

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Nattasuda Taephant for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling presented on April 21, 2009.

Title: The Experiences of Asian Group leaders who are Leading Groups in Asia.

Abstract approved:

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Deborah J. Rubel

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the experiences of Asian group leaders who were leading groups in Asia. This research was developed to address a need for exploratory research in the area of Asian group leaders' perceptions and experiences during the process of leading groups in Asia. Grounded theory procedures were utilized in this investigation. Six research participants from Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand participated in this research over a period of nine months. The interview data was coded and analyzed using grounded theory techniques.

Results from this research described what Asian group leaders experienced in group work practice. The major findings of this research were themes related to awareness, basic self, reflective experimentation, and cultural system. These Asian group leaders used their awareness of groups and individuals, their resources, their core beliefs, and their understanding of the cultural system as the basic materials for the reflective experimentation process. Reflective experimentation was the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups, while at the same time attempting to develop interventions which were appropriate for their group members. They overcame the challenges to their

group work practice through their motivations and inspirations. They also transferred their knowledge and experiences from training in the West to practice in Asia. The results of the reflective experimentation process resulted in both personal and professional growth and the development of culturally appropriate group interventions. Their growth and interventions concurrently impacted their awareness, their basic self, and their cultural system. Therefore, the process of reflective experimentation continued its influence as Asian group leaders continued working with groups.

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The Experiences of Asian Group Leaders who are Leading Groups in Asia

by  
Nattasuda Taephant

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Nattasuda Taephant, Author

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Introduction

After the emergence of the multicultural counseling movement, scholars began to research ways to develop culturally sensitive interventions (Bemak & Chung, 2004; DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004; Shechtman & Halevi, 2006). The aim of these interventions was to provide effective mental health services to clients from diverse cultures (Hong & Ham, 2001; Lin, 2004; Tseng, 2004). This movement was attuned with the increasing growth of racial and ethnic populations in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). For example, one of the fastest growing racial and ethnic groups was the Asian population (Kim, 2007). Based on the 2000 census, the Asian population increased by 13 % from 248.7 million to 281.4 million (U.S. Census Bureau). Therefore there was a strong need for counselors to provide effective mental health interventions to Asian clients.

One counseling modality that was often discussed as a potentially effective mental health intervention for Asian clients was group counseling. One of the basic characteristics of the Asian population is collectivism. Collectivism is a worldview that values group goals as being more important than individual goals (Oyserman, Coon, & Kimmelmeier, 2002 as cited in Williams, 2003). Thus for Asian clients a group counseling approach might be the most appropriate intervention. Even though researchers suggested that group counseling might be an appropriate treatment for Asian clients, very little research exists on its application with this specific population. Furthermore, none of existing research investigated leadership practices of Asian group leaders with Asian

groups. This dissertation was developed based on the need to develop culturally sensitive interventions, the appropriateness of using group work with clients from the Asian population, and the importance of group leaders' role in developing and delivering culturally sensitive interventions. The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the experiences of Asian group leaders while leading groups in Asia.

### *Overview of This Chapter*

This chapter begins with the researcher's personal introduction regarding the research topic. After discussion of the researcher's personal experience, the next section addresses the rationale for study. The final section covers the purpose of the study, the grand research question, and the research methodology.

### *Personal Introduction to the Research Topic*

I am a native of Thailand. I am also an international student in a doctoral program in counselor education and supervision in the United States. Prior to moving to the U.S. from Thailand I earned a Masters degree in Counseling Psychology. In my home country I taught many counseling classes, served as a group leader and participated as a member in several groups. As a group leader, I often thought about the way in which I worked with the group members. I was trained in a school that focused on how to integrate Thai culture and Buddhism into the counseling practice. As an instructor, I often pondered the following question "What is the most appropriate way to train group leaders?" During that time period and even now, I have yet to find an answer to this question.

My first year's experience in the U.S. was very important. I encountered a new culture and that engagement helped me to understand the broad meaning of culture as it

related to differences in people. As a result of this exposure, I deeply understood how important culture was to human beings. This new understanding not only influenced me on a personal level, it also impacted me on a professional level. This experience strongly encouraged me to further study group workers' integration process or the way in which integration occurred between knowledge gained from training and personal lived experiences.

When I started to explore topics for this dissertation study, the myriad of personal observations and experiences, as well as my goal to become counselor educator, led me to think I could discover something new from the field that would be useful in the process of developing culturally sensitive interventions for Asian clients.

#### Rationale for the Study

The rapid increase in the growth of culturally diverse populations (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009) led to the beginnings of the multicultural counseling movement in the counseling profession (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Researchers, counselors and others began to recognize the importance of culture in the counseling process (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). According to Logo (2006) and Pederson (2002) culture impacts each individual from birth on and affects the way people interact with other people. This is particularly true in the counseling field, which due to the nature of the counseling process relies on talking and listening (Logo; Tseng, 2004). Hence, the counseling process might result in misunderstandings between counselors and clients because of the cultural differences. Scholars also had an awareness of the strong Eurocentric bias in counseling theories and that these theories might not best serve clients from different cultures (Bemak & Chung, 2004). As a result of these and other factors

researchers and practitioners attempted to modify practices to be more culturally sensitive and to develop awareness and knowledge as it related to specific groups of clients (Bemak & Chung). The goal of the modifications was to provide effective interventions to all clients.

Regarding culturally sensitive interventions related to Asian clients, researchers were concerned that Asians tended to have lower utilization of mental health resources (Yeh & Inose, 2002). Furthermore, Asians' attitudes toward seeking assistance from professionals trained in western based psychology were not always favorable (Atkinson, Ponterotto, & Sanchez, 1984; Kuo, 2004; Ringle, 2005; Yeh & Inose; Zhang & Dixon, 2003). While some scholars focused on understanding the factors which might affect therapeutic relationships or attitudes toward counseling (Atkinson, Pontetrotto, & Sanchez; Kim, 2007; Mok, 2004; Zhang & Dixon) others scholars focused on the application of Asian culture and values in the counseling process (Chang, 2005; Hong & Ham, 2001; Lin, 2004; Tseng, 2004). An intervention that was commonly recommended for Asian clients was group counseling or therapy. Many researchers studied and advocated for the use of group therapy with Asian populations (Chung, 2004; Conyne, Wilson, Tang, & Shi, 1999; Conyne, Wilson, & Tang, 2000; Coven, 2004; Leong, Wagner, & Kim, 1995; Pope, 1999). This intervention was recommended because the principles of group work were similar in some ways to the values of collectivistic cultures (Bemak & Chung, 2004). These cultures usually focus on interdependence, mutual cooperation, collaboration, harmony, and sharing (Bemak & Chung).

While group work was often recommended for Asian populations, multicultural group work was relatively new and understudied (Greeley, Garcia, Kessler, & Gilchrest,

1992). Even if group work was considered to be a culturally appropriate intervention, the predominant group theories were still based on Western culture and might be the cause of underutilization and poor results (Bemak & Chung, 2004; DeLucia-Waack, 1996; Shechtman & Halevi, 2006). The impact of this finding upon group leadership cannot be underestimated. For example, leaders have an important role in creating a safe environment for group members to examine and explore their personal relationships and problems (DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004; Yalom, 1975). If group leaders are not culturally sensitive, it might lead to an inability to develop effective counseling relationships and early termination (Sue & Sue, 2003). An example of this type of potential issue is the emphasis on challenging and confrontation in group counseling, which might be incongruent with Asian core values which emphasize harmony in interpersonal relationships (Hong & Ham, 2001).

Scholars provided recommendations for group leaders who were interested in working in multicultural settings in either a research or practice capacity (DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004; Greeley et al., 1992; Rivera, Garrett, & Crutchfield, 2004). The general recommendations were as follows: To increase group harmony; to understand the impact of race, ethnicity, and cultural influences' on group members; and to incorporate indigenous and cultural rituals into group (DeLucia-Waack, 1996; Greeley et al., 1992). These practitioners also presented their experiences as group leaders who worked with multicultural populations, particularly Asians (For instance, Chang, 2005; Conyne et al., 2000; Conyne, Wilson, Tang, & Shi, 1999; Coven, 2004; Leong, Wagner, & Kim, 1995; Marbley, 2004; Pope, 1999). Yet none of the literature provided a systematic study of the experiences of group leaders from ethnic minority groups. Fuertes

and Gretchen (2000) suggested that the study of counselors from ethnic minority or indigenous groups who adapted counseling theory in their practice with clients from ethnic minority or indigenous groups would be very valuable.

As stated previously, the emergence of multicultural counseling influenced researchers and practitioners to become more aware of the impact of culture on counseling practice (Arredondo, Rosen, Rice, Perez, & Tovar-Gamero, 2005). As a result of the movement, researchers and practitioners made efforts to provide culturally appropriate interventions to clients. These efforts extended to the practice of group work, in particular the practice of group work with Asian populations. However, given the literature which addressed multicultural counseling, group work with Asian populations, and the group leader's role in multicultural group work, there is still a need for better understanding of culturally sensitive treatments with Asian populations, specifically as it relates to group work.

The current literature and research does not provide the information necessary to understand Asian group leaders' perceptions and experiences while they are leading groups. Moreover, no studies explored Asian group leaders' perceptions and experiences while they are leading groups in Asia. Leong and Leach (2007) suggested that to increase therapists' capabilities to service culturally diverse population it is important to enhance research efforts at the international level. Accordingly a study designed to expand the knowledge base about Asian group leaders' perceptions and experiences while working with Asian group members would benefit educators, supervisors, practitioners, and researchers. Clearly, there is a need for exploratory research in the area of Asian group leaders' perceptions and experiences about the process of leading groups in Asia. This

research attempts to fill in the gap in the literature as it relates to the practice of group leaders in Asia.

### Purpose of the Study and Grand Research Question

The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences of Asian group leaders who were leading groups in Asia. This study describes the process of Asian group leaders as they worked with groups of Asian clients within an international context. More specifically, this study provides information about ways in which knowledge and skills from training and experiences might be integrated into the practice of counseling in Asian cultures. The theory which was generated from this study might provide useful information regarding leading groups in Asia and a needed link between practice and research. The grand research question is: “What are the experiences of Asian group leaders who are leading groups in Asia?”

### Methodology

Due to the lack of literature and research related to Asian group leaders’ perceptions and experiences while leading groups, this research utilizes an exploratory research method. An exploratory study was designed to focus on the perceptions and experiences of Asian group leaders in Asia. The results from this study were intended to fill in the gaps in the knowledge base about Asian group leaders’ ability to adapt counseling theory into their practice with Asian clients. This knowledge might be valuable in developing culturally sensitive interventions with Asian clients.

This researcher used the nature of the research question as a guideline for choosing a research method. As stated earlier, the research question posed in this study is as follows: “What are the experiences of Asian group leaders who are leading groups in

Asia?” Creswell (1998) stated that qualitative research was particularly appropriate to answer questions of “How” or “What.” Therefore qualitative research methodology is appropriate for this research question. Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated, “Qualitative methods may be used to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional research methods” (p. 11). Therefore qualitative research enables the researcher to understand the experiences and perceptions of Asian group leaders who practice in Asia.

The research question in this study also focused mainly on the process of group leaders’ experiences. As Morse and Field (1995) stated, a grounded theory research design is the appropriate design for a research question that focuses on experiences over time. Based on these criteria, the researcher used grounded methods in this study. Grounded theory was utilized to gain a better understanding of the experiences and processes of Asian group leaders while they lead groups.

#### Overview of Upcoming Chapters

The remaining chapters of this dissertation progress as follows. Chapter Two provides a thorough review of the literature as it relates to multicultural group counseling and the practice of group leaders in multicultural settings. This section discusses the multicultural movement in the counseling profession and includes the American Counseling Association (ACA) Multicultural Competencies which were generated as a result of the movement (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Subsequently, there is an overview of the cultural characteristics of Asian populations, the implications for counseling Asian clients, and the use of group counseling with Asian populations. The

last section of Chapter Two is an overview of group leadership in multicultural settings and specifically, group leadership with Asian clients.

Chapter Three outlines and describes the study's methodology. There is an overview of qualitative research and its appropriateness with the research question. The following section is a discussion of the grounded theory method, including the development of a grand research question, the researcher's stance, the researcher's role, the data collection process, and data analysis. The last section concludes with a discussion of trustworthiness. Chapter Four provides results from the first round data analysis. It also presents the emerging main concepts, properties and dimensions. This chapter also includes the data triangulation, the discussion and the questions developed for the second round interview. Chapter Five presents results from the second round data analysis, the reconceptualization of main categories, the emergence of new categories, the emerging connections between categories, the data triangulation, the discussion and the questions for the third round of interviews. Chapter Six provides data from the third round of interviews, the confirmatory explanation, the connection between dimensions, the properties, and categories, the data triangulation, the discussion and member checking. Chapter Seven provides the theory and the discussion of the overall research.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This review discusses literature in the area of multicultural counseling. In addition, it covers the cultural characteristics of Asian populations, the implications of counseling with Asian clients, and group leadership in multicultural settings. The main purpose of this chapter is to present the literature that influenced this researcher's process of developing a conceptual framework (Maxwell, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

This review of the literature begins with general information related to the multicultural counseling movement and includes the ways in which the counseling profession was impacted by the institution of the ACA Multicultural Competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). The next section shifts to an overview of the cultural characteristics of Asian populations, the implications for counseling Asian clients, and the use of group counseling with Asian populations. The last section of the literature review provides an overview of group leadership in multicultural settings.

#### Multicultural Counseling

Multiculturalism has been referred to as psychology's "fourth force" (Pedersen, 2002). Scholars increased their attention to multicultural counseling as a result of the rapid changes in racial and ethnic demographics in the U.S (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). The 1990 U.S. Census Projections revealed that by the year 2000, more than one third of the population would be racial and ethnic minorities. Furthermore, by the year 2010, racial and ethnic minorities are predicted to become a numerical majority, with White Americans constituting approximately 48% of the population (Sue, Arredondo, &

McDavis, 1992). Consequently, it is logical that practitioners and researchers might need to enhance their knowledge base as it related to multicultural counseling. An enhanced multicultural knowledge base would assist in the process of counseling clients from diverse backgrounds.

To begin to understand the importance of multicultural counseling, it is critical to understand culture and its impact upon individuals. “Culture has been defined as a group of people who identify or associate with one another on the basis of some common purposes, needs, or similarities of background” (Axelson, 1993 as cited in Merchant, 2006, p. 322). Each human is born into a context of existing culture and this culture was the framework for people to learn and display their behaviors. It affects the way they encounter the world and relate with other people (Logo, 2006; Pedersen, 2002). Each cultural group may have its own distinct interpretation of reality and might offer a different perspective on the nature of people, the origin of disorders, and the standards for judging normality and abnormality, and the therapeutic approaches. Yet, people tend to not be aware of the importance of culture. As Smith, Richards, Granley, and Obiakor (2004) stated, “culture is invisible without contrast” (p.3). When people contrast their perspectives with other people, they may see the need for multiculturalism. Laungani (2005) summarized the major elements of multiculturalism as follows:

- (1) Human beings were the output of their own cultures.
- (2) Multiculturalism was not a political system.
- (3) Each culture had a unique way of acquiring the meaning of its own world(s).

- (4) Each culture was in some ways imperfect because no culture had all the answers to questions about the meaning of life.
- (5) Each culture had something of value to offer another culture and also had something of value to learn and absorb from another culture.
- (6) Each culture had a plurality of values and traditions.
- (7) The shaping process of human behavior enabled people to transcend (with limitations) their own culturally embedded boundaries.
- (8) A mixture of cultures was more likely to lead to personal growth in the areas of intellect, emotion, art, spiritual, humanitarianism, and morality.

Over the course of two decades, the question of cultural diversity has become better understood by counselors. To illustrate, counseling models often rely on the process of talking and listening (Logo, 2006; Tseng, 2004). As stated previously, the counseling process might result in miscommunication as it related to cultural differences in the relationship. Furthermore, cultural clashes might occur between the fundamental values of counseling and the values of different groups. The result of these misunderstandings between counselors and clients might lead to the inability to develop trust and support in the relationship, and may lead to early termination or ineffective treatment as well (Sue & Sue, 2003).

As stated earlier, scholars had an awareness of the strong Eurocentric bias in counseling theories and that these theories might not best serve clients from different cultures (Bemak & Chung, 2004). In response to this awareness, there has been a growing consensus that counselors should move away from stressing the problem area as being the primary focus of the relationship to identifying the demographic and social

characteristics that must be included in the process of aiding clients in their efforts (Bemak & Chung; DeLucia-Waack, 2004; Tseng, Chang, & Nishizono, 2005). Practicing multiculturalism in the counseling relationship is essential because it might increase the client retention rate and enhance treatment outcomes (Shechtman & Halevi, 2006; Smith et al., 2004).

Therefore, therapists are encouraged to modify their practices to be more culturally sensitive. Again, a major step in developing a culturally appropriate practice was the emergence of multicultural counseling. Sue and Sue (2003) defined multicultural counseling as “a helping role and process that uses modalities and defines goals consistent with the life experiences and cultural values of clients, recognized client identities to include individual, group, and universal dimensions” (Sue & Sue, p.16). Multicultural counseling refers to the preparation and practices which integrated multicultural and culture-specific awareness, understanding, and skills into counseling interactions. Multicultural counseling focuses not only on race and ethnicity, but also on gender, sexual orientation, and other populations (Arredondo, Toporek, Brown, Jones, Locke, Sanchez, & Stadler, 1996; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis 1992).

Due to the increased of emphasis on cultural sensitivity in counseling; several professional organizations addressed multicultural issues through their ethical guidelines and practice standards. Examples of this new stance include the generation of ethical standards by the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2005). The ACA also approved the Multicultural Counseling Competencies (Arredondo, 1999).

### *Multicultural Counseling Competencies*

During the early stages of the multicultural counseling movement, Thomas Parham, president of the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), called for the scholars to develop a set of multicultural counseling competencies (Arredondo, 1999). This call was answered by Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) who published “*Multicultural Counseling Competencies and Standards: A Call to the Profession.*” The book became a benchmark in the counseling profession and further aided in the process of developing the multicultural competencies. The 31 current multicultural competencies were operationalized by Arredondo, Toporek, Brown, Jones, Locke, Sanchez and Stadler in 1996. The multicultural competencies provided a framework for counselors to assist them to understand clients’ contexts which included gender, race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, abilities, age, and religion (Smith et al., 2004). The competencies focused on the following three areas: self awareness, knowledge, and skills ( Arredondo et al., 1996; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Self awareness referred to a counselor’s awareness of his or her own assumptions, expectations, values, biases, and privileges. Knowledge referred to a counselor’s understanding of culturally diverse clients’ worldviews without judgment. Finally, skills referred to a counselor’s ability to design appropriate interventions in working with culturally diverse clients (Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, & Bryant, 2007; Smith et al.; Sue & Sue, 2003; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis; Tseng, 2004; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005).

In addition to the multicultural counseling competencies, some researchers proposed the development of multicultural counseling theories. Sue, Ivey, and Pedersen

(1996), as cited in Pedersen (2002), proposed a multicultural counseling theory based on six propositions that demonstrated culture centered perspective. The six areas were described as follows:

- (1) Each Western or non-Western theory represented a different worldview.
- (2) The totality and interrelationship of client-counselor experiences and contexts must be focused in the treatment.
- (3) A counselor or client's racial/cultural identity might influence the ways in which problems were defined with either appropriate counseling goals or processes.
- (4) The ultimate goal of the culture-centered approach was to expand the repertoire of helping responses available to counselors.
- (5) Conventional roles of counseling were only some of many alternative helping roles available from other cultural contexts.
- (6) The Multicultural Counseling Theory emphasized the importance of expanding personal, family, group, and organizational consciousness in contextual orientation.

The need for multicultural counseling emerged and became a significant movement in the counseling field. Practitioners and researchers had attempted to develop knowledge related to specific groups of clients in order to provide culturally appropriate interventions. One group particularly in need of culturally appropriate interventions was people of Asian descent.

## Asian Populations and Counseling

The Asian-American population has become one of the fastest growing populations in the United States (Kim, 2007), yet research revealed that Asian people have low utilization of mental health resources (Atkinson, Ponterotto, and Sanchez, 1984). Researchers also found that Asian's attitudes toward seeking assistance from professionals trained in western-based psychology are not always favorable (Atkinson, Ponterotto, and Sanchez; Kuo, 2004, Ringle, 2005; Yeh & Inose, 2002; Zhang & Dixon, 2003). Arredondo (1999) emphasized that multicultural-competence skill development consisted of counselor awareness, the understanding of personal beliefs and attitudes, and the ability to provide ethical and culturally relevant counseling with appropriate interventions and techniques. Accordingly, practitioners who are interested in working with Asians needed to begin the process with knowledge of the Asian culture.

This section covers major cultural differences that might affect counseling relationships with Asian clients. The major cultural differences outlined in the literature are collectivistic vs. individualistic orientation, family connection, communication style, and valuing harmony. The last component of this section covers suggestions found in the literature for counselors who work with Asian clients. The reader must be aware that although the literature review discusses group differences, individual differences always exist within groups. Thus the information is only a starting point in the process of understanding culturally different clients and is not a replacement for understanding of the individual client.

The first factor is individualism and collectivism. Asian cultures are often viewed as being collectivistic cultures while Western cultures are often viewed as being

individualistic (Chung, 2004; Hong & Ham, 2001; Laungani, 2005; Yeh & Huang, 1996). Research suggested Western cultures emphasize personal responsibility, self-reliance and self-achievement (Laungani, 2004). In Western culture individual needs might override the needs of the family. This contrasts with Eastern cultures which often emphasize collective responsibility and collective achievement. In Eastern cultures individual needs are often subordinate to the needs of the family (Laungani). Collectivism is defined as a worldview based on the assumption that groups bonded and mutually obligated individuals so much that the individual often becomes simply a component of the social (Laungani; Oyserman, Coon, & Kimmelmeier, 2002 as cited in Williams, 2003). Collectivism is also characterized by a primary focus on groups with a strong orientation toward interpersonal cooperation and group interdependence. Individualism is defined as a worldview that centralizes personal goals, personal uniqueness, and personal control (Laungani; Oyserman, Coon, & Kimmelmeier, 2002 as cited in Williams). Individualism is also characterized by the primary focus on individual goals with a strong orientation toward individual autonomy and independence from the group (Oyserman, Coon, & Kimmelmeier, 2002 as cited in Williams). The connectedness in a group might affect counseling because the Asian community supports networks are very strong. Therefore Asians tend to seek help from family members, respected elders, and indigenous healing practitioners rather than outside professionals (Kim, 2007). In addition, the group-oriented value might affect the way in which counselors and clients develop therapeutic goals. Specifically, the counselor might need to consider the client's community while developing goals with the client (Kim).

The second factor is family connection. Relationships between family members are the most important relationships to Asian people. As stated earlier, Asians are often influenced by their collectivistic cultural background (Paniagua, 2005). This practice is evident in their valuing interconnectedness with family and community (Hong & Ham, 2001; Ringel, 2005). This connectedness to family might affect counseling because Asians may tend to avoid sharing their problems with people outside their family (Paniagua). Counselors should be aware of the importance of family in the lives of Asian clients. To illustrate, for an Asian person to lose his or her family support might bring a sense of shame and guilt. This sense of shame may lead to considerable anxiety and depression because the individual might feel that they were excluded from the group (Paniagua).

The third factor is communication style. Asian people often respond to the verbal communication of others by appearing quiet and passive (Wright & Lander, 2003). Paniagua (2005) suggested counselors should be aware that the silent messages communicated by Asian people might have two meanings. First, silence might be a sign of respect and politeness and might also be a sign of an individual's desire to speak after a point is made during conversation. Additionally, when some Asians use eye contact and silence it might mean that they are giving attention and respect. Secondly, they may use silence because they do not understand the conversation or the question. Counselors might learn to understand the differences between the silences by observing the nonverbal communication of their clients, checking the understanding of the question, and giving clients' time to speak after the counselor has finished his or her conversation (Paniagua).

The last factor is values; Asian core values might include compromising, mind harmony, respect for life and nature, modesty, and acceptance for all situations (Hong & Ham, 2001). These values are influenced by Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism (Hong & Ham). The common themes of these philosophies are the core of Asian cultures. “Harmony” represents the core of Asian cultures, and is integrated into the Asian way of life. Asian cultures emphasize harmony in interpersonal relationships. Open expressions of conflict or confrontation are viewed as inappropriate. When Asian people have interpersonal conflicts, they mostly work on the conflict at an intrapersonal level. For example, the phrase “Mai Pen Rai” or “Never mind” in Thai culture means that it does not matter when something unfortunate happens (House & Pinyuchon, 1998; Scorzelli & Scorzelli, 2001). This phrase reflects the belief that a person must gracefully submit to external forces beyond one’s control (Scorzelli & Scorzelli). With an understanding of Asian core values, counselors might be able to develop culturally appropriate intervention for Asian clients.

Many practitioners and researchers are already aware of the influence of cultural background and the differences between Asian clients and clients from western culture (Conyne, Wilson, & Tang, 2000; Leong, Chang, & Lee, 2007). Scholars have attempted to develop culturally sensitive interventions for Asian clients by studying therapeutic variables, reporting direct experiences from working with Asian clients, and understanding clients’ characteristics (e.g. Conyne, Wilson, & Tang; Kim, Li & Liang, 2002; Leong, Chang, & Lee; Lin, 2004; Tseng, 2004). The studies on the therapeutic process of Asian clients tended to rely on a small sample of conveniently available subjects, such as international students (Zhang & Dixon, 2003). The literature could be

divided in three main areas: client characteristics and preferences that affected the therapeutic process, specific treatments to improve working alliance, and examining clinical encounters as an intercultural interaction (Leong, Chang, & Lee). This author reviewed and summarized scholarly works on counseling Asian clients in two parts: The pre-session preparation and the in-session preparation. This summary might assist counselors who work with Asian clients to provide effective intervention to their clients.

The first part is the pre-session preparation; counselors should integrate Asian philosophy into planning interventions (Ham, 1993). Counselors should also attempt to understand Western therapeutic factors from an Eastern culture perspective. To illustrate, Ham studied the concept of empathy in Asian cultures and hypothesized that counselors needed to learn about Asian belief systems and the cognitive structures of Asian clients in order to develop cultural empathy with clients (Ham).

The second part is the in-session preparation. In the session, counselors should educate their Asian clients about the nature of psychological problems and psychotherapy because there might be a stigma regarding psychotherapy (Hong, 1993; Paniagua, 2005). Counselors should also inform their Asian clients about the duration of therapy because these clients might expect a quick solution to their mental concerns (Paniagua). Furthermore, counselors should develop culturally sensitive treatment goals. For example, Ringel (2005) suggested that the differences in developmental aims and relationships between Asian and Western cultures should be an important consideration in the formulation of treatment issues and goals. If not taken into account, these differences might affect the relational dynamics between the client and the therapist. In addition, counselors should develop a multicultural counseling style compatible with

clients' characteristics. For instance, Lin (2004) suggested that practitioners should develop a multicultural counseling style compatible with Taiwanese characteristics, such as collectivism, respect for authority, the hierarchical structure of society, emphasis on family relationships, and the harmony of interpersonal relationships.

This review of the literature also describes other attempts to develop the appropriate interventions for the Asian culture (Hong & Ham, 2001; Lin, 2004). To illustrate, most Western therapies follow a cognitive, rational approach to understand the nature and cause of problems, and how to deal with them (Hong & Ham; Lin). In contrast, some Eastern therapies stress the importance of actual experience, without cognitive understanding (Hong & Ham; Lin). For example, Morita therapy, originally called "new life experience therapy," is a unique psychotherapy developed in Japan. Morita therapy called for neurotic patients to retreat into bed rest for one or two weeks in the initial stages of therapy, then to restart and experience life without obsessive preoccupations or neurotic complexes (Sasane, 2005). Meditation therapy is another type of Eastern therapy that bypassed the cognitive approach. Meditation therapy which originated in Asia is a psychological and physical healing method that is based on purposefulness, rationality and self-healing nature of psyche (Chang, 2005).

Understanding Asian culture and how it might affect the counseling relationship and process may be helpful to counselors in developing culturally sensitive interventions for clients. One intervention that is considered by counselors to be effective is group work.

## Multicultural Group Work

Group counseling has been proven as a highly effective treatment (DeLucia-Waack, 2004). Yalom and Leszcz (2005) stated that in some cases group therapy is more effective than individual therapy, particularly when the objective of the treatment is learning about interpersonal relationships and social support. Group is one of the methods to help humans to know a full meaning of humanity (Trotzer, 2006). According to Trotzer group counseling is the development of face-to-face interpersonal networks characterized by trust, acceptance, respect, warmth, communication, and understanding. During the group process, a counselor and several clients come into contact in order to help each other confront unsatisfactory, or problem areas in the clients' life. They discover, attempt to understand, and implement ways in which to resolve problems and dissatisfactions (Trotzer, 1972 as cited in Trotzer).

Kline (2003) proposed that all group counseling and psychotherapy are multicultural because group members came from different backgrounds and each member represented the diversity in communities. Conyne (1998) stated that in our society, people function on a daily basis as members of a diverse range of groups, such as committees, neighborhoods, or personal change groups. Within the group, members bring their unique cultural identities from their cultural backgrounds, races, genders, and socioeconomic statuses.

Group work may be a culturally appropriate intervention because the principles of group work are similar to the values of collectivistic cultures which focused on interdependence, mutual cooperation, collaboration, harmony, and sharing. These fundamental concepts, found in both collectivistic cultures and group work, suggest a

natural linkage between group counseling and culturally diverse populations that are consistent with their value systems (Bemak & Chung, 2004).

Even though group work might be a culturally appropriate intervention, group practitioners need to be aware that the predominant group theories are based on Western culture, and therefore might not be a match for other cultures (Bemak & Chung, 2004; DeLucia-Waack, 1996; Shechtman & Halevi, 2006). Specifically, group practitioners need to give more attention to multicultural competencies in group work. The major concept of group therapy is to address the similarities and differences among members and to utilize both to help members learn, change, and grow. Diversity in the group also maximizes the advantages of the group (DeLucia-Waack). As stated previously, scholars have studied the process of using group counseling with specific cultural populations, such as Asian clients (e.g. Carr, Koyama, & Thiagarajan, 2003; Forsyth, 2000; Wright & Lander, 2003). Many researchers have also studied the effects of cultural differences on members' participation in a group (e.g. Ringels, 2005; Shechtman, Hiradin, & Zina, 2003; Yu & Gregg, 1993).

DeLucia-Waack (1996) identified the five inherent Eurocentric assumptions in group counseling: The individual as the focus of treatment, the importance of verbalization, the importance of unstructured interaction among members, the importance of taking risks and trying out the new behaviors and the role of the group leader.

Merchant (2006) also identified that the primary goal in group work, which is based on Western psychology, is to create an environment that promotes free exchange of thoughts and feelings about any topic. This means that the leaders value self disclosure, and verbal

and nonverbal exchanges. This value may be in conflict with Asian cultures, which generally do not value expressing feelings and direct communication.

Professional counseling associations all agree that understanding clients' culture is essential for understanding clients' behaviors. More importantly, these associations expect that therapists, including group therapists, provide services with awareness of cultural influences (Shechtman & Halevi, 2006). The Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) has developed the ASGW Best Practice Guidelines (ASGW, 1998) and the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (ASGW, 1999).

The major objective of the ASGW Best Practice Guideline and the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers is to enhance the understanding of how issues of diversity affect all aspects of group work. These areas include: training diversity competent group workers, conducting research that adds to the literature on group work with diverse populations, understanding how diversity affects group processes and dynamics; and assisting group facilitators in various settings to increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills as they relate to facilitating groups with diverse memberships (ASGW, 1999). The principles may be divided into three dimensions: group worker's self-awareness, awareness of group members' worldviews, and culturally appropriate intervention strategies as key elements in being culturally competent (ASGW).

In fact, not only are group workers expected to provide culturally sensitive group work, but counselor educators are also expected to infuse the ASGW Best Practice Guideline and Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Worker into training programs. Bemak and Chung (2004) recommended seventeen areas that counselor educators should be cognizant of while teaching group work. One area is "Maintaining an awareness of

how to modify and adapt group theory and technique so that they are compatible with the values, practices, behaviors, and belief systems in a particular culture” (p. 39). This area is congruent with the third dimension that group leaders need to understand; the ways in which to reconstruct group theory and technique in a multicultural context. Therefore, culturally competent group leaders should have the prerequisite skills necessary to modify group theory for particular cultures.

Group workers and researchers have made efforts to develop an understanding of utilizing group work with Asians (Chung, 2004; Yu & Gregg, 1993). Yu and Gregg summarized the characteristics that might affect Asians’ participation in group. The first issue is self-disclosure. Asian clients may have difficulty disclosing in group because Asians might be formalistic and reluctant to talk about themselves in public. Asian clients might also be confused by traditional group counseling approaches in which the focus is on verbalization, confrontation, conflict resolution, individuation, and autonomy. Consequently, if group practitioners are unaware of this issue, there might be a strong negative outcome.

The second issue is Asian values. Asians often value harmony and welfare of the groups in which they are members. As a consequence, Asians might feel a need for smooth relationships and harmonious living. In the context of group counseling where conflicts and challenges are frequent, albeit necessary to the process, Asian clients might struggle with this issue.

The last issue is verbal and emotional expression. Asian clients generally have lower verbal and emotional expressions when compared with Western clients (Chung, 2004). Group counselors should understand the role of silence in the Asian culture. Asian

clients' silent behavior and low level of interpersonal interactions in group may not be a sign of resistance, but may be part of the dynamic of Asian cultures.

