



# *Planting the Seed to Grow*

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# *Our Time Together*

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# The Origins

Who are we?

Jenna Basto



Darian Constantine Brooke Murphy



We are current Graduate students at Monmouth University in New Jersey, who are anticipating a Masters degree in 2025

Dr. Erin Nau: Professor of Social Work in Groups Course



# How did our group come to be?



It all started with a candy bar,  
and grew into something so much more...

# How our Group Became to Be

We were all attending our Practice with Groups class during the Fall 2022 semester when we were told about our semester-long project: each of us were randomly paired together into groups of four to simulate the stages of group therapy together. Our group was brought together all because of the luck of the draw with Reese's Peanut Butter Cups!

Once we formed our group for the very first time and got to know one another, it almost appeared as if the main topic of the group just came to us as we were talking about what to do. Our group felt so natural and flowed so nicely, we were invited by our own professor, Dr. Erin Nau, to present our experience in the 2023 IASWG Symposium online!



# After 2023 IASWG:

Because of our experiences in Group Work, we were each inspired to incorporate group work in our own ways, and our Senior Year Internships allowed for us to make waves in that end and enhance our skills further. Dr. Nau and the group gathered for a celebratory lunch at the beginning of our Senior Year in Fall 2023, where we were invited to, once again, present here at the IASWG, but this time, in Madrid!


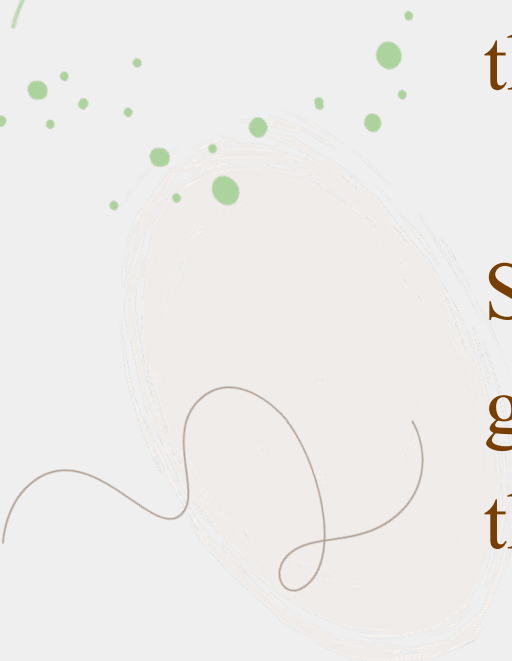
We have all grown since our last experiences, and we know it will only go further by the time we make it to Madrid. We know that this Group Work Class with Dr. Erin Nau has inspired us to incorporate group work in to our practices, has allowed for us to spread our wings in our internship, and to further our skills. With this, we would like to share the importance of a Group Work Course, because they have the chance to **PLANT THE SEED** to allow others to **GROW.**







# Class Structure

Our class is taught on the Bachelor of Social Work level during Junior/Senior Year or first year of the Master of Social Work level.



Students are randomly put into groups that they will be with for the entire semester.



Student groups work together in a task group to create role plays of groups for the population of their choice.



*Self-Care*



*Domestic Violence*

*Stress relief for college students*


*Children with divorced parents*








Student groups present beginning, middle, and end group stages.



Student groups record online group to present in person in class and an in person role play.



Activities every week to create safety in the classroom.






# Empathy, Cohesiveness, Teamwork

The importance of group work and the effectiveness it has had on all of our lives has been prominent.


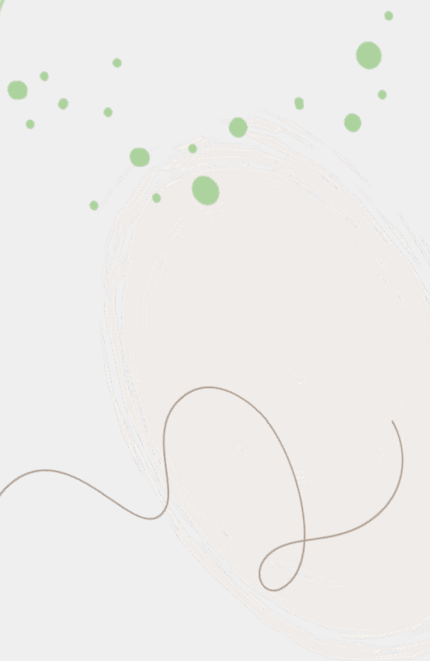
The skills that we learned, such as facilitating group discussions, were not all that the class had to offer.

What we learned doesn't just apply in therapeutic group work; it applies to the entire Social Work profession.









It is important for people to feel like they could have someone to talk to about things that they may not bring up to the people in their close circle relationships.



We want this presentation to help people see the beauty of the group dynamic and how groups work together. It isn't simply about sitting in a circle taking; it's about learning how to be vulnerable, how to care about others and how to coexist. The skills that we learned, such as facilitating group discussions, were not all that the class had to offer.



Group work is used throughout different aspects of our lives, and we have seen that transpire. The purpose of group work is to give people that safe space to talk about struggles, opinions, and things about your feelings that you may have anxieties or fears about.





# Using Components of Group work in Practicum

Practice with groups has provided students with the opportunity to utilize its material when working in their internships. While all 3 of our internships are completely different from one another, we will share how we used group work during our senior practicum.

**Jenna Basto-** Ocean Avenue Elementary

**Darian Constantine-** The Boys and Girls Club

**Brooke Murphy-** Complete Care, Skilled Nursing Facility

# Ocean Avenue Elementary School

Ocean Avenue is a general education elementary school that is located in a lower socioeconomic neighborhood.

