

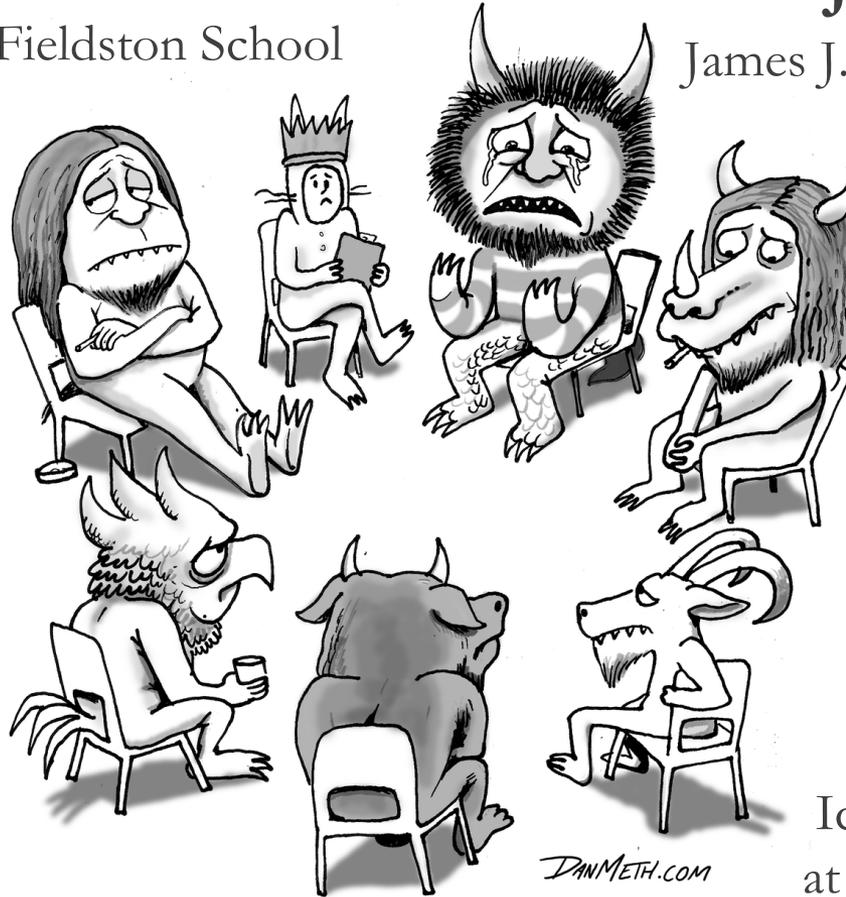
# ACT in Groups – Who We Are

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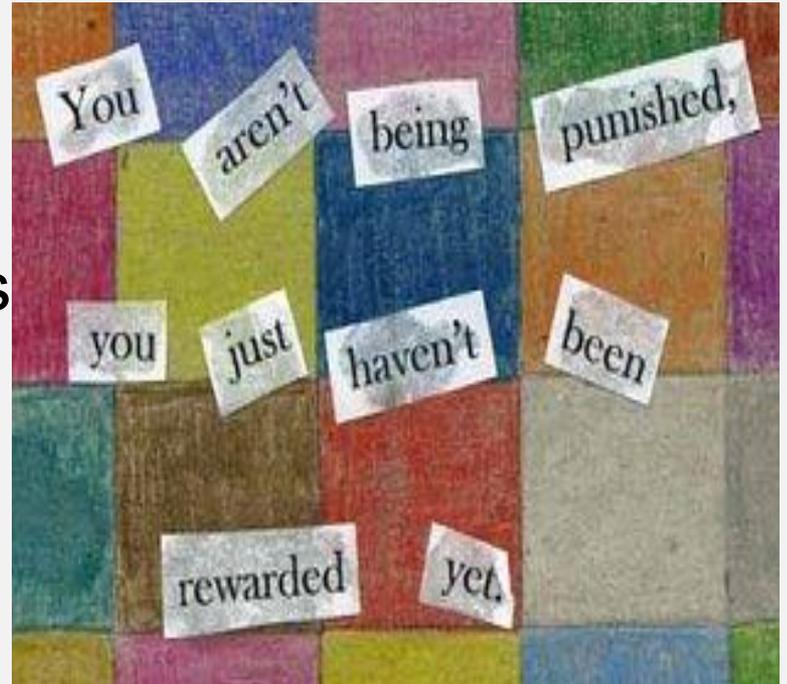
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Icahn School of Medicine  
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# Why Groups Are Rewarding Therapeutic Factors

- ◎ Universality of suffering
- ◎ More learning opportunities
- ◎ Receive peer support
- ◎ Set context for experiential exercises
- ◎ Development of socializing techniques
- ◎ What else?