Some researchers have suggested specific ways to apply group counseling to Asian populations (Conyne, Wilson, & Tang, 2000; Pope, 1999). Pope (1999) proposed the following ways to apply group career counseling with Asian populations and specified the issues of consideration for group practitioners in using group career counseling with Asian clients:

- (a) "To develop relevant and specific cultural information regarding local communities and clientele" (p.27).
- (b) "To not expect everyone who is born and raised in Asia to be the same or use the same definitions for even the same words" (p.27).
- (c) "To assess the levels of acculturation and identity development." (p.27).

Conyne, Wilson, & Tang (2000) presented how group work and counseling services are viewed in China as important tools for solving social problems. They also proposed the characteristic features which group practitioners should be concerned about when developing group programs.

- (a) The tendency of Asian students to adhere to authority in which the facilitator is expected to be the expert and authority and therefore would be directive and instructive.
- (b) Their tendency toward emotional containment rather than expression.
- (c) The avoidance of direct confrontation and self disclosure in maintaining either personal face or family face.
- (d) The sensitivity to obligation.

- (e) The perceptions of their role in psychoeducational groups in which their responses might be expected to be restrained and non participatory.

Coven (2004) presented the experience of leading group dream work in Taiwan with Taiwanese people. Group dream work is a type of group based on the Gestalt approach. Coven found that dream work techniques may be appropriate for Taiwanese clients because Asian people might not present their emotions directly in public, so they might feel more at ease presenting the emotions through dreams.

Understanding of group counseling in general, understanding Asian cultures, and understanding ways in which to utilize groups in Asian cultures provides a framework for considering the role of group treatment in Asia. The use of group work in Asian culture might assist in providing culturally appropriate interventions for clients. The group leader is another critical element that is necessary in the process of providing a culturally sensitive group experience to clients.

#### Group Leader's Role in Multicultural Group Work

Group leaders play a large role in producing authentic sensitive group experiences for diverse members. Trotzer (2006) defined the group leader as the person who has professional training in group work and group processes and has specific competence as a group leader. A leader who has knowledge and experiences in group work integrates professional expertise and personal commitment to help group members engage in group interactions (Trotzer).

By creating a container for the process, group leaders play an important role in creating a safe environment for individuals to examine and to explore their personal relationships and problems (DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004; Yalom, 1975). Group

leaders' efforts also affect group environment and group members' interactive skills. The environment should be supportive; each group member should be able to learn from each other (Kline, 2003). Group leaders play an important role in establishing the group dynamics and the outcomes of group members. Although the major therapeutic force comes from effective group facilitation, several group leader characteristics and behaviors are correlated with group effectiveness (Riva, Wachtel, & Lasky, 2004).

While the group leaders' tasks and techniques are important to group success, the most important basic characteristics of group leaders' success are acceptance, genuineness, and empathy (Yalom & Leszcz, 2005). These three characteristics are very important in the process of building the therapist-client relationship. More specifically, group leaders might have many techniques but they will not be effective if they do not possess the aforementioned characteristic factors (Yalom & Leszcz). In addition to these basic characteristics, Lieberman, Yalom and Miles (1973) presented four functions of group leaders: emotional stimulation, caring, meaning attribution, and executive leadership function.

- (1) The leadership function of emotional stimulation occurs when the leader is involved in the fostering of feeling expressions, revelation of personal values and beliefs, and sharing of deep emotional concerns.
- (2) The leadership function of caring is implemented by the leader's expression of warmth, acceptance, genuineness, and concern. When effective, the caring function results in group members being able to increasingly give and receive emotional support and nurturance.

- (3) In meaning attribution, leaders provide members with a cognitive understanding of the events in group. Giving names to experiences and feeling, interpreting, explaining, and clarifying are the methods utilized by leaders to give members new insight and knowledge about themselves.
- (4) With the executive leadership function, the leader set limits, suggested norms, and provided directions to the group. Leaders focus on the procedural aspects and direction in group.

Beyond these suggestions for effective group leadership, the literature also provided recommendations for leaders of multicultural groups (Bemak & Chung, 2004; DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004). Greeley et al. (1992) suggested that the main tasks of group leaders in multicultural group work are to increase group harmony by uniting the coalitions and to create an atmosphere in which multicultural dialogue and understanding are not only tolerated but encouraged. The literature also suggested that the successful group leader would not only be capable of recognizing racial identity related issues while in the midst of the group process, but would also be capable of resolving the issues while avoiding the appearance or reality of having joined any coalition.

In addition, DeLucia-Waack and Donigian (2004) suggested that cultural norms might be involved in the relationships between group leaders and members. Members from different cultures might have different conceptualizations of how the group leader should lead members. Culturally competent group leaders endeavor to increase their understanding of the impact of race, culture, and ethnicity on the development of clients who come from different cultures. They also possess an awareness of the clients'

cultural-racial-ethnic development in the counseling process. Group leaders should also consider how clients' cultural-racial backgrounds might influence their preferences for particular types of groups, approaches to group counseling and group leaders (Ivey, Pedersen, & Ivey, 2001 as cited in D'Andrea, 2004).

In the process of awareness suggested by the ASGW Best Practice Guidelines, identity development is also associated with an individual's process of exploring themselves, and this process affects how they might feel about themselves and also affects the way they interact and perceive individuals from other groups (D' Andrea, 2004; Rubel, 2006). Sue and Sue (2003) referred to five stages of the racial/identity development model which are as follows: conformity, dissonance, resistance and immersion, introspection, and integrative awareness. Individual in conformity state might completely embrace the dominant culture's beliefs and reject his or her own culture at the same time (Sue & Sue). The next stage, dissonance is characterized by conflicting messages that are inconsistent with the view of one's own culture and the dominant culture (Sue & Sue). Individuals in the resistance and immersion stage might completely embrace his or her culture's values and beliefs and reject those of the dominant culture (Sue & Sue). Individuals in the introspection stage have strong feelings associated with the previous stage and how these feelings interfere with the development of self-identity (Sue & Sue). In the last stage, integrative awareness, an individual develops his or her inner sense of security and appreciates unique aspects of their culture (Sue & Sue). Further an important idea related to the racial identity development model is that each individual's awareness and acceptance of their own social identity is different (Rubel).

When working with diverse group members, group leaders should be aware that individual cultural identity plays an important role in the interaction between group members. Group leaders should acknowledge that many goals and techniques were developed based on Eurocentric perspectives and might not be appropriate to use with clients from underrepresented groups. For example, self disclosure based on Western theory might be ineffective for Asian members. Also, Asian members might personally share if the environment is comfortable (Chung, 2004; D' Andrea, 2004; DeLucia-Waack, 2004).

DeLucia-Waack (1996) proposed the general guidelines that group leaders may use when working with members from diverse cultures:

- (1) Help group members to conceptualize problems in a cultural context.
- (2) Help group members develop their identity in the context of cultural, demographic, and personal construct.
- (3) Utilizes culture sensitive orientation.
- (4) Use both Alloplastic and Autoplastic. Alloplastic is the process of focusing on adapting oneself to social structure and Autoplastic lenses. Autoplastic is the process of working on adjusting society to better fit the needs of individual.

In addition, Rivera, Garrett, and Crutchfield (2004) made recommendations to group leaders from mainstream cultures on the ways in which to improve their leadership with group members from underrepresented groups, emphasizing the use of indigenous approaches and cultural rituals in groups.

As previously stated the group leader's main task is to increase group harmony by uniting the coalitions and to create an atmosphere in which multicultural dialogue and

understanding are not only tolerated, but encouraged (Greeley et al., 1992). The successful group leader not only possesses the capability to recognize racial-identity related issues but also is able to take explicit action toward resolving the issues.

Rubel (2006) made a recommendation for group leaders who worked with clients from diverse backgrounds. According to Rubel, it is important to focus on the pre-group planning and process goals. In planning, group leaders should be careful in examining group purposes and goals. The purpose and goals should be clear and serve diverse clients, group composition and screening, and group duration and settings. As it relates to process goals, group leaders should also evaluate and adjust each process goal to meet the needs of diverse members.

The literature provided general suggestions for leaders of multicultural groups; however, it also provided specific information for leaders of group work with Asians. Chung (2004) suggested that Asian group members might perceive group leaders as authority figures and experts. Thus group members from Asian cultures might play a passive role in group. Therefore, more highly structured and didactic approaches might be more culturally appropriate interventions for Asian group members.

Chung (2004) also suggested a way in which group leaders from different cultures might be able to work effectively with Asian clients. According to Chung it could occur through integrating the skills from Western theory and by creatively using, modifying, and altering traditional skills and techniques. For instance, Asian group members might feel uncomfortable in expressing themselves in group, group leader should create safe environment and model self disclosure.

Yu and Gregg (1993) proposed six tenets for working with Asian clients in groups.

- (1) Self exploration, group leaders should start by understanding and recognizing their biases and prejudices toward members of specific ethnic groups.
- (2) Client orientation, in the pre-group interview session, group leaders should explain to Asian client's about the expectations for group members, the purpose of group, and the roles and functions of the group leader and members.
- (3) Group Composition, culturally homogeneous groups might be appropriate and beneficial to Asian clients.
- (4) Rapport building. Group leaders should make special efforts to develop rapport with Asian clients because it might take more time to develop rapport with Asians.
- (5) Group Orientation. Group leaders should bring implicit norms to group awareness and help establish new norms that take into account cultural variability and serve all group members.
- (6) Group facilitation. Group leaders need to be aware of special circumstances and values that Asian clients bring to the group. The leaders might use the fundamental knowledge to understand clients and facilitate clients' personal growth.

The literature also provided suggestions for leaders of multicultural group work and group work with Asians, as well as, the implication of multicultural group work in research and practice. Marbley (2004) an African American researcher and group leader

suggested from direct personal experience that research and training which concentrates specifically on the roles of the culturally different practitioner in group would help to develop better effective multicultural group counseling. However this type of exploration has not occurred with Asian leaders or populations.

### Conclusion

Based on this review of the literature, the following conclusions might be drawn regarding the practice of group leaders with Asian clients in Asia: Researchers and practitioners have made efforts to provide culturally appropriate counseling interventions with Asian clients (for instance, Coven, 2004; Mok, 2003; Pope, 1999). Furthermore, these efforts have extended to the practice of group work, and in particular the practice of group work with Asian populations. The limited literature available provided some general guidelines for group leaders who were interested in working with Asian group members (Chung, 2004), Yu and Greg (1993). However, there is still no tangible research available in the area of the Asian group leaders' practicing with Asian clients.

In order to stress the need for knowledge and understanding in multicultural counseling, Leong & Leach (2007) encouraged scholars to conduct research at the international level. More specifically, a study of counselors from different ethnic minority groups who adapted counseling theory in the practice with clients from ethnic minority groups would be very valuable additions to the field of counseling as it pertains to multiculturalism, knowledge and awareness (Fuertes & Gretchen, 2000).

The review of literature provided the inspiration for the researcher to conduct research at the international level and to provide knowledge as it relates to the practice of

the group leader in Asia. This study focused on Asian group leaders' experiences while leading groups in Asia.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

After the emergence of the multicultural counseling movement scholars became aware of the growing need to enhance their knowledge base as it related to the development of culturally sensitive interventions (Bemak & Chung, 2004; DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004; Shechtman & Halevi, 2006). Even though group work was proposed as a culturally appropriate intervention for Asian clients, research about group work in Asia was still limited. Some researchers studied the use of group work in Asia, (For instance, Coven, 2004; Mok, 2004; Pope, 1999), but none of the research studied Asian group leaders' experiences while leading groups. Group leaders play an important role in creating a safe environment for group members to examine and to explore their personal relationships and problems and are, thus, important in multicultural group work (DeLucia-Waack & Donigian; Yalom, 1975). However, given the scant literature regarding multicultural counseling, group work with Asian populations and the group leader's role in multicultural group work, there is a need for greater understanding of culturally sensitive treatments, especially with the Asian population. Scholars suggested that research conducted at the international level would enhance knowledge about multicultural counseling (Fuentes & Gretchen, 2000; Leong & Leach, 2007), and in particular, Fuentes and Gretchen suggested that studying counselors from indigenous groups who adapted traditional counseling theories to clients from indigenous groups would be very valuable. The need for research conducted at the international level and the limited research conducted that regarded group leaders' experiences in leading groups

in Asia indicated the need for this study. This study focused on the experiences of Asian group leaders' who are leading groups in Asia.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology used in this study. This chapter begins with an overview of naturalistic inquiry and qualitative research. The next section presents a discussion of the grounded theory method, including the development of a grand research question, the researcher's stance, the researcher's role, the data collection process, and data analysis. The last section concludes with a discussion of trustworthiness.

### Qualitative Research

The nature of the research question should guide one's choice of a research design (Creswell, 1998). The research question for this study was "What are the experiences of Asian group leaders who are leading groups in Asia?" As Creswell stated, qualitative research is particularly appropriate to answer questions of "How" or "What." For this reason, qualitative research methodology was appropriate for this research question. Additionally, Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated, "Qualitative methods can be used to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that were difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional research methods" (p. 11). Therefore, qualitative research enabled the researcher to understand the experiences of Asian group leaders who practiced in Asia.

As Denzin & Lincoln (2005) stated, "Qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right" (p.2). Qualitative research includes the process of studying participants in their own settings, the process of learning about meanings that people make of their experiences, the process of exploring individuals as they interact with each other and

their environment, and the reporting of results in the typical language of the participants (Morrow, 2007). The process of qualitative research consists of interpretations that make the world of the participants visible. The process transforms the world into products such as field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos. Morrow described qualitative research as research that uses language as a tool. Through qualitative research, the researcher is able to experience and present meanings that would not be possible using other strategies.

After the researcher made the decision to use qualitative research for the study, the next step was selecting the research design. Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales (2007) suggested that the criteria for selecting a research design should begin with the researcher's inquiry process and philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology), how to know what is known (epistemology), inclusion of the values (axiology), the nature in which the research emerges (methodology), the writing structures (rhetorical), and the selection of an interpretive paradigm. The selection corresponds with types of research questions that help to frame different types of research design for the study. In this study, the research question was "What are the experiences of Asian group leaders who are leading groups in Asia?" This research question situated the main focus on a process. Morse & Field (1995) stated that grounded theory research design is an appropriate design for research question that focus on process or experiences over time. Based on these criteria, the researcher used the grounded method in this study.

### Grounded Theory

The term "grounded theory" refers to the method and the product of inquiry (Charmaz, 2005). Strauss & Corbin (1998) used the term "grounded theory" because they

determined that “theory that was derived from data systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process”. Grounded theory is a methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data and that is systematically gathered and analyzed. The theory evolves during the research process and is a product of continuous interplay between analysis and data collection (Goulding, 2002). Creswell et al. (2007) suggested that researchers use grounded theory methods to advance knowledge of the counseling process, multicultural counseling, and counselor education and supervision.

Grounded theory research design may be divided into two approaches, more systematic analytic procedures espoused by Strauss and Corbin (1998) or more constructivist procedures presented by Charmaz (2005). This researcher used the Strauss and Corbin approach for the reason that the systematic analytic approach seemed to fit with the rigorous method of counseling research (Creswell et al., 2007).

Strauss & Corbin (1998) developed the special coding processes, open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, for specifying the properties and dimensions of categories, as well as organizing the emerging theory in a conditional matrix that contained the precursors, contexts, intervening conditions, and consequences of core categories. Researchers begin with open coding, which is coding data for major categories of information (Creswell et al., 2007). In this stage, the researchers’ flexibility is important in the process of generating new categories of data (Pidgeon & Henwood, 2002). The details about the open coding process are discussed under the data analysis section. After open coding, the next process is axial coding. Axial coding is the process of relating categories to their subcategories (Strauss & Corbin). The purpose of axial coding is to begin the process of reassembling details that were fractured during open

coding (Strauss & Corbin). The next process is selective coding where the researchers identify one or more coding categories, called the core phenomenon, and reexamine the data or collected new data to build a model around this core phenomenon (Creswell et al.). The model can include causal conditions, what factors caused the core phenomenon, strategies, actions taken in response to the core phenomenon, contextual and intervening conditions, broad and specific factors that influenced the strategies, and outcomes from using the strategies (Creswell et al).

### Developing the Grand Research Question

The development of the grand research question is important because in the grounded theory method the grand research question frames the research and should also have provided flexibility and freedom to explore the phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In addition, the grand research question in the grounded theory method is oriented toward action and process (Strauss & Corbin). The grand research question for this study was developed due to the need for a study related to multicultural group work at the international level, the need to study indigenous group workers' adaptation of western practice to group work in their own cultures, and this researcher's professional and personal experiences. The primary purpose of this study was to explore experiences of Asian group leaders who were leading groups in Asia. Accordingly, this investigation utilized the grand research question: "What are the experiences of Asian group leaders who are leading groups in Asia?"

### Researcher's Stance

As Morrow (2007) stated it is common and desirable for qualitative researchers to present their worldviews, assumptions, and biases to the reader. These help the reader

understand the researcher's stance and help the reader address the subjectivity of qualitative research (Morrow). Therefore, I briefly outlined my particular stance.

Since I started to learn and to practice counseling, all of my experiences increased my desire to gain additional knowledge about the counseling profession. My experiences in Thailand as a counseling student, intern, counselor, and lecturer in the counseling program had also influenced my passion to seek interventions that were appropriate for Asian people. I was always fascinated by the integration of culture into peoples' lives. The most significant experience for me was my first year in the U.S. as an international doctoral student. Upon arrival I encountered a new culture, and it increased my awareness about the importance of culture. This awareness may affect my research because I believe that culture often influences the ways in which practitioners work with clients. For example, practitioners should try to adjust their knowledge and experiences to fit within their own and clients' cultural context. The goal should be to provide culturally sensitive interventions for the clients. I personally believe group leaders should develop appropriate interventions that fit with their group members, and group leaders should also integrate their cultural knowledge into their group work practice.

#### Researcher's Role

The researcher is one of the most important factors in qualitative research because qualitative research involves the researcher as an instrument for analysis (Maxwell, 2005; Pope-Davis, Toporek, Villalobos, Ligiero, Brittan Powell, Liu, Bashshur, Codrington, & Liang, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This researcher reviewed the literature regarding the role of researchers to help make this herself into an effective instrument of analysis. These roles are as follows: establishing research relationships, maintaining ethical

standards, maintaining awareness of their values in the research, and balancing between the qualities of objectivity and sensitivity when conducting the research.

#### *Establishing Research Relationships with Participants*

Relationships with participants are central to effective data gathering because participants often disclose information of vulnerable nature (Morrow, 2007). Researchers have a responsibility to negotiate research relationships with participants that are safe, trusting, and ethical (Maxwell, 2005). The process of negotiating a research relationship is complicated but important to the success of the study (Maxwell; Suzuki, Ahluwala, Arora, & Mattis, 2007). Maxwell used the terms “gaining entry”, “gaining access”, and “building rapport” to help researchers to understand research relationships.

In this study, the researcher reflected on what the participants shared. This researcher was trained as a professional counselor, so the researcher used skills and experiences to develop research relationships with the participants. An appropriate rapport was developed with clients to further establish a climate which allowed participants to share their experiences. During interviews, the researcher reflected on participants’ responses which might help participants to feel comfortable sharing their experiences.

#### *Cultural and Ethical Considerations*

Creswell (1998) identified maintenance of ethical standards as one of the researcher’s responsibilities during research. Researchers should protect participants’ rights (Morrow, 2007). Haverkamp and Young (2007) suggested that qualitative researchers help participants anticipate their reactions, insure participants consent during the research process, and stay open to the possibility for a participant to withdraw. Most

importantly, researchers have the responsibility of treating participants respectfully (Morrow). This researcher reviewed ethical guidelines based on the suggestions of Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and Christians (2005). The ethical guidelines were informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) stated that participants have a right to be informed about the nature of the research in which they are involved due to respect for human freedom. Consequently, potential participants were given information about the study and instructed to contact the researcher if they were interested in participating. Once they indicated their interest, they were contacted by the researcher and informed about the purposes, methods, and procedures of this study. Further they were informed that participation included three individual interviews, 30-45 minutes per interview. The participants were also informed that the purpose of the interviews would be to explore their experiences as group leaders who practice in Asia. They were also told that the interviews were recorded and at the completion of the transcription process those recordings would be destroyed. Potential participants were also told that the findings were to be included in the student researcher's dissertation, might be used to generate professional articles and presentations, and that any publication or presentation would not include any identifying data. The potential participants were then asked to volunteer for the study. This researcher sent an informed consent form to each volunteering participant. Participants were asked to sign the informed consent form and return it to the researcher prior to the initial interview. In the consent form, this researcher provided and discussed the following details about the purpose of this study: What would happen during the study? How long it would be? The risk involved in participating in the study? The

informed consent also discussed confidentiality and the participants' rights as human subjects, and the costs and benefits of participation. At the beginning of the interview, this researcher verified the participants' understanding of the information in the consent form. Additionally, this researcher asked participants if they wanted the researcher to clarify any points in the consent form or had any questions regarding informed consent.

The researcher must assure participants' confidentiality (Christians, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this research, the confidentiality of the subjects was protected throughout the data collection, the analysis and the write-up procedures. Names or any other identifying information were not included in data collection materials. The recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher, checked for accuracy and subsequently destroyed by this researcher. Before the beginning of the study, the researcher discussed the issue of confidentiality with the participants. All other data, such as the file recording, and transcription were labeled only with the participants' assigned numbers. No other individuals had access to the subject names and their corresponding numbers. All files were stored in password-protected computer files. Only the researcher had access to the computer files. All paper documents were stored separately in a locked file cabinet. Only the researcher had access to this data.

In this study, the researcher used the internet program, SKYPE, as well as regular long distance calls to conduct telephone interviews. The SKYPE program is free software that allows people to register and communicate with people on their contact list via telephone or video call. The SKYPE service provided higher voice quality than long distance telephones. These programs are also secured by a password that is needed to access accounts. This researcher informed participants about the risks of internet

interviews. This researcher also informed participants that they should not share their clients' names. In case they needed to share, they should use only their clients' initials.

Ensuring data were accurate is also important in qualitative research (Christians, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This researcher ensured that the data was internally valid. The techniques to ensure internal validity were discussed under the section on how to establish trustworthiness.

#### *Maintaining Awareness of Researcher's Value*

Researchers should have awareness of their values and expectations during the study. Researchers are expected to bring their own values and biases to the study (Maxwell, 2005). In conducting qualitative research, researchers don't need to be concerned about eliminating their values, but researchers should understand the ways in which values influence their research (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Therefore researchers should understand how their values and expectations influence the way research is conducted. In this study, the researcher presented the researcher's worldview, assumptions, and biases. The researcher journaled about her own awareness while conducting this study. The researcher wanted to maintain an understanding of how her values influenced the research.

#### *Balancing between Objectivity and Sensitivity*

The researcher should maintain a balance between objectivity and sensitivity (Morrow, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Maxwell (2005) suggested that balancing objectivity and sensitivity is essential in the process of developing a qualitative study. In this study, the researcher attempted to balance between objectivity and sensitivity by using the techniques suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998). The researcher maintained

objectivity by comparing emerging concepts with literature and participant experiences to do the following: find the examples of similar phenomenon, obtain multiple perspectives of an event, reflect on the question “what is going on here,” maintain an attitude of skepticism, and follow the research procedures. For maintaining sensitivity, the researcher used professional and personal experiences to provide sensitivity and insight to the events described by participants.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) summarized the characteristics of qualitative researchers who used the grounded theory method: “(a) The ability to step back and critically analyze the situation; (b) the ability to recognize the tendency toward bias; (c) the ability to think abstractly; (d) the ability to be flexible and open to helpful criticism; (e) sensitivity to the words and actions of respondents; (f) a sense of absorption and devotion to the work process” (p. 7).

#### Data Collection Process

This section begins with a discussion about participant selection criteria. After which the discussion about the data gathering process is provided.

#### *Participant Selection Criteria*

Participant selection in qualitative research is purposive rather than random which means a participant should be a person who has relevant characteristics to be in the study (Haverkamp & Young, 2007; Morrow, 2007; Suzuki et al., 2007). This research used the concept of purposive selection (Maxwell, 2005) as a guideline for participant selection. These guidelines were used to achieve representativeness of the setting, to achieve maximum variation of participants, to examine cases that were critical to the study, and to

establish particular comparisons to clarify the reasons for differences between individuals.

In this research, the researcher recruited Asian group leaders from Thailand, Japan, and Taiwan who met the criteria of currently leading groups in Asia and who were also fluent in English. For the first criterion of the study, the researcher focused on Asian group leaders' experiences due to the fact there was limited research on the topic of group work in Asia. This criterion was also influenced by the researcher's cultural background as an Asian. Barnes (1996) suggested that it might be helpful for a grounded theory researcher to have had experiences with the culture of the participants. In this study, the researcher shared a similar cultural background with participants; therefore it might be beneficial to assist this researcher to understand the participants' meanings, intentions, and emotions that may be generated from the same cultural perspectives. The researcher further specified the need to find group leaders who were currently practicing in Asia, specifically the countries of Thailand, Japan and Taiwan. The reason for being specific about finding participants from Thailand was due to the fact the researcher shared the same nationality and cultural background, which might be beneficial in deeply understanding the participants' way of being (Barnes). The reason for finding participants from Taiwan was due to the significant efforts made by the Taiwanese to develop culturally sensitive counseling interventions (Lin, 2004). Finally, the reason for being specific about finding participants from Japan was the long history that Japanese researchers and practitioners had in the process of developing culturally sensitive interventions, such as the Morita therapy method. Also significant is the idea that these three countries have relatively higher usages of counseling and group work than mainland

China or Vietnam. Additionally, while Singapore has a strong counseling history, the population of Singapore is very heterogeneous population. Thus group workers from were not included in the sample.

The second criterion was that participants must be able to converse fluently in English due to the fact that the data collection was conducted in the English language. This researcher decided to conduct the study in the English language for the following reasons: the translation process might interfere with the data collection process (Barnes, 1996) and specifically the language barrier between the researcher and participants might decrease the opportunity to understand participants' phenomenological fields. An indicator of the participants' fluency in English skills was whether the group leaders were trained in institutions where the English language was predominant. It might be a limitation of this study that the data did not include the experience of group leaders who graduated from institutions where English wasn't the predominant language. This researcher used extent of data saturation to determine sufficiency of data collection and number of participants (Creswell et al., 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Morrow, 2007)

The snowball sampling technique was used for this study, which began with identification of cases of interest from people who knew which cases were rich in information (Creswell, 1998). The researcher began the data collection process by sending emails to the following email lists: CESNET, COUNSGRAD, IAGP:TRANS and DIVERSEGRAD. These listservs are all counseling related and some have a multicultural orientation. The researcher asked in these inquiries if people knew of Asian group leaders who were currently practicing in Thailand, Japan, and Taiwan. The researcher asked the members of each listserv to identify potential participants or other

informants who might know of potential participants. The researcher also contacted group leaders and counselor educators in Asia who were known to the researcher in order to provide a description of the study to them. The researcher also asked them to identify potential participants or other informants who might know of potential participants.

Due to the nature of the research, which was conducted at the international level and the limited number of group leaders who were practicing in Asia, the participant recruitment process took longer than the researcher expected. The researcher also had difficulty contacting potential participants who were indicated by informants. However, six participants volunteered to participate in this study. All of them remained involved throughout the research process.

The participants for this study were diverse geographically and in gender. The participants were from three countries in Asia: Thailand, Japan and Taiwan. Four of the participants led groups in Thailand. One of the participants led groups in Japan, and the other led groups in Taiwan. There were three females and three males in the study.

The participants were also from diverse educational backgrounds. Two of the participants held Ph.D.'s., in psychology. One of the participants held an Ed.D., in counselor education. One of the participants held a Ph.D. in counseling. The final two participants held master degrees, one in expressive arts therapy and the other in social administration. Five of participants graduated from institutions of higher education in the United States and the other participant graduated from a university in Canada. The sample of participants represented a wealth of experience. The number of years participants had been leading groups in Asia ranged from 1.5 years to 30 years.

The first participant was currently practicing in Thailand. He had a doctoral degree in counselor education from a university in the U.S. He had been leading groups for 30 years. He identified his theoretical orientation as being a Buddhist counseling approach. The majority of his clients were Thai. He also taught in the counseling psychology department at a university in Thailand.

The second participant had a private practice in Thailand. She also taught as an adjunct professor. She had practiced in the U.S. for 7 years prior to returning to Thailand. She had practiced in Thailand for 11 years. She had graduated with a master degree in expressive arts therapy from a university in the U.S. The majority of her clients were Thai, Australian, and European.

The third participant practiced in an agency in Japan, which focused on eating disorders. He had 7 years experience of practicing in groups in Japan. He graduated with a master degree in social administration from a university in the U.S. The majority of his clients were Japanese.

The fourth participant was teaching at a University in Taiwan. She had a doctorate in counseling from a university in the U.S. She had one and a half years of experience practicing counseling in Taiwan. She'd had some experience of practicing in Taiwan prior to being awarded her doctorate. The majority of her clients were Taiwanese.

The fifth participant taught in a psychiatric department at a university in Thailand. He graduated with a doctorate in psychology from a university in Canada. He had practiced in Thailand for 12 years. The majority of his clients were Thai.

The sixth participant had practiced in Thailand for one and a half years after she graduated with her doctorate in counseling psychology from a university in the U.S. She

also had some experience of practicing in Thailand prior her doctoral degree. She had taught at one university in Thailand.

Building on the discussion regarding the factors that related to the data collection process, the relationship between researcher and participants, the participant selection criteria, and the cultural and ethical considerations, the next section discusses the data collection methods.

### *Data Collection Method*

Maxwell (2005) suggested that data in qualitative research might include anything the researcher can see or hear, or anything communicated to the researcher while conducting the study. Therefore, in this study the researcher included two sources of data which were interviews and researcher's journal.

Interviews are one of the most important qualitative data collection strategies (Goulding, 2002; Suzuki et al., 2007). Interview methods produced data that emphasizes the participants' life experiences. In this study, this researcher conducted interviews via internet telephone and telephone. In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to balance the researcher's research experience, the nature of the phone interview, the nature of naturalistic inquiry, and the nature of counseling research (Maxwell, 2005; Suzuki et al.). Semi-structured interviews were designed to cover a common set of themes, but allowed for change in the sequence of questions and provided the researcher with the opportunity to follow up on the interviewees' answers (Suzuki et al.).

Fontana and Frey (2005) summarized key considerations associated with interviewing that included: assessing the setting, understanding the language and culture

of the respondents, deciding how to present one's self and the nature of research, locating an informant, gaining trust and confidentiality, and establishing rapport.

Before the interview process started, the researcher asked the participants to think about one of the groups that they were currently leading and to use experiences from that group to answer the questions. The researcher followed the interview process suggested by Suzuki et al. (2007):

- (a) To ask introductory questions to help the participant feel more comfortable.
- (b) To ask specific questions that pertained to the research topic: In this study, the researcher asked the following questions: What influences you as you lead this group?, What do you aware of yourself and your group members while you leading group?, How do you know what to do in your groups?, and How does your awareness of culture impact you when you are leading groups? The researcher developed these questions by reviewing the conceptual context and consulting with a faculty member who was familiar with grounded theory method and group work.
- (c) To ask participants closing questions in order to add any information that they might feel is relevant.
- (d) To provide the participants with a description of what the next part of the research process entails. In this study, the researcher would inform participants about follow-up interviews and member checking.
- (e) To express thanks to the participant for giving his or her time and involvement in the study.

A researcher journal was also employed. This journal included the researcher's introspection and self-reflection. The journal helped to assure that the researcher's subjectivity dominated and that the participants' perspectives were fairly represented (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Morrow, 2007). Introspection is the examination of the researcher's own mental and emotional processes (Goulding, 2002). During conversations with the participants, the researcher drew on her own knowledge and experiences to interpret the participants' emerging stories (Goulding). The researcher began to journal at the beginning of the data collection process and to continue to journal until the end of data analysis process.

The literature related to the data collection process has been reviewed and included the factors that qualitative researchers should consider while conducting research. The next section describes the data analysis phase.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis in grounded theory is a process of reducing data into concepts that are used to build theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this research, the data analysis phase began with reviewing transcripts, audio files, and the researcher's journal. Audio files of participant interviews were transcribed. The transcripts were edited for accuracy. The edited transcripts were analyzed for themes and were used to develop the second round interview questions and the third round interview questions.

This researcher employed Strauss and Corbin's methods (1998) in the data analysis phase. These included open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to specify the properties and dimensions of categories. A conditional matrix was used to organize the emerging theory into a structure that contained the antecedents, context, intervening

conditions, and consequence of core categories. The details of each stage are discussed as follows.

### *Open Coding*

“Open coding is the analytic process through which concepts were identified and their properties and dimension are discovered in data”, (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 101). Open coding was a process to open up the text and explore ideas and meaning to develop concepts. As analysis continued, events and ideas that shared similar characteristics were grouped together into categories (Strauss & Corbin). During open coding, the researcher closely examined the data for both differences and similarities among categories (Strauss & Corbin).

