

Definition of Social Group

A group is the foundation of society and culture. Human beings are also a product of group life. Most of the Anthropologists believe that man started his life on this earth by living together. Man has always been dependent upon his fellow beings in defense, food and shelter. The satisfaction of various needs could be done only by cooperation among various people in society. This reciprocal help brought them into social contact with one another and here the social group was founded. It was the real foundation of human society. Imam Ghazali is also of the view that for the satisfaction of various needs the people formed social groups. Shah Wali Ullah Mohaddis Dehlvi said that for continuity of human race and satisfaction of other needs of food, house and clothes the human society was founded.

Definition of Group

According to Merrill: "Two or more persons are in communication over an appreciable period of time and who act in accordance with common function or purpose". Emory S. Bogardus: "a number of persons, two or more who have common objects of attention, who are stimulating to each other, who have common loyalty and participate in related activities are called as group".

‘Group’ from social work point of view

A common conceptualization of the small group drawn from the social work literature is "...a social system consisting of two or more persons who stand in status and role relationships with one another and possessing a set of norms or values which regulate the attitudes and behaviours of the individual members in matters of consequence to the group. A group is a system of relationship among persons. Therefore, group as a social system has a structure and some degree of stability in interaction, reciprocity, interdependence and group bond. Open social systems do not exist in a vacuum; they are part of and transact with their surroundings". Thus, group is a collection of people who need each other in order to work on certain common tasks, and the social group work(er) provides a hospitable environment (agency setting) to achieve those tasks".

Characteristics of social group

The basis of grouping may be numerous but the division of population on the basis of age, sex, income, profession and other gave them various types of social groups. Following are the characteristics of a social group.

1. Given number of individual two or more.
2. Reciprocal relations exist among the its members.
3. These are formed for common goals and objectives.

4. Having sense of unity and solidarity which results loyalty and sympathy.
5. A strong sense of we-feeling which develops cooperation among the members.
6. Group norms and regulations (written or unwritten) must be followed for group control
7. Awareness about its membership to differentiate them from other groups
8. Group control (direct or indirect control) for members activities

Definition of Social Group Work

Social group work has been defined differently by various experts on the subject, here are definitions given by some experts of the social group work. H. B. Tracker-1955 defined as: “Social Group Work is a method through which individuals in the groups and in the agency settings are helped by a worker who guides their interaction in programme activities so that they may relate themselves to others and experience growth opportunities in accordance with their needs and capacities to the end of the individual, group and community development”

“Social group work is a method of social work that helps persons to enhance their social functioning through purposeful group experiences and to cope more effectively with their personal, group or community problems” (Marjorie Murphy, 1959).

“Social Group Work will refer to working with a small group (members ranging from 7-10) to a medium size group (members ranging from 10-20) for a variety of purposes beginning from recreation to behaviour modification on the one hand and accomplishing tasks including social change and development on the other, with a variety of clients ranging from children to elderly. The worker makes use of the expertise in human relationships to help these groups to achieve the group goals in a participatory manner while paying adequate attention to individual needs and social norms” **(H.Y.Siddiqui -2008).**

Goal-directed activity with small treatment and task groups aimed at meeting socioemotional needs and accomplishing tasks. This activity is directed to individual members of a group and to the group as a whole within a system of service delivery ([Toseland & Rivas 2009](#)).

The History of Group Work

While the tradition of group work in the profession is rich, it is also one marked by conflict and ambivalence. Before the start of social work as a profession, services were provided by various community-based and faith-based individuals and groups. Early group workers were more likely to view social conditions, such as the Industrial Revolution, urbanization, or the unequal distribution of wealth, as the cause of social problems. As such, early group workers were focused on social change, while individual workers tended to see pathology as resting within the individual.