# Why Groups Are Challenging

Obstacles might include:

- Time
- Space
- Cancellations (e.g. snow days)
- Attrition
- Inconsistent attendance

What else?

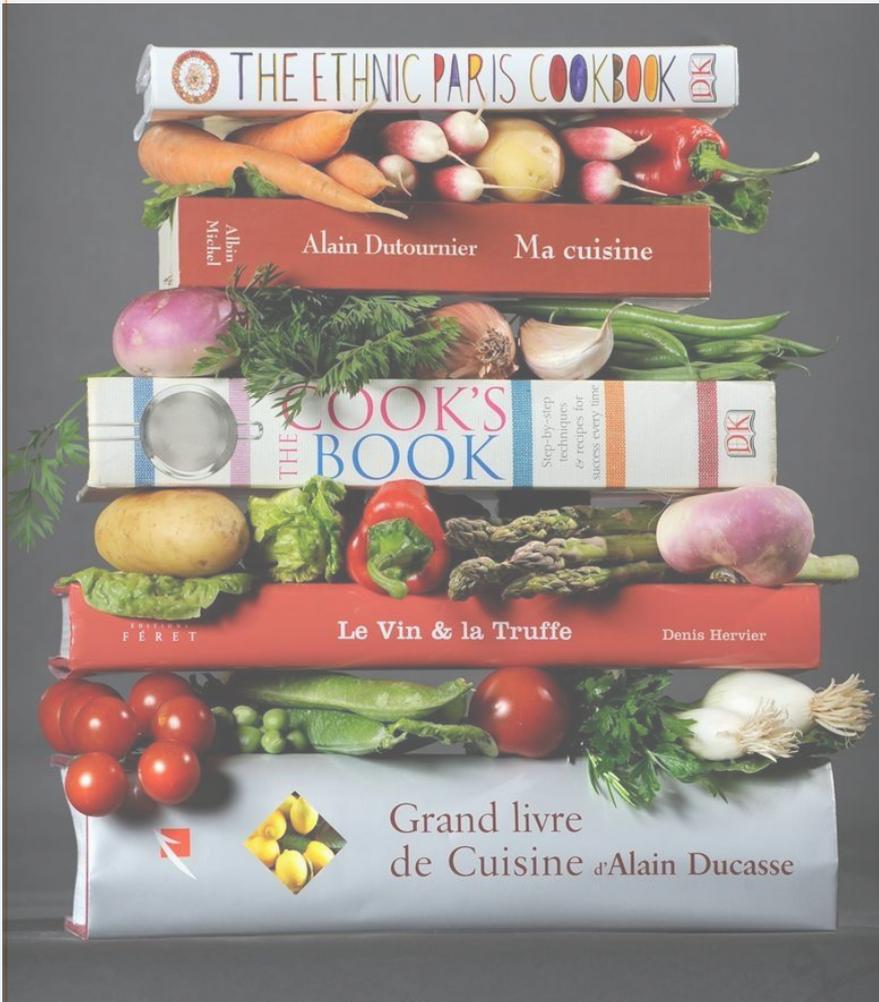
# Goals

After this workshop  
you will be able to:

- Maximize benefits of groups
- Understand the challenges  
you might encounter
- Transform those challenges into opportunities
- Commit to try new approaches to your challenges

... we would hope.

# Moving - From Protocol to Curriculum



## JEAN GEORGES AUTUMN TASTING MENU

AMUSE BOUCHE

EGG TOAST

\*\*\*

SPICY TUNA TARTAR WITH BLACK OLIVE AND CUCUMBER

\*\*\*

GOAT CHEESE ROYALE, BEET MARMALADE AND CRUSHED PISTACHIOS

\*\*\*

CRISPY SKIN BLACK SEA BASS, ROASTED BRUSSEL SPROUTS AND SPICED RED APPLE JUS

\*\*\*

POACHED LOBSTER, SAFFRON TAPIOCA, GEWURZTRAMINER FOAM

\*\*\*

MINTED RACK OF LAMB, AUTUMN MUSHROOMS, RED CURRY EMULSION

\*\*\*

AUTUMN DESSERT TASTING

CRANBERRY PARFAIT, WALNUT NOUGATINE, SOFT VANILLA MERINGUE  
SWEET POTATO SOUFFLÉ, CRANBERRIES AND MEDJOL DATES

# Check-In

Name

What type of group do you work with (or are you hoping to work with)?