The first step of building theory was conceptualization. In this process the researcher grouped similar events under a common heading (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In conceptualization, the researcher broke down data into discrete categories and then labeled them according to apparent meaning (Strauss & Corbin). After conceptualization, the researcher conducted comparative analysis, which involved comparing incident to incident and then comparison of larger categories to determine overlaps, similarities, and differences. As the researcher continued with data analysis, she discovered other events that shared common characteristics. Accordingly, the researcher attempted to group similarly events under the same category. The researcher was aware of some concepts that might be developed into subcategories that would further explain the context of major categories. The emergence of subcategories represented the beginning of axial coding, which ran concurrently with open coding (Strauss & Corbin).

### *Axial Coding*

Axial coding is the process of relating categories to their subcategories and other categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The purpose of axial coding is to begin the process of reassembling details that were fractured during open coding (Strauss & Corbin). During this process, the description of relationships between categories and subcategories moves from the narrative to the conceptual level (Strauss & Corbin). As the relationship between categories, subcategories, and other categories begins to emerge, the contexts and processes of the phenomena also emerge (Strauss & Corbin). Eventually, categories become saturated, and the data provides no new properties, dimensions, or relationships. This process was mirrored during this study.

### *Selective Coding*

After the process of open coding and axial coding, the researcher worked on the selective coding process. “Selective coding is the process of integrating and refining categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).” Integration is an ongoing process that identifies a central category or core category to all other related major categories (Strauss & Corbin). An identification of the central category was very important to theory development. These strategies were employed by the researcher in this study.

The researcher used Strauss and Corbin’s suggested techniques to aid integration: Writing a storyline, using diagrams, and sorting and reviewing analysis memos. After the researcher had an outline for a theory, the next step was to refine the theory. This process involved further refining categories and relationships to develop clear explanations and descriptions of the phenomena under exploration (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Strauss and Corbin suggested the following ways to refine the theory: to review scheme for internal

consistency and gaps in logic, to fill in poorly developed categories, to validate the theory, and to build in variations.

After open coding, axial coding, and selective coding procedure, the researcher analyzed the process relationships. Process is related to the sequences of actions or interactions that are part of a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). To recognize process, the researcher changed the focus to action and followed it over time to understand the structure (Strauss & Corbin). This structure produced the context for action (Strauss & Corbin). The outcome from analyzing process relationships were a vital part of the story (Strauss & Corbin). This process began during axial and selective coding and was integrated into theory through the use of conditional matrices.

The conditional matrix is a tool to help integrate categories, properties, and dimensions with process relationships (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A conditional matrix can be a diagram or other visual guide to help the researcher understand and keep track of interplay of conditions and subsequent actions and to track their path of connectivity (Strauss & Corbin). The conditional matrix was the last step of the data analysis phase of this research. As processes became clearer, the researcher began interrelating categories around core phenomenon, or the research repeated data collection and the data analysis process until “theoretical saturation took place” (Strauss & Corbin, p.292). During the data analysis process, the researcher examined, questioned, and compared data throughout the analysis process to ensure data credibility (Strauss & Corbin).

#### Establishing Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a way to ensure to audiences that the findings of the study are worthy of their trust and attention (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this research,

trustworthiness was established based on the framework presented by Lincoln and Guba. According to Lincoln and Guba the criteria for trustworthiness are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The credibility of qualitative studies is related to the internal validity of quantitative study and addresses the closeness of the findings to the participants' experiences (Lincoln & Guba). The transferability of qualitative studies, related to the external validity of quantitative study, refers to the applicability of research conclusions to other settings (Lincoln & Guba). The dependability of qualitative studies, which is related to the reliability of quantitative studies, refers to the reproducibility of results (Lincoln & Guba). The confirmability of qualitative studies, or objectivity in quantitative studies, refers to whether the research results could be corroborated by others (Lincoln & Guba). This researcher used techniques suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Maxwell (2005) to implement each criterion. A description of how techniques were implemented in this study is provided below.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested the following techniques to address the credibility: prolonged engagement, triangulation, negative case analysis, peer debriefing, and member checks. In this research, prolonged engagement was used by this researcher to increase credibility. Prolonged engagement helped to build trust between the researcher and the participants and also facilitated checking for misinformation (Lincoln & Guba). The participants in this study were interviewed individually three times over a nine months period, which allowed the researcher to fully engage with the participants and the data.

Triangulation was also used to increase the credibility of this study. Triangulation is a strategy that used multiple sources and methods in data collection (Maxwell, 2005). This method reduces the chances that the research conclusions reflected systematic biases or limitation of sources (Maxwell). In this study, triangulation was exhibited during data collection and data analysis of this study. For the data collection phase, this researcher collected data from different types of sources. This researcher utilized data from the phone interviews and the researcher's journal. During the data analysis phase, different types of data were used to ensure emergent themes. Another triangulation method that was included was literature triangulation. Literature triangulation pertained to checking the research results against concepts in the literature. In this study, the researcher also used member checking technique to enhance the credibility of this study. Member checking was the systematic feedback of research data and conclusions from participants. This technique minimized the possibility of misunderstanding (Maxwell).

One important method to enhance the credibility of this research was controlling researcher bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Creswell (1998) encouraged researchers to clarify at the beginning of the study any personal biases or assumptions that might impact the study. Such preconceptions affect the subjectivity of the researcher, so the researcher should be aware of his or her own assumptions. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stated, qualitative research is not primarily concerned about eliminating what the researcher brings to the study. Rather, the researcher should understand how his or her own values and expectations influence the research process (Maxwell, 2005). In this research, the researcher described her stance to present her personal values and expectations regarding the research in this study. During the data collection phrase, this researcher used the

journaling method to add to her awareness of her own values which might influence the research. As Suzuki et al. (2007) suggested, this researcher maintained a reflexive journal for the entire study. The researcher also moved through the research process with the researcher's advisor closely monitoring the researcher's biases.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested a technique that could be used to enhance the transferability of the research. According to Lincoln and Guba, including thick descriptions of the context of the study and the study procedures enables others to make decisions regarding the applicability of finding to their settings. The researcher included detailed descriptions of the context of the study, the study procedures, and the participants to assist others to make decisions about the transferability of the finding from this study.

In this study, dependability and confirmability were addressed by using a single technique, the confirmability audit. The confirmability audit requires an audit trail, which includes raw data, analyzed data, process notes, research development notes and materials (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For this study, information needed for a confirmability audit was recorded, retained, and may be made available for future use.

This study met the criteria for trustworthy research. Through the utilization of techniques that promoted credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability the theory that emerged from this study not only represents the reality of the participants, but also provides helpful information that may be used in other settings and studies.

### Conclusion

The grounded theory method was appropriate for the exploration of the experiences of Asian group leaders in Asia. The researcher followed the ensuing

research process. The first stage was developing a conceptual context and a grand research question. Next the researcher defined the researcher's role and identified the researcher's research stance. The second stage was collecting data, which included two data collection methods which were interviewing and the researcher's journal. The third stage was data analyzing which involved organizing data, open coding, axial coding, selective coding, the integration process, and utilizing a conditional matrix. The last stage was establishing trustworthiness. This researcher repeated data collection and the data analysis processes until data were saturated. After the researcher conducted research using this process, the result fulfilled the research goal, which was to develop a grounded theory of the experiences and processes of Asian group leaders who are leading groups in Asia.

## CHAPTER IV

### FIRST ROUND INTERVIEWS

#### Introduction

The researcher gathered data from the six participants using telephone interviews. In the interviews the researcher asked the following questions: (1) “What influences you as you lead this group?” (2) “What are you aware of in yourself and your group members while you are leading group?” (3) “How do you know what to do in your groups?” (4) “How does your awareness of culture impact you when you are leading groups?” After the interviews the researcher conducted verbatim transcriptions. Then, the researcher analyzed the transcripts by using open coding and axial coding procedures and discovered three major themes that were conceptualized as *reflective experimentation*, *awareness*, and *flavor*. These themes represented participants’ experiences while they were leading psychoeducational groups, counseling groups, and therapy groups in Asia. The properties and dimensions of each theme were revealed to further describe each category.

#### *Reflective Experimentation*

The first concept, *reflective experimentation*, emerged from the analysis of data of the initial interview questions. Participants described what they experienced while they led groups in Asia. The goal of each participant was to develop effective ways to work with their groups. *Reflective experimentation* was defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups while at the same time attempting to develop appropriate interventions that were appropriate for particular group members. The *reflective experimentation* process consisted of the participants’ motivations for wanting to

conduct groups in Asia, the interactions that resulted in the development of styles and interventions, and connections to participants' core beliefs.

From analysis of data in the category *reflective experimentation* several subcategories emerged. The sub-categories developed from this category were (a) *motivation*, (b) *developing their style*, and (c) *believing in philosophy*. The subcategories described distinct major components of the category *reflective experimentation*.

#### *Motivation*

Participants described their inspiration to begin and to continue conducting groups in Asia as a part of *reflective experimentation*. *Motivation* was defined as the inspiration, internal and external, which helped participants to begin and to continue their group work practice in Asia. The participants conversed about how conducting groups in Asia was sometimes challenging. Yet for the participants the motivation received from the challenges were critical to helping them to meet the challenges. The sub-category *motivation* consisted of four properties that further described participants' experiences. These properties included *seeing the benefits of group work*, *receiving positive experiences in their training*, *being willing to take risks*, and *being proud of their cultural heritage*. Details of each property are described as follows.

*Seeing the benefits of group work*. One property of *motivation* that participants described was *seeing the benefits of group work*. The participants indicated that perceptions of a positive outcome for the group members who participated in their groups was one of the factors that motivated them to continue practicing group work. This positive outcome was beneficial for the group members' personal growth. This property of *motivation* was called *seeing the benefits of group work* and was defined as the

motivation the participants experienced when they observed their group members benefit from group work.

- P1 ...So when they're sharing their experiences with this member, they can learn about themselves too...
- P2 ... I think for they, themselves to experiences group process will help them be in touched and they would have gone through the process of group dynamics themselves. So they understand when they are in another role as a leader what their patient group members will experience. I think this is something that one can learn not from the textbook but from going through an experiential workshop...
- P2 ...I think to be able to not only use group process with clients but also to the professional, it helps them to understand being a part of mental health process can be beneficial and help them develop themselves...
- P3 ... there's element of being therapeutic and try to make change but I think more than that it's important especially for people in Japan is for them to know that they're not alone, there's other people who are suffering from the same situation like them...
- P4 ... I have faith that they will find their way and I think something is more special in the group because is more than one client in a group. Some client was a peer pressure there. They like "hurry up, I'm waiting for your expression, I'm waiting for your expression"...
- P4 ... But after that I'm hoping that they can take advantage of this resource and for the ongoing. I mean the resource that helping them to support each other. So I tried to do a lot of helping them, establish relationship with one another and try to support each other. I think it's extremely important for this population...

Two participants described their beliefs in the benefits of group for group members as corresponding to their own theoretical orientations and philosophical beliefs.

- P1 ...we try to bring this people to live by bring them to understand and to see the true nature of life. From misunderstanding to understanding which we call in Bali is "Sammadhiti". If you come to see me with your own story, your disappointment, like the departure of your love one, you bring it with a lot of bereavement, even sorrow. This is just a little bit of what in your mind. So what we try to do is get into the root of this symptom which we know what we call in Bali "Uppatan" or attachment you know. This situation brings you a little bit of "Dhukka". "Dhukka" expresses in many

forms, anxiety, depression, sorrow, so we call this symptom “Dhukka”. We know the root of symptom is attachment. So we try to cut the attachment, to bring the members to fully understanding that life is a flow. It’s changing. Life is the process of being that is not come along with our expectation. You cannot order the world or people or anything to come along or congruence with your desire. So you have to understand your desire which kind of the detachment in it. So we work with the attachment or desire. So we help the member to cut the attachment to something and they may not let freedom go it in the consciousness. And then they might understand better the true of nature of life or living. So this process will free them to go along well with their life again.

- P2 ...So they are aware of the potential of countertransference issue that might come up but by having this awareness or experience of going through a group process. It will help them not to mix their own personal issue or personal limitation with their clinical work with their patients...

*Having positive experiences in Western training and practice.* In another property of *motivation*, participants described the positive feelings they had about the training and practice they received in Western educational institutions prior to returning to Asia to start their own practices. They shared about how their positive feelings contributed to their ability and willingness to continue to engage in *reflective experimentation*. This property was called *having positive experiences in Western training and practice*.

- P3 ...I did a practice at the student practice. During the three years, I worked (identity information removed) at the family service center. We did mini group at elementary school and we did kind of close group. The program was pretty excited. It’s kind of more than a therapy, kind of peer pressure. It’s the group to help children deal with peer pressure, like psychoeducational....
- P4 ...I really can appreciate what (identity information removed) say about strength a child have inside his/her heart and what the counselor need to do is provide the environment and opportunity with the faith, with the strong faith about their inner strength and to help them to develop every aspect of themselves.
- P6 ... I would like to try to transfer the knowledge that I learn from my pre-doctoral internship at (identity information removed) to use with Thai populations. I impressed in CBT group cognitive behavior is called managing mode group, easily how to reduce the academic problem due to

academic stress at (identity information removed). I thought at that time, if it works with students in the U.S., it should work with students in Thailand too....

*Being willing to take a risk.* The participants also described different aspects of their personalities they noticed when encountering challenging situations when they first started to practice in Asia. This aspect of their personality helped them to stay motivated, to be willing and open in the process and to try new activities. This property in the *motivation* sub-category was called *being willing to take a risk*. *Being willing to take a risk* was defined as the participants' readiness to try new ideas even if it is difficult to do so. Even though this property was described in detail by one of the participants in the interview, the other participants indirectly seemed to share similar feelings. Since this property was not clearly expressed, the researcher developed a question to collect more information in the next round of interviews regarding this potential property.

P3 ...we were very willing to take to risk to try the new thing. And also he himself had you know. In his previous work had seen that the cognitive therapy worked. So he wanted to do something like that but he can't find anybody who willing to do that, so what happen was that he decided "well, let's try this out". For me it was a chance, the freedom to do...

P3 ... When I did start the group, it was something new in Japan. Umm we didn't have anything to model. It was a chance to do something brand new...

P3 ... The thing that I can add is when you have opportunity to try something new and you really have nothing to lose. You know, nothing to lose, you will gain. The opposite of nothing to lose is to gain something. You try what you can. But also it uses a lot of motivation. It's an opportunity...

*Being proud of cultural heritage.* A fourth property described by the participants in the subcategory of *motivation* was *being proud of cultural heritage*. The participants described being motivated to begin and to continue group work practice in Asia because of a sense of appreciation for their own cultural backgrounds.

P1 ... Because as a Thai, I feel that Buddhism is our cultural heritage...”

P4 ... I’m supposed to be a Chinese, you know, in my blood. But my family moved to Taiwan, hundred years ago, more than hundred years ago...

*Being proud of their cultural heritage* might be related to several properties described later. The potential connection was discussed under the interaction section.

In addition this sub-category, *motivation*, might be an important influence on the participants because during the first round interviews, the participants described difficulties and challenging situations which they all had experienced. Thus the *motivation* sub-category might be a factor that helped the participants to continue to work in groups. However the relationships among the properties in *motivation* sub-category with other properties were not yet clear. Especially, the property *being willing to take a risk* was not clearly described. Therefore, a question was constructed to gather more information about *being willing to take a risk*: “The researcher’s observation from our previous conversation is that leading groups in Asia is challenging. Do you remember? We talked about external challenges, like some stigma and also some challenges in a group? What motivates you to do groups in Asia even though they are challenging?”

#### *Developing Their Style*

The second sub-category in the *reflective experimentation* category was *developing their style*. The participants described how integrating knowledge and experiences leading groups eventually transformed into personal style. *Developing their style* was defined as participants’ process for incorporating knowledge and experiences into a personal style or general approach that worked effectively with group members. From the further analysis, *developing their style* had five properties that were described in more detail. These properties included using *trial and error, using previous*

*experiences, using culture understanding from an emic perspective, evaluating the current situation, developing confidence, and outcome.* The properties described major components of the sub-category *developing their style*. Details in each of property were discussed.

*Trial and error.* The participants described their processes for attempting to utilize their own knowledge and experiences as they conducted groups even though they were not sure of the outcome. This property of *developing their style* was called *trial and error*.

P3 ... I can't really say you know. How you figure something like that out is a trial and error thing. When you try it, it might work or it doesn't work...

P6 ...I'm not really sure because about the culture. So I like to see that what component of the group from the U.S. and what I can do in Thailand. So I conduct that group and use some content from the group in U.S. and apply that to Thai student...

This property was described by two of the participants, yet, this property appeared to play an important role in helping the participants to develop their personal styles because it was the only property that represented the opportunity for the participants to receive the feedback from group members. Specifically, they received feedback regarding the process of developing their general approach to group work. Unfortunately, this subcategory was not clearly expressed by participants. Therefore, a question was constructed to gather more information about *trial and error*: "When you have decided that you need to do something or try something different while you are leading your group, how do you decide what to do next?"

*Using previous experiences.* Participants also described utilizing both learning experiences and clinical experiences to help develop their personal styles or general

approach to group work. This property of the *developing their style* sub-category was called *using previous experience*.

Participants described *using previous experiences* from their training in Western educational institutions, which included both theoretical and practical experiences to help to develop their style. Participants recalled strategies that worked well or didn't work well and incorporated them into their general approach to working with groups.

- P2 ...when I was a student, one of my primary trainers always told me that in any kind of group, after you explore about 5 minutes, you always ask "What are you feeling right now?". So it will help a participant or a member to break away from the intellectualization and they have to focus on the feeling that goes along with the content that they describe...
- P2 We are helping them to go to one therapeutic factor that Yalom is recapitulation of family process. I help them to go back and try to understand what's going on. After they complete that theme then we brings them back to the here and now scene. They will extinction that right now, they are in adult world. They are not in the childhood. So they have a power to change, they have a power to design.
- P3 ... Yalom is the textbook for the class....
- P4 ... think that kind of training background really affect me when I am conducting a group such a like person centered oriented group. I really do believe and holding that faith in my mind. I think they will find their way...

One participant described his personal experiences of living in many different countries and how these practical experiences helped him to develop his personal style or general approach to group work.

- P3 ...I compare three cultures that I know, the Latin culture, the Japanese culture and American. And constantly, I'm kind of functionalizing in term of culture. I believe that culture is developed to response to some kind of necessary. So you have to see the function, functional part in each of the culture and see what they are trying to do by maintaining culture norms and beliefs. And so when you know what that culture is trying to do, what function is served. Then for the first time, you can manipulate it, you can

use it, you can change it, you can do all kinds of things with it. But you really need to see that culture in not just alone...

*Using cultural understanding from an emic perspective.* The participants described *using cultural understanding from an emic perspective* as one property in the *developing their style* sub-category. This property was defined as the integration of the participants' knowledge and understanding of their own cultures from a cultural insider's perspective to their general approach in group practice.

- P3 ...I think if the person who is completely alien to Japanese culture comes and tries this think, it probably wouldn't work. You have to have some knowledge of the Japanese culture to be able to put the limits and that's what is. Pushing the limit of what someone will feel if Japanese...
- P3 ... one of the thing in Japanese culture, more than the discussion group, more than a really spontaneous group, the group is often going to be again a very psychoeducational group. It's going to be kind of like a classroom but you can put in little bit of discussion. But a lot of time the response to discussion is weak. So it's kind of hard to set up the discussion like...let's discussion this kind of thing...
- P3 ... I don't know a lot of people say, doing group therapy would be difficult in Japan but a thorough background in that culture, a person who is from that culture. If you can, you know. If somebody going to start in Japan and says I want to be a therapist in Japan. It's important that they have a good background in Japanese culture.

*Evaluate current situation.* The participants also described *evaluating the current situation* as one of the properties in *developing their style*. This property represented the process of comparing previous knowledge and experiences with current situations to inform their general approach to group work. This property was developed from participants' intuitive sense and also from feedback from group members. *Evaluating the current situation* consisted of a dimension which varied along a continuum. At the one end of the dimension was the participants' perception of the current situation as a *challenging* experience.

- P1 ... In the past, when we used Rogerian or Gestalt approach, we have to use English words; sometimes we translated them into Thai. They are not familiar but they feel free to work though this discomfort...
- P2 ...If you are to go to somebody outside the family to share the family problem, it's to betray the family because it's bringing the inside or personal information of the family be told to the outside...
- P2 ... Let's say if you disagree with something or if you say something negative, the culture of Eastern world expect you to be quite about it or don't argue because argument is being view as disrespect. From the Western culture, it is encouraged because you are standing up for your right. So they encourage you to speak up. So this is something that you have to take a look what's going at first, try to blend in. Because in the culture of psychotherapy we would like a person to be aware of their own feeling as well as to be able to verbalize it so how can you integrate that into Eastern culture. Whereby don't say it because it's disrespectful...
- P3 ... Many people waiting for information, that's one thing that I think very very culture situation. So I think in the beginning I start in many group session, let's discuss this and then nobody say anything...
- P3 ... the thing is there is one aspect that they may not have vocabulary and capacity to propose feeling in words. It doesn't mean they don't have feeling. It means they do have those feeling...
- P4 ...one of the difficult parts for me is the language. I'm so serious talking about that. Because when I was in America, whatever I learn in counseling profession, I learn in English. So when I went to practice in my professional, the first thing that strikes me the most is the language difference. I never used Chinese language to conduct a session. So that first thing that strike so high is the transformational of the language...
- P4 ...When I met with the group for the first time, one of the typical saying I got, one of the typical reaction I go from my group members was "Oh you are the group leader". The message underneath that saying you are so young. How could you going to be group leader. I think that was especially problematic...
- P4 ... Sometime I was saying something and the group members looked at me like, what are you mean by that? What's that? They are kind of understood what I was saying but they could not really understand completely what I was saying. And they kind of understand what I was saying but they were just like, that's such a weird language....

- P6 ... but if ask them to discuss something about that, to critique, this quite hard in the cognitive part...
- P6 ... It works when I ask them to do breathing exercise or stay in the peaceful mind for very brief that work but not very good. And the part that ask the participant to discuss about the content or discuss about technique or skill, CBT skills that we teach. So far I don't think it works. Because Thai student, they don't like to talk...
- P6 ... When I'm running group like personal growth group for undergrad student, their age like my child age. They use the Thai frank that sometime I didn't get that at the very first time...
- P6 ...when I came back the first 3 months, you may, I think you would amazing about when people graduate from abroad or somewhere else with higher degree. People going to give some kind of expectation or distance that people or students put into that person. I feel that at the very first session, first one or two hours. It's quite I aware that I have to be slow and let the student know me in the different way. Let's they know me and let's I know them. It quite takes time compare to once I conduct the same group before I left for my Ph.D. program. I think I can get them talk, the breaking the ice session is about 15 minutes. But now it likes hours and hours.

On the other end of the dimension was the participants' perception of the current situation as a *supportive* experience.

- P1 ... they feel more convenient with our practice and further Buddhist teaching because they feel they are Buddhist. So it makes them feel that we talk in their language...
- P3 ... once you know what things are there for, then you can change them, you can manipulate them. That's not something that you should fear but something that you can use to your advantage. You know a lot of people, I think when we talk about doing counseling and doing things in other cultures, they think of that as an obstacle. But many times, instead of being obstacle is going to being advantage...
- P3 ... many people say that Japanese people, they're not use to American style psychotherapy; they're not use to talking about their feelings. The funny thing is interesting that I never had trouble about somebody talking about themselves when they're in trouble. That's contrary to the belief of what people believe about Japanese people because most people think that Japanese people are very close, are not open about their feelings.

In addition, this property, *evaluating the current situation*, might be connected to awareness of group level interactions. The potential connection between these two concepts was discussed under the interaction section.

*Developing confidence.* Participants described *developing confidence* as one property in *developing their style*. This property was defined by the participants' expressions of confidence regarding the process of developing their general style in group work. Their expressions of confidence varied by the level of experience they had practicing group work.

- P1 ... now I immerse quite a bit in Buddhist teaching. I have an experience in what Buddha taught for quite sometimes. And I think now I know of what it is and where it is. So now I'm kind of lead a group by using Buddhist teaching as a guideline. The main teaching that I used like a theme for practicing group counseling and psychotherapy, you might know this quite well is four noble truths. This law covers all of phenomenal of the universe. So I like it very much...
- P1 ... it's very a long and gradual process. Because I myself, I'm not quite sure we have come a right way or not. But with studying Buddhadasa's teaching, I feel more confidence. And now I love it then. I have confidence in using it in counseling and psychotherapy...
- P2 ... I've been in the field for years, well it's almost like natural process, when there appear stuck, when their repetitive emotion in the here and now.

The participants were at different stages in the process of *developing their style* or general approach that worked effectively with their group members. This was due to the experiences the participants had gained practicing in the field. For example, the participants who had more experiences practicing in Asia described their style with high confidence.

- P2 I think it's up to different people style. Like for me I've been in the field for years, well it's almost like natural process, when there appear stuck, when their repetitive emotion in the here and now. I observe that then I

ask that when you felt like that before. Because when they are in intense mode of their emotion, it helps them connect with their old transference. They usually can go back to the scene in their childhood. So then we put the scene into here and now on hold for a little while and then we go to their childhood so that they can explore in another level.

- P5 ...at the beginning everything can be difficult, you might say. Like any kind of art that you practice. When you start play piano, at first you feel very awkward and with more practice, it gets easier and easier. So with more experiences, that's not too difficult...

*Outcome.* The last property in *developing their style* was *outcome*. The participants described their perceptions of their general approach to group work which was developed through integrating their knowledge and experiences. Descriptions of this general approach or personal style was termed *outcome*.

- P1 ... So we have our map in our mind and in term of a group we facilitate them to tell their story. I think I empathize about the story of the member. I told my students that we work with story so we have to do our best to facilitate them to tell their story. We can work with their psychology through their story. If someone comes to the group with the heart broken story, we listen to their story and we know beforehand. In their story, there must be some kind of attachment inside. And then, we try to make them detach. We help them see the true nature of living that we can't hold everything because the true nature is changing. And what happen are what happen....
- P3 ...I try to picture what type of family each person came from and I try to picture the context that they're in. And then I kind of imagine myself speaking or being part of that context. That can limit what I can say, what I can go from there. You know, I guess is the basics of social work concept of starting where the patient is. But I use my imagination put myself in their context that probably put the limit how far I will go...
- P5 ...I believe ideally, you should create your own lens or your own style of approach to group work. And it has to be authentic to your nature, cannot role play or try to pretend to be Rogers or Fritz Perl or some famous monk. It has to be you. You integrate what you learn from various disciplines...
- P5 ...the thing like checking what's happen from the last time, starting with greeting, reviewing the situation and kind of evaluating the present moment, the atmosphere, level energy of the group, warming up exercise,

certain agenda that you thought before. And then during all this, many things might come up. And then you have to plan, what you want to deal with or focus on. You have to evaluate the urgency or difference issue and may be arrange your priority...

### *Believing in Philosophy*

The third sub-category in *reflective experimentation* was labeled *believing in philosophy*. The participants described their philosophical beliefs and the ways in which they applied their philosophies into practice while leading groups. *Believing in philosophy* was defined as the participants' perceptions and feelings about the core philosophies they employed while they were leading groups. *Believing in philosophy* consisted of two differing properties, *Western philosophy* and *Eastern philosophy*.

*Western philosophy*. The *Western philosophy* property was described as the participants' philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Western based philosophy.

- P2 ... We are helping them to go to one therapeutic factor that Yalom is recapitulation of family process. I help them to go back and try to understand what's going on. After they complete that theme then we brings them back to the here and now scene. They will extinction that right now, they are in adult world. They are not in the childhood. So they have a power to change, they have a power to design...
- P2 ... as a trained psycho dramatist , one of a thing that we began is to learn how to warm up ourselves to be ready, to be spontaneous as well as to decrease our own anxiety when we enter a group setting because for some people be in a group can be quite scare...
- P3 ...I think that is important in the group. I feel and this is the way I do my group. The patience is in control of their life. Okay, I'm in control of the group. And I think the thing going to be really bad if the patience is in control of the group and nobody in control of their life.
- P4 ... I use a lot of skills from the child centered play therapy. Though in my heart, I have to holding the attitude that I'm all there for them....
- P5 ...My strongest influence while conducting group would be from Gestalt therapy. May be another influence would be Rogerian approach, Rogerian is very gentle, Gestalt therapy is very straight forward. That time would be

rough for clients. So that creates a nice balance. Another influence I have would be Buddhism, especially the practice of mindfulness and that is also related to Gestalt approach, focus on here and now...

*Eastern philosophy.* The other property of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category was *Eastern philosophy*. One participant described his philosophical beliefs which were influenced by Eastern based philosophy.

P1 ... I lead a group by using Buddhist teaching as a guideline. The main teaching that I used like a theme for practicing group counseling and psychotherapy, you might know this quite well is four noble truths....

#### *Awareness*

The second category, *awareness*, emerged from data analysis from the initial interview questions. *Awareness* was defined by participants' focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in their groups and in individual group members while attempting to develop interventions appropriate for their group members. Participants described *awareness* as a resource for them to gain understanding about the groups they led. *Awareness* helped them to develop general approaches that worked effectively with their group members. *Awareness* also helped them to make in the moment interventions in groups. The properties (a) *awareness of group level*, (b) *awareness of individual level* and (c) *awareness of their culture* emerged from further analysis of the data.

*Awareness of group level.* The first property of *awareness* was *awareness of group level*. Participants explained what they attempted to find in groups through using awareness of the group as a tool. Participants also explained the awareness they had about the group process, which helped them to develop general approaches and in the moment interventions that worked effectively with their group members.

P1 ... Our mind has to be quite when we lead group. This quietness allows us to see clearly into their stories. And within that story we can see the

structure in their story. And we understand before hand, in every story some kind of attachment in there. So we look beyond the story. And we try to help them to attach themselves from the experiences, from the knowledge that they attached to. And then when they kind of they get an a ha experience...

- P2 ... I observe their interaction before the group actually happens, try to listen to their conversation and try to integrate myself to the informal conversation before the group starts...
- P3 ... I guess the big thing that I try to keep aware of is I want my group members to keep aware of. For several times, there's element of being therapeutic and try to make change but I think more than that it's important especially for people in Japan is for them to know that they're not alone, there's other people who are suffering from the same situation like them...
- P5 ... I have to be constantly alert to the, all the external stimuli and also my internal reaction, always interacting. This is a good analogy. I also teach martial art, it calls Aikido. For Aikido practice in the advance level, we have might be 3 or 4 people attacking you at the same time. So you are standing alone and you have to deal with all of them, all at once, trying not to be hit. And working in the group is like that. You have to be alert. Everything is going on at the same time around you. You cannot focus on just one patient at a time....

*Awareness of individual level.* The participants described the second property of *awareness* as being *awareness of individual level*. *Awareness of individual level* property involved a process of being aware of individual group members and themselves as individuals while they were leading. Participants described awareness of the individual level as one of the aspects that participants' believed was necessary for group leaders to possess. According to the participants, awareness at the individual level helped them to develop general approaches that worked effectively with their group members.

Awareness also helped them to make in the moment interventions in groups.

- P1 ... We have to be aware of ourselves. We have to be aware of our own mind. Before you can lead a Buddhist group, you have to be practice quite a bit with yourself. You have to begin with kind of self observation. This has to be done quite sometimes. If we have this experience, we can

understand others. As a leader, we have to aware of ourselves, our fear, and our anxiety. But with the practice, group leader will be prepared to lead a group and with the mapping that we talk earlier. So our mind has to be clean and clear...

- P2 ...I think another important thing of the group leader; you have to always be aware of your own anxiety. Because if your anxiety is up, so then you're too worry about your own feeling, so you're not pay attention to what's going on in the group. That is something that you have to ask yourself to be there for the group...
- P4 ...When I was leading a group, I saw that difference could cause some of the misunderstanding I had for them or it caused some questioning I have. Because I was always put in my mind, maybe I'm over react. I was always very carefully about that because how well my group members see me as a group leader who is not marry, who does not have children, how could she relate to my experience, relate to my struggle. And I know that when I over react to that it can be a problem for me as a leader. I mean me, personally as a leader. But I know I have to put that in my mind because it could happen...
- P5 ...mostly is nonverbal expression, change of facial expression, movement, everything and then you have to be mindful of your reaction at the same time, your chain of thoughts. And just like mindfulness meditation, certain things trigger something in you. If you are not mindful, you might fall into some kind of chain reaction cognitively.

Participants further described the benefits from awareness at the individual level for both group leaders and group members.

- P1 ... Our mind has to be quite when we lead group. This quietness allows us to see clearly into their stories. And within that story we can see the structure in their story. And we understand before hand, in every story some kind of attachment in there...
- P2 ...You know once you warm up, the anxiety decrease. Then you will be able to observe, what's going on inside the group dynamics.
- P2 Even if some of the issue that comes up in the group may be almost exactly same with your own unresolved issue that we call counter transferences. But we have to stop ourselves and say that I will deal with my own issue later, right now I'm a group leader, and my responsibility is to help this group go through their process.

- P5 ... You know a certain group members can say something with the certain kind of nonverbal communication accompany with verbal communication that body expression or gesture or tone of voice may trigger you to think of something else in your life, like your past experience. You might react in the certain way which may not be helpful or therapeutic. And before, if you are very mindful, you be able to catch that before you start to express yourself. So that's why I say mindfulness practice is very important in this kind of work....

*Awareness of their culture.* Participants also described their *awareness of their culture* as one the properties of the *awareness* category. This was described by participants as an aspect where awareness of their own cultures helped participants develop general approaches that worked effectively with their group members. Furthermore, awareness helped them to make in the moment interventions in groups.