The end of World War II marked an important time in the development of clinical group methods. Psychiatrists, overwhelmed by the number of returning veterans with psychological problems, began seeing veterans in pairs or groups, not for therapeutic reasons, but out of necessity. Also, with the introduction of early psychotropic medication, the profession increasingly began to view the individual as the focus of practice. In the 1950s, the professional society that was concerned with group work joined with other societies to create the National Association of Social Work. This affiliation unified the many different methods of the profession into one organization. Over the next twenty years, many schools of social work introduced group work concentrations, in which students focused on group work in the second year of their MSW program. In the 1960s, group work in social work and other helping professions was used increasingly as a vehicle for social change. Consciousness-raising groups and groups used in War on Poverty programs helped empower women and ethnic minorities to fight alienation and seek control over their communities. Groups (sit-ins) were used as a tool of education during protests against the Vietnam War, and by activists in the civil rights movement. This energy and creativity were reflected in the teaching of group skills in social work education programs.

Two types of inquiries have enhanced our understanding of groups. One type of inquiry has come from social scientists who have studied groups by experimenting with them in laboratories or observations of group's functioning in community setting. The other type has come from group work practitioners who have examined how groups function in practice settings like social work, psychology, education and recreation. The results of both enquiries have led to improved methods of working with a variety of different types of groups.

The concept of a primary group was also an important contribution to the study of groups. Cooley in 1909 defined a primary group as a small informal group such as family or a friendship group, which has a tremendous influence on member's values, moral standards and

normative behaviour. The primary group was therefore viewed as essential in understanding socialization and development. Allport (1924) for example, found that presence of others improved task performance.

After World War I, social scientists also began to study groups operating in the community. One of the earliest was Frederic Thrasher (1927) who studied gangs of delinquents in the Chicago area by becoming friendly with gang members and by observing the internal operations of gangs. Thrasher observed that every member of a gang had a status within the group that was attached to the functional role that the member played for the gang. Thrasher also drew attention to the culture that developed within a gang, suggesting there was a common code that all members followed. The code was enforced by group opinion, coercion and physical punishment. This work along with others have influenced the ways group work is practiced with youths in settlement houses, neighborhood centers and youth organizations. Group work was also used for therapeutic purpose in state mental institutions but much of the interest in group work stemmed from those who had led socialization groups, adult education groups and recreation groups in settlement houses and youth service agencies. It is often believed that group work is considerably younger than casework, but group work agencies actually started only a few years after casework agencies. The **first course of group work** was offered in the School of Social Work at Western Reserve University in Cleveland by Clara Kaiser. When she left for New York in 1935, Grace Coyle continued to develop the course. It was taught partially as a method and partially as a field of practice. By 1937 about 10 schools offered special course in social work. However, as Schwartz points out, the real historical differences between the two is that casework soon became identified with social work. Social profession whereas group work did not begin to become formally linked with the profession until much later during the National Conference of Social Work in 1935. In 1936 the American Association for the study of group work was founded with an aim to clarify and refine both the philosophy and practice of group work. By **1939 group work** began to be treated as a separate subject at the National Conference of Social Work. The identification of group work with social work profession increased **during the 1940s** although group workers continued to maintain loose ties with recreation, adult education, and mental hygiene **until the 1950s** when group workers joined together with six other professional groups to form the National Association of Social Workers in 1955. Group work and the Settlement houses where it was practiced offering citizens the opportunity for education, recreation, socialization and community involvement. **Settlement Houses** offered groups as an opportunity for citizens to join together to share their views, to gain mutual

support and to exercise the power derived from their association for social change. Unlike casework, where there is a sharp distinction between the given and the receiver, group work evolved out of the idea of self-help, self-help of a group nature. While philanthropy was generally of middle class origin, mutual self-help as the name implies, developed from the need for mutual aid and support. As compared to caseworkers who relied on insight developed from psychodynamic approaches and on the provision of concrete resources, group workers relied on programme¹⁶⁴ Social Work Intervention with Individuals and Groups activities to spur members to action. Programme activities of all types were the medium through which group attained their goals. Activities such as camping, singing, group discussion, games and arts and crafts were used for recreation, socialization, education, support and rehabilitation. Unlike casework, which was largely focused on problem solving and rehabilitation, group work activities were used for enjoyment as well as to solve problems. Thus, the group work method that developed from the settlement housework had a different focus and a different goal than casework method.

