

MENDELHOROWITZ.COM

GROUP THERAPY

What It Is And Why It Works



Mendel Horowitz

Individual and Group Psychotherapist
Jerusalem, Israel

050-709-4809

347-630-9731

mendelhorowitz@gmail.com

GUIDELINES

Cameras and mics will be turned on for the Q&A



1 Submit questions in the chat for the Q&A.

2 Email to receive a copy of today's slides.

3 Email any follow-up questions.

ABOUT YOU & ME

"Our feelings are the essential part of what we bring to every group: they are our humanity, our instruments of diagnosis and cure." Louis R. Ormont



1 Personal

2 Educator

3 Therapist

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING TODAY

1. How do therapy groups differ from support groups?
2. Who can benefit from therapy groups?
3. Can therapy groups help your congregants, students, or clients?
4. Are therapy groups appropriate for Orthodox Jews?
5. Are virtual groups effective?



“

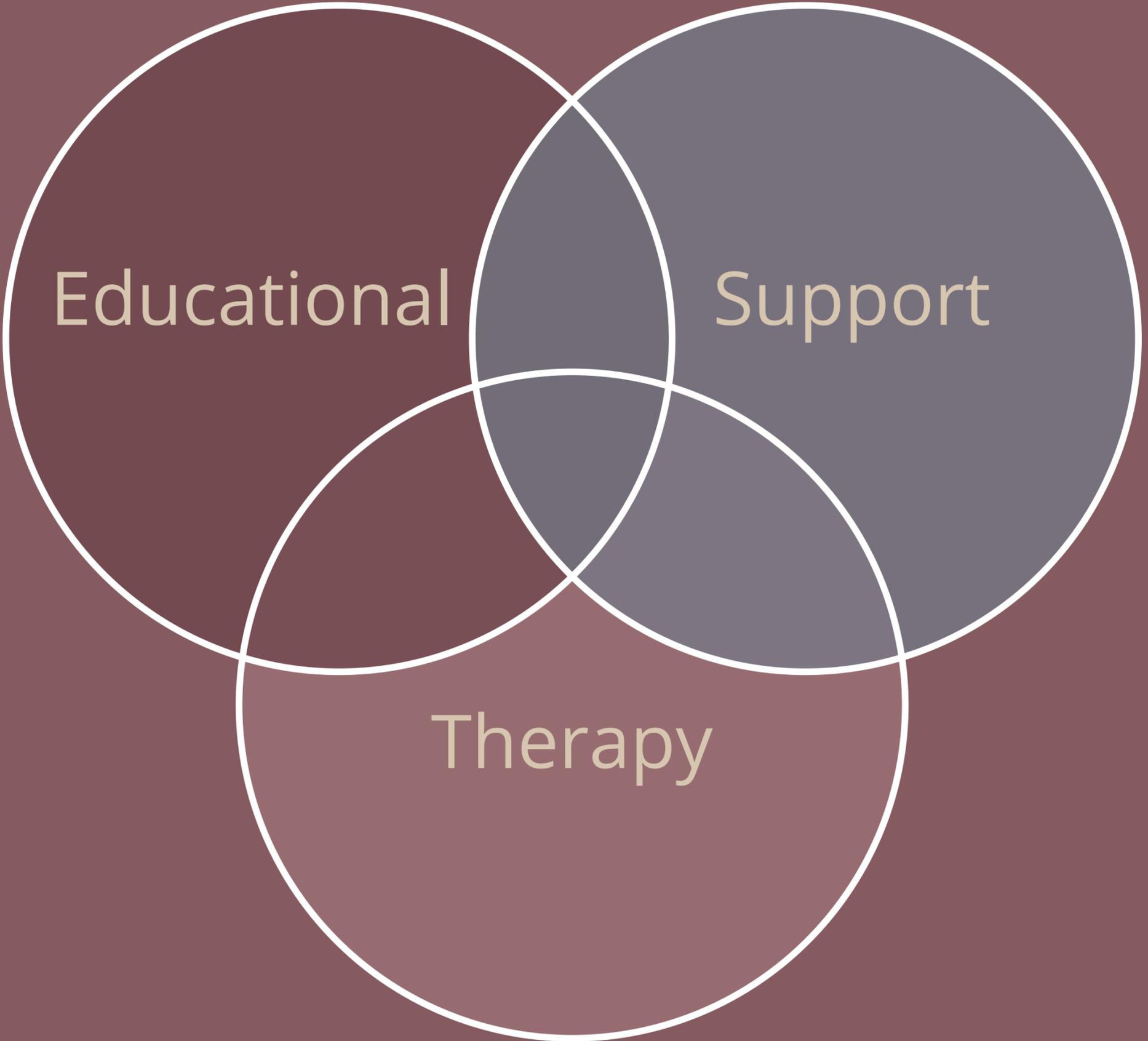
THERE IS NO HUMAN
DEED OR THOUGHT
THAT LIES FULLY
OUTSIDE THE
EXPERIENCE OF
OTHER PEOPLE.