- P1 ...Our culture identifies as Buddhist and I noticed that there must be something in Buddhist teaching that you know.
- P5 ... you have to be aware. I have worked with people from difference culture and I have to really mindful of my own value and my attitude toward certain things and certain behavior. Again, when clients express themselves in the certain ways, I try to not use my background my own culture background to judge their behavior or their expression....

*Awareness of their culture* could be related to several properties. The potential connection was discussed under the interaction section.

### *Flavor*

The third category, *flavor*, emerged from analysis of data generated during initial interview questions. Participants described the ways in which they worked in the moment in their groups. *Flavor* was defined as being the participants' perceptions of the ways in which they practiced being in the moment in their groups through a combination of their group leadership skills and understanding of group members' cultural backgrounds. Their practices in groups may be similar or different from the traditional group practice.

From the analysis related to the category of *flavor*, the properties included *preparing group members for a new experience* and *intervention*. The properties were distinct and major components of the category *flavor*. The details in each property are discussed below.

*Preparing group members for a new experience*. Participants described *preparing group members for a new experience* as one of the properties of the *flavor* category. *Preparing group members for a new experience* represented the participants' ways of working in groups and understanding that group members might be encountering very new experiences. The definition of *preparing group members for a new experience* was the process of combining understanding of group members' cultures and the group work culture to find ways to prepare group members for the new experience. Participants further described characteristics of *preparing group members for a new experience*.

The first characteristic in *preparing group members for a new experience* emerged from participants' descriptions related to their understanding of group members' perceptions of group leaders as authority figures. As group leaders, the participants applied this knowledge into their work with group members. This characteristic of *preparing group members to new experience* was related to accepting their authority figure status and being cognizant of it as they prepared group members.

- P1 ... May be depends on myself as a leader too, I am a teacher, a professor; I think they are kind of confident in me at the beginning. And then when I ask them to play some role in a group, they feel free to do...
- P2 ...A person might be afraid to authority figure so I try to blend in first and joke around with them....
- P2 ... the goal for that it's to decrease their anxiety of the authority figure in group...

Participants described providing comfort as one of the characteristics of *preparing group members for new experiences*. Providing comfort entailed the participants enhancing group members' comfort and safety levels in the group. Participants also described the methods that they used to provide comfort to the group members. Participants detailed providing a safe environment, information, and specific parameters to group members. Furthermore, participants expressed that a supportive and safe environment in their groups was an aspect that might help group members feel comfortable and be able to open up in groups.

P1 ...when I ask them to play some role in a group, they feel free to do. May be because we warm up the group well enough to facilitate to make them trust group

P4 ... I know when the group began for the entire group members, others group members were stranger for them. And creating a safe environment was extremely important. Though I was do a lot of reflection and try to create environment without threat and creating a welcoming atmosphere. To tell them that was safe, you can say something. And I was doing more initiating and inviting, quite a lot when I began the group. Because I felt that I have to take my time, take my chance and create environment of safety and warm they immediately, faster...

One participant described that providing information needed by group members, such as information about the nature of group counseling, group members and group leaders' roles in group, helped the group members feel more comfortable in the groups.

P3 ...when I started the group, my first session I always do a little bit of ice breaking and after that I go into some roles, right after that I go straight to talk about symptom, you know. What are your symptoms? What happens to you?

P3 ... I tell the patient that for some people this is gonna quick and some people might take more time to take the information and everything in the group settles and you feel like, you are ready to move. So the link of the group, the number of session, you try to calculate out and add the number of session so that just about everyone be able to experience some type of change happens in the group...

Two participants described providing specific parameters as a way to provide comfort to group members.

- P3 ...put framework to the discussion and make it small enough and safe enough for them to put their information out and discussion their feeling and they can do it...
- P3 ...Well talking friendship, may be about boyfriends, girlfriends. I think the bulimia group; I talk about how to talk to your friends about your sickness? Have you talked about them? Or what kind of things have to talk to friends? So people start to say, I tell such and such. You have to go very specific...
- P4 ... what I typically doing, I was trying to remember. I was asking them to give me a lot of example because it's easier for me to remember the concrete example. So when somebody saying something sometime at the beginning I will pull out my memory about those concrete examples that I heard from the group members. Then I was " I remember so say bla bla bla that's kind of similar, what do you think?". So at the beginning I was doing the linking by myself to show them that this is how it runs. And this is okay to share. That's alright to share what we have experiences....
- P6 If it's something that we put on structure, like step 1, step 2, step 3 for Thai students to follow that or to sharing or to reflect feeling about that or their experience about that. They tend to do very well on that...

*Intervention.* Participants' described one property of the *flavor* category as the ways they work in the moment in groups. This property was called *intervention*, which was defined as the participants' ways of working in groups in the moment by integrating knowledge and experience. Further analysis revealed *intervention* had three characteristics that provided more detail regarding the participants' intervention in groups. These characteristics included letting go of plans, connecting, and incorporating cultural understanding.

Letting go of plans was the characteristic that was described by participants' as being willing to let go of plans that they had developed beforehand and following the need in the moment.

- P2 ... cannot fix activity before. Because sometime when you enter the group, you need to be aware of what's going in with their life, just right before the group or may be a few days before. By having a fix activity that can be a limitation because it might not go with the flow of the group...
- P5 ... you have to have a balance between preparations or prepare activity and your spontaneity. You prepare something but you are not control or not limited by what you prepare. You are ready to adjust or adapt to the situation. So I use both, preparation and then spontaneous reaction to the situation....
- P5 ... You learn different kind of groups, different kind of techniques. But then when you get into the fight, you cannot go from A, B, C, D and so on. You have to pick them up depending on what kind of attack is most urgent...

The second characteristic in *intervention* was connecting. Participants described connecting as one type of *intervention* that had the purpose of connecting group members to each other in the moment while they were worked in groups. Participants also expressed connecting as an intervention designed to help participants not feel alone in the groups.

- P1 ... If we work with this member, we facilitate interaction from others because to let others interact with another person is a learning process... And then we can get back to them later, to ask them to focus on their sharing experiences. And then because it's your own story, so we work through his or her story again. So we will use the group like interactive field for individual to learn himself or herself...
- P3 ... the first when they start talk about their symptoms, I asked them straight, you know. For example, in bulimia group, do you binge? Do you purge? And so they tell the group, I been bingeing for 7 years, purging for just many and the group goes the around the room, having everybody show their experiences, the conversation started to peek up. And people explain more and more about what happen. At first, they are a little bit burdens about concepts of speaking about their troubles but right away as soon as they figure out that everybody have the same, you know. I'm the same as that person over there. I have the same symptoms with her. I have the same feeling with that person over there. You know, it starts to relate....

- P3 ... I think more than that it's important especially for people in Japan is for them to know that they're not alone, there's other people who are suffering from the same situation like them...
- P3 ...So many times in therapy once the group is started up, you know and everybody is quick to see that other people share the same thing; they are quick to try to describe what's happening to them...
- P4 ... I started using a lot of linking to help them, to encourage their expression to one another. No matter is encouragement or whatever or wondering or whatever. I'm tried to open the conversation. Rather than all of them are talking with me in the feather way, I hope that they can kind of create some of relationship between on another....

The last characteristic of *intervention* was incorporating cultural understanding.

Participants expressed the importance of incorporating their understanding of culture as an intervention. They described their cultural understanding as a resource for them to use in the moment when they made interventions in their groups.

- P1 I think it fits for them to use Buddhist framework with them. In a past five years, the records send to us, our members are more kind of ...they feel more convenient with our practice and further Buddhist teaching because they feel they are Buddhist. So it makes them feel that we talk in their language. So it feels that way ...
- P2 ... I would say that in order for you to be a better helper. You need to be aware of your own need first. It's not a selfishness that sometime being view in the Eastern culture because if you focus on yourself it's not quite nice because it's not considered of others. So what I do is I point out some of differences and I let them know that if their intention is to help others, they need to negotiate the boundary. How much could they do? They can still do it in a respectful way because they have their good intention to help other person to solve their problem...
- P2 ...I try to use the technique of reframing and put into a dilemma. So they have to struggle. I don't give them the answer. They have to solve their dilemma themselves. I reframed it in a way they see both sides as positive. You know, they may speak up even though in Asian culture but the intention is good, so they should do it. Because if they don't speak up, then is them join in the problem. You are not helping but you are hurting. It's that confusing...

- P3 ...I think if you push the issue too far, you know, that's not normal. What do you really think is normal? Then they may shy away but if you go into the discussion, well, what they feel is normal, may be is the chance to...certainly going to the differences. And say may be they are different family and be okay with differences. So I guess in a culture is bad to be difference, you know I think if you can find a good way to be different, I think people willing to talk about difference....
- P4 ... Sometime it was very difficult when you want to get something when you want to love yourself or treat yourself well but a reality part is getting difficult. I'm seeing a lot of you are working so hard to treat yourself well and I know it's very hard and very difficult and I know sometime it's very complex and stressful. But I'm really glad that you work so hard to get it to yourself...
- P6 I think is my idea that the nature of my Thai student. They love something that fun because it's their age. Also it's Thai characters that like something fun or exciting. And I think that in the future. So far I don't think my training in the U.S. gonna provide some group that make them feel interesting and fun and learn in the group. I would like to see the kind of services more or I would like to practice some kind of group that make my student learn and fun at the same time.

### *Interaction*

*Evaluating the current situation* seemed to play an important role in the process of assisting participants' to develop their personal style. This property reflected the participants' thoughts while they made decisions regarding their general approach to work with their group members. This property might have a connection with the *interaction* sub-category in the *flavor* category. However, the data from the first round interview was not enough to explain these connections. In addition, *awareness of group level* could be connected to *evaluating the current situation* in the *reflective experimentation* category. However the relationships between the two properties were not clearly described.

Therefore, a question was constructed to gather more information about *evaluating the current situation*: "From our previous conversation, I can see that while

you are leading your groups, you are trying hard to develop interventions that work for your group members. Sometimes what you try works and sometimes it might not work. How do you know if what you've tried in group has worked or not? ”

*Incorporating cultural understanding* might be related to *being proud of their cultural heritage, using cultural understanding from an emic perspective* and *awareness of their culture*. However, the relationships were not clearly described.

Therefore, the following question was constructed to gather additional information: How does culture play in each process?

### Triangulation

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the use of triangulation as a method to increase the credibility of qualitative research. In this study, the researcher used the literature review as a triangulation method for the first round of data analysis.

The category *reflective experimentation* was supported by the literature. The category *reflective experimentation* represented what participants experienced while they were leading group. The goal was to develop effective ways to work with their groups. *Reflective experimentation* was defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups while at the same time attempting to develop appropriate interventions that were appropriate for particular group members. *Reflective experimentation* consisted of three sub-categories, *motivation, developing their style, and believing in philosophy*.

Rubel and Kline (2008) used the grounded theory method to study expert group leaders' experiences and perceptions during the process of leading groups. This study ascertained that the process of experiential influence was identified as a main process of group leadership. “Experiential influence described the pervasive influence of the

participants' accumulated experiences with groups upon their group leadership” (Rubel & Kline, p.145). Experiential influence affected the way group leaders worked in group with group members, understood the interaction in group and developed their intervention. This concept supported the *developing their style* sub-category and the *motivation* sub-category in the category *reflective experimentation* in this study.

Rubel and Kline (2008) provided further descriptions regarding experiential influence through the following two concepts: leader resources and leadership process. Leader resources represented group leaders pre-existing knowledge (Rubel & Kline). This concept supported the *developing their style* sub-category in the category *reflective experimentation*. Leadership process represented how group leaders developed their understanding of group interactions and made decisions about interacting in the group. This concept supported the *developing their style* sub-category in the category *reflective experimentation*.

Merchant (2006) identified that the primary goal of group work based on Western psychology is to create an environment that promotes free exchange of thoughts and feelings about any topic. This means that the leaders value self disclosure, and verbal and nonverbal exchange. This value might be conflict with Asian cultures, which generally do not value expressing feelings and direct communication. This suggestion supports the *challenging* dimension in the *developing their style* sub-category.

The second category, *awareness* was defined by participants' focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in their groups and in the individuals while attempting to develop interventions appropriate for their group members. The *awareness* category

consisted of three properties, *awareness of individual level*, *awareness of group level*, and *awareness of their culture*.

Multicultural counseling competencies include three areas: self awareness, knowledge, and skills (Arredondo et al., 1996; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Self awareness refers to a counselor's awareness of his or her own assumptions, expectations, values, biases, and privileges. Knowledge refers to a counselor's understanding of culturally diverse clients' worldviews without judgment. Skills refers to a counselor's ability to design appropriate interventions when working with culturally diverse clients (Constantine et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2004; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis; Sue & Sue, 2003; Tseng, 2004; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005). The ACA Multicultural Competencies and the ASGW Best Practices of group counseling mandate that group leaders increase their awareness, skills, and knowledge about the individuals with whom they work (DeLucia-Waack, 1996; Greeley et al, 1992). Therefore these two concepts support the category *awareness* of this study.

The third category, *flavor* was defined as being the participants' perceptions of the ways in which they practiced being in the moment in their groups through a combination of their group leadership skills and understanding of group members' cultural backgrounds. Their practice in group might be similar or different from the traditional group practice. The *flavor* category contained of two properties, *preparing group member for a new experience* and *intervention*.

DeLucia-Waack and Donigian (2004) and Yalom (1975) suggested that group leaders who create a container for the process have an important role in providing a safe environment for group members to examine and to explore their personal relationships

and concerns. This suggestion supported the property *preparing group member for a new experience* in the *flavor* category.

In the category *flavor*, the characteristic of connecting was related to the concept of cohesiveness by Yalom (1975). Group cohesiveness is one of the curative factors in group therapy (Yalom). This concept was also supported by Kottler and Forester – Miller (1998) who indicated that the group leaders' job is helping individuals to feel connected with others.

Hong (1993) suggested that counselors should educate their clients about the nature of psychological problems and psychotherapy. According to Ham (1993) Asian clients might possess stigmas regarding psychotherapy. Greeley et al. (1992) suggested the main tasks of group leaders who lead multicultural groups are to increase group harmony and to create an atmosphere in which multicultural dialogue and understanding are encouraged. These suggestions supported the characteristic of providing comfort in the *flavor* category.

Chung (2004) suggested that Asian group members may tend to perceive group leaders as authority figures and experts. Therefore group members from Asian cultures might play a passive role in the group. Therefore, more highly structured and didactic approaches may be more culturally appropriate interventions for Asian group members. DeLucia-Waack and Donigian (2004) also suggested that cultural norms might be involved in the relationships between group leaders and members. Members from different cultures might have different conceptualizations of how the group leader should lead members. These suggestions supported the characteristic of accepting authority figure status.

Chung (2004) also suggested a way that group leaders from different cultures might be able to work effectively with Asian clients: To integrate the skills from Western theory and creatively to use, to modify, and alter to traditional skills and techniques. For example, Asian group members might feel uncomfortable expressing themselves in group, therefore the group leader should create a safe environment and model self disclosure. This suggestion supported the *developing their style* sub-category in the category *reflective experimentation*.

Hong and Ham (2001) also suggested that the emphasis on challenging and confrontation in group counseling might be incongruent with Asian core values that often emphasized harmony in interpersonal relationships. This issue was also addressed by DeLucia-Waack (1996) and Greeley et al. (1992). According to these researchers, incorporating indigenous and cultural rituals in group might be appropriate for group leaders in multicultural settings. Sue and Sue (2003) provided a definition of multicultural counseling that incorporated the process of defining goals consistent with the life experiences and cultural values of clients. In addition, to recognize client identities to include individual, group, and universal dimensions, these suggestions supported the incorporating cultural understanding.

### Discussion

After the first round of interviews the interview transcripts were analyzed by grounded theory method. Three major themes emerged from open and axial coding processes. The themes represented participants' experiences while they were leading groups in Asia. These themes were conceptualized as *reflective experimentation*, *awareness*, and *flavor*. Literature triangulation was used to support or refute the

categories, as well as to provide insight into areas to be further explored for understanding.

### *Reflective Experimentation*

The category *reflective experimentation* represented what participants experienced while they were leading groups as they worked to develop effective ways of working with their groups. It was defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups while at the same time developing appropriate interventions for particular group members. Participants described *reflective experimentation* as consisting of three sub- categories, which are as follows: (a) *motivation*, (b) *developing their style*, and (c) *believing in philosophy*.

*Motivation* was defined as the inspiration, internal and external, that helped participants begin and continue their group work practice in Asia. This sub-category of *motivation* consisted of the following four properties: *seeing the benefits of group work*, *receiving positive experiences in their training*, *being willing to take risks*, and *being proud of their cultural heritage*.

One property of *motivation* that participants described was *seeing the benefits of group work*. Participants described their perception of positive outcomes for group members from their group participation as one thing that motivated them to continue to practice. Some participants described seeing the benefits of group work in terms of group members' personal growth. Some participants described it in terms educating group members to counteract stigma toward counseling and psychotherapy. Two participants described their beliefs in the benefits of group as corresponding with their theoretical orientations and philosophical beliefs.

The property *willing to take a risk* was defined as the participants' readiness to try new ideas even if it would be difficult to do so. Even though this property was described overtly by only one participant in the interview, the other participants seemed to share similar feelings. Because this property was not clearly defined, the researcher developed a question to collect more information in the next round of interviews.

In addition, during the first interviews participants described the difficulties and challenging situations that they had faced, indicating that *motivation* might be an important influence. Therefore, *motivation* might be the factor that helped participants to continue working in groups. However the relationships among categories in *motivation* were not yet clear. Specifically, the property *willing to take a risk* was not clearly described by the participants in the study. Therefore, a question was constructed to gather more information about *willing to take a risk*: "The researcher's observations from previous conversations concluded that leading groups in Asia was challenging. Do you remember? We talked about external challenges, like stigma and also some challenges in group? What motivates you to do groups in Asia even though they are challenging?"

The second sub-category in the *reflective experimentation* category was *developing their style*. This sub-category was defined as the participants' process for incorporating knowledge and experiences into their personal styles to work effectively with their group members. Further analysis found *developing their style* had five properties that provided more details. These properties included *trial and error, using previous experiences, using cultural understanding from an emic perspective, evaluating the current situation, feeling, and outcome*.

The property *trial and error* was described by participants as their process for attempting to utilize knowledge and experiences while conducting groups even though they might be unsure of the outcome. This property was described by two participants, yet this property seemed to play an important role in the process of transforming previous and current experiences into personal style. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather more information about *trial and error*: “When you have decided that you need to do something or try something different while you are leading your group, how do you decide what to do next?”

The third sub-category in *reflective experimentation* was *believing in philosophy*. Participants described their philosophical beliefs and also described the ways in which they applied their philosophies into practice of leading groups. *Believing in philosophy* was defined as participants’ perceptions and feelings about the core philosophies that they used while they were leading groups. *Believing in philosophy* consisted of a continuum; at the one end of *believing in philosophy* continuum was *Western philosophy*. Western philosophy was described as the participants’ philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Western based philosophies. At the other end of the *believing in philosophy* continuum, participants described their philosophical beliefs that were influenced Eastern based philosophies, which was identified as *Eastern philosophy*.

#### *Awareness*

*Awareness* was defined by participants’ focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in their groups and of individual while attempting to develop interventions appropriate for their group members. Participants described their awareness as a resource for them to gain understanding about the groups they led. Awareness consisted of three

properties which were *awareness of group level*, *awareness of individual level* and *awareness of their culture*.

*Awareness of their culture* was described by participants as being an aspect of the process that occurred when participants' became cognizant of their own cultures while leading groups. This awareness helped them to develop general approaches that worked effectively with their group members and it also helped them to make in the moment interventions in their groups. However *awareness of their culture* was not clearly described by participants. Consequently the researcher developed the following the question to further explore in this dimension, "How does culture play into each process?"

#### *Flavor*

*Flavor* was defined as the participants' perceptions of the ways they practiced being in the moment in their groups through a combination of group leadership skills and understanding of group members' cultural backgrounds. Their practices in groups might be similar or different from traditional group work practices.

*Preparing group members for a new experience* represented the ways in which participants' used their understanding that group members may be encountering new experiences. The definition of *preparing group members for a new experience* was the process of combining understanding of group members' cultures and group work culture to find ways to prepare group members for new experiences in group. This property consisted of two characteristics, *accepting authority figure status* and *providing comfort*. The property of *preparing group members for a new experience* was supported solidly

in the literature. However the connections between this property and other properties and dimensions were not clearly described.

*Intervention* was defined as the participants' integration of knowledge and experiences to work in the moment with their groups. Further analysis revealed the characteristics of *intervention* which were letting go of plans, connecting, and incorporating cultural understanding.

These categories, properties, and dimensions emerged from the data of the first round interview. However, the interaction of categories, properties, and dimensions were not revealed. There were several areas that needed further study to explore the connection and create a grounded theory of the experiences of Asian group leaders who are practicing in Asia.

The first area that needed further exploration was the interaction of *incorporating cultural understanding, pride in their cultural heritage, using cultural understanding from an emic perspective* and *awareness of their culture*. Therefore, a question was constructed to gather more information about these relationships: "How does culture play in each process?"

The second area that needed further exploration was the relationship between *awareness of group level* and *evaluating the current situation*, a property in the *reflective experimentation* category. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather more information about how these two dimensions correlated: "From our previous conversation, I can see that while you are leading your groups, you are trying hard to develop interventions that work for your group members. Sometimes what you try works

and sometimes it might not work. How do you know if what you've tried in group has worked or not?"

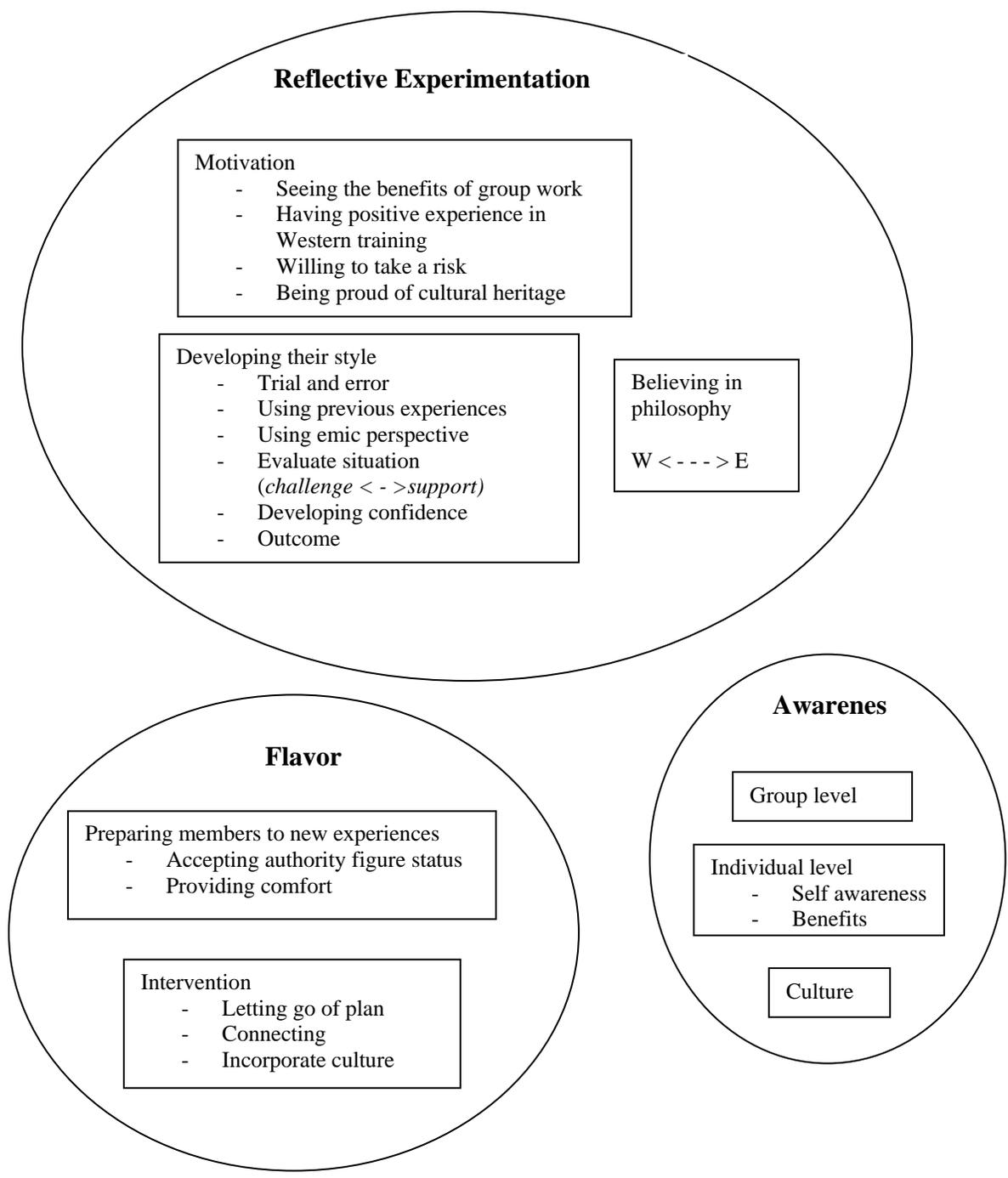
### Conclusion

In the first round of interviews, three major themes emerged. The themes were conceptualized as *reflective experimentation*, *awareness*, and *flavor*. Each theme represented participants' experiences while they were leading groups in Asia. The researcher began to see the relationships between the properties and dimensions in each theme, but some of properties and dimensions were not clearly described nor were the ways in which they connected together.

Questions for the second round interviews were constructed to gather more information about *motivation*, *willing to take risk*, *trial and error*, relationships among *awareness of their culture*, *integrated culture knowledge to practice*, *being proud of their cultural heritage* and also the relationship between *evaluating the current situation and awareness of their culture*. The questions were (1) "My observation from our previous conversation is that leading groups in Asia is challenging. Do you remember, we talked about external challenges, like some stigma and also some challenges in a group. What motivates you to do groups in Asia even though they are challenging?" (2) "From our previous conversation, I can see that while you are leading your groups, you are trying hard to develop interventions that work for your group members. Sometimes what you try works and sometimes it might not work. How do you know if what you've tried in group has worked or not?" (3) "When you've decided you need to do something or try something different while you are leading your group, how do you decide what to

do next? (4)How does culture play in each process?" Figure 1 illustrated categories, properties and dimensions.

Figure 1: Categories, properties and dimensions



## CHAPTER V

### SECOND ROUND INTERVIEWS

#### Introduction

Three categories emerged from the first round of interviews. The categories were as follows: *Reflective experimentation*, *flavor*, and *awareness*. In the second round of interviews, the researcher again utilized internet telephone interviews to gather data from all six of the participants. The data from these interview sessions was also recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Open and axial coding methods were employed to analyze the data. The purpose of the analysis was to form a grounded theory of the experiences of the participants. The categories from the first round of interviews were reviewed to determine if they were supported by the second round data. In addition, the data was examined to identify any connections between categories and properties that emerged during the first round of interviews.

The researcher used questions that were developed to collect additional information related to the following properties *motivation*, the connection of culture toward others, and the process of developing their style or the general approach that worked best with their respective group members. The questions were: (1) “My observation from our previous conversation is that leading groups in Asia is challenging. Do you remember we talked about external challenges, like some stigma and also some challenges in a group? What motivates you to do groups in Asia even though they are challenging?” (2) “From our previous conversation, I can see that while you are leading your groups, you are trying hard to develop interventions that work for your group members. Sometimes what you try works and sometimes it might not work. How do you

know if what you've tried in group has worked or not?" (3) "When you've decided you need to do something or try something different while you are leading your group, how do you decide what to do next?" (4) "How does culture affect each process?"

The analysis of the second round of interviews resulted in the reconceptualization of the *flavor* category. Participant descriptions did not confirm *flavor* as a stand-alone category. The participants' definitions indicated that it was more appropriate to include *flavor* as a part of the *reflective experimentation* category. However, the *awareness* category and the *reflective experimentation* categories were consistently confirmed by participants. The second round analysis also resulted in the emergence of two new categories *basic self* and *cultural system*. The analysis of second round data revealed that participants described their experiences while leading groups in Asia in the following four major categories: *awareness*, *basic self*, *reflective experimentation* and *cultural system*.

Analysis of second round of interview data confirmed the conceptualization of *awareness* as a category. The category *awareness* was initially revealed in the analysis of data collected from the first round of interview questions. The data analysis from the first round described the participants' focus on attaining awareness of individual, group and culture while they were working in groups. Prior to the analysis of the second round data, the properties of *awareness* consisted of (a) *awareness of group level* (b) *awareness of individual level* and (c) *awareness of culture*. The participants described their perceptions of *awareness* in terms of employing awareness in the process of developing interventions, which the participants deemed as being appropriate to utilize with members of their groups. The *awareness* category was defined by the participants

during the second round of interviews as the participants' focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in their groups and in the individuals while attempting to develop interventions appropriate for their group members.

Furthermore, participants provided details related to *awareness* during the second round of interviews. As a result of this data analysis two additional *awareness* category properties emerged: The *sources of awareness* and the *duration of awareness*. Again, the participants consistently described the *awareness of individual level* and *awareness of group level*. However, due to the emergence of the *sources of awareness* property, the concepts of *awareness of individual level* and *awareness of group level* which were revealed during the first round were reconceptualized as a dimension of the *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category. The second round data analysis also resulted in the emergence of a new dimension, the *duration of awareness* property of the *awareness* category. The details of each property and dimension are discussed in the next section.

The *basic self* category was revealed in the second round data analysis. In the first round of data collection, one concept under the *motivation* sub-category appeared to be influenced by the participants' self. However this concept wasn't clearly expressed during the first round of interviews. In the second round of interviews, the participants thoroughly described their selves. The descriptions revealed a new category, the *basic self* category. The *basic self* category was defined by participants' basic characteristics that helped them to begin and to continue their group work practice. These characteristics helped them to begin and to continue their group work practice. The *basic self* category consisted of the following: their beliefs in the group work process, their personalities, and

their connections to core beliefs. The *basic self* category contained one sub-category and one property. The sub-category was *believing in philosophy*. The property was *using resources*. The sub-category and property provided additional details in the category *basic self*.

The *believing in philosophy* sub-category of the *basic self* category was defined as a set of core beliefs that the participants used to practice group work and also used to support themselves while they were leading groups. The *using resources* property represented the components participants' perceived as being useful materials to developing a personal style that supported their work in groups. The details of this sub-category and property are discussed in the next section.

As stated previously, the *flavor* category emerged during the first round of data analysis. *Flavor* was defined as the participants' perceptions of the ways in which they practiced in the moment during their groups. The participants described employing a combination of their group leadership skills and their understanding of group members' cultural backgrounds to practice in groups. Further analysis of data during the first round interviews revealed the following properties in the *flavor* category: (a) *preparing group members for a new experience*, and (b) *interventions*. In the second round of interviews, the participants provided descriptions of the process of for incorporating their knowledge and experiences into developing their personal styles. As the participants further described the *reflective experimentation* process, the category *flavor* was absorbed by the *reflective experimentation* category. The *reflective experimentation* category was defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups while at the same time attempting to develop interventions which were appropriate for particular group

members. Participants also provided further details in *reflective experimentation* and it resulted in the emergence of two sub-categories, *outcome* and *process*.

In addition, the second round analysis resulted in a deeper description of *flavor* as it related to the actions exhibited in groups. The processes related to *flavor* in the second round analysis resulted in its reconceptualization as part of *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category. The *outcome* sub-category was defined as the participants' results from process of integrating all their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice. The *outcome* sub-category consisted of two properties, *interventions* and *gaining growth*. The *interventions* property was defined as participants' practicing in group with a combination of group leadership skills and understanding of groups in particular context, which could be similar or different from the traditional group practice. The *gaining growth* property was defined as the advancing of participants' stage of development as a person and as a professional during the process of group work practice in Asia. The *process* sub-category was defined as participants' process for incorporating their knowledge and experiences in leading groups. The *process* sub-category consisted of two properties which were *having motivation* and *transferring*. The *having motivation* property was defined as the inspiration, internal and external, that helped participants start and continue their group work practice in Asia. Participants defined *transferring* as being the process by which they were able to integrate the knowledge and experiences gained from Western countries into their group work practices in Asia. Details of each property are discussed later.

