

Certified Addictions Counseling Program at the CPD

The University of Denver's Center for Professional Development is proud to offer the seven-course series of trainings required for Certified Addictions Counseling. Interested professionals may take the courses one at a time depending on their schedule and educational needs, or they may attend the Center's "CAC Camp," which includes all seven courses in one intensive series. [Click here](#) for more on CAC Camp.

Additionally, the CPD offers a licensure exam preparation course, available multiple times throughout the year. We also offer a Substance Abuse Consultation Series. For more information about these programs, [click here](#).

Course Title

- **Certified Addictions Counseling Series: Group Counseling Skills**
- **CAC Level II Required Class**

Overview of Training

Group therapy is a powerful tool in delivering addiction treatment services. Groups have many therapeutic elements and effects that draw people into the culture of recovery. Groups provide useful information, allow one or two therapists, depending on group size, to facilitate the group process which helps a number of clients simultaneously and provides positive peer support and pressure for recovery. This class will help the aspiring addiction counselor to understand the use of group therapy in the addiction treatment field and enable them to demonstrate the skills necessary to facilitate a therapy group. The class will focus on the group process and will discuss diversity within groups as well as the many challenges a group leader may face. The class will also present models of effective group practice. All CAC required classes seek to enhance the ability of the counselor to offer treatment services in a manner that respects gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural, familial, systemic and socioeconomic diversity.

Course Content

- a. History, effectiveness, models, and types of groups in addictions treatment **DEFINITIONS OF CO-OCCURRING DISORDERS RELEVANT TO THIS CLASS**
 - i. **COMMON GROUP THERAPY** models used in substance abuse treatment (psycho-educational, skills development, cognitive-behavioral/problem-solving, and support)
 - ii. **THREE GROUP THERAPY TYPES (RELAPSE PREVENTION, TOPIC SPECIFIC, CULTURALLY SPECIFIC AND GENDER SPECIFIC GROUPS)**
- b. **INTEGRATING MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES INTO THE GROUP PROCESS**
 - i. **OVERVIEW OF MI STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES**
 - ii. **COLLABORATION: LOOKING AT PROS/CONS OF CHANGE**
 - iii. **EVOCATION - LOOKING AT THE DESIRE FOR CHANGE**
 - iv. Developing Discrepancy - looking at current situation vis a vie their ultimate goal
 - v. Stage-of-change interventions with group clients

c. GROUP STRUCTURE, CONTENT, AND PROCESS:

IDEALLY CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT OF CLIENTS IN GROUPS: MATCHING CLIENTS WITH MOTIVATIONAL LEVEL, ASSESSING CLIENT READINESS FOR GROUP, POPULATION SPECIFIC ISSUES

- i. (WOMEN, ADOLESCENTS, CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS, LEVEL OF INTERPERSONAL FUNCTIONING, IMPULSE CONTROL, AND LANGUAGE BARRIERS)
 - ii. **STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT**
 - iii. Group style and structure: Revolving membership groups typical in addiction treatment, client retention in groups, client safety in groups, group norms closed groups)
 - iv. **BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR GROUP WORK FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIALISTS IN GROUP WORK (SEE RESOURCES)**
 - v. **ETHICS OF GROUP COUNSELING AND COMMON ETHICAL ISSUES THAT ARISE IN GROUPS**
 - vi. Therapeutic factors of group from the American Group Psychotherapy Association (see Resources)
 - vii. Goal setting and service planning in groups
 - viii. Group experiential techniques (art therapy, role playing, homework assignments, letter writing, other exercises)
- d. GROUP LEADERSHIP SKILLS, STYLES, AND TECHNIQUES:**
- i. Leadership qualities--modeling behavior, ethics, flexibility, group cohesion, managing conflict, encouraging motivation, setting limits, maintaining safety, etc.
 - ii. **CO-LEADERSHIP OR CO-FACILITATION MODEL**
 - iii. **KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL COMPETENCIES FOR THE GROUP COUNSELOR**
 - iv. **GROUP LEADERSHIP STYLES**
 - v. **DIVERSITY-COMPETENT COUNSELOR IN CONTEXT OF LEADING A GROUP**

Demonstration of Competencies

Upon completion of this training class, as measured by skill demonstration and examination, the participant will be able to:

- a. Select an appropriate strategy from accepted and culturally appropriate models for group counseling with clients who have substance use disorders
- b. Demonstrate how to choose appropriate strategies for special populations in group therapy such as women and adolescents
- c. Perform the actions necessary through actual practice facilitation, to include:
 - i. Opening and closing a group
 - ii. Setting group norms and goals
 - iii. Managing group process
 - iv. Facilitating the entry of new members in an existing group, and transitioning members out of group
- d. Understand the concepts of “process” and “content,” their differences and how to move the group toward one or the other

- e. Demonstrate ability to manage difficult group behaviors as well as sensitivity to group dynamics such as crying, angry outbursts, challenge for leadership of group, etc
- f. Create an individualized progress note based on group topic and client participation in that group
- g. Demonstrate effective motivational interviewing strategies and techniques in group facilitation

Suggested References

- a. Principles for Diversity Competent Group Workers**, Association of Specialists in Group Work: <http://www.asgw.org/>
- b. Substance Abuse Treatment: Group Therapy: Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) 41**. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: www.samhsa.gov
- c. Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, Fifth Edition**: Irvin D. Yalom and Molynd Leszcz (2001).
- d. Substance Abuse Treatment and the Stages of Change: Selecting and Planning Interventions**: Gerard J. Connors, Dennis M. Donovan, and Carlo C. DiClemente (2004).
- e. Group Therapy for Substance Use Disorders: A Motivational Cognitive-Behavioral Approach**: Linda Carter Sobell and Mark B. Sobell (2011).
- g. The Group Therapy Treatment Planner**: Kim Paleg and Arthur E. Jongsma, Jr. (2005).
- h. Group Treatment for Substance Abuse: A Stages of Change Therapy Manual**: Mary Velasquez, Gaylyn Gaddy Maurer, Cathy Crouch, and Carlo C. DiClemente (2001).
- i. The Group Therapy of Substance Abuse**: David W. Brook and Henry I. Spitz (2002).
- j. Group Psychotherapy and Recovery from Addiction: Carrying the Message**: Jeffrey Roth (2004).
- m. Cognitive Therapy in Groups: Guidelines and Resources for Practice**: Michael L. Free (2008).
- n. Couples Therapy for Alcohol Use Problems: A Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment Program Workbook**: Barbara S. McCrady and Elizabeth E. Epstein (2008).
- o. Conducting Group Therapy with Addicts: A Guidebook for Professionals**: Ivan R. Elder (1990).
- p. Group Exercises for Adolescents: A Manual for Therapists**: Susan E. Carrell (2000).
- q. Group Process Made Visible: The Use of Art in Group Therapy**: Shirley Riley (2001).
- r. Enhancing Motivation for Change in Substance Abuse Treatment (TIP) 35**. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: www.samhsa.gov
- s. The Therapeutic Factors**. American Group Psychotherapy Asso. Yalom & Leszcz (2005) <http://www.agpa.org/guidelines/factorsandmechanisms.html>
- t. Learning Group Leadership: An Experiential Approach** (2nd Edition). Jeffrey Kottler & Matt Englar-Carlson (2010).
- u. Joining Together: Group Theory and Skills**. Johnson, David W and Johnson, Frank P (2013) /11E Pearson ISBN# 10: 0132678136, ISBN-13: 9780132678131

Instructor Bio

Erin Gazelka is a therapist and clinician in Denver, Colorado. Ms. Gazelka earned her Master of Arts degree in Forensic Clinical Psychology from the University of Denver in 2009. She also

earned her Juris Doctorate degree from William Mitchell College of Law in 2007 and is a licensed, inactive attorney in both Minnesota and Colorado. Ms. Gazelka is currently practicing as both a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Licensed Addiction Counselor. She has primarily practiced in the context of forensic issues for the past seven years, providing therapy and assessment services to adult offenders in the community corrections and parole systems. She has provided acute mental health care and suicide and violence risk assessment in Jefferson County Jail for six years. She has extensive experience facilitating a variety of groups and individual therapy, including inpatient and outpatient substance abuse groups. Ms. Gazelka is currently a provider for Kaiser Permanente and has helped develop and facilitate the Intensive Outpatient Program for severe and persistent mental illness at Highline Behavioral Health. Prior experience has included work as a guardian ad litem and drug treatment counselor for juveniles on probation. She also wrote proposed changes to legislation and developed curricula for teaching legal and psychological issues while working as a legal research for National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).