Between 1910 and 1920, those who were concerned with adult education, recreation, and community work began to realize the full potentials of group work. They began to understand that groups could be used to help people participate in their communities to enrich people's lives and to support those persons whose primary relationships were not satisfying. They became aware of the potential that groups had for helping people learn social skills and problem-solving skills. They began to use groups to prevent delinquency and to rehabilitate those who were maladjusted. The organizations that build the foundation of group work were the self-help and informal recreational ones: settlement houses, neighborhood centres, Camp Fire Girls, Jewish centers and camps. Latter designated as 'group work agencies' the new concepts that united these services are participation in small groups, the democratic way of life, community responsibility and membership in a worldwide effort.

Early in 1920 Mary Richmond realized the potentials of working with groups and wrote on the importance of small group psychology. Mary P Follett, a political scientist in 1926 wrote in the book --- The New State, that solutions to social problems would emerge from the creation of groups in neighborhood and around social interest. John Dewey, who developed the idea of progressive education also found the usefulness of small groups as early as 1933. According to him, social group work method was an application of the principles of¹⁶⁶ Social Work Intervention with Individuals and Groups progressive education to small informal groups in leisure time settings. In fact, group work was very closely associated with community organization method and its concept of citizen's participation. During the 1940s

and 1950s group workers began to use groups more frequently to provide therapy and remediation in mental health settings influenced by the psychoanalysis and ego psychology.

World War II, which created a severe shortage of trained workers to deal with mentally disabled war veterans. It was spurred on by the continued interest in the use of groups in psychiatric settings during the 1950s. Although there was an increased emphasis in the 1940s and 1950s on utilizing groups to improve the functioning of individual group members, interest remained in using groups for recreational and educational purposes, especially in Jewish community centers and in youth organizations such as Girls Scouts and the YWCA. During the 1940s and 1950s groups were also used for purposes of community development and social action in many different neighborhood centers and community agencies. At the same time, there was an accompanying increase in the study of small group as a social phenomenon. The years after the war saw an immense rise in group work literature. Gertrude Wilson's *Social Group Work Practice* (1949), Harleigh B. Trecker's *Social Group Work* (1949), Grace Coyle's *Group Work with American Youth* (1948) and Gisela Konopka's *Therapeutic Group Work with Children* (1949) appeared in a time span of only two years. These books made the attempt to clarify the orderly process of social group work as part of the helping function of social work on the wide scale from healthy to sick individuals and groups. During the decade of the 1960s the popularity of group services declined. The skills of group worker were then viewed as being more significant in the area of community organization in organizing youths and adults around important social concerns. Also during the 1960s the push towards a generic view of practice and the movement away from specializations in casework, group work and community organizations, tended to weaken group specializations in professional schools and to reduce the number of professionals who were trained in group work as their primary mode of practice. During the 1970s interest in group work continued to wane. Fewer professional schools offered advanced course in group work and fewer practitioners used group work as a practice method. In order to increase practitioners' awareness about the potential benefits of groups, group workers throughout the US and Canada came together and held the first Annual Symposium for the Advancement of Group Work in 1979. Each year since then, the annual symposium about group work has been convened.

Group work as a method of social work came to India in 1936 along with the introduction of professional social work education, ten years after its formal acknowledgement in the West. Even though there is evidence of the group approach being used in charity, imparting

religious education through oral tradition, mobilizing people for the freedom struggle against the British, social reform and in welfare strategies such as the Sarvodaya and Bhoodan movement, there is very little documentation and theorization based on it. All schools of social work in India teach a course/paper in social group work (sometimes alternatively titled as social work with groups) at the graduate and the postgraduate level.¹⁶⁸ Social Work Intervention with Individuals and Groups There was an effort to develop some indigenous materials in group work by the then United Nations Social Welfare and Development Centre for Asia and the Pacific and the Association of Schools of Social Work in 1979. Compared to casework and community organization, contributions in developing indigenous materials on group work are lagging even today. The Department of Social Work at the University of Baroda developed and published some of the first records of group work practice in 1960. The Association of Schools of Social Work jointly with the Technical Cooperative Mission (USA) laid down minimum standards for group work practice. Two social workers who have tried to trace the historical development of group work in India, V.D. Mehta (1987) and Helen Joseph (1997), agree that the theoretical perspective taught in the schools of social work in India and the practice models are primarily American as in the case of social work itself. The practice of social group work in India is generally limited to correctional and other residential institutional setting, hospitals and so on in the urban areas. The general activities undertaken were recreational, educational and cultural in character.