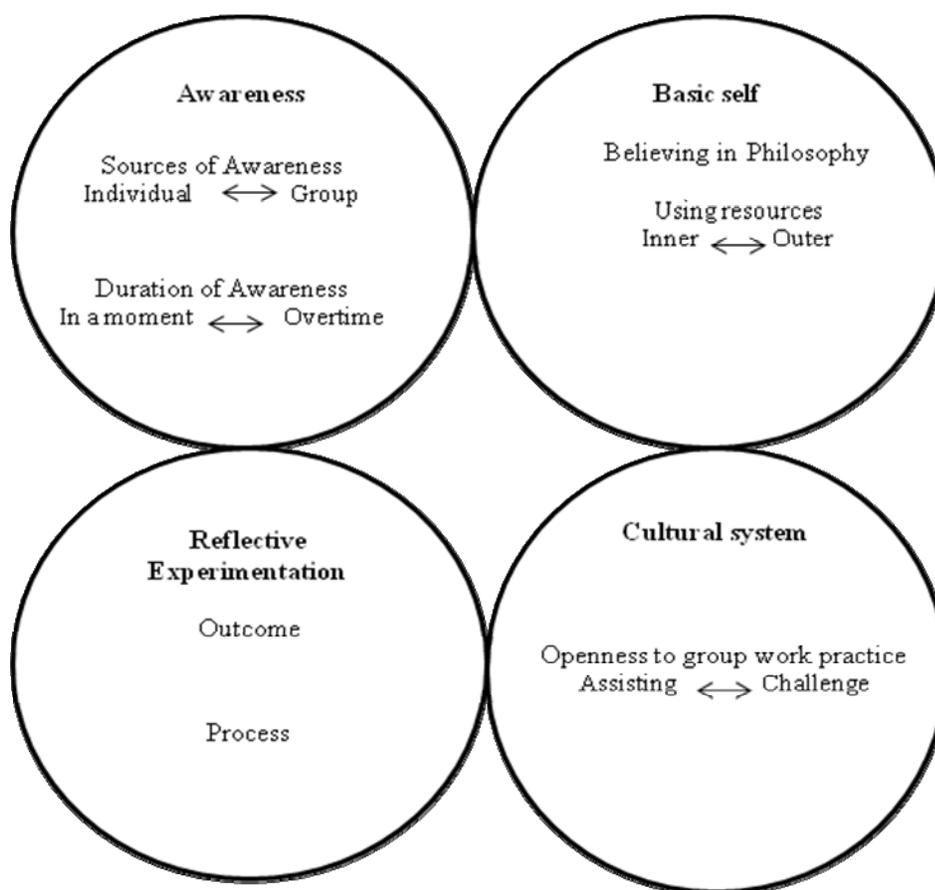
In the previous analysis, the concept of culture was indirectly mentioned by participants. It was mentioned as being part of the three main categories revealed during

the first round data analysis: *Motivation, flavor*, and *awareness*. As a consequence, the researcher developed a question to gather additional information about culture in the second round of interviews. This question resulted in the emergence of a new category, the *cultural system* category.

The second round analysis broadened the concept of culture into the *cultural system*. During this round the participants expressed their perceptions of the *cultural system* that affected their experiences while leading groups. As a result, it became the *cultural system* category. The *cultural system* category was defined as the knowledge and values shared by the participants' cultures that influenced to their group work practice. The *cultural system* category was described by the participants as their perceptions related to the interaction of culture with their practice in group and the effect of the community. Further analysis resulted in the emergence of the property of the *cultural system* category, as well as the *openness to group work practice* property. The *openness to group work practice* property was defined as the influences from the participants' cultural systems that helped their group work practice in Asia. The participants also described a dimension of the property *openness to group work practice* of the *cultural system* category. This dimension described the involvement of the *cultural system* in the participants' group work practice in Asia. The details of dimension were discussed under the *cultural system* category section.

After the previous discussion related to the results revealed during the second round data analysis, the next section provides details related to each category, properties and dimensions. Figure 2 illustrates the categories and properties that described by participants in the second round interview.

Figure 2: Categories, properties and dimensions



### *Awareness*

The *awareness* category was consistently defined by participants in the second round of interviews as the participants' focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in the group and in the individual while they attempted at the same time to develop interventions appropriate to use with their group members. The *awareness* category consisted of two properties, the *sources of awareness* property and the *duration of awareness* property.

*Sources of awareness.* This researcher defined the *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category as the participants' descriptions regarding their personal sources for obtaining awareness while they worked in groups. The analysis revealed that the *sources of awareness* property may be described by a dimension that varied along a continuum from the individual level of awareness to the group level of awareness.

At one end of this dimension, the *awareness of group level* was described by participants as a utilization of personal awareness to assist them to understand the dynamics in their groups. Participants expressed that considering the issues occurring in their groups during the *awareness of group level* helped them to work in groups. The following participants' quotes illustrated the ways in which they used their personal awareness of the group level while they worked in groups.

- P6     I feel that the group move forward pretty good or good. The time is passing really fast. Their level of participation is high.
- P6     ...one thing that Thai client and my Western client have when I conduct the group I can feel the flow of the group.
- P6     I think as a group leader, we can feel that. It's the group flow or the group success or not. And the energy too, when the group success. You can feel the energy is the positive energy. You can feel anxiety, anxious or a lot of feeling though.

At the other end of the dimension, *awareness of individual level* was defined as participants' awareness of individual level that helped them to develop their personal styles that worked appropriately with their group members. The following quotes illustrated the ways in which the participants perceived *awareness of individual level* which helped in their work in groups.

- P2 ...therapist feels that “oh no, my plan didn't work”. And then start to focus through attention. And begin to feel incompetent. Then the therapist would lose their confidence and then true focus will be distracted from what's going on in the group but it comes back to seeing yourself and how did I feel, what was going on.
- P2 ...Then you can take the accountability of your part. However, if after you explore, you have a sense that may be this client having transference on you. Meaning that the real issue is not between you and her but may be just because you as a therapist have certain quality that reminds the client of her mother.
- P5 To make an analogy, it would be like a cook. You know, you have to cook enough. You have to know about recipe. You have to have enough experience in cooking. Then after you are confidences. Then you can change the recipe. You can add different flavors to make a unique dish, to be your own. Otherwise you will be like McDonalds, everywhere is always the same.

*Duration of awareness.* The second property of the *awareness* category was the *duration of awareness*. This property was defined as the period of time that participants engaged with the information to gain awareness. Participants also described a dimension of the *duration of awareness* property. The dimension consisted of *awareness in the moment* at one end of the dimension and *awareness over time* at the other end of the dimension.

At one end, *awareness in the moment* was defined as the awareness that participants might achieve in a short period of time. Participants expressed the *awareness*

*in the moment* as the awareness that they gained from observing the group members' interactions during the groups

- P3 a lot of times that thing that I look at is I'm looking for the expression. A lot of times when people are, you get the nail on the head. You know when you get the exact sentence, they all be surprised after that they all talk.
- P3 ... the patient doesn't come in and tell you, I think I feel better but the patient comes in and says I feel a lot better. You know is not something that the person has to think about. It's something that the person knows their life has changed. Like, you know I feel so much better because I'm not throwing out. I'm not hiding in the bathroom. I'm not buying all the stuffs. The patients themselves cannot deny in the change.
- P4 I truly see the kids that didn't change in the very obvious way but they changed just slightly. Sometime it's just a sentence they said that very different from the other sentence they mentioned earlier or previous. This sentences they mentioned this time is more positive one. I think that's the improvement.
- P5 Patients reaction and behavior resulting from the session or the activity that took place in the session.
- P5 ... then you're going back to cook again. You serve a dish to your customer and then you watch their reaction. If they are really happy with the dish, then you make the right decision. If they cannot finish the dish, then you have to think again.
- P6 If my Thai client they don't like a group, they would sit like in the position that they don't want to get, you know or they just. How can I explain, they don't pay attention on the topic very much.

At the other end of the dimension, participants described the personal awareness that they used to understand their groups over time. The *awareness over time* was defined as the awareness that gradually helped them to gain information while they worked in groups.

- P3 I think the interesting is you test the pattern by asking it over and over in different direction.

- P3 ...the thing is how I develop theory that's you see many many many cases. You know 10, 20, 30, 40, and after you have seen as many cases, you start to see pattern of the cases. May be it's just my imagination, you know.
- P3 I think that when we looking for result from trying to make change. The change has be negligible change or close to negligible change. You know, I look for drastic change when I'm doing therapy. I don't feel that I'm truly found a form of cure or some kind of change, unless I found something that makes a drastic change.
- P3 I think the interesting is you test the pattern by asking it over and over in different direction. In the way that's not to suggest the pattern but you want to collect information. I think it's really easy to do "Wow, this is the pattern, right. This is what you believe, right. This is what it is." Then not giving the patient chance
- P4 I have to say in the first two sessions, they are kind of hesitant, they are kind of go with the surface, they don't want to take much adventure; they just go around the water to see what's going on. But then later on, I notice that in the third session, along the third session to the end. They begin to explore more and more. Even though they kind of open up themselves just a little more in comparison to the last time but I think it's amazing.
- P4 So what I monitoring or how I evaluate the progress is more from small changes in the way they talk about themselves, in the way they arrange (removed identity information), in the way they project who they are, you know. So that's pretty subjective to understand, though I can really document whatever they say to do really systemic analysis, for sure.
- P4 The process takes time. So what I monitoring or how I evaluate the progress is more from small changes in the way they talk about themselves, in the way they arrange (removed identity information), in the way they project who they are, you know. So that's pretty subjective to understand, though I can really document whatever they say to do really systemic analysis, for sure.
- P4 Even though there is not seemed to be a huge therapy step. But I did notice that they change little by little along the session.

The dimensions of both properties, *source of awareness* and *duration of awareness* of the *awareness* category may be related to the *resource* property of the *basic self* category. The potential connections are discussed under the interaction section.

### *Basic Self*

During the second round analysis, the *basic self* category was defined by participants' basic characteristics as group leaders that helped them to begin and to continue their group work practice. The *basic self* category contained one sub-category, *believing in philosophy* and one property, *using resources*. The sub-category and property further described the experience of participants while leading groups in Asia. The details in each sub-category and property are discussed as follows.

#### *Believing in Philosophy*

In the second round of interviews, the participants described *believing in philosophy* as a sub-category of the *basic self* category. It was defined as a set of core beliefs that the participants possessed that they used in group work practice and also used to support themselves while they were leading group. *Believing in philosophy* consisted of the following four properties: *having Western beliefs*, *having Eastern beliefs*, *having a universal perspective*, and *trusting in group work*. The properties of *believing in philosophy* additionally described major components of the sub-category *believing in philosophy*. The details of each property are discussed as follows.

*Having Western beliefs*. The first property, *having Western beliefs* was defined as participants' philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Western based theory. Further analysis revealed that the *having Western beliefs* property was described as being a dimension that ranged along a continuum. The continuum ranged from *high levels* to *low levels of having Western beliefs*.

As previously stated at one end of the dimension was *high levels of having Western beliefs*. It was defined by participants' expressions of a high reliance on Western based theories while they practiced in groups.

- P2 you know, what people do in group is to support each other. So I think overtime that resistance client may be able to lower her wall or his guard down because one of the main therapeutic factor that Irvin Yalom always cited that you help them to begin to have a shared feeling. So I think when people are able to emphasize with one another then it increases the chance for real sharing.
- P4 it's really hard, from a scientific measurement part, I didn't really answer this question. But in my mind, the faith is very important for me while I'm doing counseling work.
- P4 So I think by using (removed identity information) which I'm not force them to do anything. I am only offering a way for them to explore themselves. A way that they can control to share their world with me, if they prefer to do so. I think the whole control of how they want the session to be process so think the quality of the (removed identity information). I think matches them so that's why choose that to do rather than force to do that.
- P6 I try to conduct logotherapy group for graduate student. The logotherapy itself came from Western country, from Europe. I found that the group itself, I mean the group process is the way that I'm deliver the logo, I mean the content or the way we interact I'm using the logotherapy

At the other end of continuum was *low levels of having Western beliefs*. This was defined by participants' expressions of modest reliance on Western based theories while they practiced in groups.

- P1 ...So I had a question. I think this question I have had it for a long time I think since I studied in a college. A question was "why must I study just Freudian or Rogerian or Jungian, you know. Was there a Thai psychologist in town, practice from our own viewpoint? But I found no one then. I had kind of question that my mother, my father did not understand or know anything about Piaget or Freudian or Rogers but how could they look after me as a young infant or a child. What's kind of psychology they use in order to look after me, to take care of me? So I think it must be some kind of psychology but we don't know exactly what it was yet

*Having Eastern beliefs.* The second property of the believing in philosophy was the *having Eastern beliefs* property. Participants described their philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Eastern based theory which was called *having Eastern beliefs*. This property was defined as participants' philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Eastern philosophy.

- P1 I feel this map from Buddhist teaching is broad and covering all dimensions, all aspect of psychological phenomenal.
- P1 Somehow if we take a close look of their problem or their question, and we understand what the root is from our Buddhist understanding of a question of life. So if we are trained to be a good examiner. I don't want to use a good listener, you know, examiner. We will have kind of a map in our mind. And we can explore or x ray into the root of problem very easily. And it's not easy to find a root of problem now. But exciting moment is how use your though to help them solve their problem. And I think now understand that in any problem. I mean psychological problem. We call it attachment or Uppatan in Buddhism. We like to use the words, Uppantan. It means attachment because this kind of attachment becomes a prison for a person. So we try to cut this attachment. We can cut this attachment by first, look at them to understand the reality of life which is such changing. Life is bigger than our expectation. Expectation and attachment in these contexts are the same thing. So when you expect, you attach. So we try to cut this attachment or expectation. We call this process, a realization process.

*Trusting in group work.* The third property of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category was the *trusting in group work* property. This property was defined as the participants' beliefs in the benefits gained from group work for both themselves and their group members. The following participants' quotes illustrated the beliefs that the participants had about group work being beneficial for both themselves and their group members.

- P1 Sometime it might be boring not only for a counselor but for a client too. But in group is very exciting place to explore, to give, to love, to take. A lot of things happen in group.

- P1 I just feel that from practice, group is, well, very exciting and sometime entertaining with people. It's life, lively. It's real. And it's very powerful in term of stay together and let member helping each other. It's a life. It's life. I think you can feel it from your practice
- P1 ...a lot of reason to explain it but from our experiences, I think group is fit into Thai society.
- P2 ... if it is in the group setting, it's the entire group dynamic and how they interact with each other and help each other find some sort of change. So I think the benefit, once it works, it's more satisfy.
- P2 Even though of course it's more challenging to do in the group but the part that I particularly like it, it's because I love to observe and challenge group dynamics.
- P2 It's about genuine feeling rather than begin a superficial. You know sometime you feel that your client get an insight and outside psychotherapy office within just a few days, they just forgot and returned to their normal pattern that may be dysfunctional. But when you lead the group from week to week, when you return, not only that the leader would be interested in hearing the process but other group members also show some interests in how thing happens. So they can't just put on the mask and say on superficial level "oh thing's great". Because when you have member of 7 or 8 watching and listening and observing you, and some of them have the similar feeling. So they know when and where to challenge...
- P2 I think if the group leader is able to help group members go through the process and understand the process, regardless difference in the culture perspective. I think people when there are somebody who is willing to listen to them emphatically. It make them feel like they can talk and relief. If you can help them stay in the moment of relieving their stresses and also using the reframe technique appraising them on their courage to open up despite culture taboo of not talking. Then you can help them began to see.
- P3 Well, I think that is as in U.S. is the same, that groups are always good in term of cost performance. You want to get as many people in a little time that possible and basically, it does come down to the financial issue
- P4 I have to say in the first two session, they are kind of hesitant, they are kind of go with the surface, they don't want to take much adventure; they just go around the water to see what's going on. But then later on, I notice that in the third session, along the third session to the end. They begin to explore more and more. Even though they kind of open up themselves just a little more in comparison to the last time but I think it's amazing. I mean

by the progress of client is not typically obvious or huge to the point you notice. I told myself to be sensitive about the little progress the clients were making. Even though there is not seemed to be a huge therapy step. But I did notice that they change little by little along the session.

- P5 ...group therapy is practical when there's not too many therapist around and there are many patients, or clients. So you get to see more than one of them at once.

This property seemed to be important for the participants to continue to practice group work in Asia. However, participants didn't provide concise descriptions regarding this property. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to glean additional information about the trusting in group work property. The question was "Belief in the value of groups seems important to motivation to lead. Can you describe how you developed your belief in the value of groups?"

*Having a universal perspective.* Participants described their philosophical beliefs about the universal effect of their practice which was based on the commonalities that exist between human beings. The *having a universal perspective* property was defined by the participants' beliefs in the positive effect of their group work practice on group members because of their perceptions of the common nature of human beings.

Participants expressed their universal perception related to therapeutic processes and their collective belief that all humans are the same at some level. Furthermore, humans were not ultimately divided by cultural differences.

- P2 I think that the factors that even though they are differences in culture and the perspective on whether you should or should not reveal personal or family information but I think that if you are able to provide a safe environment and establishing trust then a few member can open up and begin to share in their way.
- P3 beyond being Asian or being of the Asian cultures, people are human and therefore humans regardless of where they are on the planet are social being and therefore the group is gonna work regardless of what culture is.

- P3 ...when human being regardless of culture, when human being are reduce to the basic necessity in life, the first thing that goes out of the door is culture. And that's mean, what I mean by that when people are in dire higher need of help, they are not going to obey the culture rules. They gonna just tell you everything about themselves and the expression goes, spell the beans....
- P4 It's like disregard a culture issue when we are counseling a person, we will go into the intra part to work with, to taste the water, to see how far we can go to try to make this stage of this relationship work really smoothly. And with dealing with the culture issue, not only picking to the intra part also the culture part. When I want to get this spin of this relationship more smoothly to the point, we can kind of get into that and work something out.

Two participants expressed beliefs that their philosophical orientations were not affected by cultural boundaries.

- P1 Well, culture is not according. It's not according with culture. It's in psyche. It's psychological work.
- P1 It's somehow beyond cultural because this map is universal. Whether you are American or European, this map is broadly, deeply, and widely. This map is universal, can use with every person in this planet. And this map is very effective, you know.
- P4 I think the culture part, to some extent, I don't think it plays a big part because (removed identity information) itself, it provides a freedom for the participants to explore because it's nonverbal and it did not attach to traditional therapy, concepts, because uses a lot of miniature that typically, people wouldn't imaging that a talk therapy would be like that. So it does not attach to any traditional stigma in therapy and it's really giving the freedom because the humanistic approach.

*Using resources.* The *using resources* property of the *basic self* category was defined as the assets participants used to develop their personal style of group leadership. Participants further described a dimension of the *using resources* property. The dimension consisted of *using inner resources* at one end of the dimension and *using outer resources* at the other end. Participants also described the characteristics of *using resources*.

At one end of this dimension, *using inner resources* was defined as the inner sources for participants to use in developing their personal style. Participants described the characteristics of *using inner resources* as to utilize past experiences, experiential understanding, understanding from an emic perspective, and intuition. The dimension and characteristics of the property *using resources* further described how participants perceived the *using resources* property.

Participants described how utilizing their past training experiences in Western theory that included both educational and clinical experiences helped them develop the ways in which they worked with groups.

This quote from Participant 4 presented how utilizing a previous experience helped her to address a current situation in a group.

P4 ...sometime I might recalled back to my experiences to see, do I have similar experiences in the past, how did I deal with that?

The participants described using cultural understanding from an emic perspective as a characteristic of the *using inner resources* dimension. The participants also described the use of experiential understanding to develop their personal style. These descriptions provide further evidence of the potential connection between the *using inner resource* property and the *awareness* category.

P1 If it done, we know it, you know. When it's finish, we know it. That's why I call it experiential understanding.

P1 ...my answer is we know whether it works or not by our experiential or psychological observation, our experiential looked into this kind of problem.

P1 ...In order to understand this map, psychologically and experientially, we have to practice quite a bit...

- P2 What happen is that even though each approaches, they have their own way, but when you begin to absorb a lot of this information and then you see a client, you can see that you can take some of the theoretical idea and turn that into activity. You integrate them.

The participants also described utilizing intuition while they were working in groups. One participant described using intuition during a time when he made a decision about the use of an intervention which he was not sure would succeed.

- P1 ...Like when a mother feeds her baby. How does she know when her child is full? How does a mother know when a child, she or he has enough food? So may be from our observation when a child stops receiving food. It likes experiential understanding. In experiential understanding if we use it with our client, we can feel when his or her problem is done. When the problem is done, we usually feel happy, feel relieve. We understand experientially is done, it works. If it's not done, we know that's not work. We have to try another method with in this map with this person.

Participant 4 described using intuition during a time when she ran out of choices for interventions.

- P4 Sometime you know a lot then all the precept knowledge you have kind of make some of the creative people, the easy one or the easy intervention kind of like blind spot for you but you just did not feel that, even though it's quite of obvious. So a lot of time, I might go by the intuitive part, like just try something difference, that's really out of the situation.
- P4 ...If I'm running out of every option that I mention, sometime I just try something that's very creative. I might just try something crazy. Well, the crazy one I try, will still base on my understanding on client.

At the other end of the dimension, *using outer resources* was defined as the external sources participants used when developing their personal style. The participants discussed the characteristics of *using outer resources* which included using supervision, researching the literature, employing measurement and utilizing feedback from families.

The participants expressed that using supervision is a characteristic of *using outer resources*. The following participants' quotes illustrate the participants' use of supervision as an outer resource.

- P2 Well, most group people here they don't have process at the end of the group. And then do whatever they do. This is something that I think (removed identity information) is still lack a lot, in term of giving important to supervision. I think it's important to process after the session, after the group.
- P2 I do group after the group has ended; I always have like a process session with my co leader to think about what went right, what went wrong and what kind of intervention we made. In case that something went wrong, what could we have done?
- P4 a lot of time, I might use some supervision. I talk about the case with my chair, kind of share that with my colleges to see what they think, to get some other perspective in the same issue because sometime I would have a blind spots when I'm doing the work.

Two participants described utilization of current literature as one of the *outer resources* that they used while practicing in groups.

- P2 when I do group activity, I don't usually repeat them a lot. What does that mean, over a year; I learn to observe client's individual needs and sometime group needs. And I think as a therapist, you need to keep up with your reading. Whether be reading about therapeutic activity or about certain approaches. Because from all information, from books, from on line courses, from attending a conferences.
- P2 ... I think as a therapist, you need to keep up with your reading. Whether be reading about therapeutic activity or about certain approaches. Because from all information, from books, from on line courses, from attending a conferences.
- P4 ...Sometime I research on the literature what I can do differently.

Two participants also described the use of measurements as a characteristic of *using outer resources*.

- P3 I think the important is you should use objective scale as much as possible. What I mean by objective scale is like self report scale before

and after the group. To see anything changes. You know, for example, you have something like eating disorders, you have very low self-esteem, you have problem with expression of yourself. You take test like TAS test. And you take the scales and so that you see and you make part of the group, you make your interventions according to those problem and so when you can see the change in the scales, you can see those interventions work or not.

P6 ... the group that's part of my research. I would know from the evaluation, pre and post....

Participants indicated that feedback from a group member's family may be a characteristic of *using outer sources* to help gather information. The following participants' quotes illustrated that they had gathered information from families related to group members' development.

P3 May be family members also say wow, life is completely change for us you know. We are lots happier; we are lots closer as a family. We communicate a lot more, you know. I think dinner was terrible time, now is such an enjoyable moment.

P5 You can talk with the family also.

Figure 3 illustrates the *basic self* category, sub-categories, properties, dimensions.

Figure 3: Basic self category, sub-categories, properties and dimensions



### *Reflective Experimentation*

From the participants' descriptions in the second round of interviews, *reflective experimentation* was defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups while at the same time attempting to develop interventions that were appropriate for group members. Participants also provided further details in *reflective experimentation* and it resulted in the emergence of two sub-categories, *outcome* and *process*. Participants further described the properties of each sub-category. The property described distinct major components of the sub-category *outcome* and sub-category *process* of the reflective experimentation category.

### *Outcome*

The *outcome* sub-category was defined as the participants' results from the process of integrating all their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice. The *outcome* sub-category resulting from further analysis revealed that the outcome sub-category consisted of two properties, *interventions* and *gaining growth*. These properties described distinct major components of the sub-category *outcome*.

*Interventions*. In second round data analysis, the *interventions* property was defined as participants' practicing in group with a combination of group leadership skills and understanding of groups in particular context, which could be similar or different from the traditional group practice. Participants further described the characteristics of *interventions*. The characteristics were as follows: preparing group members for a new experience, letting go of plans, and genuineness.

Participants combined their understanding of group members' culture and group work culture in order to find ways to prepare group members for a new experience. Participants accepted their authority figure status and provided specific parameters with the intention to prepare group members for a new experience in groups. These quotes from participants illustrate their perception of accepting their authority figure status as a characteristic of the *interventions* property.

- P1     Now we know that people coming to group with a question in their life. If we know what a question is, we are able give the answer. I do not talk in term of intellectual question but experiential question.
- P3     Once you suggest to them, this is what happens or this is the problem. Then they like, yeah it's exactly how it is. The interesting about personality disorder, if you not, if you can't explain to them how this happen to them, then the therapy will not advance. But if you can explain to them how they became this way, then they are open to change.

Participants also described their attempts to provide specific examples so that the group members would feel comfortable to open up and share in the groups. They described their willingness to wait for group members' prompts indicating readiness to make changes.

- P3 You can force change in that situation but you know, that's not exactly what I'm looking for and I'm hoping that's not what patients looking for either.
- P4 I would never force them to express anything or to explore anything they don't want to. Even though I can sense from number of behaviors that may be they aware of something or they may sense something. But I will never say, you know "well, tell me about that". I will wait until they ready to tell me so. But I would surely note in my mind that they might notice something but I would never force them to do anything until they are ready.

Participants described their willingness to let go of plans that they had developed beforehand and follow the need in the moment. The following participants' quotes provided examples related to being flexible and letting go of plans.

- P2 I put a pause on activity or sometime let that activity because warm up activity usually short. So after that then I break them into small group or sometime just sit in the big circle and ask them "what were their feeling, were and then?" . So the number one, the therapists have to not too be afraid to ask. Because sometime, some people are afraid to put out the question like "what was wrong". But without asking, how would you know. So you kind of open up the floor and may be sometime is anxiety, sometime they just feel like they have a late night. But without asking, it's therapist's own interpretation. So they are more sharing, you have more information. And then you have to let go your previously planned activity and then use information that you get from the group members from the discussion of what's going on. Then move on forward. So what have required on therapist part is the skill to be spontaneous and also a therapist who can let go of the plan without getting stuck on it.
- P5 you will create activities or take part in decision also which means you have be a flexible person and not to become too rigid or become stuck in particular frame of reference or thought.

One participant described that genuineness was important to him as a group leader. Genuineness was defined as the participants' being real when they worked in groups.

P3 You really don't know what to do next. Because you have patient in front of you who hasn't feel better. I think that's very scary point but at the same time, I don't panic any more, I don't. The reason is because I know if it does not going to happen here, it's not going to happen anywhere else. So what I will do, maybe talk to the patient "you know I don't really know what's going to happen next, you work with me and I work with you. We try to get through this."

Participant 2 described an outcome that was developed from a technique she learned to help her to understand her group members.

P2 It's usually a combination of reframing technique of how one can see therapy process. Or even for people, men and women, you see that a lot of men usually don't like to admit to their sensitive feeling and they don't usually cry. Because they feel crying is a symbol of weakness. If you help them see, just look inside yourself. If you are aware that your feelings are coming up and you are not running away from that. You let it slip into you. You observed it. You feel the pain. At that moment, you allow your tear to drop. That's more like it's your courage to accept the truth and painful.

The participants further expressed their feelings about the *interventions* property and the other processes they had experienced. The participants also expressed confidence as it related to their process for developing a general style of group work practice. Their expressions of confidence were varied by each of the participants' level of experience. The following participant's quote provided information about his personal style.

P1 ...when a person present his or her problem in life. Any problem, we call that a question. And people's problem will state their story broadly. Somehow if we take a close look of their problem or their question, and we understand what the root is from our Buddhist understanding of a question of life.

*Gaining growth.* During the second round of interviews, the data indicated the emergence of a concept which regarded participants' growth in personal and professional level as being a part of the *reflective experiment* category. In the first round of analysis the participants described the stage of *developing their style* as being the work experience they had in the field. The participants who had more experience expressed that they were more confident about their practice. Consequently, from the emergence of the concept in the first round data and the description in the second round data, the *gaining growth* property was revealed. The *gaining growth* property was defined as the advancing of participants' development as a person and as a professional during the process of practicing group work in Asia.

The participants' group work experience levels varied so their descriptions related to the *gaining growth* property also varied. The following quote of Participant 1 who had more than 20 years of experience practicing in Asia illustrated the personal growth development while he was trying to apply his philosophical belief to practice.

- P1     There are at least two level or two types or two things together at the same time, you know. I like to understand human nature, that's the first thing and the second one is to apply the principle or knowledge to help human being. But these two are both sides of the same coin. So it goes together. In order to help effectively, we have to understand the nature of human being. If you dig deeply into what we call "human being", we will be able to understand life more and more, to be able to live harmonious with life.
- P1     Even our self, you know. It begins with our self and then we can use it with members or patients or clients.

The following participant's quote illustrated the participants' perceptions related to experience and how it affected their practice.

- P3     But a lot of time people, like less experiences therapist just slightly to be there and panic and try to make thing works out by force. But the things if you try to force things to make any better, those changes are never

permanent changes. They will never for long. One example of forced change never last for long is the treatment of social anxiety disorder. If you use cognitive behavioral therapy for social anxiety disorder, you get change in the short term. But study after study suggested that after when all therapy cut and after that you get relapse of symptoms and problems with the same amount of you know if your therapy went out for five weeks, five weeks after the change changes back. Ten – twenty weeks later, it's almost back to normal, prior to the initial stage. So I think you can force people into change. You can force change in that situation but you know, that's not exactly what I'm looking for and I'm hoping that's not what patients looking for either.

P6: I think the experience is important to help me decided or should I move on or should I stay for little while. If I lead the group for the first time, it takes me for little while to learn about it.

The following quote is from Participant 6 who had the least amount of experience practicing group work in Asia. Participant 6 expressed perceptions regarding experience and how it affected her practice.

P6 ...it's a good topic. It helps us to see the difference. Sometime I feel frustrate with it because it isn't like what I expected. Like I was trained in this way and I tried to mix it in another culture and I'm still new to adjust it to the new culture.

However, details in the *gaining growth* property were not clearly described in the second round of interviews. Therefore, the researcher developed questions to collect additional information regarding the *gaining growth* property. The questions were “As I talk to you, you seem like you get a lot of fulfillment/joy from creating and leading groups. Can you talk to me about that fulfillment?” and “How have your experiences leading groups in (participant's country) changed you as a group leader or person?”

### *Process*

In the second round interview, participants began to describe their process of incorporating their basic self, their awareness in group, their understanding of the cultural system into their group work. It resulted in the emergence of the *process* sub-category of

the category *reflective experimentation*. The *process* sub-category was defined as participants' process for incorporating their knowledge and experiences into their practice in group work. The *process* sub-category consisted of two properties which were *having motivation* and *transferring*. The properties of the *process* sub-category described distinct major components of the sub-category process. Details of each property are discussed below.

*Having motivation*. The property *having motivation* was defined as the inspiration, internal and external, that helped participants start and continue their group work practice in Asia. Further analysis revealed that *having motivation* consisted of two characteristics, being motivated by an exploring personality and being motivated by a helper identity.

The second round interview, participants expressed being motivated by an exploring personality as characteristic of the *having motivation*. Being motivated by an exploring personality emerged from participants' descriptions that related to their collective characteristics as people who liked challenging activities. This characteristic helped them begin and continue their practice in group work in Asia. Participant 1 described the internal factor that motivated him to continue to practice in groups.

P1 It's something inside. It's something inside our guts. It's not just being a counselor or counseling psychologist by training but we must have that thing in our mind to serve all human being as much as we can.

Participant 1 further described how studying psychology and working with patients helped to motivated him to develop his personal style in leading groups.

P1 When I first practice with a student, when I was in junior year, I have to practice with a student in a school nearby my university. I have a chance to take a close look at the patient in a mental asylum too. And somehow, this seed was planted in my mind that in some day that I will be more

effective in term of helping and understanding human nature. And work more effective.

The same participant provided additional details regarding the curiosity that motivated him to practice in groups. Participant 1 talked about how he was motivated to practice because he wanted to find answers regarding human beings.

P1 There are at least two level or two types or two things together at the same time, you know. I like to understand human nature, that's the first thing and the second one is to apply the principle or knowledge to help human being. But these two are both sides of the same coin. So it goes together. In order to help effectively, we have to understand the nature of human being. If you dig deeply into what we call "human being", we will be able to understand life more and more, to be able to live harmonious with life.

Participant 3 and Participant 5 expressed themselves as people who liked challenging activities and it helped them to begin and to continue their practice in group work in Asia.

P3 ... I'm doing a group I always think of that. That we are doing something that's at first people would wonder "Is that really gonna go well in Japan and the other part of Asia?" Well, at the same time we're trying to proof something, right? I think that's bringing a lot of motivation.

P3 I think personally what motivates me to do that is the concept of group in Asia. It's so foreign. If it goes well, you are doing something that's very different and they rely on motivations. What I mean is the challenge itself is the motivation.

P5 ...it's interesting for me, a challenge. If you look at it as challenges is always motivating to try. Healthy way of approaching things in life, I guess. And may be another reason is group therapy is practical when there's not too many therapist around and there are many patients, or clients. So you get to see more than one of them at once.

P5 ... Second, it's interesting for me, a challenge. If you look at it as challenges is always motivating to try. Healthy way of approaching things in life ....

Participants also described being motivated by their helper identity as part of the motivation property. Participants described devoting themselves to practicing group work and committing to their profession. The following participant quotes provided their perceptions of how their helper identities contributed to their motivation.

- P1 I think it is a purpose of our professional commitment. As counseling psychologist, we have to find way to better our human friends' psychological well being. I think as a professional, group is the way that we can serve the public. And I think is like operational room of those physician friends. I think we work in group instead of operation room.
- P4 I want more people to know about this option. I'm not telling them. I'm not forcing them to believe this is the only way or the right way. But I think to know more options would be a good choice, would be good to know for lots of counselor, so even teachers at school.
- P5 The first one is there's not too many people to do it if I don't do it then the patient don't get service.
- P6 I think is a part of our practice, we have individual, we have group, we have workshop. It's like a tool. I think group like a tool for counselor, for therapist to deliver whatever like psychotherapy to client
- P6 ... Its part of my job is one reason and another reason is it might be a good tool to deliver counseling to clients, to many clients at the same time. And another reason is its part of my training during my master and Ph.D. too. It's the tool that we learn too.

