

Social Justice

Focused

STRUCTURED PEER GROUP SUPERVISION

(SPGS)

Considerations
& How-To
Guide for
Implementation

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WHAT IS IT?

SPGS is a group intervention where peers in a clinical profession meet to share about their clinical interventions and consult on their client cases over a pre-determined length of time. A Social Justice Focused SPGS group meets with the intended goal to conceptualize cases and provide feedback specifically through a social justice lens as opposed to a medical model.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Many individual problems that clients present in therapy are rooted in or are affected by social injustice. Mental health service systems face a multitude of barriers to integrating culturally appropriate or related social justice issues into practice. Mental health interventions have the best outcomes when they are easily accessible, culturally appropriate, and delivered through a social justice perspective.

BENEFITS

Increases Skills

SPGS assists mental health professionals with building clinical skills and identifying any gaps within their clinical practice or service delivery. Social Justice Focused SPGS helps clinicians to integrate social justice topics and principles into their therapy practice.

Builds Community

SPGS creates a support network and decreases isolation.

Prevents Burnout

SPGS reduces stress and prevents burnout.

LOGISTICS

Environment Type	Decide if you will hold SPGS sessions in-person or virtually. Suggested Type: Virtual groups eliminate some barriers to participation .
Session Time Frame	Decide how long each SPGS will be. Time frames will depend on format and content included in the SPGS group sessions. Suggested Time Frame: 2 hours per session allows enough time to have a deep dialog plus time for feedback.
Length of Time	Decide how many SPGS sessions will occur and over how long. This may depend on how many group members you have participating. Suggested Length of Time: 1-2 sessions a month over 5-10 months depending on group member consensus.
Scheduling	Decide how you will schedule sessions. Will you use a scheduling software? Schedule session-to-session? Plan all Session dates/times in advance. Suggested Scheduling Method: Prepare a few different consistent days/times and allow group members to pick the one that works best for them in advance. This allows members choice and collaboration while maintaining a structure that they can plan for.

GROUP MEMBERS

Recruitment	How will you recruit group members? Will you need to advertise? Where? Suggested Recruitment Method: Use social media, networking platforms, and word of mouth to recruitment members. The more places you and the more often you post, the more inquiry you will have. Cold contacting is a useful way to reach people who may be interested. Remember to be friendly and welcoming and respond to inquiries in a timely fashion for the best results.
Number of Members	Decide how many group members you will have. Traditionally, SPGS involves a group of 3-12 members. Suggested Number of Members: 8-10 is an ideal number of members because it's small enough to manage group dynamics and time but large enough if some members miss a session, there can still be a robust discussion and multiple perspectives.
Personalities	What kinds of personalities would be a good fit to have in the group? It's important to think about how different people may interact with each other. Suggested Personality Type: The most effective Social Justice Focused SPGS group will have members who are open-minded, able to receive constructive feedback, honest and vulnerable, respectful for the group dynamic to facilitate learning and growth.
Skill Levels	Consider what level of skill group members should have. All members should

have around the same level of skill and experience to decrease any power dynamic of having a more experienced "supervisor" lead. **Suggested Skill Levels:** The Social Justice Focused SPGS group members should be knowledgeable enough both clinically and about social justice topics and principles to be able to work independently without much direction.

Identities

Consider the identities of the group members. How do members identify regarding racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, disability status, age identities, etc.? **Suggested Identities:** Group members should be diverse in both identities and personal and professional experiences for the most effective social justice integration and for the safety of group members who have historically marginalized identities.

PREPARATION

Orientation

Consider hosting an orientation sessions before SPGS sessions officially begin. **Suggested Orientation Guide:** Go over the purpose and format of the group, the roles of the group members, the logistics of scheduling sessions, and have members introduce themselves to begin to build rapport.

Creating Safety

How will you create safety in the SPGS space and among group members? **Suggested Safety Method:** Create a group contract or guidelines in collaboration with group members to promote safety and comfort within the group. This will encourage participation and honesty in group content.

Roles

Who will be responsible for recruitment? Planning and scheduling? Will roles change from session to session? **Suggested Roles:** Limit the amount of people responsible for scheduling and planning for consistency but be clear that these members are not the leaders. Everyone will take turns presenting and giving feedback throughout the group sessions.

Organization

Where will group members find and share concrete materials? **Suggested Organization Method:** Create a shared drive to keep any documents, resources, or materials related to the SPGS sessions for members to access easily.

CONTENT

Presentation Guide

What will the case consultation presentations look like? **Suggested Presentation Guide:** Create a formalized guide to case presentations including what should be included. The guide should give some structure but

	still allow flexibility for members to present in ways that support their
Psychoeducation	Will there be opportunities to include social justice education or will the SPGS group consist solely of case consultation? Suggested Psychoeducation: Integrate space to discuss higher level social justice concepts separate from individual client cases. This can look like different members sharing about a single social justice concept in a lecture-style way or by providing supplemental educational materials.
Macro-Level Topics	Social injustice includes more than just individual experiences but includes macro-level institutional systems as well. To incorporate social justice principles, macro-level concepts need also be discussed. Suggested Macro-Level Integration: Besides clinical cases, also discuss the equity issues involving the use of insurance, the DSM and diagnoses, psychotherapy notes, access to services, etc.
Format	What will SPGS sessions look like? Suggested Format: Have two people present a client case, each person will have 45 minutes. At the beginning on the next SPGS session, the two people who presented prior can share any updates. Alternatively, use half the time to discuss a macro-level topic or integrate psychoeducation and have one person present a client case during the other half the session.

This document was created based on the results of a doctoral capstone research project.

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