The population of this school experience a variety of societal issues that can interrupt there daily lives by negatively impacting there social, emotional, and physical well being.

Facilitating Groups within Ocean Ave, has opened the doors for children to express what they are experiencing.

It allowed other children to have the safe space to listen. but most importantly know that these systemic issues that they face, they are not alone.

# The Boys and Girls Club

- The Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) is an organization that provides a safe and supportive place for kids to go after school. The organization has over 5,000 locations nationwide, and they offer various programs to help children and teenagers learn new skills, do better in school, stay healthy, and build good character.
- Offer Various Groups Throughout the Day relating to different things to help youth make friends, find support in one another, and to have a safe space to share what they are going through

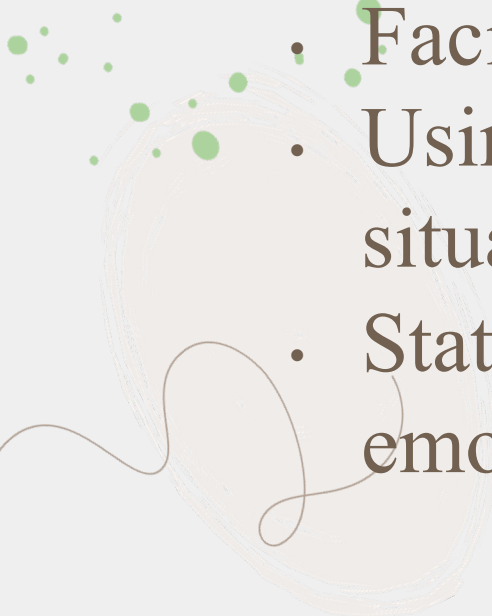

# The Boys and Girls Club

- **SMART Moves** - A group that is designed designed to help kids and teens make smart and healthy choices, and focus on emotional wellness, resolving conflict, and healthy coping mechanisms
- **SMART Girls** - Focuses on the health and well-being of girls. It provides them with guidance on topics like healthy lifestyles, personal hygiene, and self-esteem through group discussions, activities, and mentoring
- **Passport to Manhood** - Helps boys transition into responsible young men. The program covers important topics such as personal responsibility, healthy relationships, and making positive choices through interactive sessions and group activities



# Complete Care Shrewsbury



- Hearing Dr. Nau's experience facilitating a breast cancer support group provided insight to groups I would run at CC
  - Facilitating care plan meetings
  - Using silence in difficult situations
  - Stating roles and providing emotional support
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# Classroom Changes




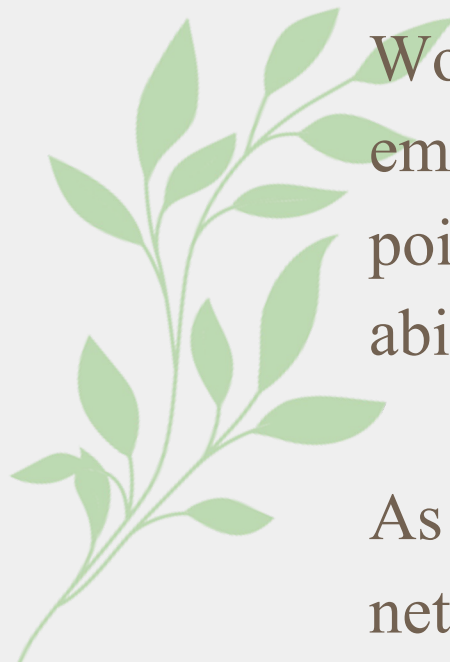
- Explicit attention to anti-racism, intersectional feminism
- Bringing in more case studies
- Encouraging students to choose a “less social-work type group”.
- One session focused on group work in communities and organizations.
- One session focused on global group work.

# Personal Effect from Group Work

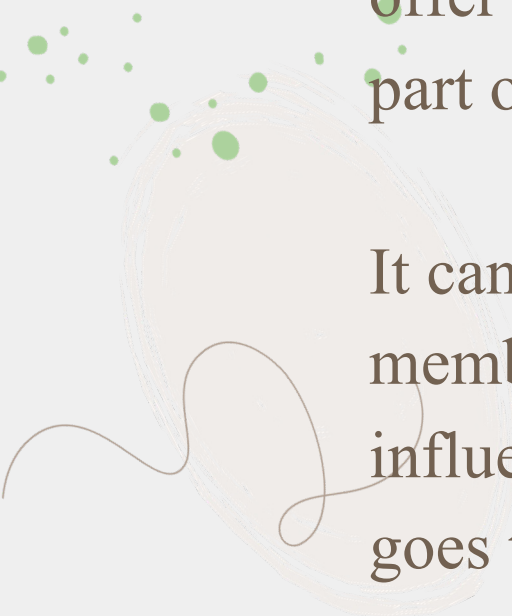


We feel deeply about the importance of creating a safe space for people to talk about struggles, opinions, and feelings such as anxiety and fear. Not only in the classroom or workforce, we have implemented the lessons of group work into our personal lives as well.


Group work has changed the way we personally de escalate situations and comfort others. It brings out skill sets that can be utilized as in resolving conflicts, interaction, and communication.



Working on issues with others develops empathy and an understanding of different points of view, which help improves our ability to communicate with others.



As seen in our group, group work can create a network of individuals who can guide you, offer emotional support, and help you feel a part of a community.



It can allow people to learn from the other members in their group, showing their influence, impact, and proving that nobody goes through their battles alone.





*Questions?*



*Thank You!*