Yet, the connections between the property of *having motivation* and the other categories and properties were not clearly expressed by the participants. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather additional information related to the connection of *having motivation* and the other categories and properties. The question was; "It seems like your curiosity and enjoyment of challenges motivates you to lead groups? Is this true? And if so, can you tell me more about this"?

*Transferring.* In the second round interviews, participants started to describe their process of transferring their knowledge and experiences from training in the West to

group work practice in Asia. The participants defined *transferring* as the ways in which they were able integrate the knowledge and experiences gained from Western training into their group work practices in Asia.

- P1 If we talk like a metaphor, it might be like I was a seed that look for a good place to be planted. So I had a chance to study in the West and as Thai, you know. I feel deeply those theory didn't fit my way of life here.
- P4 Sometime there is. From my observation in my own experiences, I will remind myself to watch out my American training background in this cultural issue.
- P4 ...my undergraduate in counseling profession is taken in Taiwan. My master and doctoral training is started in American. It's mean I get intensive and deepen training in American. That's truly seriously I would greatly affected by American culture, in training styles and in counseling styles. And so that's one part of me, pretty westernize as far as profession is counselor. However, there's another part of me which is Taiwanese oriented which is my culture part. And how these two parts could be in conflict, may be, could be work together, may be. So what I'm saying by that is sometime I choose intervention or I choose the way I response to my clients or group members, based on my professional judgment. Sometime the professional judgment overlooked the culture sensitivity. What I am saying by that is sometime I though as Taiwanese I should know or sometime when I am doing a work is more Western training part of me make a judgment rather than the professional part based on the culture sensitivity and make a judgment. The evolve so fast, sometime I cannot catch it until the session is finished then I realized that on in that part I challenge that simply because the western values I learn in my training and then I put that on the table and say "see" that I may be sensitive about the culture part in Taiwan to some extent sometime I may not be that respectful of the culture difference during the session.
- P4 sometime the half of me, the part of the counseling values, the part of metaphilosophy about counseling which is rooted in Western culture. I think that really matches what I think, what I believe. Though, the line was not so clear. Whether this is truly who I am and I just found the Western value that matches what I think or I'm just a slide of white paper and then I'm get in touch in the American culture I found it and it flip me or I prefer that much more than Chinese vaule. So I don't know which one happen first but either way I gotta say that a lot of the values or the concepts that counseling have about human nature, I really believe so, I really believe. So that's part of me. That goes beyond the culture part. I mean that's really me. That's the intra part of me. From that individual

perspective, I'm bringing that. I mean my personal value into session. May be I mention that before, I don't think it's possible to be value free in counseling session. So I bring that part of me into session. And it's just that part of me that greatly affected by Western cultures.

- P6 the way that we employed theory from the Western sometime it's not well fit with the Thai culture. For example, in logotherapy we talk about meaning in life and life has purpose or life has goal to fulfill. In Thai culture, in Buddhist culture, sometime the purpose of life itself prevented us to moving forward to the meaning. I think that somehow the Western philosophy itself is well fit with Thai client and in Thai culture. From my observation, the Eastern philosophy is something it meets with the group setting because people can just go and sometime find a place that they can do self- reflection, they can sit and think, do some reflect and then they can gain some insight, they can follow some Dharma, they can get some solutions. So it seems to be that the way that Thai people use to solve their life problem employed Eastern culture, Eastern philosophy and also they employed the way Eastern people used, it's more individual. So when I tried to employed group counseling and used logotherapy in the group to work with life problem. Sometime I found that it was not get together very well.
- P6 It's quite difficult for me when I ask myself to finger out what culture component that effect on this and this and that. Sometime is hard though. It's hard. If it's obviously like time, I can feel the different. But somehow the, there is something there but I don't know how to reflect, how t say it. It's something that we have here in Thailand, compare to experience in the U.S. I don't think they have this very much. But I don't know what to say.
- P6 I think is interesting when you post question and try to answer it and found it oh yes. This is different from Thai. I mean my Thai clients are different from my Western clients. Even the way I interact to my Thai client and my Western client is different too. Not just from the group. Not just from client but from myself. I don't know how to explain. I like your topic.
- P6 It seems to me in the group too. I as people from the Eastern, I get use to communication with nonverbal too. I don't have a problem when I communicate nonverbal with my Thai client. But in the Western, I mean when I lead group with Western client. I get feedback that they got some difficulties to read my nonverbal. I don't get this problem when I lead group in Thailand. My Thai client can read my nonverbal very well.

Although, *transferring* was described by participants during the second round of interviews, the participants did not clearly express details about *transferring* or the

connection of *transferring* with others categories and properties. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to collect additional information regarding the process of transferring knowledge from Western training into their practices in Asia. The question was “Describe your process of fitting your experiences with western counselor training with your identity as a (participant’s nationality) group leader?”

### *Cultural System*

Although culture was not revealed as a main concept in the first round analysis, culture seemed to be related to many of the dimensions and properties in the categories *flavor*, *awareness*, and *reflective experimentation*. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to better understand the properties and dimensions that seemed to be affected by culture.

The participants provided rich descriptions regarding the influence of culture in the second round of interviews. The rich descriptions resulted in the emergence of a new category, *cultural system*. Participants defined the *cultural system* category as the knowledge and values shared by participants’ cultures that had influenced their group work practice. The *cultural system* category consisted of one property which was *openness to group work practice*. Further analysis revealed the *openness to group work practice* property was described by a dimension that varied along a continuum from supporting to challenging.

At one end of this dimension, *supportive*, the participants described how the support they received from their cultural systems aided their practice.

- P1 I was born in Thailand in 1969. It’s almost 60 years now and then the community have the value of helping each others. My parent usually went to the temple and give things to the poor. So this kind of, we call it in Buddhism as Metta or loving kindness, is a ingredient in our psyche

because we live with it, stay with it. I saw it every day. The sense of helping, to help, to do anything that can help our human being to love happily, I think this kind of atmosphere make this kind of seed in my psyche. I think this is not unusual, is common practice in (removed identity information). We hear from our parents. They told us to help others who are need of our helps. I brought it to the profession, in term of psychological helping....

- P3 factor that can help you more than obstacle. A lot of people often consider culture to be an obstacle. I think it's actually helping factor. You always need some point of reference in you therapy or intervention or relation with people in the culture. And knowing what the limit is in term of culture is, help you get somewhere. Without it you don't have a guiding principle. But the problem is the guiding principle is not crystal clear. It's the gray one. That's why you have to fit in with it to see where the lines are really drawn.

One participant described the support he received from an organization that had employed his services. Due to budgetary reasons the organization also supported the participant's desire to run groups

- P1 Also organizational needs that request us to help them, they would like some kind of quality service in term of counseling, you know would like us to help them not just one by one but group by group. They can't, well. I think, it is economical reason too. They feel that group is more effective.

At the other end of the dimension was *challenging*. The participants described how the challenges they experienced from their cultural systems obstructed their practice. Challenges stemmed from misunderstandings, the cultural systems in the community, and the malpractice suits filed against others in the profession.

- P2: I had been in part of group that they just put everybody in one group. Because they feel like psychologist or group leader is baby sitter, this is for inpatient. So the nurse can have the patient out of their ward and do some activity. But when you don't separate and try to screen and put them in appropriate level. You can't have an active psychotic in the same group with trauma survivor who tries to tell you about trauma...
- P2 Some members had previously attend other group therapy before with different group therapist and he had overtime learn that one of the most important group rule regarding confidentiality was not be follow. And

therefore he felt very much betrayed when he found out later that his information was being reviewed outside the therapy group. So for that person, yes, he still has the need to attend group but he went to the difference one, to search where the right one is. So with that person, it took him awhile and also not only when he entered my group, he observed and not participate but his style of getting it out is to challenge me, to see what will be my reaction, whether I can provide safety for him or not.

- P3 So I think that culture places as being not a force that assisting you rather that being a force that opposing you. I think the first thing that people told me when I came to Japan and started work is that “you know, Japanese people are used to counseling and they are not used to telling their feeling.”
- P4 Some of those kids, they have been required to visit the counseling room quite often or they have been required to visit the dean quite often that they may build up the wall to anyone who want to talk to them. So that part is still hard to work on not just because this population but also in culture, we are not just used to talk someone or stranger about what we really think and from a broad perspective.

Additionally, the *cultural system* category only emerged during the second round analysis. The details in its property and dimensions were not thoroughly described by participants. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather additional information regarding the cultural system. The question was, “What is it like to run groups in your system?”

### *Interactions*

The participants described the interactions between categories, sub-categories, properties and dimensions in the second round of interviews. The emergence of interactions between categories, sub-categories, properties and dimensions further described the experiences of Asian group leaders while they worked in Asia. The interactions are described below.

In terms of the interactions between categories, the participants started to describe connections that further explained their experiences leading groups in Asia. The

participants described the interactions between the *awareness* category and the *basic self* category. The interactions were described between the dimensions of the *sources of awareness* and *duration of awareness* property of *awareness* category and the dimension of *using resources* property of the *basic self* category.

Participant 2 illustrated the connection between *awareness of group level* in the *awareness* category and *using inner resources* in the *basic self* category. She described her awareness of the group level as a factor that helped her in terms of inner resources while she worked in groups.

- P2 I may figure it out before the group begins. I have certain activity that I may want to use for warm up and when group members arrive, you go ahead with your warm up and group member are not really motivated. Then you can have hypothesis that, number 1, may be something else going on in their mind and they are not focus. And number 2, things that we are talking about is something that they want to avoid.
- P2 I put a pause on activity or sometime let that activity because warm up activity usually short. So after that then I break them into small group or sometime just sit in the big circle and ask them “what were their feeling, were and then?”. So the number one, the therapists have to not too be afraid to ask. Because sometime, some people are afraid to put out the question like “what was wrong”. But without asking, how would you know. So you kind of open up the floor and may be sometime is anxiety, sometime they just feel like they have a late night. But without asking, it’s therapist’s own interpretation. So they are more sharing, you have more information. And then you have to let go your previously planned activity and then use information that you get from the group members from the discussion of what’s going on. Then move on forward. So what have required on therapist part is the skill to be spontaneous and also a therapist who can let go of the plan without getting stuck on it.

Participant 2 also described the connection between *awareness over time* in the *awareness* category and *using inner resources* in the *using resources* property of the *basic self* category. She described the information that she collected over time as a factor that helped her in terms of inner resources while she worked in groups.

- P2 ...if is an ongoing group. If we figure it out, what was wrong? If the issue is about we should not allow so and so interfere with the other person in a group. If it's the dynamics between two members and if we didn't say anything as a group leader which you should, then we can raised up the following time. You know, that's one good thing about the ongoing is that if something went wrong, you discuss with your staff and try to figure it out "How to bring up the unresolved issue to the next time that we meet?" What you don't want to happen is members to begin to have more and more and more hidden issue that they get made at the therapist or other group members because that can damage the dynamic

In addition, the participants described the interaction of the *awareness* category and the *basic self* category. They also described the interaction between the *awareness* category and the *reflective experimentation* category. The interactions were described between the dimensions of the *awareness* category and the *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category

Participant 3 illuminated the connection between *awareness of group level* in the *awareness* category and *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category. He described his awareness of group level as a variable that helped him make judgments regarding the interventions he chose to use in groups.

- P3 One of the thing is you have, in the treatment whenever you in treatment, you make a hypothesis and you want the hypothesis to be true. Often it's not accepted. What's A cause B, cause C, you know. B cause C, no. C cause D or something like that. It's not something simple like that. You have to take very multi variance situation. You don't have a luxury of going through the scientific process. But how do you know, once you see major behavior changes that another of seeing people changing. But how do you know what to do next, whenever you, the single intervention that you put inside your therapy. The reason that you put them inside there is because you trying to complete a much larger picture. So just making a single change within the therapy is not grounded to say that you make a goal intervention. You looking at the whole picture and trying to change a family system or family situation or sickness which I think sickness or illness, whatever you want to call or disorders is a group of symptom bundles together. For some reason if it's bundle together like that, it becomes a problem. So if you can go through can change little bit of the bundle then the whole thing will change. So you need a much larger of

what's happening. Because you have much larger picture of what's happening even though when you do small intervention within the group, if they make changes. Then you know you are going in the right way, the much larger picture. How would I say this? Let's see. For example, if you going on a trip. You know that's may be a thousand miles away. Each day you have to check you map how much you make improvement. If you get the certain check point, you know. At 500 miles mark, it should be a town or a city or this place or some kind of landmark.

Participant 2 further clarified the connection between *awareness of individual level* of the *awareness* category and *interventions* of the *outcome* sub-category. She described using of awareness of individual level as a variable that helped her to work in groups.

P2 ...Then you can take the accountability of your part. However, if after you explore, you have a sense that may be this client having transference on you. Meaning that the real issue is not between you and her but may be just because you as a therapist have certain quality that reminds the client of her mother.

Participant 5 discussed the connection between *awareness in the moment* in the *awareness* category and *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category. He described awareness in the moment as the factor that assisted him to make appropriate interventions while in groups.

P5 You have to have a good knowledge based so you have a lot of tools or techniques. And theoretical foundation and with experience you will be able to decide which would be most appropriate for the moment.

Participant 5 also discussed the connection between *awareness in the moment* in the *awareness* category and *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category. He described how awareness in the moment helped him make a decision while he worked in groups.

P5 ... then you're going back to cook again. You serve a dish to your customer and then you watch their reaction. If they are really happy with

the dish, then you make the right decision. If they cannot finish the dish, then you have to think again.

Participant 3 illustrated the connection between *awareness over time* in the *awareness* category and *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category. He described awareness over time as the factor that helped him to better understand the results from his interventions in groups and how to make the appropriate interventions in group.

P3 In the bulimia group is, we want to get them to stop bingeing and purging. And we want them to live a life that's of course this is not so specific but productive life. But as I say you know that bingeing, purging has nothing to do. Its end result of symptom. What's you do is you go back and you think. Well, how do I get to the point that they will stop bingeing and purging and if you can think about the system and the problem that would suggest, that would make it happens. Then you think about the interventions that will probably change that type of attitude that make them think that way. And so I go to the whole thing and work backward and then I do the intervention. And when you get a little bit of change, so actually the thing is I do see changes after small intervention but it the final result that brings all of this together. If the patient will come back and say, you know I don't know why but I'm not purging and bingeing anymore.

Participants also described the connection between the *basic self* category and the *reflective experimentation* category. The connection was described between *believing in philosophy* and *having motivation*. This quote from Participant 4 illustrated the internal process between *high levels of having Western beliefs* of the *basic self* category and the *having motivation* property of the *reflective experimentation* category. This participant described how her belief in a philosophy supported her motivation to work in groups, so she was willing to begin and to continue to practice group work.

P4 I think the reason why I choose to do group work mean, the big reason might be because I do (removed identity information) group work. If I simply do a group work per se, I might not be that much motivated to do it. However, if I'm required to do that, I will prefer to do that. And I'm

saying that I do group work, mainly the most effective reason for me to choose group work may be (removed identity information), because it sharpening my skills in (removed identity information) in groups. And group (removed identity information) were slightly different or to a certain degree that different from the individual (removed identity information) work that I think it increasing my experiences and my learning part of that. So that is the reason I choose to do that.

Even though Participant 4 started to describe the supportive connection between the *having motivation* property and the *believing in philosophy* sub-category it still wasn't clearly described. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather additional information regarding the connection of *having motivation* and the other dimensions and properties. The question was, "It seems like your curiosity and enjoyment of challenges motivates you to lead groups? Is this true? And if so, can you tell me more about this?"

The participants also detailed the relationships that existed between the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category and the *reflective experimentation* category. During the second round of interviews the participants described the interactions of the *basic self* category and the *reflective experimentation* category. Specifically, the participants clearly described the interactions that existed between the *outcome* sub-category and *process* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category, and the *believing in philosophy* sub-category of the *basic self* category.

Even though the participants' philosophical beliefs might vary from *high levels of having Western beliefs* to *low levels of having Western beliefs*, they all described the application of their beliefs to the intervention they made in group. Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 4 and Participant 6 described the connection between the

*believing in philosophy* sub-category of the *basic self* category and the *intervention*

property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category.

- P1 we have some kind of structure to work with. If you have a map of building house, you will know where you stand at this particular moment. So we try on and on proceed with the process from that spot where we are at that moment. We know where we are with the map
- P1 We will use map to explore, like a doctor explores patient' heart. It hits the right spot. When we hit the right spot it's not difficult now to bring them out of this spot. If we do not know what and where the spot is, it's not very easy.
- P2 if after you explore, you have a sense that may be this client having transference on you. Meaning that the real issue is not between you and her but may be just because you as a therapist have certain quality that reminds the client of her mother. And then she begins to act, the way she will act to her mother. So in that way, you bring the client to acknowledge and see is that the bottom or not. So either way, they can explore interpersonal issue between therapist and the client or if there are unfinished business or transference feeling that developed from the family of origin then you have some more clear about that.
- P4 I always hold the faith that people will find out their inner strength in the very supporting and excepting environment. So I have to keep that faith in my mind that a lot of how I response to the client comes out to carry out a lot of the philosophy that I have in my mind. Because I think that have to say that you believe in inner strength of the client, it's such an easy but I think to actually carry out in the interaction with the client is quite challenging.
- P4 If I'm truly seriously holding that faith in my mind. Then those ingredients will help them. So when I'm not see the expectation or the progress or the improvement, I expected to see after the certain period of time and because of that I became self doubt about that. I don't really think I'm holding the faith. I'm truly holding the faith because my faith has been shaking up, simply because I did not see that. So that's one part so even though the discourage moment happened. And it will happen a lot of time but I think holding the faith is still the core issue that I will need to deal for every of my client and on the other side. It's go back to the faith again. May be I mentioned it last time to.
- P6 I think the experience is important to help me decided or should I move on or should I stay for little while. For the experience, if I lead the group for the first time, it takes me for little while to learn about it. And the second

would be the theory that back up the group. If the group is logotherapy, I would have step like, step one clarify meaning, step two, three, four, five. If I feel like the member is involve and fulfill each step, I'm gonna move them to another step. It's kind of the process of interaction between group member and leader at that time. First is previous experience, second is theory that back up...

Participants also provided descriptions that presented the connection between the property *having a universal perspective* of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category and *the interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category. They discussed the interventions they used in groups and seemed confident that the interventions would not be limited by cultural differences. The following participants' quotes provided the example of this connection.

- P1 It's somehow beyond cultural because this map is universal. Whether you are American or European, this map is broadly, deeply, and widely. This map is universal, can use with every person in this planet. And this map is very effective, you know.
- P4 I think the culture part, to some extent, I don't think it plays a big part because (removed identity information) itself, it provides a freedom for the participants to explore because it's nonverbal and it did not attach to traditional therapy, concepts, because uses a lot of (removed identifying information) that typically, people wouldn't imagine that a talk therapy would be like that. So it does not attach to any traditional stigma in therapy and it's really giving the freedom because the humanistic approach.

Participant also described a connection between the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category and the *using resources* property of the *basic self* category. Participant 5 described how he integrated his past experiences into *inner resources*. It helped him become more flexible while he worked in groups. The following participant quote illustrates the connection between the *interventions* and *using inner resources*.

P5      You have to have a good knowledge based so you have a lot of tools or techniques. And theoretical foundation and with experience you will be able to decide which would be most appropriate for the moment. And then you will create activities or take part in decision also which means you have be a flexible person and not to become too rigid or become stuck in particular frame of reference or thought.

Exploration of interactions between the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category, and the *reflective experimentation* category resulted in an understanding of the participants' internal process while they worked in groups. Figure 4 illustrated the interaction between the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category, and the *reflective experimentation* category,

Figure 4: the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category, and the *reflective experimentation* category,



The interactions described the relationship among the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category, and the *reflective experimentation* category. In the second round of interviews, participants provided thick descriptions of the interaction of the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category, the *reflective experimentation* category, and the *cultural system* category. Participants described ways in which they use their knowledge and understanding of their own culture to develop a general approach in group practice.

Participant 1 described how using cultural understanding as a resource helped him to develop his personal style. The quote below described the positive connection of

*assisting* in the *openness to group work practice* of the *cultural system* category as it related to the *believing in philosophy*, and the *resources* of the *basic self* category and the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category.

P1 Now I think if we take very close look to our psyche. I mean in term of cultural psyche. I think our parents have some kind of psychological heritage and I found that that heritage mainly stems from the understanding of Buddhist teaching. And you know, Buddhism was the only teach in Thailand for a thousand year.

Participant 3 further described his perception of culture as a factor to help him to practice and develop his general style of group work. The quote presents the connection between the *assisting in openness to group work practice* of the *cultural system* category and the *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category.

P3 And this is going to get little bit semi mathematical. So if you know that in a limited space, there is not infinite amount of possibility. Then in a limited space, there's going to be less probability. So in a limited space, you have a limited about of possibility and then you have even less probability, okay. So taking that rule, now I go back to therapy and cultures. You look for limited factor. For example, you look for 20 yards by 20 yards room is the limiting factor is 20 yards by 20 yards. So the four wall is 20 yards by 20 yards that limited your search. So when you take in culture and you start to think about hypothesis.

The participants also presented the connection between *reflective experimentation* and the *challenge* dimension of the *openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category. The participants described their perceptions of their cultural system as a limiting factor while they were working in group. The following participant quotes indicate a limiting effect from *cultural system* toward *outcome*.

P3 ...how does culture affect the way you come upon the solution and something like that, it's the filter. It's the limiting wall. It's something that narrows down the possibilities and probabilities.

- P4 ... I still need to say that culture part play a little bit in the group work or (removed identity information) group work, the reason why I say that because still they are not use to talk to somebody about what they think.
- P4 Gender is a culture issue too. In my group they were all male. I mean in the (removed identity information) group there are all male. That makes it hard as far as if we count gender as culture issue. That is harder for them to express them self.
- P5 If it does it can be very subtle. It's very difficult to explain. It may be individual characteristic. My own view of things and for sure my cultural context would have some influence on my perception, my judgment. It's very hard to explain or give example.
- P6 In the Thai culture, the group leader, I as a group leader, I hold another role as instructor or teacher or my age is quite difference from them because I'm senior, they are students. Something like that. I think that may prevent them to do something that may offense. They may feel that this is challenge me or this is not respect. So they hold on. It seems to me. They will hold on their feeling until they feel "oh this group leader is terrible"...
- P6 ...for my Thai clients, I think culture play a role in this day. Somehow at the beginning they seemed to use their nonverbal if they don't like more than the using of verbal. And sometime is hard to tell because I think some nonverbal at the beginning sometime is difficult to see the different that they have something carry from outside or because the aspect of the group that they bore or they have something carry at the beginning...

In the second round of interviews, the participants further expressed the supportive connection that existed between the *cultural system* category and the *reflective experimentation* category. The participants further explained the relationship between these two categories by describing the connection between the *having motivation* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category and the *openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category.

Participants indicated their motivation to practice group work in Asia was influenced by their cultural background. The following participant's quote presents the

connection between *having motivation* and *cultural system*. He explained how the cultural system affected his curiosity and commitment to profession.

P1 I think is something deep down inside. May be our grant or our culture or our parent, I don't know but something in my mind still stay with me along the way that we have to help our human friends to make them, to offer them, to facilitate them, to live well with their life. And with that we have to find a lot of knowledge, right knowledge which would be a good work to be a best for us to practice in term of helping them to live harmoniously with life.

Participant 1 also described the positive connection between the *cultural system* category and *having motivation*. He talked about how his cultural system influenced his personality. He expressed that his Thai way of life motivated him to develop his personal style as it related to group theory and also encouraged him to continue to practice group work.

P1 I was born in Thailand in 1949. It's almost 60 years now and then the community have the value of helping each others. My parent usually went to the temple and give things to the poor. So this kind of, we call it in Buddhism as Metta or loving kindness, is a ingredient in our psyche because we live with it, stay with it. I saw it every day. The sense of helping, to help, to do anything that can help our human being to love happily, I think this kind of atmosphere make this kind of seed in my psyche. I think this is not unusual, is common practice in (removed identity information). We hear from our parents. They told us to help others who are need of our helps. I brought it to the profession, in term of psychological helping....

Another participant described his perception of a connection between *challenge* in the *openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category and the *having motivation* property. He was motivated by challenging factors in the cultural system because he liked challenging activities

P3 ...you try to do something. That usually doesn't happen at that place. But as I said before, I think what I feel is the full motivation of that is that people would be, would think that groups don't work in Asia. But beyond being Asian or being of the Asian cultures, people are human and

therefore humans regardless of where they are on the planet are social being and therefore the group is gonna work regardless of what culture is. And so while I'm doing a group I always think of that. That we are doing something that's at first people would wonder "Is that really gonna go well in Japan, well and the other part of Asia?" Well, at the same time we're trying to prove something, right? You know. I think that's bringing a lot of motivation.

Participant 2 described that *trusting in group work* helped her deal with the challenge she had from the cultural system. The quote illustrates the connection between the *trusting in group work* property of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category and *challenging* in the *openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category.

P2 I think that the factors that even though they are differences in culture and the perspective on whether you should or should not reveal personal or family information but I think that if you are able to provide a safe environment and establishing trust then a few member can open up and begin to share in their way

Participant 5 indicated the positive effect from the community he lived in toward his *motivation* to practice. The following participant quotes presented the connection between the *assisting* dimension of the *cultural system* category and the *having motivation* property of the *process* sub-category.

P5 if you have good family support. They value you. So you have stronger self esteem and when you want to do something. You feel that you are worthy doing that...

P5 ...when you are in family or people around you appreciate what you do and show their confident, show their respect to your activity. Then you feel satisfy, you feel grateful, you feel motivated to do more....

P5 Asian culture where perseverance is valued. I think it's in still in mind of many people that you have to persevere, keep going, don't give up. So that's kind of feeling. And I think it's not just culture influence. It's also upbringing that you have, you know, the support from family and significant people in your life

Participant 3 expressed his perception that having the same culture as group members helped him to better understand group members' point of reference. The participant integrated his awareness in group and his understanding toward culture as the guiding principles for him to develop interventions. The quote describes the connection among *assisting* in the *openness to group work practice* of the *cultural system* category, *interventions* in the *outcome* property of the *reflective experimentation* category, and *awareness in group* in the *sources of awareness* of the *awareness* category

P3     you need to, you push just a little hard to, you try to taste the see what the boundary really are and to see if you can get the full understand about the culture. And I think often time culture is not as binding of factors you may think. It can be a factor that can help you more than obstacle. A lot of people often consider culture to be an obstacle. I think it's actually helping factor. You always need some point of reference in you therapy or intervention or relation with people in the culture. And knowing what the limit is in term of culture is, help you get somewhere. Without it you don't have a guiding principle. But the problem is the guiding principle is not crystal clear. It's the gray one. That's why you have to fit in with it to see where the lines are really drawn.

For the most part the connection between the *reflective experimentation* category and the *cultural system* category was described by participants as a positive relationship that involved the *assisting* of the *cultural system* category and the *transferring* and the *interventions* property of the *reflective experimentation* category. Participants perceived their culture as helpful while they were working in group. Additionally, the *awareness of individual level* of the *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category emerged as important part of this process. The participants described how the awareness they possessed about culture was the basis for the positive relationships between these three categories.

Participant 2 described the interaction of the *awareness in individual* in the *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category, *challenge* in the *openness to group work practice* of the *cultural system* category, and *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category. The following participant quotes provide descriptions related to the use of individual awareness in developing therapeutic relationships.

- P2 I think a lot about that can help bridging the relationship between the therapist and the client. When you mention, let says certain things about client's culture. You can see that some client show some reaction that show "oh, I didn't know that you know about that in my culture". So I think that in it help creating the rapport. And the client may feel that he is important enough for you to find out more. And I think it's important for the therapist that he or she does not have to play the role of the perfect therapist. You can ask client to share with you, the culture aspect from the client's culture.
- P2 I'm not trying to discredit the important of recognizing culture difference. I think it's important for therapist who works with client from difference culture. It's therapist's responsibility to learn more about that culture so her response would not step over line or do some damage in term of the culture. But once the therapist done some research before seeing the client and understand basic attitudes and ways of caring manner and the rest of culture issue. I think once you be able to do that. When you meet with client, then you combine your knowledge of culture with clinical skills. I think its sensitive way to approach it. Because I think that it's just the matter of making people feel safe enough to open up and to share and to respect certain kind of body language and certain kinds of word that may have different meaning in term of interpretation.

Participant 4 further described the supportive connection between the *cultural system* category, the *awareness* category and the *reflective experimentation* category.

This participant described how her awareness of the group helped her to choose the right interventions in the group. She also used awareness to help her in adjusting interventions.

The quote below presents the supportive interaction of *awareness of group level* in the *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category, *assisting* in the *openness to*

*group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category, and *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category.

- P4 I think back to how the quality of the relationship effects what I do in making a decision when I taking a culture issue into consideration is different to the group phrase. Typically for the group phrase that the group is still try to cohesive, is the group is try to forming trusting relationship. Then I will be a little bit more conservative. I would be more conservative about taking care of the culture issue. I will go with the culture issue stuff. And then after the trusting relationship, after the relationship is kind of forming when I will push a little bit more. I typically use metaphor with my students. I say when you want to counsel client. The first thing you got to understand your client, you going into their worlds, to understand the self, you have to work in your client pace rather than your own pace. When you are really into your client inner's world. Then that's the time change could happen. Because now once you know what's going on there, you might slightly help them to alter their pace in their world. Not forcing way but more facilitating way...

Participant 1 presented an integration of his own cultural understanding into the interventions he used in group. The quote illustrates the supportive interaction of *assisting in openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category, the *having Eastern beliefs* property of the *believing in philosophy* property of the *basic self* category toward the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category.

- P1 We are not talk in level of intellectual or cognitive. Question in group, I mean these, when a person present his or her problem in life. Any problem, we call that a question. And people's problem will state their story broadly. Somehow if we take a close look of their problem or their question, and we understand what the root is from our Buddhist understanding of a question of life. So if we are trained to be a good examiner. I don't want to use a good listener, you know, examiner. We will have kind of a map in our mind. And we can explore or x ray into the root of problem very easily. And it's not easy to find a root of problem now. But exciting moment is how use your though to help them solve their problem. And I think now understand that in any problem. I mean psychological problem. We call it attachment or Uppatan in Buddhism. We like to use the words, Uppantan. It means attachment because this kind of attachment becomes a prison for a person. So we try to cut this

attachment. We can cut this attachment by first, look at them to understand the reality of life which is such changing. Life is bigger than our expectation. Expectation and attachment in these contexts are the same thing. So when you expect, you attach. So we try to cut this attachment or expectation. We call this process, a realization process. So we help to realize that you know, well this is just my expectation but the reality is. Suppose there is a mother coming into our group and she has a lot of trouble with her child. She may tell her story about her child preparing for admission to the university and she expects a lot of her child to study harder and harder which mean she has some kind of attachment. It means she attaches to her idea or her expectation somehow. So we help her to take a close look into her expectation which is the root of her psychological problem. And try to reduce all qualifies that well, her child has his or her own way of studying. It may not meet her expectation but well, must understand that any life does not depend on her expectation, does not fit her expectation. So she has to reduce her expectation to live in reality with her child. However what her child can be, must be excepted by her. It's real. That is reality. For us now, when we can understand structure of psychological problem.

Participant 1 also indicated how *awareness in a moment* and *having Eastern beliefs* helped him understand and adjust his interventions in groups. The quote below presents the supportive interaction of the *having Eastern beliefs* property of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category of the *basic self* category and *awareness in the moment* in the *period of attaining awareness* property of the *awareness* category toward the *outcome* of the *reflective experimentation* category.

P1 ... we have some kind of structure to work with. If you have a map of building house, you will know where you stand at this particular moment. So we try on and on proceed with the process from that spot where we are at that moment. We know where we are with the map

Participant 4 who expressed *high level of belief in Western based theory* also indicated how this and awareness helped her to understand and adjust her interventions in groups. She further described her way of developing interventions by combining her understanding of her own culture, the awareness she had in group, and her philosophical beliefs. The quote presented the supportive interaction of *awareness of group level* in the

*sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category, *assisting* in the *openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category, the *having Western beliefs* property of the *believing in philosophy* property of the *basic self* category toward the *interventions*.

P4 I mean when I made the decision I have to consider, okay how acceptable the culture is to this kind of intervention or this kind of responding. So it's in the broad way. Even though it place out in the broad way how I make the decision, I would also consider the faith that I have in the group as well as the relationship that I have with the group members. I mean if I have a strong relationship, the counseling relationship with the client or with the member, then I may push a little bit. I may just challenging clients a little bit more. What I mean by challenging is not really force my client or force member to think the culture is not good, I'm challenging you now. What I'm trying to do is there's difference angle to see it and this angle you might not be that much use to that because the culture issue but that's not mean you are wrong or that culture is absolutely right. I'm just saying that you know if you stand from different angle to look at the same thing. You gonna get broader perspective of what's going on, and the more information you get or the more perspectives you view the same thing from difference angle that will equip you in the better position to make the decision that you prefer to. After you weight all the good, all the bad, all the prices you have to pay or a bit you can get. So that what's I mean by challenging. And I will introduce this concept to my clients, "You know when I challenge your culture. I'm not saying is bad. I'm not saying it good. I'm just saying let look at that from the different angle."