Group work method was also practiced in community work, as in the case of Mahila Mondals and Yuvak Mondals, but it was primarily recognized as community work. Practice of group work is also given emphasis through the fieldwork programme in some schools. Students placed in agencies and open communities work with groups of children, youth, adults and elderly who are either 'sick' or healthy in urban and rural areas. For instance, the student of Visva Bharati placed in open communities organize groups of children and adults in the poor neighborhood with a combined objective of socialization, structured recreation, functional literacy, awareness generation on health hygiene, environment and other socially relevant issues.

In the recent years, groups of adolescent girls and boys are also being organized in the villages to deal with issues of life skill development including home management, reproductive and sexual health, sexuality, family planning methods etc., considering the social reality that majority of them will be getting married at an early age. This brief review of historical trends in group work practice is intended to enable you to understand current trends in group work practice from a broad perspective.

Today a remedial approach focusing on improving the functioning of individual group member continues as the preferred method of practice. This model of practice is based on problem identification, assessment, and treatment. The emphasis on mutual aid characteristics of group work also continues where the worker's role is to mediate between the needs of group members and society. Mutual aid and shared, reciprocal responsibility are appropriate in such settings such as short-stay homes and Nari Niketans that are designed to helping women in distress to live together, to support each other and to cope with distressing life events. It is also useful in community groups like mahila mondals, youth clubs and other community groups where reciprocal sharing of mutual concerns and the giving and receiving of support are central purposes. Professional social workers are also involved as consultants or facilitators of self - help groups that emphasize the mutual aid characteristics of a group.

Typology of Groups

Different sociologists have classified groups in different ways. While some thinkers have given a simple classification, other has given an elaborate classificatory scheme. However, on the basis of the accumulated work of sociologists, we may classify the following ten dichotomous groups and grouping from as many angles as possible.

- 1) Primary group and secondary group.
- 2) In-group and out-group.
- 3) Permanent group and transitory group.
- 4) Vertical group and Horizontal group.
- 5) Formal group and Informal group.
- 6) Contractual group and Non-contractual group.
- 7) Voluntary group and involuntary group.
- 8) Homogeneous group and Heterogeneous group.
- 9) Institutional group and Non-Institutional group.
- 10) Anti-social and pro-social groups

1) Primary group and secondary group:

American sociological theory has generally followed the dichotomy of primary and secondary groups on the basis of distinction drawn by C.H.Cooley. In a primary group, there is a face-to-face and intimate relationship. It refers to small groups like the family, the play group, the neighborhood and the like.

The secondary group may be defined as a kind of associations which is characterized by indirect, impersonal or secondary relations. The trade union, the business corporation, the political party, and the state are examples of secondary groups.

2) In-groups and Out-groups:

William Graham Summer made distinction between an in group and out-group. It is characterized by the expressions "we belong" "we believe", "we feel", "we act". We identify ourselves with our own group's family or tribe or college or occupation by virtue of our awareness or likeness or "consciousness of kind",

The out-group is an association of persons towards which we feel a sense of indifference, avoidance, dislike or competition. The out group is thus opposite of the "in group". Towards in-group a man has "we are feeling" but towards on out-group have feeling of they.

3) Permanent and Transitory groups:

The distinction between permanent and transitory groups is based on the extent of the permanence of relationship of members. If the relationship among members continues for a

longer period, the group is relatively permanent. Family, nation and castes are permanent groups. But, if the relationships among the members do not last for a longer period, the group is known as transitory group. Crowds, mobs are transitory groups.

