

STUDY GUIDE for the Group Validation DVD

Introduction:

Pre-meeting discussion:

It is important for the GL and Co-Leader to discuss the rituals and group norms for each GM. (certain songs, drinks, roles, etc).

Possible questions to ask Participants:

What important rituals and norms were discussed?

Did you notice how the GL and Co-Leader both took a deep breath at the same time at the end of discussion?

What was not discussed that should have been discussed?

(The fact that one GM was very hard of hearing was not mentioned. Not knowing this information made it more difficult for the GL.)

Meeting the GM before the meeting:

One interesting point to note, it is important to know how to respond to GMs who react to the Group invitation with anxiety, skepticism, unease or say that they are 'tired'. The scene with the 'quiet lady' showed how using an anchored touch gave feelings of safety and being nurtured. The new, but experienced GL reacted with empathy and at exactly the right moment.

Possible questions to ask participants:

What are other ways to respond to a GM who says, "I don't want to come to the meeting."?

What is important about meeting each GM before a group meeting?

Setting up the meeting and waiting for the last GM

There was an interesting discussion during the waiting time. One feels the expectation before the actual group begins.

Possible questions to ask participants:

What is going on here?

What is the potential danger of such a discussion before the meeting starts?

(GMs can lose their concentration, energy and ability or desire to participate in the group.)

Birth of the group:

The opening song worked well. It is interesting that the 'tired', hard of hearing woman began the second song all alone afterwards and in that moment did not seem tired at all. The issue of not hearing well is brought in as a topic very well.

Seating order: Perhaps the woman who is hard of hearing should sit directly next to the GL so that the GL can give ‘mini’ 3-word rephrasing in her ear. It seems disturbing when the Co does that.

The opening words by the Chairwoman

Possible questions to ask participants:

What are the possible reasons why GMs might say they are ‘tired’?
 What makes a good opening song?
 What are other ways of handling a person who is hard of hearing?
 What would be a better seating order for this group?

Discussion themes:

There were many discussion themes that jumped around but the summary worked very well. One must keep in mind that only 3 of the 5 GMs can hear and speak well. One of those is very dominant and critical. That is very difficult, particularly when one discusses something in depth. But that is the reality and it can work well.

Possible questions to ask participants:

What did the GL forget to do that might have made the discussion go smoother?
 (Use the topics that were brought up in the initial meetings with each GM)
 Was the discussion too long? What are the pros and cons of having a rather long discussion?
 What techniques did the GL use to manage the dominant GM?
 What else could she have done?
 What part of the discussion fell into reminiscence?
 What would have made that section more Validation?

Activity:

The instruments worked well – but the accompanying music was not well prepared. (It was good that the CD was turned off.) Here one can see once again how a very experienced GL can still create a common melody and a ‘we’ feeling in a group despite the difficulties. One important point: the group does not have to always work well the first time. One finds, over time, solutions to the problems.

Point to notice: The GL constantly uses touch with the ‘quiet woman’. She gets a short moment of attention very often. This is something we must always continue to do so that this sort of GM does not withdraw inward.

Possible questions to ask participants:

What should the GL do to prepare better for the next time?
 (Know more songs; put the CD player in a more convenient place for the Co.)
 Could this activity work at another group meeting?

Refreshments:

Here one can notice how important it is for the GL to allow short moments of silence and say nothing; then the GMs often spontaneously talk with each other. It seemed quite harmonious.

*Possible questions to ask participants:*Problem situation:

The coughing fit and necessity of taking the 'tired' woman back to her room is important to show that sometimes things don't go the way you planned. The GL changes places briefly and engages with the woman before she leaves. That was respectful. It was astounding that the woman came back and was taken back into the group.

Possible questions to ask participants:

What are some problem situations that you have had and how did you handle them?
 What are the underlying qualities of a GL that are needed in order to deal with problem situations?
 How did the GL in this group demonstration maintain the harmony in the group?

Closing:

The ending was not particularly positive but then a nice, harmonious atmosphere developed. The closing expression, "We are here for you and you are here for us" made for an excellent moment to close the meeting.

Possible questions to ask participants:

There was another discussion during the closing. What was positive about this and what are the pitfalls?

Evaluation between GL and Co:*Possible questions to ask participants:*

What can a GL gain from this evaluation for herself?

General questions that can be asked:

What topics could have been used in this group?
 Evaluate the seating order.
 What things could the GL have done to make the group better?
 What did the Co do? What could she have done more of?
 What difficult situations could you identify and how did the GL handle them?
 What are other ways of coping with such problems?
 How was music used? When could music have added more energy?