Overcoming Trauma in a Group Therapy Setting

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Synopsis

- After her parents are murdered, Jayden moves in with her aunt and uncle and their two children.
- After receiving an ultimatum, Jayden must attend group therapy sessions.
- Through group therapy, Jayden learns how to deal with the trauma she experienced.
“Recovery can take place only in the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation”
(Herman 133)
Symptoms of PTSD

- Hyperarousal
- Intrusion
- Constriction
“According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, more than half of young people diagnosed with PTSD will later develop substance abuse problems” (Bougard et al. 196)
Turning the Tides©

- Consisted of 12 sessions ranging from 60-90 minutes
- Based on Judith Herman’s three-stage model of trauma recovery and on Skills Training in Affective and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR)
- Purpose was “to design a safe, confidential environment to help female adolescents cope with overwhelming feelings and trauma related stress” (Bougard et al. 198)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Welcome &amp; Self-reflection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOALS:</strong></td>
<td>Encourage patients to begin to reflect upon their sense of self, their comfort level with the group as well as provide an overview of the group content, ground rules, and process.</td>
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<td><strong>ACTIVITY:</strong></td>
<td>As a group patients decide on ground rules for group (confidentiality, respect, etc.) Individually, patients write a letter to themselves describing something they want to change/let go of/heal from in their life.</td>
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<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Safety—Coping skills</td>
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<td><strong>GOALS:</strong></td>
<td>Review the stages of healing with an emphasis on safety as the most important step in treatment. Discuss and teach new ways to be safe, utilize coping skills.</td>
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<td><strong>ACTIVITY:</strong></td>
<td>Patients choose safe coping skills from a list provided or can create their own. Patients use these to create a collage or something creative (index cards, bookmarks, etc.)</td>
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</tbody>
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**Table 1. Turning the Tides© Session Content and Activities**
Character Guide

- LilyPad (group leader)
- Pinnacle (Jayden)
- Reflection (Wes)
- DBB (Death by Boredom)
- Green Eyes
- Pandora
Conclusion

- Implemented the effects of Jayden’s PTSD
- Implemented the idea of a curriculum
- Implemented an activity based on the curriculum
Works Cited