# Terminal Uniqueness

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# Other Experiential

White Bear

Walking meditation

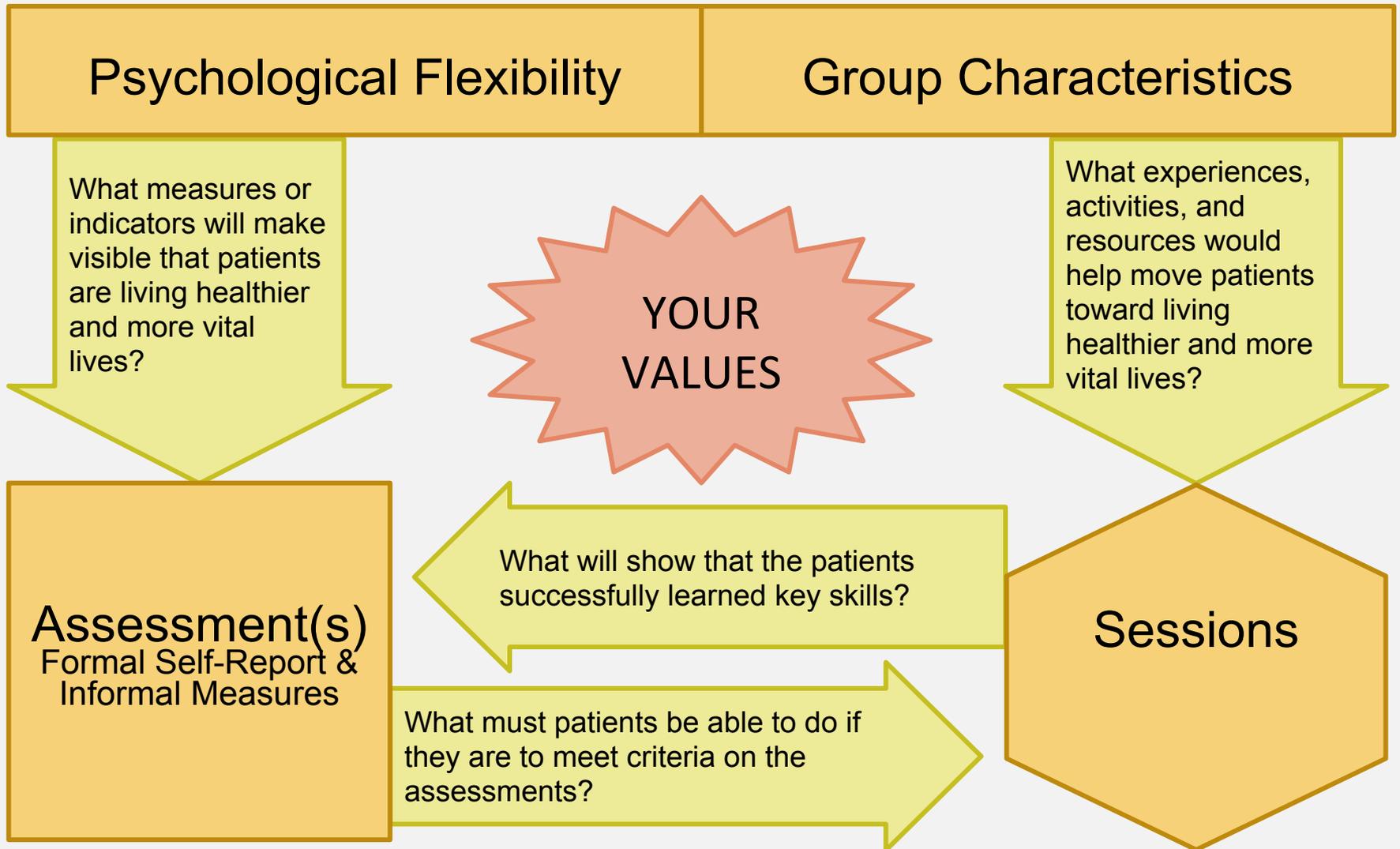
# Debrief

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# Designing a Session

- Check-in (interest & values activation)
- Experiential exercise (with increasing level of willingness over time)
- Discussion
- Session work/Homework assignment
- Check-out
- Contingency management

