

EDITORS' PREFACE: INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

COUNSELING AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Group Work Leadership: An Introduction for Helpers is a text written by a true expert in the field, Robert K. Conyne, PhD. This text will not only introduce to the *what* and *why* of group work but will also inspire you to see the unique value of group work for those in the helping profession. Bob Conyne's knowledge and experience helps to make the theory, the research, the concepts of group work come alive. In addition to facilitating your developing knowledge and skills, the text will stimulate further development of your professional identity (see Table EP-1).

As is obvious, one text, one learning experience, will not be sufficient for mastery of group work, nor for the successful formation of your professional identity and practice. The formation of both your professional identity and practice will be a lifelong process—a process that we hope to facilitate through the presentation of this text and the creation of our series: *Counseling and Professional Identity in the 21st Century*.

Counseling and Professional Identity in the 21st Century is a new, pedagogically sound series of texts targeting counselors in training. This series is *not* simply a compilation of isolated books matching that which is already in the market. Rather, each book, with its targeted knowledge and skills, will be presented as but a part of a larger whole. The focus and content of each text serve as a single lens through which counselors can view their clients, engage in practice, and articulate their own professional identity.

Table EP-1 Knowledge and Skills by Chapter

Group work studies that provide both theoretical and experiential understandings of group purpose, development, dynamics, theories, methods, skills, and other group approaches in a multicultural society, including all of the following:

<i>Focus: Knowledge and Skills</i>	<i>Addressed in Chapter(s)</i>
<i>Principles of group dynamics</i> , including group process components, developmental stage theories, group members' roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work	Chapter 1 and throughout whole text
<i>Group leadership</i> or facilitation styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles	Chapters 3, 7
<i>Theories of group counseling</i> , including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature	Chapters 5, 7, 8, 10
<i>Group counseling methods</i> , including group counselor orientations and behaviors, appropriate selection criteria and methods, and methods of evaluation of effectiveness	Chapters 6, 5, 9, 10
<i>Direct experiences</i> in which students participate as group members in a small-group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term, and where internship requires at least 240 clock hours of direct experience, including group work	Chapters 10, 2
<i>Professional identity</i> is a theme running through all entries in this series. It is emphasized within this text.	Chapters 9, 10, and the Epilogue

Counseling and Professional Identity in the 21st Century is unique not just in the fact that it “packaged” a series of traditional text but also in that it provides an *integrated* curriculum targeting the formation of the readers’

professional identity and efficient, ethical practice. Each book within the series is structured to facilitate the ongoing professional formation of the reader. The materials found within each text are organized in such a manner as to move the reader to higher levels of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor functioning, resulting in his or her assimilation of the materials presented into both his or her professional identity and his or her approach to professional practice. While each text targets a specific set of core competencies (cognates and skills), competencies identified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) as essential to the practice of counseling, each book in the series will emphasize the following:

- a. the assimilation of concepts and constructs provided across the text found within the series, thus fostering the reader's ongoing development as a competent professional;
- b. the blending of contemporary theory with current research and empirical support;
- c. a focus on the development of procedural knowledge with each text employing case illustrations and guided practice exercises to facilitate the reader's ability to translate the theory and research discussed into professional decision making and application;
- d. the emphasis on the need for and means of demonstrating accountability; and
- e. the fostering of the reader's professional identity and with it the assimilation of the ethics and standards of practice guiding the counseling profession.

We are proud to have served as coeditors of this series, confident that texts just like *Group Work Leadership: An Introduction for Helpers* will serve as a significant resource to you and your development as a professional counselor.

Richard Parsons, PhD

Naijian Zhang, PhD