Effective Evaluations

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Nature and Design of Your Evaluation

• What are the goals?
• What type of evaluation are you planning to conduct?
• Will you use a snapshot, pre-post, or maybe a longitudinal design?
• Who is the evaluation “for”?
• How will you share the results?
• Are there any publication plans?
Evaluation results can be used for...

- Documenting the outcomes of support group participants
- Reporting on the process of the group
- Measuring participant satisfaction
- Quality improvement
- Identifying gaps in group activities
- Providing evidence to funding agencies
- Collecting data for research that can inform the field about the effectiveness of self-help and peer support
Turning Knowledge into Power for DBSA & its Members
Process Versus Outcome Evaluation

• OUTCOME: A status individuals achieve after receiving services & supports
  - hopefulness
  - knowledge
  - skills

• PROCESS: Information describing what goes on at the group, who attends, who leads
  - # group participants
  - average group attendance
  - # of years of experience of group leaders
Reasons to Evaluate Your Support Group

- **Measure level of group member satisfaction**
  - Would participants recommend your program to others?

- **Document your group’s outcomes**
  - What % of your group members feel they are recovering from their mood disorder?

- **Measure degree of change experienced by group members**
  - Do group members feel more hopeful after participating for 6 months?

- **Identifying gaps in group activities (needs assessment)**
  - Do members want more info on specific topics, more advocacy involvement, different kinds of support?

- **Evidence for funding agencies**
  - Do participants change in positive ways over time? How many people are served?

- **Research to inform the field**
  - What aspects of peer support are critical?
Things to Consider in Designing Your Evaluation

• Who will complete the survey?
  – e.g., new group members, old ones, ex-members?

• How will you distribute it?
  – e.g., at group meetings, by mail, at conferences?

• How will you collect the completed surveys?
  – e.g., in person, return mail?

• How will you ensure confidentiality & privacy?
  – e.g., will you protect anonymity & voluntary nature?

• How will you analyze the survey data?
  – e.g., will you do it yourself, can others help, is some research assistance available?

• What will you do with the results?
  – e.g., who will you share them with and how?
DBSA Support Group Quality Survey

Why Choose It?

• Ready to use
• Administration guide is available
• Easy to link survey results to quality improvement activities you can engage in
• Can use it to compare 1 DBSA group with another, or groups in one region of the state with those in another region
• Collects information regarding logistics, reasons for attending, outcomes & process
DBSA Support Group Quality Survey – Suggestions for Use

• Add a question to measure exposure to the group (short vs. long-term members may differ in their satisfaction, needs, etc.)
• Consider rewording #5 (you don’t “meet” a “reason”) as…
  Do you feel the group is meeting the needs you checked above?
• Reformat the answer choices in #6
  Separate the response choices to be circled
• Add a phrase to #7
  “…to improve your experience in the group?”
• Add questions if you like – but only if there is a good rationale
• Use the excellent Administration Guide-Using the DBSA Support Group Quality Survey
Other Support Group Evaluation
Surveys You Can Use

• **Maton Support Group Assessment Scale** measures
  – Support group members receive from one another (Support Received), items 1-4
  – Support group members provide to another (Support Provided), are items 5-8
  – Personal relationships formed (Friendship Development), items 10-14
  – Whether different group members take on different roles, such as leader, information specialist, (Role Differentiation), items 15-19
  – Satisfaction with the group (Group Satisfaction), items 20-24

• **Attkisson Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ)** measures
  – Global satisfaction with a service or support using a brief set of questions that allow comparison with more traditional services
Why Use the CSQ or the Maton Scales?

• They are valid and reliable instruments that have been rigorously tested
• They have been tested in mental health & non-MH support groups
• Published results allow you to compare your support group with other support groups
• Enhanced perception of evaluation “legitimacy”
• Enhanced ability to analyze data & publish results
A Word About Data Analysis

Some Ways to Analyze Data

- Simple counts, proportions, or averages (total # served, % satisfied, average attendance)
- Scale scores computed according to instructions (What is the individual’s level of support received versus level of support provided?)
- T-tests to compare individuals at different time points (Does a person’s level of support received increase over time as he/she participates in the group?)
- Chi square to examine relationships between two variables (Are women more likely than men to feel supported?)
When Selecting Evaluation Instruments, Consider...

