

Ten Considerations for Facilitating Recovery Action and Progress Groups

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1. The facilitator's job is to: a) model the relationship enhancement skills (OARSI), b) evoke participant goals, tasks, plans and self-assessments, and c) manage a safe and respectful environment for intentional relationship-enhancing conversations.
2. Open vs closed? Consider the advantages and disadvantages of each. Maybe do both!
3. Size matters! Limit groups to 10 participants for a 60 minute group with one facilitator. Subdivide and separate larger groups within the group room and float between the groups.
4. Frequency: If group meets more than once a week, as in residential or intensive outpatient settings, consider administering the Outcome Rating Scale (ORS) and Group Session Rating Scale (GSRS) during different day's sessions, i.e., ORS at the beginning of the first group of the week and GSRS at the end of the last group.
5. Make the ORS available before group - encourages participants to complete the scale before the group starts. If these materials are available, don't be late because group will likely start without you!
6. Name tags or tents are essential! Help everyone learn and use each other's names. Also provides a place for displaying individual icons, art, mottos, attendance tracking and rewards.
7. Bring to group each individual's file containing completed ORSs, Relationship Rating Scales (RRS), GSRSs, Self-Completed Overview of Recovery Experience (SCORE) Boards, Recovery Capital/WHAM Plans, etc. NOTE: Distribute files after new ORSs are completed.
8. Many participants like jotting down around the ORS subscale areas phrases and/or pictures representing key events of the past week. Provides a written record of events when they look back at their ORSs. Also helpful for journaling.
9. ORSs of 32+ means something is not right - a first score of 35+ is invalid. Assist with connecting the ORS sub-scale scores to actual lived experience in the last week, not how one "feels" about it now. Encourage ORS subscale score revisions when disconnects are realized or the issues for which services were sought are not taken into considered. NOTE: prevent using rulers while making subscale marks on the ORS or S/RRS.
10. Review ORS and GSRS data during regular performance support sessions with your supervisor. Identify who is not making progress and/or at risk of dropping out and discuss potential alternatives. Performance support facilitates your immediately experienced and cumulative career growth plus program continuous quality and outcome improvement.