Irvin D. Yalom

CATEGORIES OF GROUPS

Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills by Ed E. Jacobs, Christine J. Schimmel, Robert L. L. Masson, Riley L. Harvill

1. Discussion
2. Task
3. Growth and experiential
4. Self-help
5. Educational
6. Support
7. Therapy



Educational

Support

Therapy

EDUCATIONAL GROUPS

- Focus on providing education through information-sharing and the development of skills.
- Rather than allowing the group to guide the direction of sessions, a qualified leader conducts discussions and guides participants by setting goals and presenting information.

SUPPORT GROUPS

- Consist of members with something in common and meet regularly.
- Enable members to learn that other people struggle with the same problems, feel similar emotions, and think similar thoughts.
- Provide comfort, encouragement, and validation.
- Role of leader is to encourage sharing among participants.

THERAPY GROUPS

The goal of therapy groups is to help members change, while the goal of support groups is to help members cope.

- Group experts do not agree on how therapy groups should be conducted.
- Opinions vary on the role of the members, the role of the leader, the appropriate tone, and the use of theory.

EXAMPLES

EDUCATIONAL

- Parenting skills
- Assertiveness training
- Anger management
- ADHD skills
- CBT groups
- "How to..."

SUPPORT

- Chronic illness
- Infertility
- Abuse survivors
- Grief & Loss
- Divorce
- Trauma

THERAPY

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Chronic stress
- Personality disorders
- Eating disorders
- Relationships

PROCESS GROUPS

Unstructured group environment led by a therapist that focuses primarily on material that is activated in the group experience, rather than focusing on past experiences or developing skills.

- Process groups encourage participants to examine reactions and responses that emerge in the present moment.
- Participants re-experience previous dynamics that have been distressing in other relationships.
- Participants have an opportunity to examine troublesome relationship patterns and create alternative ways of interacting.

PROCESS GROUPS

Instructions:

"To make an ongoing effort to be aware of your experience in the present moment, especially your experience of the others in the room, and to be open in expressing what you notice."

**THE THERAPIST:
THREE BASIC TASKS**

- 1. Creation and maintenance of the group**
- 2. Building and maintaining a group culture**
- 3. Activation and illumination of the here-and-now**

The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy
by Irvin D. Yalom and Modyn Leszcz



Role of the therapist

1. Encourage participation of all group members
2. Observe and identify group process events
3. Attend to and acknowledge group member behavior
4. Clarify and summarize group member statements
5. Impart information in the group where necessary
6. Ask open ended questions in the group
7. Empathize with group members
8. Confront group members' behavior
9. Help group members attribute meaning to the experience
10. Help group members integrate and apply what they learn



Yalom: Therapeutic Factors

1. Altruism
2. Cohesion
3. Universality
4. Interpersonal learning
5. Guidance
6. Catharsis
7. Identification
8. Family re-enactment
9. Self-understanding
10. Installation of hope
11. Existential factors





**THE HERE
AND NOW**

**INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS OF THE INDIVIDUAL WILL
MANIFEST THEMSELVES IN THE HERE-AND-NOW**

**FIND A HERE-AND-NOW EQUIVALENT
OF THE DYSFUNCTIONAL INTERACTION**



Who can benefit from therapy groups?

WHO CAN BENEFIT?

People who join therapy groups usually want to be able to relate better with others and to feel better about themselves.

- Feeling angry or dissatisfied in relationships
- Having difficulty trusting others
- Struggling to forge meaningful relationships
- Feeling that one often has to please others
- Relying on alcohol or drugs to socialize
- Struggling to communicate needs
- Being controlling (or controlled) in relationships
- Experiencing shallow relationships
- Experiencing anxiety in social situations
- Frequently experiencing loneliness
- Manipulating others to get one's needs met
- Having trouble with self-esteem



Can therapy groups help your congregants, students, or clients?