- Group members’ background
- Your available resources
- What you want to measure
- Nature & design of your evaluation
Know Your Group Members

*Important aspects to consider:*
- ✓ reading level
- ✓ education level
- ✓ cultural background
- ✓ language spoken

*Also keep in mind:*
- ✓ subject burden (# and difficulty of questions)
- ✓ acceptability to respondents (what will they get out of this?)
Know what you are measuring

• Is it process, outcome, unmet needs?
• Is it a value, attitude, behavior, or something else?
• Can it be summarized numerically (e.g., # of friends made among group members)?
• Is it best measured with a measure using open-ended or forced-choice items?
• What group member changes do you want to capture?
• Which group members are you targeting (i.e., new, old, or former)?
Mental Health Research Measures: Common Constructs

• Recovery
• Self-esteem
• Coping mastery
• Empowerment
• Hopefulness
• Quality of life
• Symptoms (depression, anxiety)
• Social support
• Stigma
• Knowledge about mood disorders & treatments
• Satisfaction with supports & services
Measures of Recovery

• Recovery Assessment Scale (Giffort et al., 1995)
• Recovery Self-Assessment Scale (O’Connell et al., 2005)
Measures of Coping Mastery/Self-Esteem

- Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)
- Coping Mastery Scale (Pearlin et al., 1978)
- The Brief Cope (Carver, 1997)
- Collective Self-Esteem Scale (Luhtanen et al., 1992)
Measures of Empowerment

- Empowerment Decision-Making Scale (Rogers et al., 1997)
- The Personal Empowerment Scale (Segal, et al., 1995)
- The Mutual Empowerment Scale (Neese-Todd & Weinberg, 1992)
Measures of Hopefulness

- The Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991)
- The Hopelessness Scale (Beck et al., 1974)
Measures of Quality of Life

• The World Health Organization (WHO) Quality of Life assessment (Harper et al., 1998).

• The Quality of Life Scale (Lehman, 1983).
Psychiatric Symptom Measures

- Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis, 1993)
- Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (Overall, 1962)
- Positive and Negative Symptom Scale (Kay et al., 1987)
- Hamilton Self-Rating Depression Scale (Hamilton, 1960)
- Hamilton Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (Hamilton, 1959)
- Centers for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977)
Measures of Social Support

- The Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey (Sherbourne & Stewart et al, 1991)
- The Arizona Social Support Interview Schedule (Bererra, 1980)
- The Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire (Norbeck, 1982)
Measures of Stigma

- Stigma Scale (Nuehring, 1979)
- Stigma Scale (Corrigan et al., 2004)
Measures of Support/Service Satisfaction

- Client Satisfaction Scale (Atkisson et al., 1982)
- Support Group Assessment Scale (Maton et al., 1989)
- Self-help Agency Satisfaction Scale (Segal et al., 2000)
Tips for Getting Started with Your Evaluation

• Start small
• Keep it manageable
• Use DBSA-designed tools first
• Make sure there is a good reason for every question you ask
• Get everyone’s buy-in before beginning
• Be sensitive to your group members’ needs & feelings
• Congratulate yourself for taking this important step toward improving your group!
Useful Websites for Identifying Evaluation Measures

- Social-Personality Psychology Questionnaire Instrument Compendium (QIC)
  [http://www.hs.ttu.edu/research/reifman/qic.htm](http://www.hs.ttu.edu/research/reifman/qic.htm)
- University of Texas at Austin, Tests and Assessments Research Guide
  [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/subject/ss/psyc/test.html](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/subject/ss/psyc/test.html)
- Tests, Measures & Scales
- Research Design and Methodology Information
Questions? Comments?