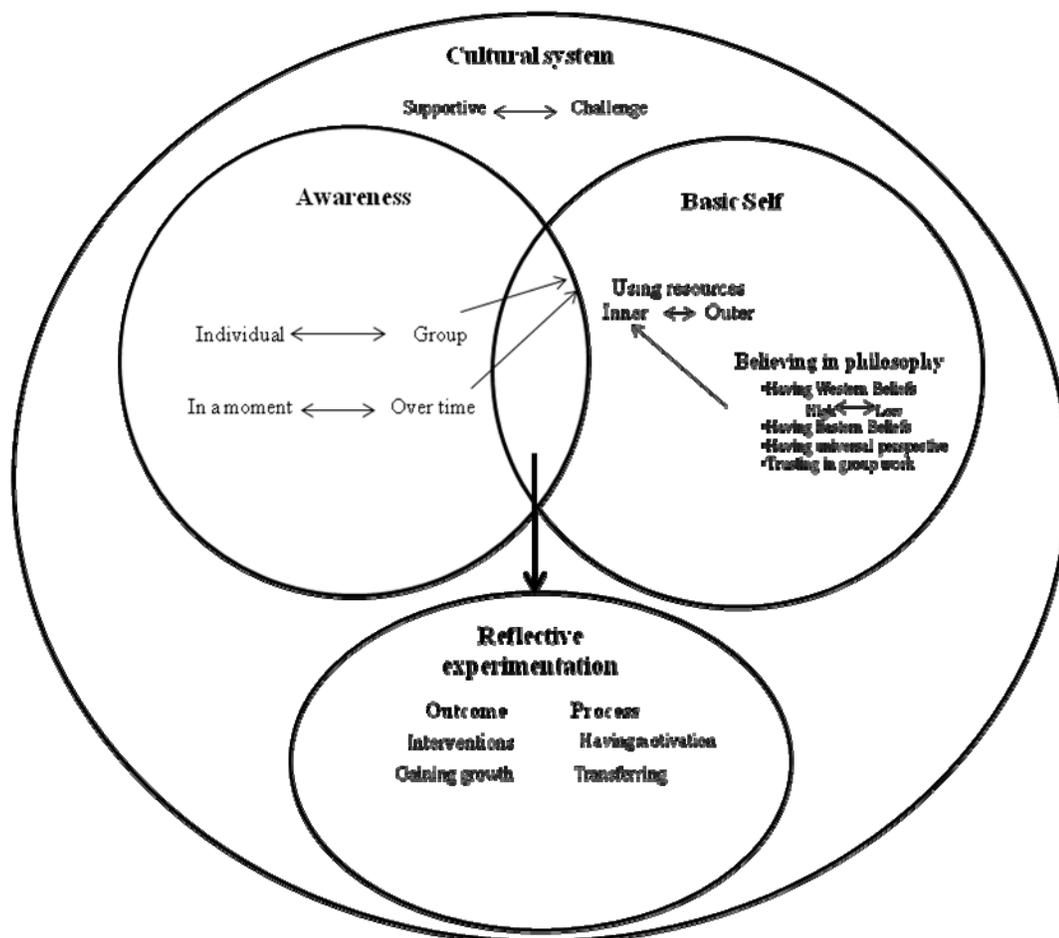
Additionally, Participant 4 described the process of *transferring* knowledge from her training to practice as part of the process of gaining her own identity. She had high levels of belief in her philosophical orientation which was developed from her training. It affected her awareness of herself and also inspired the way she worked with group members. The quote below presented the supportive interaction of *awareness of individual level* in the *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category, the *having Western beliefs* property of the *believing in philosophy* property of the *basic self*

category and *transferring* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category.

- P4     sometime the half of me, the part of the counseling values, the part of metaphilosophy about counseling which is rooted in Western culture. I think that really matches what I think, what I believe. Though, the line was not so clear. Whether this is truly who I am and I just found the Western value that matches what I think or I'm just a slide of white paper and then I'm get in touch in the American culture I found it and it flip me or I prefer that much more than Chinese value. So I don't know which one happen first but either way I gotta say that a lot of the values or the concepts that counseling have about human nature, I really believe so, I really believe. So that's part of me. That goes beyond the culture part. I mean that's really me. That's the intra part of me. From that individual perspective, I'm bringing that. I mean my personal value into session. May be I mention that before, I don't think it's possible to be value free in counseling session. So I bring that part of me into session. And it's just that part of me that greatly affected by Western cultures.

The interactions described by participants in the second round of interviews, supported connection of participants' *basic self* and *awareness* to the process of *reflective experimentation*. Figure 5 was designed to illustrate the interaction of categories, sub-categories, properties, and dimension.

Figure 5: interactions of categories, sub-categories, properties, and dimension



### Triangulation

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the use of triangulation as the method to increase credibility of qualitative research. In this study, the researcher used a literature review as the triangulation method. In the second round data analysis, the researcher focused on the triangulation of the *basic self* and *cultural system* categories. The two concepts emerged in the second round analysis as major concepts of the participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia. Participants also consistently described the concepts of *reflective experimentation* and *awareness* as major components of their

experience. However, *reflective experimentation* and *awareness* were revealed in the previous analysis, and the researcher discussed the literature regarding *reflective experimentation* in the previous chapter. Therefore, the literature discussed in the previous chapter still represented the credibility of the concept of *reflective experimentation* and the concept of *awareness*.

The *basic self* category was supported by the literature. This category was defined as the participants' basic characteristics as group leaders that helped them to begin and to continue their group work practice. The *basic self* category contained one sub-category, *believing in philosophy* and one property *resources*. Molina (1996) reported in her study regarding group leaders' transcultural constructs that successful transcultural group leaders described awareness of their personal assumptions and underlying beliefs as the issue to be examined. The results from the study implicated involvement of the group leaders' self in their practice. The result from this study supported the *basic self* category. Additionally, Kottler (1994) and Posthuma (1999) identified the characteristics of group leaders that would indicate a successful group work practice: self-confidence, risk-taking and, flexibility. This concept supported properties and dimension of the *basic self* category.

The *gaining growth* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category was revealed in the second round data analysis. It was defined as the participants' development as a person and as a professional during the process of practicing group work in Asia. This property was supported by the literature. The concept of *gaining growth* was related to the results from the study of transcultural group leaders by Molina (1996). The successful transcultural group leaders reported how they

valued understanding themselves and had a commitment to personal growth in the context of human diversity.

The *cultural system* category was defined as the participants' perception about particular norms in society that influenced the participants while they worked in groups. The *cultural system* consisted of the participants' perception regarding culture that influenced their practice in groups and the effects from community. The *cultural system* category was solidly supported from the literature. Kottler (1994) described factors regarding the perception of group leadership and group membership in Asian society that might affect to group leadership. For instance, Asian group members might not generally believe that promoting individual goals over the community is desirable. This example from literature supported the interaction of *cultural system* category and the *reflective experimentation* category. Posthuma (1999) also suggested that the environment played an important role in the progress of groups. This concept also supported the connection that existed between the *cultural system* category and the *reflective experimentation* category.

The participants also described how the interaction of *awareness, cultural system, basic self* and *reflective experimentation* helped in terms of developing their personal style. This process was consistent with the ACA Multicultural Counseling Competencies that identified self awareness, knowledge and skills as the factors needed to be learned in order to become a multiculturally competent counselor (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

## Discussion

Six participants were interviewed individually by internet phone for the second round of interviews. The data was then coded by utilizing open coding procedures and axial coding procedures. These procedures were a mechanism to begin to form relationships between categories, properties, and dimensions.

Analysis of the second round of interviews resulted in the reconceptualization of the category *flavor*. Participant descriptions did not clearly confirm the *flavor* category as stand-alone category. The definitions indicated that it was more appropriate to include *flavor* as part of the *reflective experimentation* category. In the second round of analysis, participants consistently described *awareness* and *reflective experimentation* as categories. These descriptions resulted in the emergence of two new categories, *basic self* and *cultural system*. Therefore, the analysis of the second round data revealed that the following four major categories: *Awareness*, *basic self*, *reflective experimentation*, and *cultural system*.

### *Awareness*

The *awareness* category was consistently defined by the participants in the second round of interviews as their focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in their groups and individuals while attempting to develop interventions appropriate for their group members. The *awareness* category consisted of two properties, the *sources of awareness* property and the *duration of awareness* property.

The *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category was defined as the sources for obtaining awareness while participants worked in groups. Further analysis revealed that the *sources of awareness* property dimensional and varied along a

continuum. At one end of the dimension the *awareness of group level* was described by participants as a utilization of awareness to assist them to understand the dynamics in their groups. The participants expressed the *awareness of group level* in term of helping them to work in groups by considering the issues occurring in their groups. At the other end of the dimension, the *awareness of individual level* was defined as participants' awareness of individual level that helped them to develop their personal styles that worked appropriately with their group members

The second property of the *awareness* category was the *duration of awareness*. This property was defined as the period of time that the participants engaged with the information to gain awareness. The participants further described a dimension of the *duration of awareness* property. At one end, *awareness in the moment*, participants expressed awareness in the moment as the awareness that they gained from the observing group members' expressions in the groups. At the other end, participants described awareness that they used to help to understand the groups over time. The *awareness over time* was defined as awareness which developed gradually as participants observed information while they were working in group.

#### *Basic Self*

The *basic self* category was defined as the participants' basic characteristics as group leaders that helped them begin and continue their group work practice. The *basic self* category contained one sub-category, *believing in philosophy* and one property, *resources*.

*Believing in Philosophy*

In the second round of interviews, participants defined the believing in philosophy as a set of core beliefs that the participants possessed that they used in group work practice and also used to support themselves while they were leading group. The *believing in philosophy* consisted of the following four properties: *Having Western beliefs, having Eastern beliefs, having a universal perspective*, and *trusting in group work*.

*Having Western beliefs.* The first property, *having Western beliefs* property was defined as participants' philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Western based theory. This property consisted with a dimension that varied along a continuum; at the one end of *having Western beliefs* continuum was *high levels of having Western beliefs*. It was defined by the participants' expressions of a high reliance on Western based theories while they practiced in groups. At the other end of the *having Western beliefs* continuum was *low levels of having Western beliefs*. It was defined by the participants' expressions of modest reliance on Western based theories while they practiced in groups.

*Having Eastern beliefs.* The second property of the *believing in philosophy* was the *having Eastern beliefs* property. Participants described their philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Eastern based theory which was called *having Eastern beliefs*. This property was defined as participants' philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Western based theory

*Trusting in group work.* The third property of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category was the *trusting in group work* property. This property was defined as the participants' belief in the benefits gained from group work for themselves and for their

group members. This property seemed to be important for participants to continue to practice group work in Asia. However, participants didn't provide concise descriptions regarding this property. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather additional information about the trusting in group work property. The question was "Belief in the value of groups seems important to motivation to lead. Can you describe how you developed your belief in the value of groups?"

*Having a universal perspective.* The last property of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category was *having a universal perspective*. It was defined as the participants' beliefs in the common nature of human beings and in the positive effect of their group work practice on group members because of this commonality. They believed that group work did not have to be inhibited by cultural differences. Participants expressed that their beliefs regarding their philosophical orientation were not dictated by cultural boundaries.

*Using resources.* The *using resources* property of the *basic self* category was defined as the assets the participants used to develop their personal style of group leadership. This property consisted of a dimension that varied along a continuum. At one end was the *using inner resources*, defined as the inner sources for participants used to develop their personal style. The characteristics of the *using inner resources* were to explore past experiences, to use experiential understanding, to understand from an emic perspective, and to use intuition. At the other end, *using outer resources* was defined as the external sources participants used in developing their personal style. The characteristics of *using outer resources* included using supervision, researching the literature, using measurement and using feedback from family members.

### *Reflective Experimentation*

From the participants' descriptions in the second round of interviews, *reflective experimentation* was defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups while at the same time attempting to develop interventions that were appropriate for group members. *Reflective experimentation* consisted of two sub-categories, *outcome* and *process*. Participants further described the properties of each sub-category. The properties described distinct major components of the sub-category *outcome* and sub-category *process* of the *reflective experimentation* category.

#### *Outcome*

The *outcome* sub-category was defined as the participants' results from the process of integrating all their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice. The outcome sub-category consisted of two properties, *interventions* and *gaining growth*. These properties described distinct major components of the sub-category outcome.

*Intervention.* In the second round data analysis, the *interventions* property was defined as the participants' combination of the group leadership skills and understanding toward groups in particular context, which could be similar or different from traditional group practice

Participants further described the characteristics of *interventions*. The characteristics included preparing group members for the new experience, letting go of plans, and genuineness. Participants combined their understanding of group members' culture and group work culture to find ways to prepare group members for a new experience. Participants accepted their authority figure status and provided specific

parameters while they practiced with the intention to prepare group members for a new experience in groups. Participants also described their attempts to provide a specific environment so group members felt comfortable to open up in the groups. They waited for group members' readiness and looked for group members' prompts to make changes. Participants described letting go of plans as a way of following the groups' needs in the moment. The participants also described that genuineness was an important part of their way of leading groups. The participants also expressed confidence as it related to their process for developing a general style of group work practice. Their expressions of confidence varied by each of the participants' level of experience.

*Gaining growth.* The property *gaining growth* was defined as the participants advancing through stages of development as a people and as professionals during the process of practicing group work in Asia. Participants had a variety of experience levels in practicing groups in Asia, so their descriptions regarding the *gaining growth* property were varied due to participants' experience levels. However, details in the *gaining growth* property were not clearly described in the second round of interviews. Therefore, the researcher developed questions to collect more information regarding the *gaining growth* property. The questions were "As I talk to you, you seem like you get a lot of fulfillment/joy from creating and leading groups. Can you talk to me about that fulfillment?" and "How have your experiences leading groups in (participant's country) changed you as a group leader or person?"

#### *Process*

The *process* sub-category of *reflective experimentation* was defined as participants' process for incorporating knowledge and experiences into their practice in

group work. The *process* sub-category consisted of two properties which were *having motivation* and *transferring*. The properties of the *process* sub-category described distinct major components of the sub-category process.

*Having motivation.* The property *having motivation* was defined as the inspiration, internal and external, that helped the participants to start and to continue their group work practice in Asia. Further analysis revealed that the *having motivation* property consisted of two characteristics, being motivated by an exploring personality and being motivated by a helper identity.

The second round interview, participants expressed being motivated by an exploring personality as a characteristic of *having motivation*. Being motivated by an exploring personality emerged from participants' descriptions of their collective characteristics as people who liked challenging activities. This characteristic helped them to begin and to continue their practice in group work in Asia.

Yet, the connections between *having motivation* and the other properties within *reflective experimentation* were not clearly expressed by the participants in the second round of interviews. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather additional information related to the connection *having motivation* and the other properties of *reflective experimentation*, "It seems like your curiosity and enjoyment of challenges motivates you to lead groups? Is this true? And if so, can you tell me more about this"?

*Transferring.* In the second round interviews, participants started to describe their process of integrating their knowledge and experiences from training in the West to practice in Asia. As stated previously, the participants defined *transferring* as being the

ways in which they were able integrate the knowledge and experiences gained from Western countries into their group work practices in Asia.

Although, *transferring* was described by participants during the second round of interviews, the participants did not clearly express details about *transferring* or the connection of *transferring* with others aspects of their experiences. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to collect additional information regarding the process of transferring knowledge from Western training into their practices in Asia. The question was, “Describe your process of fitting your experiences with western counselor training with your identity as a (participant’s nationality) group leader?”

#### *Cultural System*

Participants provided rich descriptions regarding culture in the second round of interviews. The rich descriptions resulted in the emergence of the new category, *cultural system*. Participants defined the *cultural system* category as the knowledge and values shared by the participants’ cultures that influenced their group work practice. The *cultural system* consisted of the participants’ perceptions regarding culture that influenced their practice in groups. The cultural system category consisted of one property, the *openness to group work practice*. The participants further provided the description concerning the dimension in this property. The *openness to group work practice* property contained a dimension that varied along the continuum, *supportive* and *challenge*.

At the *supportive* , participants described how the support they received from their cultural systems helped them practice. The support might come from an organization that had employed their services or from communities. At the *challenging*

end, the participants described how the challenges they received from their cultural systems obstructed their practice. *Challenging* stemmed from misunderstandings, the cultural systems in the community and the malpractice suits filed against others in the profession. Additionally, since the *cultural system* category just emerged during the second round of analysis. The details of its property and dimensions were not thoroughly described by the participants. Therefore, the researcher developed a question to gather more information regarding the cultural system. The question was, “What is it like to run groups in your system?”

### *Interaction*

Participants described the interactions that between categories, sub-categories, properties and dimensions in the second round of interviews. The emergence of within category interactions and between categories interactions further described the experiences of Asian group leaders while they were working in Asia.

The participants delineated the interactions between the *awareness* category and the *basic self* category. These interactions occurred primarily between the dimensions of the *sources of awareness* and *duration of awareness* property of *awareness* category and the dimension of *resource* property of the *basic self* category. In addition, the participants also described the interaction between the *awareness* category and the *reflective experimentation* category. These interactions were predominant between the dimensions of the *awareness* category and the *interventions* property of the *outcome* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category.

In the second round of interviews, participants provided thick descriptions of the interactions between the *awareness* category, *reflective experimentation* category, the

*basic self* category and the *cultural system* category. Participants described ways in which they used their knowledge and understanding of their own culture to develop a general approach in group practice. Specifically, the participants clearly described the interactions that existed between the *outcome* sub-category and *process* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category, and the *believing in philosophy* sub-category of the *basic self* category. The interactions described by participants in the second round interview supported connections between participants' *awareness, basic self* and *cultural system* toward *reflective experimentation*. *Reflective experimentation* took a central position in participant descriptions and demonstrated the potential to be a core concept of their experiences of practicing group work in Asia.

#### Conclusion

Second round analysis resulted in the reconceptualization of the initial structure describing the participants' experiences of leading groups in Asia. Participants' descriptions resulted in the emergence of four main concepts, *awareness, basic self, reflective experimentation*, and *cultural system*.

The *awareness* category was consistently described by participants as a major concept in their experiences of leading group in Asia. Participants also provided thick descriptions of the interrelationship between dimensions of *awareness* and others dimensions of the *basic self* category and the *reflective experimentation* category.

Participants provided a description that revealed the sub-category, properties and dimensions of *basic self* category. Specifically, they presented thorough descriptions regarding the *believing in philosophy* sub-category. However, the interaction of dimensions of the *basic self* was not clearly described by the participants. Consequently,

questions in the third round interview question were designed to further describe the connections between the dimensions of the *basic self* category.

Additionally, the participants indicated that there was a strong supportive interaction between *basic self* and *reflective experimentation*. The *reflective experimentation* category was described thoroughly by participants. Participants' descriptions provided a thick description of the interrelationship between the *awareness* category and the *interventions* property of *reflective experimentation*.

The participants' descriptions indicated the emergence of the *cultural system* category. The relationships between *awareness*, *basic self*, *reflective experimentation*, and *cultural system* were revealed during the study. To further describe and confirm connections and the emerging theory of group leaders in Asia, the following five questions were formulated: (1) "What is it like to run groups in your system?" (2) "As I talk to you, you seem like you get a lot of fulfillment/joy from creating and leading groups. Can you talk to me about that fulfillment?" (3) "How have your experiences leading groups in (participant's country) changed you as a group leader or person?" (4) "It seems like your curiosity and enjoyment of challenges motivates you to lead groups? Is this true? And if so, can you tell me more about this?" (5) "Belief in the value of groups seems important to motivation to lead. Can you describe how you developed your belief in the value of groups?" Finally (6) "Describe your process of fitting your experiences with western counselor training with your identity as a (participant's nationality) group leader?"

## CHAPTER VI

### THIRD ROUND INTERVIEWS

#### Introduction

For this round of interviews six questions were generated to add further depth to the categories, properties, dimensions, and relationships that emerged from the first two rounds of data collection. The questions were: (1) “What is it like to run groups in your system?” (2) “As I talk to you, you seem like you get a lot of fulfillment/joy from creating and leading groups. Can you talk to me about that fulfillment?” (3) “How have your experiences leading groups in (participant’s country) changed you as a group leader or person?” (4) “It seems like your curiosity and enjoyment of challenges motivates you to lead groups? Is this true? And if so, can you tell me more about this?” (5) “Belief in the value of groups seems important to your motivation to lead. Can you describe how you developed your belief in the value of groups?” and (6) “Describe your process of fitting your experiences with western counselor training with your identity as a (participant’s nationality) group leader?”

Data was collected through conducting individual telephone interviews with each of the six participants. The conversations were transcribed by the researcher. The transcriptions were checked against the recorded files to ensure accuracy. The data was then analyzed utilizing open and axial coding methods. Following the open coding, axial coding, and selective coding procedures, the researcher analyzed the process relationship or process related to the sequences of actions or interactions that are inherent in a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The researcher also used a conditional matrix in

this round of analysis. The conditional matrix was a tool to help the researcher integrate categories, properties, and dimensions with process relationships (Strauss & Corbin).

The analysis of the third round data verified and confirmed the categories of *awareness*, *basic self*, *reflective experimentation*, and *cultural system* with minor reconceptualizations. The data from third round interviews also revealed new properties and dimensions of the *basic self*, *reflective experimentation* and *cultural system*. It also clarified the connection within and between categories. Overall, the descriptive concepts clearly depicted participants' experiences of leading groups in Asia and exhibited the redundancy that indicates saturation. This in turn indicated that adequate data had been collected. A theory related to group leaders in Asia emerged from the thick and thorough descriptions.

#### *Awareness*

The *awareness* category was strengthened by the participants' descriptions of the category and its relatedness to many properties. In the third round interviews the definition of *awareness* was strongly confirmed by participants as participants' focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in their groups and in the individuals while attempting to develop interventions appropriate for their group members. In addition, the third round interviews revealed that the existing properties and dimensions from round two were supported, and the relationships between the properties of *awareness* and the properties of *basic self* and *reflective experimentation* were strengthened. The awareness category still consisted of two properties, *sources of awareness* and *duration of awareness*.

The property, *sources of awareness*, of the *awareness* category was consistently defined as the participants' descriptions related to the sources for obtaining awareness while they worked in groups. A dimension of the *source of awareness* property was also confirmed in this round interview. The dimension varied along a continuum from *awareness of individual level* to *awareness of the group level*.

At one end, *awareness of group level* was consistently described by participants as a utilization of personal awareness to assist them to understand the dynamics in their groups. At the other end, *awareness of individual level* was also consistently defined as participants' awareness of individual level that helped them to develop their personal styles that worked appropriately with their group members.

The second property of the *awareness* category was *duration of awareness*. This property was still defined as the period of time that participants engaged with the information to gain awareness. The dimension of the *source of awareness* property was also confirmed in this round of interviews, the dimension varied along a continuum from *awareness in the moment* to *awareness over time*. At one end, *awareness in the moment* was defined as awareness that participants gained from observing group members' interactions in the groups. At the other end, participants still described and defined the *awareness over time* as the awareness which participants gradually observed information while they were working in groups.

The interactions of the dimensions of the *awareness* category along with the *using resources* property of the *basic self* category and the *interventions* property of the *reflective experimentation* category from the second round interview were confirmed by

the participants. The relationships that emerged provided greater depth of understanding about the participants' experiences leading groups in Asia.

### *Basic Self*

In the third round analysis, the definition of the *basic self* category was confirmed as the participants' basic characteristics that helped them begin and continue their group work practice. The *basic self* category contained one sub-category, *believing in philosophy* and one property, *using resources*. The existing sub-category, property and dimensions from the second round analysis were supported in this round of interviews. The sub-category, property and dimensions further described the experience of participants while leading groups in Asia. The relationships between categories were strengthened. All relationships of the *basic self* category from the previous round were confirmed. Details regarding the interaction of the category of *basic self* were discussed at the interaction section. The details in sub-category and properties were discussed in the following section.

### *Believing in Philosophy*

The *believing in philosophy* sub-category was consistently discussed by participants in the third round interviews. The definition of *believing in philosophy* was the set of core beliefs that the participants employed in group work practice and used to support themselves while they were leading groups. The four properties of *believing in philosophies*, including *having Western beliefs*, *having Eastern beliefs*, *having a universal perspective*, and *trusting group work*, were also confirmed. Participants provided greater details regarding the *trusting in group work* property. It resulted in the emergence of a characteristic of the *trusting in group work* property. Participants further

described their interest in group members as part of their core beliefs. It resulted in the emergence of the property *respecting group members* of *believing in philosophy* sub-category. The property described distinct major components of the sub-category *believing in philosophy*. Details in each property were discussed.

*Trusting in group work*. The definition of *trusting in group work* property was confirmed by participants as the participants' belief in the benefits gained from group work for themselves and for their group members. In this round, participants also added richness to this property by providing details about characteristics of the *trusting in group work*. Participant 1 expressed his strong feeling towards the benefits gained from group work for both participant and his group members. The quote from Participant 1 expressed his passion towards group work practice which was developed from his direct experiences from working with groups.

P1 ...The experiences that we know group works, group is helpful, group can help people, group is a good place, group is life, group is a living thing and I am confident in it. It's not the belief in group but the experience in group, the real life experience in group that I find it very beneficial. So I think I am confident in group because I know with my heart, with my experiences, with my blood, sweat and tear that it works, it helps, it's laboratory for human being. It's microcosm of society. It's sacred place. It's temple...

P1 ...it's a temple. It's sanctuary. It's very good place you know. I just like to tell the public that if you are unhappy with your life, well. I got a place that you can come and go out with fewer burdens, with less painful experience, with better, with strength, with liveliness in order to live your life again....

P1 It's from my heart, from my senses, from my effort. It's from what I have put into groups with my whole heart that I think you know. It's valuable. It's sacred. It's the place that make unreal person to become a real person. It's place that people can change from the worst to the best.  
 Researcher What made it becomes a sacred place, what made it becomes a special place though?

- P1 Well, it's place that you can find the real knowledge of being human being.
- Researcher It's place that you can find the real knowledge of being human being.
- P1 It's not a place that we talk in our ordinary language but it's the place that we talk with our super ordinary language. It's the language of heart, you know. It's the language of experiences. It's not social language but it's the language of human heart. I think that sacred, that very special place. In our ordinary life, we do not have a chance to talk with that language but in a group we can talk with that special language. I think with the special language it makes us go near our true heart. That's why I call it a sacred, very very special place.

Participant 2, Participant 3 and Participant 6 also described their belief in the benefits of group for themselves and their group members:

- P2 ...I think when you are group leading is important not to only do it because it's your duty to do it. I think you have to like doing it. I think if you don't like doing group, don't put yourself in that position because it will create the dynamics in that group if you just doing it for the duty, you know.
- P2 ...that's making that's kind of comment also get the rest of the group going because often time when a person is working on the problem, other people would be in touch in their own personal life that may have similarity in their issue. It also encourages them not to be passive about their problem.
- P2 I think as a trainer when you see, when you begin the training period. They are quite naïve but then when you see them transform to something, you know, their self development. I think that's something that gives me more strength to keep doing what I'm doing because I can see what I am changing. It happens within the person. And then I know the initial changes, then it can make more changes in person who come into the persons' life. So that's the part that I like. And also when you have group member who may enter the group, somebody shy, somebody childish, and somebody who cannot set boundary or say no to other people and then at the end of the workshop you see that they begin to have more argument with other people in a constructive way and be more assertive. Then you feel like, yes that person has become a stronger persona and I feel proud of them, you know. They really get something of the group.
- P2 I think the most important part is the therapeutic connection or the relationship between you and members.

- P3 ...when you one on one with the patient and you have an hour. If you talking half the time and the patient talking half the time, that means that patient have to talk for at least 30 minutes and you have to talk for another 30 minutes. But if you have 6 patients, you know, and you have only 1hour and you do really need to talk. So 30 minutes for you and the left 30 minutes, five minutes per patient. So they need to really focus on what they are saying rather than rambling on whatever they want to talk about. So there first challenge becomes whether, this is what you're just saying until you get the ball rolling.
- P6 I start to like group in a group. At the beginning it seemed to be that I like group as part of my research project. For now I think even it's not a research project. I still like it. Because it's the way that I learn from my previous group, my latest one, I really enjoy when I see the group members they change. They change the way they express their thoughts, their feelings or the way that they treat their friend, they react to their friend. It's like you watch the tree from Winter through after Winter and Spring time. Something like that. The group itself, the group process, the group dynamic itself or group outcome itself, is the therapeutic force. It's happiness.

*Respecting group members.* In the third round interviews, the participants started to describe their sense of respect for group members as part of their core beliefs. This description resulted in the emergence of a new property of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category, *respecting group members*. *Respecting group members* was defined as participants' positive interest in group members' lived experiences and their potential to grow.

- P1 At the beginning of my practice, it's very fascinating to share painful experiences with other. I feel that to get to know painful experiences of other is being honor by other. It's like they honor me to walk with him or her along the painful experiences. I think this very fascinating to me and this honor that they give me. I feel from the deep inside me. I have to help them out. This is the deep motivation, I think. To help them, to alleviate, to better their painful experiences, so these inspired me to look for, to search, to dig into a right knowledge to help them.
- P3 What I do, I look at everything, I look at people. I look at the context of what that person is. I think one of the things that I look at it as I have only one life to live. In that life time, I can only experience my life. But I feel that's not enough for me. I want to experience many many more lives and

that's the reason I really enjoy the work. Because every time I sit there for hour and half, I interview a patient and ask them about their lives. That's another life I got to experience. And so I really really have a love for enjoy certain information. But in a very very few people though I see the enjoyment of enjoying somebody life.

*Having a universal perspective.* In this round, participants provided rich information regarding the property *having a universal perspective* of the *believing in philosophy* category. Participants described their beliefs in the universal effect of their practice due to the common nature of human beings. The *having a universal perspective* property was continually defined by the participants' beliefs as these beliefs pertained to the positive effect of their group work practice on group members. Furthermore, the participants' perceptions related to the common nature of human beings were important to note.

P5 ...there are certain aspect of life that can be universal which is transcendent culture boundary and I think leading the group is one of them. You can be in any culture and you can lead group and may be some minor variation according to specific culture but in general I think its universal process. In a group you need to have a leader, group dynamic is similar. May be the expression of people in the group can be slightly different.

*Using resources.* The *using resources* property of the *basic self* category was consistently defined as the assets participants used in the process of developing their personal style of group leadership. Participants further described a dimension of the *using resources* property. The dimension consisted of *using inner resources* at one end of the dimension and *using outer resources* at the other end of the dimension. All dimensions and characteristics from second round analysis were consistently confirmed as part of the *using resources*. Figure 6 was developed to illustrate the sub-categories, properties and dimensions of the *basic self* category.

Figure 6: the *basic self* category, sub-category, property and dimensions



*Reflective Experimentation*

*Reflective experimentation* was revealed during the first round interviews.

Participants consistently expressed their beliefs about the process of *reflective experimentation* throughout the first, second and third round interviews. Especially during the third round of interviews, the category of *reflective experimentation* was strengthened by the participants' descriptions of the category as the key concept that related to many dimensions and properties in the other three categories: *awareness*, *basic self*, and *cultural system*. *Reflective experimentation* was still defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups, while at the same time attempting to develop interventions which were appropriate for particular group members. The existing sub-categories, properties, dimensions, and characteristics from round two were supported, and the relationships between categories and within categories strengthened. Participants consistently described supportive connections from *awareness*, *basic self* and *cultural*

*system* toward *reflective experimentation*. They confirmed that utilizing their awareness, their core beliefs, their perceived resources, and their understanding of their cultural system, all were a part of their *reflective experimentation* process. In this round, participants also added richness to this category by providing details regarding the *gaining growth* property and the *transferring* property. This resulted in the emergence of dimensions of both properties. Details of each property were discussed.

### *Outcome*

The *outcome* sub-category was consistently defined as the participants' providing results from the process of integrating all their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice. The properties of *outcome* sub-category from the second round interviews, *interventions* and *gaining growth*, were also confirmed by participants in the third round interviews.

*Interventions.* The *interventions* property was consistently defined as participants' practicing in groups with a combination of group leadership skills and understanding about groups in a particular context. That context could be similar or different from the traditional group practice processes. Participants also confirmed the characteristics of *interventions* including preparing group members for a new experience, letting go of plans, and genuineness.

Participant 1 discussed his intervention style in group work. He integrated

*Western beliefs* and *having a universal perspective* to his group work *interventions*.

P1 I like us to take our time to present our finding and idea in term of being a good leader from Buddhist. Buddhism told us that we all as a human being have the same structure of psychology or the same psychological structure. If we study thoroughly on the four noble truth, this teaching, this finding of the Buddha, you know told us that all human being, 6000 million on earth have the same psychological structure. Most of the same I

always tell my student that we are encounter with just one problem. And there's only one solution for that problem. That problem based on the misunderstanding the real nature of life. So I do not find any difficulty in any system because we people do have external differences like Chinese or Thai or American but according to the structure of the mind. I think we share the same structure. If we kind of, you know, have enough experience, we will look through the external differences and try to understand what is inside which we call psychological structure. So any psychological problems share the same roots. So we can grab the word attachment or ignorance or craving, any term because these terms share the same area, in deeply these terms share the same area in our psychological structure. If you misunderstand what life really is, you have that craving and that brings you to attachment, you know to any idea, experiences, or knowledge. So that's imprisoning us all. So we have to understand these first. And then if we understand what the problem is; any story, any human story, if we study deep enough. We see that. If it's problematic, it shares the same psychological structure which roots in ignorance or craving or attachment which I have said about earlier. If we understand this, we try to find ways. There's many ways in accordance to the problem that will cut the people from attach to any idea, concept, or experience, to understand the real nature of life which is always flow. Anything in life is not in our power to do anything with it. If you lost your cat or your bicycle, that's no way that we can control this situation. We have to live with it and be with it with the understanding. So at least there are 2 kinds of problem now, external problem which is anything we encounter. We feel not good about it. And then, I usually call internal problem. External problems, we encounter external problem every day. We lost our cat. We lost a bicycle. But the matter is how we solve this kind of problem. We have to solve external problem without internal problem. That's the way that we should go as a counselor or as human being. So we have to understand this first, external problem. If we lost our cat, that's the problem we call external problem.