# Designing a Curriculum



# Obstacles as Opportunities



# It's a make-it-work moment!

Create session content per the challenge. If possible, include:

Check-in

Experiential exercise

Discussion

Session work/HW

Check-out



Image: <http://www.cardboardrepublic.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Tim-Gunn.jpg>

# The Calendar

## Examples:

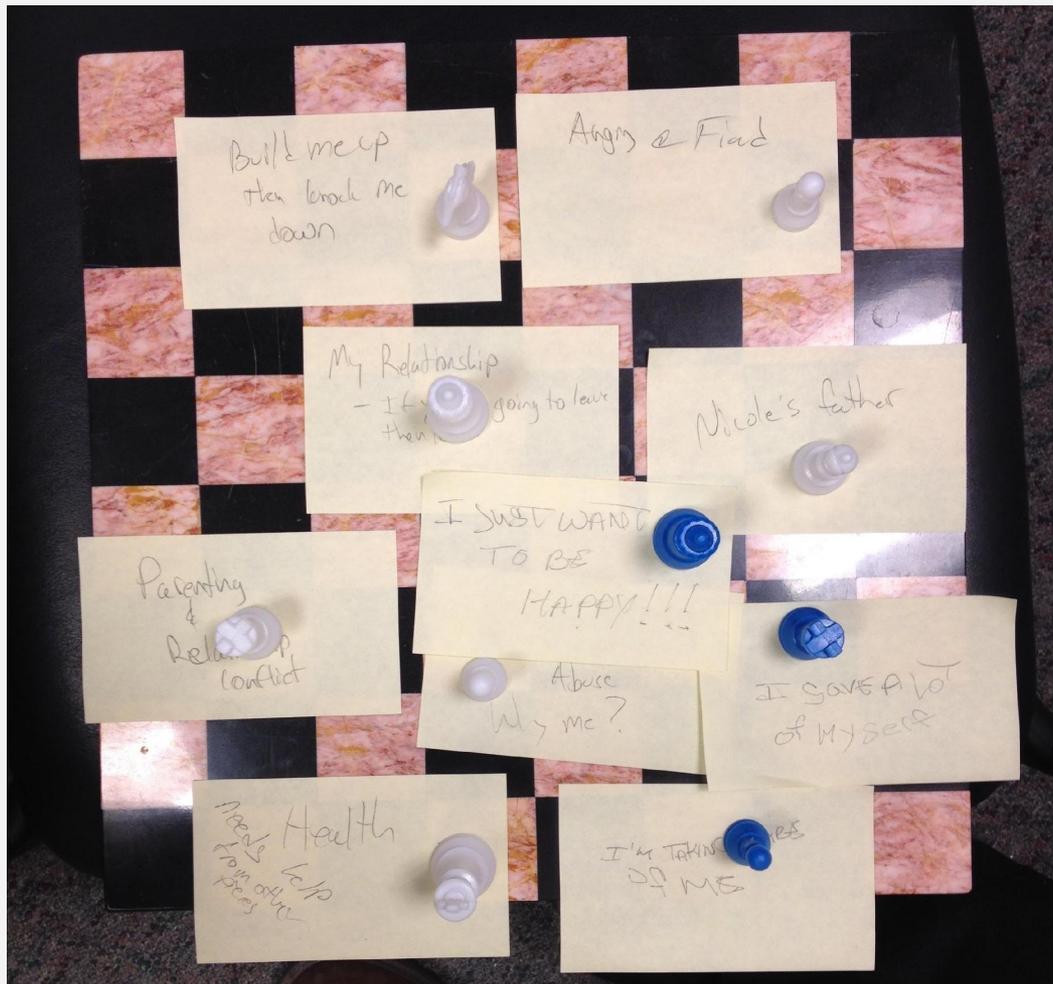
- Beginning of the month \$\$
- Fourth of July
- Father's Day

What times of month or year are difficult for your group?

# Calendar Challenge

Devise an experiential activity that makes use of the calendar in a way that is relevant and useful for your group.

