

February to April 2007 Anger Solutions™ Group

Canadian Mental Health Association, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

Exit Report

We began with 12 participants, and graduated 11. Attendance was maintained at 90% throughout the program. Our group consisted of 6 males and 6 females and we lost one of the males. The individual who withdrew did not offer an explanation and attempts to contact him have been fruitless. He attended the first 5 groups and did not return after that. His participation was very minimal and he appeared to be less than motivated from the start.

Referrals were primarily internal, as in they were clients of CMHA and were referred to the group by their program worker. In 2 cases, the participants were involved in the legal system and in one of the cases, funding was provided by Probation and Parole. Four of the 12 participants disclosed addiction issues, however I suspect there may have been others as well. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 – 65 years of age and we did not see any negative issues associated with this mix.

In regards to target behaviours, most of the participants reported consistent anxiety and frustration levels which impaired their happiness and positive growth. Most reported being unable to remain calm when confronted by the aggressive behaviours of others. One individual reported inappropriate contact with others when highly stressed and disclosed that with the education in regards to understanding the impacts of past experiences, this person was able to build better coping strategies.

At the final session, participants were asked if they felt they had learned anything new through this program. All but one stated they felt their behaviours had changed for the better. The one who reported the opposite was challenged by the other members and after their conversation, this individual too agreed that perhaps there has been changes. From a facilitator's perspective, I can safely state that growth was witnessed in all of the participants. In fact, two separate mental health workers within this agency, reported to me directly the shocking growth their clients have demonstrated. Both of the workers report the growth seemed very evident after about weeks 5-6.

The clients enjoyed the informality of the group and stated they found the education component to be helpful. On a few occasions, it was interesting to see how one gender was surprised by the fact that the other gender experienced similar stresses. Almost all reported not enjoying the role playing, stating they were uncomfortable. All also reported appreciating the option of active participation or not. Finally, all agreed to follow up contact with this worker and with the other participants as well, to discuss their progress and concerns. We will contact each of the participants in 1, 3, 6 and 9 months time for follow up reporting.

There was no defining moment where I saw any one person get that 'ah ha' moment, but I marveled at how eager participants were to share successes they had during the week when they practiced new skills. One person in particular informed me that she carried her workbook around with her for support. She stated that when she felt herself getting angry, she would actually pull the book out and remind herself of what she needed to try next.

Although it seems funny to hear, this person is in my opinion, our most successful graduate and even her mental health worker has commented on the incredible change in her behaviours.

Our next group will run immediately as the management of CMHA is excited by the positive results of the last group.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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