4) Vertical and Horizontal groups:

D. Miller divided groups into vertical and horizontal groups. The vertical groups are large, inclusive groups such as nations, religious organizations and political parties.

The horizontal groups are small divisions consisting mainly, of members from; social class, a group of doctors, teachers and engineers are some of the examples of horizontal group.

5) Formal and Informal groups:

A formal group consists of a number of persons working together for the attainment of a given goal. It functions according to a set of rules under the authority of a set of officers. It has a definite structure. A bureaucratic group is an example of the formal group.

An Informal group consists of a number of persons working together to achieve common goal. There is no set of formal rules and regulations in it. It has no definite structure. Crowd is an example of informal group.

6) Contractual and Non-Contractual groups:

The contractual group arises out of a contract. Here, the powers and responsibility of the members as well as of the group are clearly defined. A trade union, a business corporation are examples of contractual groups. But, non-contractual groups do not rest upon contract. The family, village are examples of non-contractual groups.

7) Voluntary and In-Voluntary groups:

A voluntary group is one which a man joins according to his own wish. He withdraws his membership at any time of his own sweet will. Political parties, Youth association are examples of voluntary groups.

An involuntary group is based on kinship such as the family. The membership of the groups is compulsory. A man has no choice to what family he will belong.

8) Homogeneous and Heterogeneous group:

The student community is a heterogeneous group, because students come from different age, sex, family, intellectual attainment and social background. The Indian nation is a medley of heterogeneous group, when viewed from the standpoint of national or racial origins religious pursuits. But culturally, India is a homogeneous entity.

9) Institutional and Non-institutional groups:

The institutional groups are those which function through rituals, officers, codes conduct and regulatory power including the power to punish. The state is an institution group. But a public or a mob is a non-institutional group.

10) Anti-social and Pro Social groups

Anti-social is that group which acts against the interest of the society. They destroy public property and peace. They intend to spread fear and aggression to pursue their aims. Examples include the terrorist groups, criminal groups, thieves and murders. Similarly, a group of laborers on strike against the administration of factory, students demonstrating protest, people gathered to demonstrate against the government may also sometimes become violent and anti-social groups.

Pro-social group is that works for betterment of the society. They engage in activities for the development, prosperity, welfare and peace in the society. All the governmental and non-governmental welfare organizations are examples of pro-social groups who work promoting education, reducing poverty, providing health care, treating drug addicts, helping the under privileged people and rehabilitating the grieved ones in the society.

Group Work Purposes

- ◆ **Rehabilitation**—restoring members to their former level of functioning
- ◆ **Habilitation**—helping members grow and develop
- ◆ **Correction**—helping members who are having problems with social laws or mores
- ◆ **Socialization**. helping members learn how to get along with others and do what is socially acceptable
- ◆ **Prevention**—helping members develop and function at an optimal level and helping them prepare for events that are likely to occur
- ◆ **Social action**—helping members change their environment
- ◆ **Problem solving**—helping members resolve complex issues and concerns
- ◆ **Developing social values**—helping members develop a humanistic approach to living

Importance of Groups in Human Life

Human beings are the creation of group life. Groups are a fundamental part of social life.

Groups can be very small – just two people –or very large. They can be highly rewarding to their members and to society as a whole, but there are also significant problems and dangers with them. All this makes them an essential focus for research, exploration and action.

The study of human society is essentially the study of human groups. Society consists of groups of innumerable kinds and variety. No man exists without a society and no society exists without groups. Groups have become a part and parcel of our life. Out of necessity and inevitability human beings are made to live in groups. Knowingly or unknowingly or unwillingly, with pleasure or contempt, people live in groups and societies. Man's life is to an enormous extent lived and controlled by groups of different kinds. German sociologist, Groups play an important part in human life. An individual's bringing up, care, personality building, education, social, economic and psychological needs fulfillment, sense of security, love, satisfaction of emotions and culture transmission-all of these are possible through group life which tells its importance. How an individual is affected by groups? how do groups create facilities for individuals? How does an individual benefit from these? The detail of these is given below:

I. Enhancement in individual's capacity

In social life, many jobs cannot be done by an individual and he needs the help of others. The bringing up of children and their care cannot be done by an individual alone for whom family came into existence and this increased the individual's capacity. In agriculture, no man can do the job alone because some of heavy jobs of carrying stones is not possible for an individual where two or more persons can do this job easily. That is why, family is given importance in the society. Because this group provides manpower for agriculture and is also helpful in fighting being strong physically.

