

The Orientation Group

PSOT's Approach to Welcoming and Further Resourcing Clients

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Learning Objectives

1. To describe a manualized group treatment model for survivors of torture
2. To begin designing a group session unique to your clients' needs and program's resources
3. To identify the benefits of PSOT's group work in healing from torture
4. To share group intervention strategies with peers

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Overview

- Overview of PSOT
- Orientation Group Description
- Benefits and challenges of group
- Homework
- Question and Answer

Large Group Exercise: Experiences of Group Work

- Think of a group you have participated in (e.g. psychotherapy, religious, parenting, support, class)
- Did the group serve a function for you that could not have been met if you were on your own or with only one other person?
- What role/function(s) did you serve in the group?
- What was your withdrawal from the group like?
- What is your most fond memory of the group?

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The Program

- History
- Setting
- Personnel
- Strengths
- Limitations

The Clients

- Demographics
- Functioning
- Strengths and Resources
- Utilization of the Program
- In the context of NYC
- Barriers to Care

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PSOT Orientation Group: Structure

- 4-session, weekly psychoeducation support
- 1.5-2 hour long sessions
- Semi-structured manualized framework
- Co-leadership (often cross discipline) with supervision by licensed clinician
- Orients clients to program services and personnel, and to their own bio-psycho-social health
- Led in a single language (with use of live or telephonic interpretation if needed)
- Didactic and experiential components each session
- Guest speakers

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PSOT Orientation Group: Membership

- Adult clients
- Recently admitted to the program
- History of torture, significant human rights abuses, or exposure to wartime trauma
- Presenting needs:
 - loss of community, isolation
 - disruptive trauma symptoms
 - difficulty navigating NYC and its systems,
 - confusion about the asylum process and their rights as immigrants

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PSOT Orientation Group: Goals

- Increase knowledge of trauma and common traumatic reactions
- Strengthen coping strategies
- Provide mutual support among participants
- Further triage participants' needs and refer
- Increase knowledge of program services and community resources and how to access them

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PSOT Orientation Group: Approach

Framework	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warm and welcoming• Safety and respect• Confidentiality• Empowerment• Value cultural perspectives and experiences• Strengths-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psychoeducation about trauma• Cognitive-behavioral coping strategies• Foster community and connection• Triage and screen• Review PSOT services

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4 Elements Bracelet



Rationale: External and internal stress triggers have a cumulative effect.

Goal: To reduce and prevent stress and promote ability to stay in "window of tolerance."

Plan: Wear a 4 elements bracelet on wrist and every time it is noticed perform brief self-calming exercises

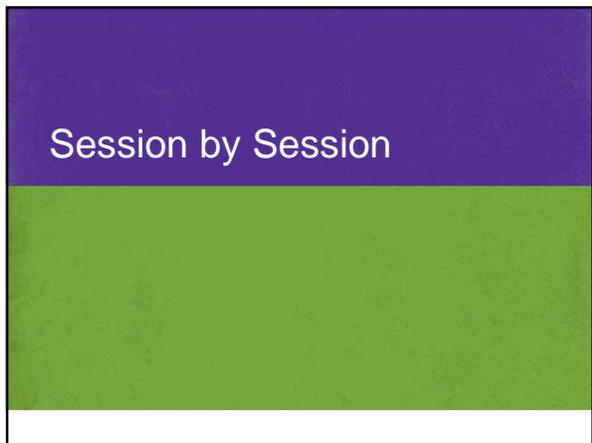
Earth: Grounding/safety in the present moment

Wind: Calming Breath

Water: Relaxation and Control

Fire: Hopeful Imagination

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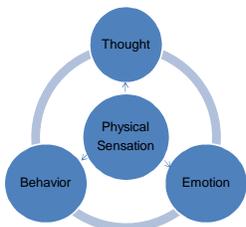


PSOT Orientation Group: Session 1

- Member and leader introductions
- Rules and expectations
- Introduction to the program and hospital
- 4 elements bracelet
- 2 coping strategies: Earth-grounding and Wind-deep breathing
- Homework: skills practice

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PSOT Orientation Group: Session 2



- Review homework
- Discuss trauma, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and depression
- Presentation: de-mystifying psychopharmacology
- Introduce thoughts-emotions-behavior-physical sensations paradigm
- 2 coping strategies: thoughts & emotions tracking, pleasant event scheduling
- Homework: skills practice

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PSOT Orientation Group: Session 3

- Review homework
- Presentation: immigration and asylum process overview
- Process reactions to the immigration discussion
- 2 coping strategies: Water-calm and control, progressive muscle relaxation
- Homework: skills practice

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PSOT Orientation Group: Session 4



- Coping strategies: Fire-vision board, hope and imagination

- Review homework
- Review information from previous sessions
- Process reactions to group coming to an end
- Present future services at and outside of PSOT: ongoing group therapist, social services provider
- After group, facilitators make service recommendations for each client and facilitate engagement

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PSOT Orientation Group: Client

Benefits

- Reducing Isolation
- Normalization of experiences - "I'm not the only one"
- Breaking the Silence
- Healing through community
- Culturally syntonio community support
- Recipient and giver

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PSOT Orientation Group: Client

Challenges

- Fear of being with others who are unknown
- Fear of what they might have to say
- Fear of what others will talk about
- High avoidance to manage other trauma symptoms
- Lack of familiarity with group therapy
- Hard to imagine effectiveness of coping skills

PSOT Orientation Group: Facilitator

Benefits

- Semi-structured; time-limited
- Resource-wise
- Review/learn basic coping skills and CBT principles
- Increased confidence in working with clients in all services
- Supports management of workplace stress

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PSOT Orientation Group: Facilitator

Challenges

- Working with an interpreter
- Managing timeliness
- Time management
- Process vs. content
- Navigating Co-facilitator and supervisor relationships
- Difference in linguistic skills

YOUR Homework from Orientation Group

- Join staff from your own organization and:
 - begin to design a 5th session OR
 - begin to design your own multi-session group treatment model
 - To run for your own clients (e.g. treatment centers)
 - To offer to another program (e.g. if you have an expertise but don't provide services to groups of clients)
 - To be modeled off of PSOT's group or to address entirely different needs of your population
- Next Steps: Write down group model or session proposal and the date when you will meet with colleagues to finish designing it
- Incorporate 1 or more of the bracelet exercises into your teaching, workday, or clinical practice

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