

THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

- ❖ The therapeutic community (TC) for the treatment of drug abuse and addiction has existed for about 40 years. TCs are drug-free residential settings that use a hierarchical model with treatment stages that reflect increased levels of personal and social responsibility.
 - ❖ The goals are to effect a complete change of lifestyle, including abstinence from substances, to develop a personal honesty, responsibility and useful social skills and to eliminate antisocial attitudes and criminal behaviour .
- ❖ A therapeutic community is a treatment facility in which the community itself through self-help and mutual support is the principle for promoting personal change.
 - ❖ It is a treatment model of drug abuse and addiction that has existed for about 40 years.
 - ❖ In a therapeutic community there are drug free residential settings that use a hierarchical model with treatment stages that reflect increased level of personal and social responsibility.
 - ❖ Residents and staffs participate in the management and operation of the community , contributing to a psychologically and physically safe environment where change can occur.
 - ❖ Peer influence mediated through a variety of group processes is used to help individual learn and assimilate social norms and develop more effective social skills.
- ❖ The focus is on social , psychological and behavioral dimensions of substances use ,with use of the community to heal individuals emotionally and support the development of behavior's , attitude , and values of health living.



OBJECTIVES OF A Therapeutic Community.

- To use patient's social environment to provide a therapeutic experience for him.
- To enable the patient to be an active participant in his own care and become involved in daily activities of his own community.
- To help patient to solve problems ,plan activities and to develop the necessary rules and regulations for the community.
- To increase their independence and gain control over many of their own personal activities.
- To enable the patient to become aware of how their behavior affects others.

ELEMENTS OF TC INCLUDES:

- Free communication.
- Shared responsibility.
- Active participation.
- Involvement in decision making.
- Understanding of the roles ,responsibilities ,limitations and authorities



THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY AS A TREATMENT

MODEL

- A treatment model based on family and community.
- It is fundamentally a self-help approach which strives to sustain the main characteristics of a pro-social and positive family environment.
- This includes providing order in daily living , nurturance through physical and psychological safety , individual acceptance and encouragement conditional only upon honest participation and the transmission of healthy values.
- TC is designed to intensify life experiences that help individual learn about themselves , gain self –esteem , develop self respect ,learn about others ,foster maturity and respect for others.
- Concepts of responsibility , authority , codes of behavior are established to promote change.
- Concept of “**Act as if**” is practiced when trying to learn something about your self that is new and difficult to understand and accept.
- Delivery is through distinctive features of the therapeutic community , that is therapeutic language , community as a method ,rational authority , therapeutic community views of the disorder , recovery as well as right living.

Concepts Applied in Therapeutic Community

- **Recovery** - is gradual building or rebuilding of a new life.
- **Right living** - means to change lifestyle identity by :
- Role modeling therapeutic community values of right living are ; honesty , self –reliance, work ethic , responsible , concern , active and continuous learning.
- Abiding by community rules.
- Remaining drug free.
- Steadily participating in daily regimen of groups ,meetings, work and education functions.
- Meeting all the obligations.
- Maintain a clean physical space.
- Maintain a clean personal hygiene
- Act responsible to self , concern of others and community.
- Display socialized behavior such as civility , manners , respect and keeping agreements



Community as a method

- Individuals are taught to use the peer community to learn about themselves to change lifestyle and identity.
- Social structure and Collective learning process.
- Learning by identifying with others through participation, observation and interaction with others to change thoughts , feelings and behavior patterns.
- Behavior management and shaping tools.
- Internalization of therapeutic community culture and language.
- Hierarchical work structure and communication system.
- Open communication and personal disclosure.
- Variety of roles.
- Continual feedback from peers and staff.
- Role models.
- Peer interpersonal relationships ,Friendships and healthy family – like relationships.
- Staff ethics and self care.
- Staff roles and rational authorities.