2. Fulfillment of basic needs

A lonely person is helpless, and this obliged him to lead a group life. A man not only is a living creature or has biological needs for his satisfaction but also he has social and [psychological](#) needs. Therefore, needs can be divided into three kinds:

- i.** Biological needs: Hunger, thirst, sleep and sexual satisfaction.
- ii.** Sociological needs: Desire for wealth, honour and social status.
- iii.** Psychogenic or Psychological needs: Love, friendship and ego passions.

The completion of all of these needs is not possible individually and only group life plays an

important role for these achievements. The primary group of family does play its part in providing love, sexual satisfaction, food etc. Primary, secondary and reference groups play their parts for behaviour, tendency correction and building of personality. In-group provides recognition and self-bring. Thus, all groups play their parts according to the expectations of the society to complete the basic needs of an individual.

3. Personality development

A man merely biological entity at the time of his birth. It is group life that teaches him language and tells him the ways of living. He begins his life from the primary group where he is brought up. He learns family ways and then interacts with other groups which include friends, neighbors. Their ways affect his habits and lifestyle and his personality. Afterwards, school, college, office affects him by contact with secondary groups. His personality is improved by discipline and rules. His way of living becomes mature. Reference Group helps him to compare his personality with those of others to make it better. Formal and Informal Group interaction gives a chance to express his personal abilities and their promotion and all of the help him to become the best of all the creatures.

4. Transmission of culture

Groups play a part in transmitting culture from one race to another race. Primary group as family, friends and neighbors make the individual learn norms of life, customs, traditions, values and habits. Similarly, language, dress transmits knowledge; experience through formal and informal education to a new race. In-group and Informal Group transmit recreation, games and stories of wars to a new race which are adopted by the new race to harmonies with the culture and also to guarantee the security of the culture.

5. Social control:

The most important function is social action in the group dynamics. Primary group is an informal manner that manages for social control. Good manners and informal sanctions make the character of an individual according to the expectation of the society and traditions. Values and customs create materiality in the expected character and there is a harmony between the trends and behaviour of the society. Secondary Group makes the individual abide by the rules and regulations. Formal Group produces some prestige in interaction through status degree. Formal Group also helps in adopting sanctions for achieve of specific objectives. In this way, discipline finds a way in life. Deviation in manners is decreased which in turn, decreases mutual dispersion and social stability is promoted.

6. Possibility of achievement of collective aims

In social life, some human needs are such which cannot be got by individual efforts. For

example, construction of houses, festivals of grief and happiness, building of places of worships are collective aims and their achievement is only possible through different groups. Recreation is a collective aim and it needs the participation of primary and secondary group. Similarly, protecting society from crimes is a collective aim. This can be achieved by formal and secondary groups with the help of primary group. In the modern and urban life, the collective aims—electricity, water supply, roads, dams, law and order are not possible without the secondary and formal groups like Highways authority, police and administration. This shows that the collection aims are only to be achieved through social groups.

Alone versus together

- Isolation can be positive, but prolonged isolation is stressful
- People respond negatively if they expect to be alone
 - increased aggression
 - take risks
 - reduced cognitive capacity

Principles of Social Group Work

A principle is a moral rule or belief that helps you know what is right and wrong and that influences your actions, a basic truth or theory: an idea that forms the basis of something. Here are given the principles of social group work by H.B Tracker.