# Accessibility



TABASCO



SAD  
TABASCO



RUMINATION  
MAD AT BEING  
EATED



OUTBURST  
RED DEVIL



HYPERVIGILANCE  
JAMAICAN HOT N SPICY



PROBLEMS SLEEPING  
MIND SALSA



PEOPLE TREATING ME  
LIKE I'M STUPID  
TABASCO



**What's on your plate?**



# Accessibility

## Examples:

- Plate (accessible for general population)
- Hot sauce (accessible to an individual)
- Bad essay introduction (accessible to a specific population)

What are some exercises or metaphors that don't/wouldn't work for your group?

# Making Exercises Accessible

Adapting an exercise to suit the needs and interests of the patients in the room

Replacing the chessboard with the plate

Inventing an exercise in response to the patients' interests or knowledge

Hot sauces and bad essay. Favorite Songs known to group then re-write words.

# Accessibility Challenge

Adapt a classic ACT exercise – or invent your own – to match the background, interests, and characteristics of your population.

# Creating Continuity

Do you have to eat everything on your plate?

If your struggle was a food what would it be?

What's on your plate now?

Who's doing the eating?

What's on the menu this week?  
What did you eat last week?

What tastes right to you?

# Continuity

## Examples:

- Extending the plate metaphor
- “Embrace the Shake”
- Combine two exercises to hit multiple pts

What are some exercises or metaphors that work well for your group?

# Continuity Challenge

Extend/combine an experiential exercise to hit more points on the hexaflex and create a sense of progression from one session to another.

# Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Adapting an exercise to suit the needs/interests of the patients in the room

Calendar Challenge  
Accessibility Challenge

Inventing an exercise in response to the patients' interests/knowledge

Accessibility Challenge

Hit more points on the hexaflex and create a sense of progression from one session to another

Continuity Challenge  
Blending eyes on with labels

How to handle varying levels of engagement.

What else?

# Finding Materials: Media

**Backwards Brain Bicycle**

**Passengers on the Bus-- Joe Oliver video**

**Embrace the Shake**

**Jon Kabat-Zinn Guided Meditation**

# Finding Materials

**Zen Pencils:** cartoons of inspirational quotes

**Yes Magazine:** solutions journalism

**This is Colossal:** art, design, and visual culture

**Bored Panda:** art, design and photography

**Radiolab:** science, philosophy, & human experience

**TED:** ideas worth spreading

# Using Manipulatives and Graphic Organizers

## Thoughts

“Not good enough”  
“Nobody likes me”  
“I Hate myself”  
“I’m a loser/failure”  
“I’m stupid/inadequate”  
“Better off dead”  
“SHOULD’S”  
“I’m worthless”  
“NOT FAIR”  
“It’s my fault”  
“I’M BAD”

## Feelings

Sadness  
Fear (of rejection, failure, judgment, being alone, going crazy, being harmed, losing loved ones, disappointing others)  
Anger  
Resentment  
Frustration  
Irritability  
Boredom  
Guilt  
Shame  
Loneliness  
Emptiness

## Physical Sens.

Back pain, headaches, nausea, fatigue, heart palpitations, cramps, cravings/urges, dry mouth, stiffness

## Images, Memories

Vietnam, Abuse, Rape

Work

Finances

Marital Strain

Family Conflict

Parenting concerns

VA system & providers

Trauma history

# Encouraging Punctuality

- Pick a specific time and stick to it!
- If possible avoid giving out long assessments measures at beginning of group
- Delegate roles ahead of time
- Do an activity that gets the group going
  - Mindfulness exercise
  - Video
- Contingency Mgmt only for on time arrival

# Encouraging Participation

- Managing Check-in/Check out
- Taking Risks later in group
- Support multiple levels of Engagement
  - Passengers on Bus--Acting it out vs. observing
  - Eyes on when you have an odd number
  - Labels when not everyone participates

# Supporting Trainees

- Look for something you did badly and fire yourself
- Look for opportunities for multiple exemplar training
- Give specific tasks/responsibilities
- Invite trainee to accept challenges
- Share a piece of personal content that you struggle with
- Encourage ad lib and other risk taking

# Titles or Focusing Questions

Direct attention to what's most important in the session.

Stimulate patients' interest and willingness.

Suggest a course for the session so you know what doesn't belong and what does.

Work together in a series to create a sense of continuity.

# Check-Out

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# Thank you!

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