
USING THE DVDS: AN INVITATION, A WARNING AND SOME RESOURCES FOR YOU TO USE

An Invitation

This program is accompanied by four ninety-minute DVDs. These illustrate core concepts from the text with real-life examples from an actual group. You can see many of the phenomena of groups acted out for your understanding.

You will find that the segments of the program that are illustrated on DVD are marked in the index by a DVD symbol with the number of the DVD on which it is located. This helps you to locate what you are currently studying on the DVDs quickly and easily. The illustrations offer many opportunities for vicarious learning by new group therapists, which tended to be rare indeed in my own learning to become a group therapist. I invite you to use them accordingly.

Also on each DVD are more extensive pieces of individual work in the group, only very slightly edited for the sake of continuity. In the spirit of this program, mistakes false starts and learning by experience by both therapist and protagonist are included, to give you insight into the struggle for healing and growth which is the work of the group.

A Warning

This program assumes a significant amount of experience, both in your own journey of self-discovery and in your work as a counsellor, therapist or group leader. This should ensure that the emotional intensity of the work is not completely unfamiliar. Nevertheless the material on the DVDs can be disturbing, especially the individual work.

The individual work on the DVDs resembles this text as the theoretical study of fire fighting safety procedures resembles fighting an actual house fire. This is experience at its most intense and raw! It needs to be approached with caution. Hence each piece of individual work on the DVDs is preceded by a warning so that you can take care of yourself in the face of this emotional intensity.

One of my first trainers said “We become therapists to heal ourselves and to heal our crazy families.” I certainly did. You may have unresolved issues from your past. Just as the participants in the group may be triggered into awareness of their own issues by witnessing each others’ work, so may you be triggered by viewing the work on these DVDs. It is your responsibility to take adequate precautions to manage this should it happen. Below are some suggestions for doing so.

Resourcing Yourself to Manage the DVDs

I strongly suggest that you set up at least two of the following resources to help you to support yourself prior to watching any piece of individual work on the DVDs. Whichever methods you choose, always first read the relevant text carefully. Knowledge of the process helps you to cope with its emotional heat.

1. Watch the pieces of individual work with a peer who has some knowledge of therapy, either as an individual or group therapist.
2. Make sure that you have available to you a skilled lecturer or supervisor i.e. someone who is overseeing your professional development as a therapist and/or as a group therapist, to help you to debrief after watching the DVDs. Should you be triggered, discuss this with your lecturer or supervisor.
3. Make sure that you have available, should you need it, access to a skilled psychotherapist to help you to learn from and integrate any material that has been triggered by watching the individual work on DVD. Such triggering is an opportunity for personal growth, if used well.
5. If studying this program in a group setting, be prepared to raise any issues triggered by watching individual work on the DVDs with your group.

I recommend that you always debrief from each piece of individual work on the DVDs using the following ‘Debrief Proforma’

Debrief Proforma

How do you feel after watching this piece of individual work?

What does it remind you of in your own life?

What do you need to do to process this experience?

What are your internal resources for managing this experience?

Who can assist you in managing the impact of this experience on you?

What might stop you from seeking assistance to manage the impact of this experience on you?

How can you overcome these blocks or barriers?

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DVDS

The original purchaser in buying this program accepts full responsibility for the use and disposal of the DVDs. They are to be shown only to counsellors or therapists or those training to become counsellors, therapists or group therapists.

To show the DVDs to other than these categories of people would violate the confidentiality of the participants of the group, a poor reward for people who generously and courageously agreed to having their work recorded for this program. The purchaser accepts responsibility for protecting the confidentiality of the DVDs at all times and in all situations. He or she also accepts responsibility for the proper disposal of the DVDs in the future.

The material on the DVDs is highly emotional and evocative. This is necessary and inevitable if group psychotherapy is to be illustrated. The purchaser accepts responsibility at all times for his or her emotional responses to the DVDs and for those of any person he or she permits to view the DVDs.

The DVDs are never to be broadcast, loaned, hired or screened to any one not known to the original purchaser as persons who are able to safely use the information on the DVDs for their own professional training.