1.Principle of Planned Group Formation

In social group work, the group is the basic unit through which service is provided to the individual; consequently, the agency and worker are responsible for the formation of groups or the acceptance into the agency of already-formed groups must be aware of the factors inherent in the group situation that make the given group a positive potential for individual growth and for meeting recognizable needs. Behind this principle is the fact that groups, like individuals, are different. Groups are likewise evolving, developmental, ever changing. Central to group work is the fact that groups are tremendously influential upon the behavior of the individuals. The influence of the group on the person is not necessarily social or positive. It may be opposite. Consequently, the group in social group work must possess elements of conscious design and plan. It must contain a social growth potential for the members in it.

The fact that it is a group in social agency setting with a worker makes it distinctly different from non-agency groups. Agency, group and worker in unison agree that certain positive values are in reach of this group if they will strive to attain them together. The group workers who accept this principle and its implications will study groups already formed and give help to groups on the threshold of group formation. However, he will not seek to require all groups to be alike nor expect them to meet identical needs. His skill will be evident in that way he consciously gives aid at the point of group formation. If groups are already formed, he will help them to create a satisfactory association with the agency when it is evident that such association will be mutually desirable. He will help individuals without group contacts to become a part of appropriate organized units.

2. Principle of Specific Objectives

In social group work, specific objectives of individual and group development must be consciously formulated by the worker in harmony with group wishes and capacities in keeping with agency function. Accepting the fact that the individual in the group in the agency with a worker constitutes an inseparable whole. Individuals want and get different things from groups.

Agencies and their workers must be aware of what people want from group experiences and help them to get it. Different people in different groups at different times get different results

from their experiences. What they are likely to get and what it is potentially possible for them to get become concern of the group worker. Objectives thus become a controlling force in the present life of the group. The group worker who recognizes the need for consciously formulated specific objectives for individuals and groups becomes a purposeful, rather than an unfocused worker. Group work becomes planned rather than haphazard. It, of course, remains informal, but “informal” does not mean that it is without deliberate plan and purpose.

3. Principle of Purposeful Worker-Group Relationship

In social group work, consciously purposeful relationship must be established between the worker and the group members based on the worker's acceptance of the group members as they are upon the group's willingness to accept help from the worker because of the confidence of the members have in him and in the agency. This principle assumes that it is both possible and necessary to create an effective working relationship with a group before the worker can be of help to the group. It supposes that the character of such a relationship can be defined and understood.

Effective relationship grows out of the mutual acceptance of each other by the worker and the group. The worker's relationship with the group is in itself a major tool. The quality and strength of the worker -group relationship determine the extent to which the group can be helped to the fullest realization of its potentialities.

4. Principle of Continuous Individualization

In social group work, it is recognized that groups are different and that the individuals utilize group experiences in a variety of ways to meet their different needs; consequently, a continuous individualization must be practiced by the worker. Groups and individuals must be understood as developing and changing. The fact that communities, groups, and individuals change is always a strong element in professional social work practice. Perhaps to the social worker the “law of change” is primary. The worker's belief in the capacity of most people to change, when given adequate opportunities for, and helping, changing, underlies and reinforces much of his methodology. To work with groups in awareness of their differences as well as of their similarities is a relatively new and basic principle in social group work.

5. Principle of Guided Group Interaction

In social group work, the primary source of energy which propels the group and influences the individual to change is the interaction or reciprocal responses of the members. The group worker influences this interaction by the type and quality of his participation. When people are together in groups, the possibility of interaction or inter-stimulation is

always present. Though reciprocal responses may be released by different mechanisms and may have a lower or higher degree of intensity and continuity, the fact remains that this influence of person is a major dynamic in social groupwork. The social group work implies a harnessing, direction, and conscious utilization of the natural process of interaction. The presence of a worker, whose role is to influence actively the type and degree of interaction, converts the social process into the social group work process.

6. Principle of Democratic Group Self- Determination

In social group work, the group must be helped to make its own decisions and determine its own activities, taking the maximum amount of responsibility in line with its capacity and ability. The primary source of control over the group is the group itself. It is assumed that groups accepted into a relationship with the agency have the right to make satisfactory decisions. It further assumes that individuals and groups can develop in social responsibility only when they are given opportunities to behave responsibly. Since duties accompany rights, conscious judgments must be made on how much responsibility a group should be asked to assume at any point in its development.

