

## **SUBJECT: SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH GROUPS**

**SUB CODE: GSW13**

**CLASS: I MSW**

### **UNIT-4**

#### **Programme planning and skills**

#### **PROGRAM PLANNING IN SOCIAL GROUP WORK**

##### **Introduction**

In this chapter, we shall discuss the importance of program planning in social group work. It will enable us to make proper planning for our group work practice. Planning is a process of thinking about the activities required to achieve the desired goals. It is also understood as the process of thinking before the action takes place. Planned activities play an important role in social group work. practice. These planned activities are known as the program and it has been developed for the many purposes of the group. It may include attainment about improvement in members' environmental conditions, promoting a sense of achievement, sublimating and canalizing certain impulses, and actualizing problems in an ongoing social situation, etc. Therefore careful planning is expected from a worker to direct the group and enable the group member to know his/her responsibility. Program is a concept in which the entire range of group activities, interaction, and relationship very broadly conceived and includes experience individuals and groups. Social group workers implement and translate his/her knowledge into practice with the groups and achieve the desired goal through the adequate means of program planning.

##### **Program planning.**

The group achieves the goal by making adequate use of the program and these programs are organized and composition of various activities. It includes targets, set of tasks, and set of activities. Therefore deciding and planning out for a program is very much essential for the development of the group as well as the member of the group.

An important factor for program planning

A social group worker must take into account a number of factors while going for program planning and the following are some of the important factors.

##### **General Factor**

- The program must be developed or take place in accordance with the facilities and tradition of the community program must be designed to fit into the needs and requirements of the group member.
- The group worker must analyze each factor and individualize each member.
- The participation of the group member should be opened and made mandatory to all the members of the group.

- Individual factor -The program needs to include a wide range of activities, the same be adaptable to every age group of the member. As the program must be designed and depend on the basis of what the member is capable of, and it will vary according to their age, ability, motivation, and self-control.
- Group Factor -The program should be planned out looking into the group factor as the size and composition of the groups may vary according to the purpose
- Resources Factor -All the program activities need resources. It may be in the form of money and materials. Hence proper plan of the program should be developed in keeping the knowledge of the availability of the resources.

### **Principles of Program Planning.**

The effectiveness of group work largely depends upon the effectiveness of the effective implementation of the program activities. To achieve the objective of the group work a number of important principles of program planning have been developed. Let's discuss the following principles of program planning given by **Tracker (1955)**

1. The program should be developed out of the interest and needs of the members.
2. The program should be taken into accounts such as group size, age, cultural background, and economic differences.
3. The program should be designed to provide individual experience and opportunities which they voluntarily choose and pursue because of the inherent values in it.
4. The program should be flexible and should satisfy various needs of the members and to create a maximum number of opportunities to participate.
5. The transition of the program should be developed from simple to complex and from person to group and from group to community resulting in the group growth and greater social significance.

P.D Mishra has highlighted principles in his book **Social Work Philosophy and Methods**  
The following are the principles in program planning for our reference.

1. Participation in activity depends on the rewards
2. Group work and employee energy on the felt problem
3. Leadership is by the team.
4. Membership should be based on willingness to work not on ideology.
5. The activity should be problem-centered
6. Group members should plan their own program
7. All decisions are subject to revision as a result of taking action
8. There should be definite rules and regulations of the group activities.
9. The group should be formed on the basis of sociometric measures, maturity of interest, and the needs of the individuals.

### **Conclusion**

The above outline shows how it is important for the development of programs to achieve the objective of group work. And the group worker must ensure to work and make a program planning under the preview of the given principles.

## **Skills of Social Group Work**

In a general sense skill means the capacity to perform activities. The Webster Dictionary defines it as “knowledge of and expertness in execution and performance”. Virginia Robinson refers to skill as “the capacity to set in motion and control a process of change in specific material in such a way that the change that takes place in the material is affected with the greatest degree of consideration for and utilization of the quality and capacity of the material”. Trecker defines methods and skill as “Methods means the purposeful use of insights and understanding based upon a body of knowledge and principles. Skill is the capacity to apply knowledge and understanding to a given situation. Jenkins has listed certain skills that are essential for a social group worker to become more productive in-group situation.