Work as Therapy and Education

- The primary purpose of work in a therapeutic community is to reveal and address residents attitudes , values and emotional growth issues.
- **Typical characteristics addressed by work are:**
 - Personal habits.
 - Work habits.
 - Work relations.
 - Self management
 - Work values.
- **Work in TC is used to :**
 - Shape personal behavior.
 - Promote positive interpersonal relationships.
 - Create a sense of community.
 - Instill attitudes that promote right living.
 - Teach job skills.
- Social identity and Self esteem are first acquired through participation in the work.



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- Therapeutic community work roles is often their first experience with social potency and self efficacy.
- Work provide a tangible experiential basis for hope and possibility regarding there future in the world of work.
- Work in the community also represents a concrete element of change in both social and personal identity.
- **NB**-Work hierarchy of the community is integral to the functioning of the program and strengthens the peer community through transmission of values such as community mindedness , right living and recovery.
- Residents are responsible for the practical tasks that sustain the day to day operations of the community.



Value of Peer Support

- Peers as role model and peer encounter groups formed by residents who have successfully left the program are able to provide to others who are struggling is very important.
- Program will continue to welcome back those who have finished the residential stage of treatment for social ,education and support activities for example;
- Relapse prevention , outreach counselling and support other social activities.
- One of the benefits of therapeutic community treatment is that many of the staffs are in recovery and this provide a very powerful message to residents of the benefits and success of treatment.
- They are involve through volunteer as mentors to current therapeutic community members , also through training opportunities as staff members.
- **NB**-Key elements of therapeutic community model are Community as a Method , staged approach , holistic and multi dimensional approach.



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- Therapeutic community differ from other treatment approaches principally in the use of community comprising treatment staff and those in recovery as a key agent of change an approach referred to as **Community As Method**.
- Members interact in structured and unstructured ways to influence attitudes , perceptions and behavior's associated with drug use
- Individuals admitted in therapeutic community have a history of there social functioning , education , vocational skills as well as positive community and family ties that have been eroded by their substance abuse.
- Also some clients have never acquired functional life styles and its their first exposure to orderly living.
- Therefore for them recovery involves rehabilitation , Re- learning or Re- establishing healthy functioning skills and values as well as regaining physical and emotional health.

14 BASIC COMPONENTS OF A THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY

- Community separateness.
- Community environment.
- Community activities.
- Staff as community members.
- Peers as role models.
- A structured day.
- Stages of the program and phases of treatment.
- Work as therapy and education
- Instruction and repetition of therapeutic community concepts.
- Peer encounter groups.
- Awareness training.
- Emotional growth training.
- Planned duration of treatment.
- Continuance of recovery after therapeutic community program completion.

Structure and Function of Therapeutic Community

- Part of TC model is a structural board that has many job functions
- The lines of responsibility or chain of command of the structural board are clearly marked and must be followed.
- Participants are will be taught the different job functions as thoroughly as possible so they may understand how the community operates.
- Having a well run structure is critical to a successful treatment community
- One must be willing to learn all job functions , teach other members and hold one another accountable in order for the structure to function properly.
- Therapeutic community program is a positive environment for learning how to be accountable for one's choices in a caring community where members can help themselves and each other make positive changes.
- Community members focus on behavioral change , accountability , and confronting attitudes , behaviors and criminal thinking patterns , which are destructive to individuals.
- It is a place to set goals , develop discipline and practice behaviors that lead to successful living
- It is a place where you let go of a "victim mentality" and incorporate an "accountability mentality" in to all relationships.

Relapse Prevention Skills

- Help clients identify their high risk relapse factors and strategies to deal with them.
- Help clients understand relapse as a process and as an event.
- Help clients understand and deal with alcohol or drug cues as well as cravings.
- Help client understand and deal with social pressures to use substances.
- Develop and enhance a supportive social network.
- Help clients develop methods of coping with negative emotional states.
- Assess clients for psychiatric disorders and facilitate treatment if needed.
- For clients completing residential or hospital based treatment, facilitate the transition to follow up outpatient or aftercare treatment.
- Help clients learn methods to cope with cognitive distortions.
- Help clients work toward a balanced lifestyle.
- Consider the use of a pharmacological intervention as an adjunct to psychosocial treatment.
- Help clients develop a plan to manage a lapse or relapse.