7. Principle of Flexible Functional Organization

In social group work, the process through which the worker guides the group in setting up formal organization is just as important as the actual structural details of that organization. Formal organization should be flexible and should be encouraged only as it meets a felt need, is understood by the members and can function accordingly. The formal organization of the group should be adaptive and should change as the group changes. In social group work the group is deliberately purposeful; consequently, it needs a degree of formal organization to aid it in its furthering purposes. Formal organization enables the energies of group members to become properly channeled.

8. Principle of Progressive Program Experiences

In social group work, the experiences in which the groups engage should begin at the level of member interest, need, experience, and competence and should progress in relation to the developing capacity of the group. It implies that there is a starting point for group work program and that definition of that starting point is important. The differences between groups with respect to interest, needs, and abilities are especially pertinent in the program development process. Programs which might seem incidental, even superficial, to an outsider are often quite real and meaningful to the group. Though it is possible to impose a program patterns on group, it is clearly unwise if the objectives of the group work are stated in terms of individual and group growth in democratic skills.

9. Principle of Resource Utilization

In social group work, the total environment of agency and community possesses resources which should be utilized to enrich the content of the group experience for the individuals and for the group.

10. Principle of Evaluation

In social group work, continuous evaluating of process and programs in terms of outcomes is essential. Social group worker, group and agency share in this procedure as a means of guaranteeing the greatest possible self-fulfillment for all.

Essential Skills Needed for Social Group Work Practice

H.B Trecker has listed the following basic skills of social group work.

1) Skill in establishing purposeful relationship

The group worker must be skillful in gaining the acceptance of the group and in relating himself to the group on a positive professional basis. b) The group worker must be skillful in helping individuals in the group to accept one another and to join with the group in common pursuits.

2) Skill in analysing the group situation

The worker must be skillful in judging the developmental level of the group to determine what the level is, what the group needs and how quickly the group can be expected to move. This calls for skill in direct observation of groups on a basis of analysis and judgement. The group worker must be skillful in helping the group to express ideas, work out objectives, clarify immediate goals and see both its potentialities and limitations as a group.

3) Skill in participation with the group

The group worker must be skillful in determining, interpreting, assuming and modifying his own roles with the group. b) The group worker must be skillful in helping, group members to participate, to locate leadership among themselves and to take responsibility for their own activities.

4) Skill in dealing with group feeling

The group worker must be skillful in controlling his own feelings about the group and must study each new situation with a high degree of objectivity. b) The group worker must be skillful in helping groups to release their own feelings, both positive and negative. He must be skillful in helping groups to analyze situations as part of the working through group or intergroup conflicts.

5) Skill of empathy

It refers to the worker's capacity to perceive accurately member's feelings and subjective experiences. The group worker should show in his/her behaviour that he/she is taking genuine interest in their welfare. It will help in developing confidence between group worker and the group.

6) Skill in programme development

The group worker must be skillful in guiding group thinking so that interests and needs will be revealed and understood. b) The group worker must be skillful in helping groups to develop programmes, which they want as a means through which their needs may be met.

7) Skill in using agency and community resources

The group worker must be skillful in locating and then acquainting the group with various helpful resources which can be utilized by the members for programme purpose. b) The group worker must be skillful in helping certain individual members to make use of specialized services by means of referral that cannot be met within the group.

8) Skill in interpreting verbal communication

It is the job of the group worker to keep watch on the verbal communication among the group members because if it is not on the right track, the group may lose its basic purpose. He/she should always try to direct in proper direction.

9) Skill of answering question

During group process, certain questions, queries or doubts are raised by the group members. If they are not answered in right perspective, the members may disassociate themselves. Therefore, it is essential that the social group worker has the wide knowledge of social work as well as human behaviour.

10) Skill in evaluation

The group worker must have skill in recording the development processes that are going on as he works with the group. b) The group worker must be skillful in using his records and in helping the group to review its experiences as a means of improvement. On the basis of above discussions and opinions of different social workers on the different types of skills essential for group work practitioners, we may list them as follows.