- 1) Exchanging ideas among the members freely and clearly, using language understood by everyone and with no fears of starting arguments or hurting feelings.
- 2) Examining objectively how well the group and its members are working.
- 3) Sharing the leadership jobs among the group members and show sensitivity to the feelings of all.
- 4) Accepting new ideas and new members into the group without irreparable conflict, and to disciplining the group to work toward long range objectives and profit from failures.
- 5) Thinking clearly about group problems, findings, causes and working for solutions.
- 6) Adjusting group procedures and plans to meet the feelings and the desires of the members.
- 7) Creating new jobs or committees as needed and to terminate them or the group itself, when the need is fulfilled. Phillips has enumerated the following skills of social group work.

### **1) Skill in Establishing Purposeful Relationships**

- A) 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 Analyzing the Group Situation**

- A) The group 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 as a basis for analysis and judgment.
- B) 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**

A) The group worker must be skillful in determining, interpreting, assuming and modifying his own role 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**

A) 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 a part of the working through of group or intergroup conflicts.

### **5) Skill in Programme Development**

A) 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 programs which they want as a means through which their needs may be met.

### **6) Skill in Using Agency and Community Resources**

A) The group worker must be skillful in locating and then acquainting the group with various helpful resources which can be utilized by them for program purposes

B) The group worker must be skillful in helping individual members to make use of specialized services by means of referral when they have needs which cannot be met

within the group.

### **7) Skill in Evaluation**

A) The group worker must have skill in recording the developmental 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.

Thus, the social group worker has many skills to master, but the important ones are discussed below:

within the group.

### **Skills in Building Group Cohesiveness**

The group worker must know his group members – their strengths, capacities, fears, problems and roles they can play in the group's progress. The following are the other factors the worker needs to concentrate upon in building himself within the group:

Effective rapport building with the groupmembers; to get on the same wave length with people easily and quickly

Winning the confidence and trust of people by accepting members as they are and enabling them to see the worth of every job that has to be done in the group large or small

Establishing a good working relationship, based on friendship and mutual confidence that would facilitate influence over the group members

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### **Confrontation Skills**

From handling conflicts and resistance to enthusing group members, confrontation skills could be a valuable tool for the group worker. Confrontation is the ability to clarify, examine, and

challenge behaviors to help members overcome distortions and discrepancies among behaviors, thoughts, and feelings (Egan, 2002; Toseland & Spielberg,

### **Skills of Conflict Resolution**

Conflict resolution skills are needed to smoothen out frictions within the group and also with those outside the group – inclusive of social systems. There could be several grounds for conflicts among the members. The group worker should facilitate the group to consider conflicts as a factor nourishing the group's development. Conflicts, if constructive and issue based, help the group to get a clearer vision of its goals and discover individual strengths and weaknesses. It is well known that conflicts are bound to happen; through efficient group facilitation, conflicts could be minimized and antagonistic disagreements avoided.

### **Critiquing Skills**

Constructive criticism is an important skill for the worker, for lots of learning happens while critiquing the group's progression and activities. It enables retaining the focus on the group's primary purpose. It also means appropriate questioning of the leader's inputs and interventions, contribution of members and patterns of group's functioning. Critiquing by members is healthier and many a times anticipates and prevents flaws.

### **Leadership Skills**

This is a vital skill that is disputed by researchers – is leadership a trait or a behavior? Is a leader born or made?

Despite differing views, it has been proved beyond doubt that leadership skill can be learned. However, there is no 'one size fits all' solution to mastering leadership skills.

Group leaders have to constantly remind themselves that they are working with human beings each with different viewpoints, personalities and ways of functioning.

The key skill of the leader is communicating and keeping communication channels open within the group at all times. This means the leader has to involve all members in discussions – the quiet ones, the ones who may not be comfortable talking in groups or those who can be easily silenced. The other key skills of leadership are:

Setting standards, Gate keeping, Consensus seeking,

Self understanding that leads to enhanced communiqué,

Inter-personal understanding that leads to understanding members' viewpoints,

Preventing disruptive behaviour such as diverting, blocking, dominating, silence, attention seeking, sympathy seeking etc.