

Editorial

Welcome to an interesting issue of *Groupwork* which offers insights into the frontiers of innovative groupwork practice and research from different regions of the world.

In the first article in this issue, 'Digital social work practice through groupwork on social networking sites: A case study with users of Social Services Community Centre from Malaga (Spain) on Facebook', Joaquin Castillo de Mesa, Antonio López Peláez, and Paula Méndez Domínguez report on the use of the social media platform, Facebook, as the location for a social work facilitated support group for people seeking employment in a local area in Malaga, Spain. Their overview of this group approach provides detailed insights into how the group was set up, how it operated, how the facilitators worked to foster interaction between the members and how the group grew into a positive and supportive experience for its members. In addition, the authors report on their approach to measuring the group activity in the online environment including how they tracked patterns of communication among the members. This article provides an instructive example of new methods of group observation required when working with online group activities. The research methodology used in this study will be unfamiliar to many groupworkers, but this article points to the future of virtual groupwork research and the types of knowledge that researchers and group facilitators will find useful when involved in evaluating groupwork that is taking place in online environments.

In the second article of this issue, Katalin Ujhelyi Gomez, Jerome Carson and Gill Brown provide a detailed account of the benefits of groupwork with people who are experiencing a dual diagnosis of substance addiction and mental illness. In the article titled, 'Development of a positive group intervention for coexisting problems: A mixed methods study', the authors set out their findings

regarding the benefits which can be gained by this target population through involvement in a groupwork programme which is informed by a strengths-based positive psychology approach. The results provide encouraging evidence regarding the benefits of groupwork with this target population, and the reported benefits will hopefully stimulate interest in the provision of groupwork interventions for this population and also in further research on the potential of groupwork in helping those experiencing co-existing diagnoses.

The third article, authored by Raquel Pelta and Antonio López Peláez, is titled, ‘What can co-design contribute to social work with groups?’ This article addresses the use of co-design approaches in groupwork, particularly in initiatives which work with superdiverse populations or which require transdisciplinary collaboration. The authors identify ten recommendations to help guide groupworkers interested in merging co-production and groupwork approaches. This article addresses many practical issues but also tackles more philosophical questions regarding the relations between group members and group facilitators, and the factors that support authentic co-production practices.

A Groupwork in Practice article from Paul Johnson and Kim Lamothe reports on groupwork with students in a middle school context conducted by a social work student as her capstone project. This paper traces the commitment and effort required to establish ‘The Kindness Group’ within the school context and also the impact it achieved among the target student cohort. In addition to illustrating the impact groupwork can achieve, this also paper provides an exemplar of the useful contributions that can be achieved as part of a student field practicum.

Paul Johnson is also the author of a Field Report entitled, ‘Community/Social Action Group Work in Indigenous and Rural Communities: Zimbabwe, Summer 2019’, which details his encounters with a range of community groupwork initiatives in the African continent. Drawing on insights gained during three separate visits, Johnson celebrates community group actions which seed and support a range of initiatives dedicated to raising community living standards and the development of resources such as schools for local youth.

Taken together, the contributions in this issue showcase the

range and wealth of group activity taking place in many locations worldwide. I would like to thank the authors for sharing their work and insights and for helping expand our knowledge on the different forms and ambitions of contemporary groupwork across the globe.

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