CAN THERAPY GROUPS HELP YOUR CONGREGANTS, STUDENTS, OR CLIENTS?

By paying attention to thoughts, feelings, and reactions as they occur, group participants can:

- Notice emotional patterns and thoughts that guide behavior
- Develop greater flexibility in relationships
- Deepen empathy for others' experiences
- Adjust maladaptive behavior patterns

GROUP VS. INDIVIDUAL THERAPY

- More efficiency, resources, and viewpoints
- Feeling of commonality
- Experience of belonging
- Chance to experiment with and practice new behaviors
- Opportunity for feedback
- Opportunity for vicarious learning
- Approximation to real-life encounters
- Pressure to uphold commitments
- CONFIDENTIALITY AS MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY
- DIFFERENTIATED THERAPEUTIC ALLIANCE

GROUP + INDIVIDUAL THERAPY

- Some people benefit from continuing individual therapy while participating in group therapy to try out what they may be working on in individual therapy.
- Being in a group therapy can also help stimulate content to explore in individual therapy.



Are therapy groups appropriate for Orthodox Jews?

GROUPS FOR ORTHODOX JEWS

- Considerations:
 - Educational, Support, or Process Groups
 - Single or mixed gender
 - Homogeneous vs. Heterogeneous
- Challenges:
 - Consider personal motivations for particular religious behaviors
 - Exposure to alternative behaviors and ideas
 - Relate with "others"
 - Express conflict or attraction
 - Take responsibility for choices

PROCESS GROUPS FOR ORTHODOX JEWISH MEN

Journal Article: Interpersonal Processes in Homogeneous Group Therapy with Orthodox Jewish Men in Israel: Case Example and Clinical Application by Mendel Horowitz and Avidan Milevsky

- Contagion and amplification of resistance to discussing taboo subjects based on religious principles.
- Indirect communication and the use of first-person plural pronouns and clichés.
- The shame and loneliness associated with nonconformity to religious and cultural expectations.



Are virtual groups effective?

VIRTUAL GROUPS: RESEARCH

*Journal Article: Obstacles, Challenges, and Benefits of Online
Group Psychotherapy by Haim Weinberg*

"Research on online therapy has already shown this format's effectiveness, and the therapeutic alliance that is positively correlated with outcome seems to be achievable online as well."

VIRTUAL GROUPS: CHALLENGES

- The question of presence (eye contact)
- Distractions of home and technology
- Limited to verbal communication
- Challenging to remain focused
- Tendency to disconnect

VIRTUAL GROUPS: BENEFITS

- Convenience
- Less intimidating
- Opportunity to practice verbal communication skills

VIRTUAL GROUPS: TECHNIQUES

- Be more deliberate about promoting engagement and interaction.
 - "You're expressing an enormous amount of emotion about this person. Since you can't physically be with them, I'm going to ask you to articulate everything that you're feeling."
- Acknowledge virtual format and draw attention to its oddities.
- Be more active
 - Tell members when and why you are looking at them.
 - Ask members who they desire to sit next to, look at, or be looked at by.
 - LEARN TO EXPLOIT ZOOM FEATURES.

SUPPORT & THERAPY GROUPS FOR MEN

SEPARATION
& DIVORCE

VIRTUAL GROUP
FORMING NOW

GRIEF &
LOSS

VIRTUAL GROUP
FORMING NOW

GENERAL
PROCESS

ONGOING
VIRTUAL GROUP

NEW GROUP
FORMING NOW

ADULT VICTIMS
OF ABUSE

IN-PERSON GROUP
FORMING NOW



REFERENCES

- 1** Book: The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy by Yalom and Leszcz

- 2** Book: The Group Therapy Experience: From Theory to Practice by Louis R. Ormont

- 3** Book: Groups: Process and Practice by Corey, Corey, and Corey

- 4** Book: Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills by Jacobs, Schimmel, Masson, and Harvill

- 5** Journal Article: Obstacles, Challenges, and Benefits of Online Group Psychotherapy by Haim Weinberg

- 6** Journal Article: Interpersonal Processes in Homogeneous Group Therapy with Orthodox Jewish Men in Israel: Case Example and Clinical Application by Horowitz and Milevsky