Therapeutic community Treatment Staffs

- **Roles and Functions;**
- As facilitator
- A Guide.
- Counselor .
- Community manager.
- Rational authority

Staff Competencies

- Understanding and practicing the concept “Acting as If”
- Understanding program stages and the privilege system.
- Staff members serve as positive role models
- Understanding social learning verses Didactic learning.
- Maintaining accurate records.
- Understanding and facilitating the group process.
- Understanding and discouraging the “we - They ” dichotomy.
- Understanding the relationship between belonging and individuality within the community.
- Understanding and promoting self-help and mutual help.



Cardinal rules of Therapeutic Community

- Violation of a cardinal rule may result in expulsion from the program.
- If your goal is positive and permanent lifestyle change , follow rules and procedures of the program.
- No escape or attempts to escape.
- No violence or imminent threats of bodily harm.
- No possession or use of weapons.
- No possession or use of alcohol or other drugs nor refusal to submit to urinalysis testing.
- No gang –related or racially motivated activities , specifically violence , intimidation and /or recruiting.
- No sexual misconduct.



Therapeutic Community Tools

- **Pull UP** : this a verbal comment to someone to make him aware of a negative action or behavior . The proper response to pull up is to say "thank you" and then correct the behavior.
- **Talking to** :when someone has been pulled up for negative behavior and failed to correct it , the next step is talking to , the tool is used by upper structure members or staff.
- **Learning experiences** : Dr George DeLeon teaches that therapeutic communities are "environments engineered for social learning" learning experiences are given to help residents focus on problems that are caused by their behaviors and look solutions to correct them .learning experiences typically consist of three areas; Behavioral , Cognitive and Social.
- Behavioral learning experiences consist of actions to focus one's attention on what is causing problems.
- Cognitive learning experiences consist of looking at one's thinking.
- Social learning experiences consist if how one's actions affect the community.
- **Ticket** : it is a written pull up given by expeditors , department heads or senior residents . There is usually a learning experience given with a ticket to help the person correct the behavior that is causing problems .All tickets and learning experiences are approved after investigation and agreement by treatment staff.
- **Therapeutic peer reprimand** : it is used to raise an individuals awareness of negative or destructive behavior. This creates an opportunity to teach appropriate behavior that is acceptable. Therapeutic peer reprimands can be conducted in front of the community or in a room with a panel and counselor.



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- **Ban contract** : Two people who feed into each other's negativity might be banned from hanging out together for a period of time.
- **Glue contract** : this is a contract used when two clients would benefit from knowing each other at a deeper level . This contract is used to help clients gain insight into each other's culture or belief systems.
- **Encounter slip** : used to get someone in your encounter group to encounter another member about his behavior or to determine how another member is doing in the program. Encountering is done out of care and concern to help the community member and the community.
- **Encounter groups** : this includes both encounter process and special groups. This group is considered the heartbeat of a therapeutic community. Many residents' behavior changes are the direct result of the interactions experienced in these groups.
- **Act As If** : if a person acts a certain way long enough , he will begin to feel that way and will change his attitude or behavior in that



ADVANTAGES OF THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY

- Patient develops harmonious relationships with other members of the community.
- Gains self –confidence.
- Develops leadership skills.
- Learns to understand and solve problems of self and others.
- Becomes socio-centric.
- Learns to live and think collectively with the members of the community.
- It provides opportunity to participate in the formulation of hospital rules and regulations that affect patient's personal liberties like bedtime, meal time, weekend permission, control of radio or T.V, social activities , late night privileges.



DISADVANTAGES OF THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY

- Role blurring between staff and patient
- Group responsibility can easily become nobody's responsibility
- Individual needs and concerns may not be met
- Patient find the transition to community difficult

ROLE OF THE NURSE

- Providing and maintaining a safe and conflict free environment through role modelling and group leadership
- Sharing of responsibilities with patient
- Encouraging patient to participate in decision making functions
- Assisting patients to assume leadership roles
- Giving feedback
- Carrying out supervisory functions