P1 ... We need to understand life clearly. We use our, what we called "Punya", our understanding of life to deal with problem. So when we have external problem, it doesn't mean we have internal problem. We have to illuminate our internal problem, so that we can live life fully and effectively with the external problem. I think Buddhist teaching bring us to understand that we as human being must try to understand our best, what our psychological structure which is the main root of the problem, which is ignorance, all craving, all attachment. If you can understand this, you will be with external problem without any psychological problem. So this model I think fits with any system or culture because of we do not deal with external thing but we deal with internal psychological.

Participant 2 shared her intervention style in group work. She integrated results from her *transferring* process into her *interventions*.

- P2 I appreciate the most and I told all the people who come to my counseling, number 1, I would encourage them to be themselves and fight in session because this is the opportunity for them to grow with the referee in the room, if they going to fight at home. So I said, well, you should get your money works then fight in from of me. So I can help you fix it. So I guess the enjoyment of doing it is read the dynamics and then point that you challenging them. You know kind of shake them up a bit.
- Researcher So it seems like, you like the dynamics though and the challenging situation that you have.
- P2 I always warn clients that if you are looking for support counseling. Let's me refer you to somebody else because if you come to see me, I will challenge you when you see the point and I will not let you get away easily. So you can choose from the first meeting that you want to go on or you want to see somebody else.

Participants further provided rich descriptions regarding the interaction of *interventions* with others properties and dimensions of *basic self, awareness* and *cultural system*. The emerging relationships had more depth and thoroughly described the *interventions* property in participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia. Details of the interactions and further discussion regarding the interaction of the property *intervention* are discussed under the interaction section.

*Gaining growth*. During the second round interview the data indicated the emergence of a concept regarding participants' growth in both professional and personal levels. In this round, the *gaining growth* property was consistently defined by participants as the advancing stages of each participant's development as a person and as a professional during the process of practicing group work in Asia. The analysis in the third round resulted in the emergence of a dimension of the *gaining growth*. The dimension varied along the continuum from *professional development* to *personal development*.

At one end of the continuum, *professional development* was defined as participants' perception on their development about their growth at the professional level while they continued to practice group work. The illustrated quotes from participants presented their growth as professionals and as group workers.

Participant 1, Participant 3, and Participant 5 described their professional growth from the group work practice they had been doing. The quotes present the *professional development* aspect of the *gaining growth* property of *reflective experimentation*.

- P1 ... I think to be a good counselor, you know. We have to practice it with ourselves. I think this must be the rule. Because as a counselor, you know, we don't use any technique with others but we use our heart. If it's an understanding heart, I think we cannot just work but we live with them, we share with them, you know.
- P1 We can understand almost everything now. But there still some room that I still need practice in order to fulfill that understanding. But with understanding that I have right now, I think it gives me a lot of assistant to help myself and others. That's enough now. I still have some room to practice.
- P3 It's the same thing with therapy, you know. And what I try to do. I don't try to think t get the best answer or result. I think that's a lot of responsibility and you know, I can't' worry about those thing. The works gotta be done, somebody gotta do it and maybe somebody after me will come back and perfect the whole situation. So just by trusting those thing will happens. I do what I can.
- P3 It's the same thing with therapy, you know. And what I try to do. I don't try to think t get the best answer or result. I think that's a lot of responsibility and you know, I can't' worry about those thing. The works gotta be done, somebody gotta do it and maybe somebody after me will come back and perfect the whole situation. So just by trusting those thing will happens. I do what I can.
- P3 Right, you are going to make mistake. That thing is going to happen. But you have to learn from those mistakes. Unfortunately if you get patient who die or something or commit suicide, you feel really bad but at the same time you grow up from that.
- P5 ... Um just keep an open mind and continue to learn because new thing happen all the time. People always discover or rediscover thing and you

can always learn. You cannot know everything. I think in Zen Buddhism is call beginner mind. Always try to keep that beginning mind

Participant 2 also described her professional growth from group work practice that she had been doing. The quote illustrates the *professional development* aspect of the *gaining growth* property of *reflective experimentation* .

P2 I mean people know me or when they approach me to do the training, the unique style that they kind of heard or been experience and they accept that. You know, I guess to blend in the understanding not a direct confrontation but still challenging, that's the Western part.

At the other end of the spectrum, *personal development* was defined as participants' perception on their development at the personal level while they continued to practice group work. Participants provided rich details regarding their growth at the personal level. The following quotes from Participant 1 and Participant 5 provide overall examples of *personal development*. Participant 1 and Participant 5 provided descriptions regarding their personal growth from their group work practice. They expressed that the process of leading and working in group was the same as the process for developing their personal growth.

P1 ...It makes me more real. That's my summary.

P1 ...I think it's my life journey to. Because I had a question since I was a child in an adolescent age, what life is, what the nature is. And no one seems to give me a proper satisfactory answer to that question. When I studied psychology for my bachelor degree, it was more Western. So I have question, isn't there any Thai psychologist, is the question that bring me to studying or trying to understand what life is and with the Western worldview like Rogerian or Behaviorist viewpoint or Existential viewpoint do not give me enough answer to my questions, you know. They did help me to work with our clients very effectively but I still feel that there's some unfulfilled area that I'm not totally satisfy with their explanation or knowledge. So somehow as we talked earlier. I slipped into Buddhist teaching by going down to see Budhadasa in the South. I began do seriously study Buddhist teaching and I felt that it's a truth, it's about life, it's about anything about life, it's about our psychology, it's about our

psychology problem. It's kind of you know, in Buddhist teaching seems to explain that we like to know about our life. I think I got the answer, what the life is, what the nature is and with this understanding we can live with life harmoniously, with peacefulness. I think we can live life effectively, we can work effectively, we can live with other people effective. This understanding makes us more peacefulness. And with peace of mind we have some kind of psychological strength to live. And it is the understanding that brings me to as of my question is answered. I have no question to ask because I know the answer already. I think that's kind of fascinating. We do not have any suspicious about life left. So we understand everything that happens to us. Then we can live life harmoniously and effectively.

- P5 Yes, like you have to be more mature, be aware of your own blind spots, try to remove those as much as possible, receive feedback from colleague, supervisor, even students. Because there are always area that you cannot see or you don't have enough awareness. And it's important to you to keep learning and growing. And finally you will be able to overcome cultural barrier and become in touch with human nature which is universal, deep inside each person...

Participant 6 provided rich details regarding her personal development stemming from her experiences in leading groups. She provided specific examples from her personal experiences. The quote demonstrates the *personal development* aspect of the *gaining growth* property of *reflective experimentation*.

- P6 Lately I'm conduct... It's more like personal growth group for happiness and for help students to adjust them self to the friends or to the classes, to university system. It went well. It was going well. And also lately I just lost a significant person. And after I lead the group, it really helps me too. I learn that. I find myself peaceful. I have some joy after the lost I have found recently. I'm still sad but some moment, somehow in the group I feel like oh, the suffering is some, in Thai we called Anicca, like not permanent. At the moment I learn that another side of the coin, you have some happiness. I learn from the group.

Researcher Yes, I don't know what to say. I understand what you mean. I think at that time should be something, at the beginning it might be difficult to you but when that insight happened, the thing that you absorbed from a group should be a moment of happiness that you see. That's Anicca.  
Yes. It's a lot energy, the positive energy that comes from the process.

- P6 It seems to me that I lead that same title like happiness and adjustment for 5 weeks. Each week I have like about 12 students to attend, participate in group. It seems to me that I use same topic every time but each time group members have their own unique, their own story and some time some story like. Last week, it's very hard for me because the group member that I work with one of them just lost his mom. He just lost his mom. And I'm lost too. I'm not fully finish my grief, the sudden lost. When I'm listening to his story, it seems that I can hold the sadness that he has. It's a lot of energy draw from me to deal with that. And I work with him in the group and the others group members too. And also inside me, I lost a lot of energy too.

The participants' group work experience levels varied. Consequently their descriptions related to the *outcome* sub-category also varied. Hence, the descriptions regarding *interventions* and *gaining growth* varied by participants' experiences in group work practice. To illustrate, participants who had high levels of experience expressed high confidence in practicing with their personal style. Participants who had less group work experience indicated that they questioned their practice.

These illustrations from Participant 1 and Participant 3 present their confidence in their *outcome*.

- P1 I think I am confident in group because I know with my heart, with my experiences, with my blood, sweat and tear that it works...
- P3 ...our groups' success. You know, I'm going to be really really honest with you and I'm going to say not in a stuck up man or something like that. I do pretty good job.

This quote from Participant 4 presents questions that she had while she practiced group work.

- P4 In other word, what I'm more concern was not my skills, was not the theory that I use in group, was not how well I lead the group. You know, it's not about the professional part of me. When I was in America, when I was leading a group, was more concern of me is the personal part of me in that group. The personal part, who they see in me. You know, do they see me as a counselor or do they see me as a non-American person. That's leading a group. It was really challenging or maybe I should say the

challenging is not from leading a group, the challenging is more about myself overcoming my fear and my uncertainty or maybe my irrational thought that they going to see me not a profession identity but as a minority, you know, minority from outside of the country. So the challenging more within myself, that is some work that I have to do toward myself. And this from my personal issue in that process and that can tide back to a lot of personal issue of mine. Because of my educational background in Taiwan, I was not a student that's teachers would concern that I'm a hard working student when I have my education in Taiwan because I'm not a hard working student. I'm not the student who always gets good grades. So the perception I developed about myself from significant others or the others around me was I'm not very strong. That's the concept I developed about myself. It's like Adler theory. Adler said we always have some inferiority complex. So I think because of my educational background in Taiwan. That I think in some extent I probably have some inferiority complex. So when I worked I America no matter when I was leading a group or conducting a session. That is always issue in my mind that I struggled with. That's the part when I was in America.

- P4 When I was in Taiwan. The situation changed treats. I made that. What is the focus of concern in my mind was not I was trained in America, was not I was trained with the knowledge and field that was developed in a context of another culture. What's more of the focus of my concern when I was leading a group in Taiwan is how I can successfully and how can I therapeutically or effectively leading a group that really benefit my members.

### *Process*

During the second round interviews, the data indicated the emergence of a concept that described the participants' processes for incorporating their basic self, their awareness in group, their understanding toward cultural system into their group work practices. In this third round of interviews, the *process* sub-category of the category *reflective experimentation* was consistently defined as the participants' process for incorporating their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice. The properties of the *process* sub-category from the second round interviews were also confirmed by participants in the third round interviews. The *process* sub-category consisted of two properties which were as follows: *having motivation* and *transferring*.

*Having motivation.* In the third round interviews, the *having motivation* property was consistently discussed by participants. The definition of *having motivation* was confirmed by participants as the inspiration, internal and external, that helped participants begin and continue their group work practice in Asia. Participants still confirmed two of the characteristics of the *having motivation* property which emerged from the second round interviews: being motivated by an exploring personality and being motivated by a helper identity.

Participants consistently expressed that being motivated by having an exploring personality was a part of *having motivation* property. They expressed their collective characteristics as people who liked challenging activities which helped them to begin and to continue their practice in group work in Asia.

P3 ... A healthy personality is a person who has true basic value and one is the value of growth, being able to grow, being curious, looking at things like oh, wonder how that works. How will these make me grow? How will these challenge me? So a healthy person looks for challenge. And the other thing is healthy person look to understand and to be able to control thing. The more healthy you are, the more control you try to get. So this is 2 healthy things feature value system of healthy person. I'm not going to say I'm totally healthy person but in the sense that do have very very strong curiosity and desire to have a difference type of control things so I may healthy in that sense.

P3 I go with the rule and continue to look for challenge and look for growth. Even if it's not there. I'm not worry about it, you know. Stepping up to challenge I feel it's a natural things...

The following quotes from Participant 1 and Participant 4 provide their perceptions of being motivated by a helper identity as part of their motivation to begin and continue to practice group work in Asia.

P1 ...I may have had an identity as a psychological helper since I study in a second or third year when we had a practicum with unhealthy person in hospital, I think I would like to be a helper, a psychological helper. I think

that's my identity as a helper but I didn't know how to help. I didn't know any knowledge to be helper.

P4 ...There's part of curiosity to that for sure. I think that curiosity is more like I believe all the counselors or every the researchers in the counseling profession. I believe those people they have curiosity about people in nature. Maybe not everybody have the same level of curiosity about human or human being. But I do believe counselors or researcher in the counseling field that they have some level of curiosity of human being. But I would really say what really motivate me. I want to explore, discover, may be discover more ways...

P4 I believe all the counselors or every the researchers in the counseling profession. I believe those people they have curiosity about people in nature. Maybe not everybody have the same level of curiosity about human or human being. But I do believe counselors or researcher in the counseling field that they have some level of curiosity of human being.

Participants further provided rich description regarding the interaction of *having motivation* with others properties and dimensions of *basic self, awareness* and *cultural system*. The emerging relationships had more depth and thoroughly described the *having motivation* property. Details of the interactions and further discussion regarding the interaction of the property *motivation* are discussed under the interaction section.

*Transferring*. In the third round interviews, participants also confirmed that *transferring* was a property of the *process* sub-category. In this round, participants provided rich information regarding the *transferring* property. *Transferring* was defined by participants as the ways in which they were able to integrate the knowledge and experiences gained from training in Western countries into their group work practices in Asia. Participants began the process of *transferring* at the start of their training in Western countries. The process of *transferring* continued when they returned to their home countries to practice.

Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4 and Participant 6 described clearly that they began the process of transferring as they were being trained in Western countries. The quotes below illustrate the concerns they had during the time they were training in the U.S.

- P1     And knowledge, you know, even study in our hometown is from the West, most of them are from the States, you know. To have a chance to study in the States, I think that's good time for me to see myself more clearly as an Eastern helper. As you know, we are from Buddhist tradition country. So somewhere back in my head, I would like to share this with my Western friend but I did not know enough at that time. So I just surrender to the Western theories. Then I had a chance for my dissertation. My director of dissertation, (identity information removed) allowed me to do what I like to do. That was a first time I made a serious study about Buddhist teaching. It's like putting papaya, pineapple, apple in to a blender. It's a gradual process that I put everything together and at the beginning the papaya may stay differentiate from pineapple and apple. When we have them blended, it's little by little integrated to each other, but we know structure or texture of the things. I think I feel like that you know. Now I can mix different fruits together but I still can feel the uniqueness of each fruit. It's kind of mix process. We can mix them together and we can differentiate them from each other.
- P2     ...because I came to the U.S. since high school and kind of stay on all the way and since I graduated I kind of stay on for 7 more years professionally. So I think when I first left the country. I think the perception that most people have when I left. What do you call primary school in Thailand? They kind of perceived me as somebody who quit but then when I returned for good in 1995. I guess they totally changed their perception and sometime they get annoy that I fight for everything. But then again when you enter the professional world in Thailand, then you kind learn through trial and error what appropriate and what you should hold off and find different way to say it or reframing what you like to say.
- P3     I think being trained in the U.S. You tend to be much more forceful type person, you know trying to push your way through things and making things happen. But that because a lot of American people are more direct. So one of the things, I think the way group changing you is group is the way of reintroduction back to your own culture. It's kind of welcome back. This is the way we do. You have gone for awhile so you don't know.

- P4 When I was in America, when I was leading a group. The concern in my mind was not a training I get in the Western world. It was the concern I have, was more about the racial identity of me in that group.

Participant 4 further described the difficulty in her process of *transferring*. She discussed *transferring* in terms of the translation of language and also the concepts.

- P4 ...that is quite different to run group in a difference culture. I mean in Taiwan. As far as language that we learn in counseling, let's me say it another way that as far as the training that I had in America, all the language I used, I was trained was all in English. Now, I'm going to transfer back or translate back into Chinese. Somehow it's kind of take time and experiences to know the exactly terms that can perfectly or more correctly. You know, transfer it into different culture that fits into that culture that people in my group are able to understand what I am talk about. Rather than feel it's very weird language that you saying to us. I think that's part is kind of. I don't know there's term to describe that. But sometimes is quite difficult, kind of weird sometimes.
- P4 The language thing is one I really concern. The reason why I concern about the language because I am concern about therapeutic effect. Let's me say it this way, in this two situations in American and in Taiwan. The primary focus that hit me was different. Maybe the follow up what I did to deal with the concern maybe the same thing but the reason was difference, is that make sense.
- P4 Sometime is not about whether or not, the translation is correct or not. Sometime is more about when I translate that, do my people, do my group members, are they able to understand, are they able to grasp what I'm trying to say from knowledge I used. I think is the key, rather than accurately translate that. Well, but also I need to say that accurate translation sometime is important. Ok, translation involves two parts; one is how accurate I am from translating the words from English to Chinese. Another level of translation involve how well I can translate a word and a term that people in another culture can understand that really well in context of their culture and language. So what is it like to run group is challenging, I mean. As far as the training is concerned and the term of knowledge I use, you know, how do I need to do so they can accept the concept in the group counseling that we talk about.

Participant 6 also began the *transferring* process as she was trained in the U.S.

She expressed the difficulty she had in the transferring process.

- P6 I try to fit my experience from Thailand with the way that how people lead group in the U.S. So after another 1,000 hour during the pre doctoral intern and advance practicum, I learn oh people have emotion, people have some experiences and people have some cognition, some cognitive. So they can work together in the setting. So if they prefer some like thought change, I can lead the group in that way. If they prefer to check their experience in new thing, we just go that way. It's more like have many tools to work in a group. After I came back from the U.S. to Thailand, the fitting process, the adjusting process, it's just. I think I'm in a process of adjusting. I try to slow down myself and try to stay with my client and not try to think before them; oh this way is fit for them. So I just slow down and let the members bring what they want from the group to the group and then just share what they have and I just do what I can do to fit in their experiences. It's difficult though because sometime for this group, they want to do cognitive thing or this group, I'm too tired. I don't want to think. Something likes that somehow.

Participant 3 expressed further the feelings he had during the *transferring* process. He described feeling anxious because he was trying to do something that was quite challenging.

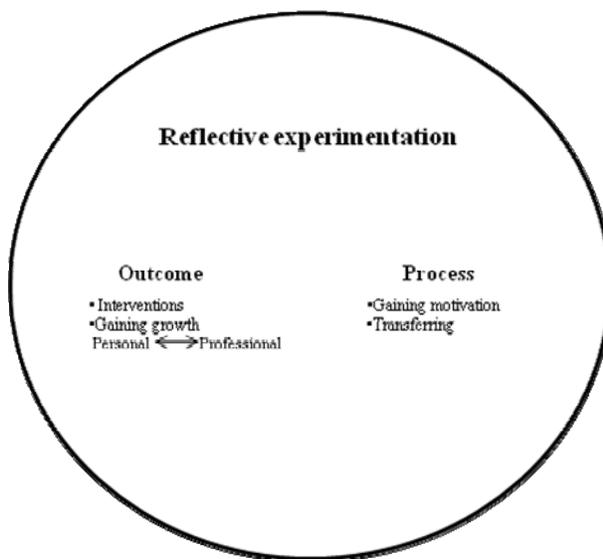
- P3 You feel, you know at a personal level you feel anxious. Because there's nobody that's going to sit there and tell you what's right and what's wrong and I don't think you can look at things as what's right and what's wrong, you know. But you look at things and it's kind of trial and error thing. You try it, maybe it's good, maybe it's bad and then you try it again. So you live through a lot of discomfort, a lot of feeling of anxiety of wondering whether you do the right thing. But I think the best way to get over that, at least this is how I found, if I don't do it, nobody going to do it. So you know, it's better to do something than nothing. So I think that's one of the things kept me going. Because it's move out of necessity and not just desire. There's need here and somebody need to response.

Although the participants in the study did not describe the connections that existed between the dimensions of the reflective experimentation category, the participants did express that the outcome of the process of *transferring* was a part of their growth at both the personal and professional levels and the development of their interventions.

- P2 I mean to develop my sense of assertiveness is not by the way I been here. It's kind of gradually happened but more so after I went to the group therapy part. I think that's the breakthrough. In my college year and graduate first year. I barely spoke up in class. But then after going through the group therapy process and began working as a professional then I need to speak up. So as Thai group leader, people know that my style is quite different. That I would challenge them but not in a confrontation way but more so like gentle challenges but if somebody kept, you know, going or denying then I would get to my point.
- P6 If you have only one tool, it's very easily when 10 people come to you. You have 1 tool. You just give it, perfect fit because you have only one to offer. And they know what you have so they come to you and they get what they want. If you so many tools, it's not clearly, it's not obviously show that what you have. People think, oh you have many tools too. So you have to deal with many options, with possibilities. I would say that now I'm still developing myself and I'm still developing or try to adjust myself, try to find my area. Is that cognitive behavioral or my previous area or try to integrate all to be just one. But it's not in that. I don't think I'm ready or good enough. I still need some time to develop or to fit that. It's still developing. So when people come to you, you have to deal with possibility. If you have many tools, you have to deal with, oh which tool that I have, which fits with the need. Well, I think the process of fitting in. I need some time to practicing what I can do and integrate that and then I think that would be ready and it comes out. People going to see obviously what they get from you, what you can give to them.

Additionally, in the third round interviews the participants also presented the connections of *interventions*, *gaining growth*, *having motivation* and *transferring* with properties and dimensions of the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category, and the *cultural system* category. These connections further helped the researcher to understand participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia and also affirmed *reflective experimentation* as the core concept of participants' experience in practicing group work in Asia. The connections between the *reflective experimentation* category and others categories and properties were discussed in the interaction section. Figure 7 was created to illustrate the sub-categories, properties and dimensions of the *reflective experimentation*.

Figure 7: the *reflective experimentation* category, sub-categories, properties and dimensions



### *Cultural System*

After the third round of interviews, *cultural system* continued to be supported as a category. Participants still defined the *cultural system* category as the knowledge and values shared by participants' cultures that influenced their group work practice. The property, *openness to group work practice* remained the same as in the second round interview. Furthermore, the relationships between *cultural system* and other categories were strengthened. The participants also confirmed the connections from the previous round and they also explained in more detail about the integration of *awareness*, *basic self* and *cultural system* in their *reflective experimentation* process. In this round, participants also added to the richness to this category by further describing characteristics of the *cultural system* category. The characteristics were working with executive administrators, participants' roles in community, and dealing with community.

*Openness to group work practice.* The *openness to group work practice* property was described by a dimension that varied along a continuum from *supportive* to *challenging*. At the *supportive* end of this dimension participants continued to describe how the support they received from their cultural systems aided their practice. The other end of the dimension was *challenging*. The participants described how the challenges they received from their cultural systems hindered their practice. Participants described some of the *challenges* from their *cultural system* to their group work practice. Some participants further described *challenges* from the mental health system in their cultural system.

P2 ...in Thailand, doctors have a high ranking than any others mental health profession in the field. So that's another battle before we go to another level which is administrator.

P5 ...department of psychiatry or psychiatric ward in a teaching school. Actually this system is not very good to run group because they are many activities and patients. The high turnover of patients, they leave quickly. They don't stay for a long time. For example, the longest they could stay would be like one month. That means only three or four sessions of group therapy which is not enough. And many of them are from remote area. So it's very difficult to follow up. And they probably get a big bag of peels and asked to come back to refill they prescription every two or three months. So it's not possible to run continuous group therapy with the same patient. So we keep get the new patients, starting over.

Researcher So it's quite challenge.

Yes. Because I think the policies and procedures of department is not conducive to this kind of activity. They want to fill up schedule with various activities, like occupational therapy, this and that, recreation and so group therapy is like part of the schedule. They don't take it very seriously.

Researcher They don't take it very seriously. It's just one part.

Right, and also they are like staff members who according to our system required to take turn in running groups and they are medical students, nursing students so on, like part of the routine, regiment. It doesn't receive

a high priority. So that's another system that's problematic. I have voice my complain a few time about this but it has not been any change.

P5 ... in my own profession, I work in medical setting. So sometime I feel little outside because I'm not a medical doctor. I'm psychologist.

Participants also shared about the involvement of the executive administrators in their respective organizations in their group work practices. They described the impact of executive administrators in their organizations on participants' group work practice. Mostly participants described the effect of administrators on their practice related to budget concerns.

P2 ... the administrator they always look for a cheaper way to save the budget.

P3 ... a lot of administrator here hear about group therapy and decide they want a group therapy in their agency is for a cost benefit. If you get one patient who pay 100 dollars for an hour, that's 6 or 7 patients to pay 50 dollars an hour.

P3 ... you get more income per hour. So that's a kind of interest that's a lot agency, a lot of people start with because of you know. I think in an agency level, in a system level, it is all about administrating and payment.

P4 ...the boss of the agency didn't really want to run the group. It is one of the personal in that agency. She does really want me to run the group. So the agency or the boss of the agency are kind of like, I don't really care, just finish that group, I can have some money to run the agency since this is non-profit agency. They financial funded by the project they requested or developed and they got the budget from the government. So if they don't run any program, whether or not counseling program or counseling group or whatever. If they don't run group, they don't get money to run the agency. So the boss of the agency was primary concern about that.

Participants also discussed their other roles within their respective communities. Most of the participants also taught at the university level. Therefore participants described their role as professors being related to their roles as group leaders. For example, they not only facilitated groups, but they also taught students about group work

practice. The participants described the ways that they made some impact on the community and system by being a trained group leader who goes out and works in the community.

- P1 I think the fruits of our work are going because your friends, your sisters, your brothers are doing their work in the field and people know us better that we can give them our service to better psychological well being. Your sisters, your brothers, they are grown up now. They share many, well, high rank position to have power to decide. And then they usually open a chance for us to go in their organization to present our work to serve employees or their subordinate. Personally, if you are done with your program, you will be the one that will come to our service. So you can lead any group here to the public and well, you will be one of our soldiers to fight in the battle.
- P1 It's like a metaphor. As a teacher of counseling psychology, I work in this more than 30 years of teaching. They are many student going into the field and work with the people. I feel that I like this and I proud of this. I feel this field will grow broader in the future.
- P5 Another thing would be supervision and teaching for students who are in training and students who come to observe and during follow up discussing. They learn something from it. It's always some good feeling to see that students are learning and changing also.

A characteristic of the *cultural system* category, dealing with the community, emerged in the third round interviews. Participants expressed that they needed to work with their respective communities in order to continue their group work practice. This characteristic helped the researcher understand the connection of the participants' experiences in practicing group work in Asia. The participants also described some of destructive factors from their communities on their practices, but they didn't present the information with a negative perspective. In fact, the participants presented the information with a positive perspective because participants had the knowledge and skills to deal with their communities.

- P2 I think by studying the system more carefully, you will be more prepared to deal with whatever might come. But if you just naively approach the system and that oh they would grant whatever you offer right away. That would be a mistake. That brings back to how do you prepare yourself when you deal with the system. If you look for more information and try to understand from their point of view or in psychodrama you call role reversal.
- P2 I'm not in one system or the others. I'm like the outsider. When they want to do some training, they contact me. So I'm more free to talk about the system because they have to think about consequence. You know, they should not criticize about their boss. But I think the main point that I say this because it's still very much of the hierarchy and so how you could prove your competency in the way that will gain their respect.
- P2 ...now I guess I learn. And now when I accepted to do training then I learned to ask more specific questions of who are participants and what are their expectations. In the very first hour of our training, so that's if they have misunderstanding or misconception of what we are going to do for the rest of the course so I have a chance to clarify at the beginning whereby before I didn't ask, I just started presenting my materials and they just went lacking. Because that part I overlooked. Because they are not used to talking about their feelings, they are not used to looking at themselves in relation to others.
- P3 ... it takes a lot of organization. It takes a lot of leadership, I think. I think the big thing is like, you know.

Participant 1 and Participant 3 also expressed the challenging influences that came from their communities as the challenges related to their group work practice. They further described the ways in which they dealt with the challenging factors by providing their communities with some knowledge and information about their practice.

- P1 ...I think a public is getting to know us, along the way of our work with them. During my 30 years period, people gain more kind of understanding of our work because our work is not very easy to communicate. It's more experiential, it's more abstract, it's not concrete and it's not very easy to communicate but if we have a chance to work with them directly, to put them in our group. They learn and they see what we can do for them. So to understand our professional service, people must have a chance to participate in our work directly because this thing is experiential, not by word of

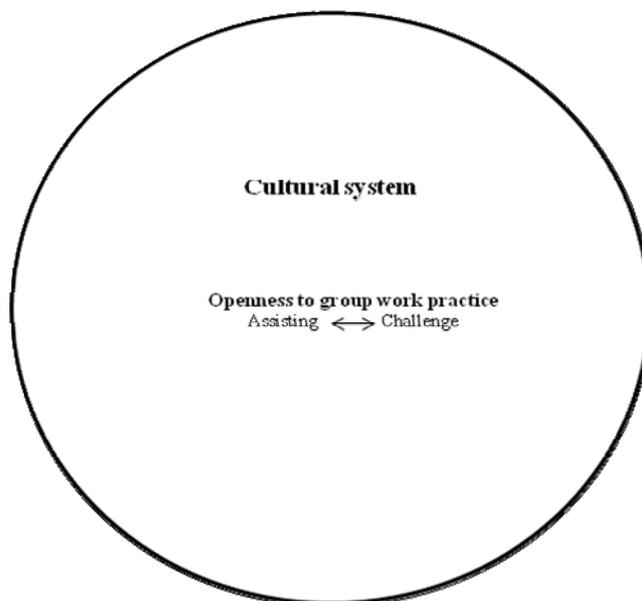
explanation. But they can feel our service. So it's a little by little process, that they know us.

P3 ... How do you say? You get positive change when you get results. People are considering to see new things when you see results.

P3 I think the person who came, the patient themselves as well whoever they meet they gonna say this place is great, I feel so much better or they tell other people about it, you know. The people who work with you who are very skeptical about things, they also see the changes. Japanese people are probably very very in to the details, the proper greeting in the morning, you know like good morning things like that. You know and you get people who come to the group and really change to do the proper greeting and stuff like that, prior to that they might quite grouchy. So the change in the system can happen when you get the result. Seeing is believing, I think that does summarize all.

Figure 8 was created to illustrate the properties and dimensions of the *cultural system* category.

Figure 8: *cultural system* category, property and dimension



### *Interaction*

Several interactions of the categories and properties emerged after the second round of interviews and were discussed in the previous chapter. In the third round of interviews the relationships from the second round were strengthened, and new relationships emerged. The relationships that appeared in the third round analysis provided thick and thorough descriptions to the framework that had already emerged.

#### *Interaction of the Awareness Category and the Basic Self Category*

One important relationship that was stated in the previous chapter was the relationship between the *awareness* category and the *using resources* property of the *basic self* category. During the third round interviews, the participants still confirmed the relationship between these two categories. Participants described the integration of their *awareness of individual level, awareness of group level, awareness in a moment* and *awareness over time* into *using inner sources*. They used this integration to practice and to develop their personal style in group work practice. In this round of interviews, the participants also described the interaction of *awareness* with other categories in terms of the integration of *awareness, basic self* and *cultural system* into *reflective experimentation*. The details of the interaction are discussed at the end of this section.

#### *Interaction of the Basic Self Category and the Reflective Experimentation Category*

In the second round interviews, participants provided descriptions that presented strong positive connections about the dimensions of *believing in philosophy* and *using resources* of the *basic self* category toward *outcome* and *process* of the *reflective experimentation* category. In this round of interviews, all connections from previous rounds were confirmed. In addition, participants provided descriptions that strengthened

the positive connections between dimensions and properties of the *basic self* category and dimensions and properties of *reflective experimentation* category. The connections that emerged helped the researcher develop a greater understand about the participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia and also affirmed the *reflective experimentation* as a core concept of participants' experiences in practicing group work in Asia.

The *having motivation* property of the *process* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category was consistently mentioned by participants as an important factor in their experiences in group work practice in Asia. Participants described the property *trusting in group work, using inner resources, having Western beliefs, having Eastern beliefs, respecting group members* as factors that supported *having motivation* .

Participant 2, Participant 3 and Participant 6 described the integration of the characteristic of using past experiences as part of the *using inner resources* dimension and the *trusting in group work* property of the *basic self* category to be a supportive of *having motivation*.

- P2 ...I think the part that I value it so much and really believe in it because when I was a student and when I worked here in United States professionally. The part of becoming professional is really encouraging me to be a group participant, meaning you work on your own issue and you go for our individual therapy. I really value in those experience because having the direct experience of what it was like to go through the most painful part of your life and to see yourself go through that. So it's kind of confirmed your belief because, yes you gone through that before. And it's nothing that can be described in the textbook.
- P3 I think that was the first time I really took an interested in group. The group will behave in any way that you lead it but if you want the group changes in certain way. You want certain things to happen. You can make the group happens that way. And you know it takes minimal effort and once you do these kinds of things what happens that other people will follow and that change will occur, you know.

- P6 I would say that my previous experiences as a group member during my master degree I attended a lot of groups. That I think what I learn about my friend, about myself. In the group setting I learn that it's safe to explore. It's safe to talk. I can cry. I can laugh in the group setting and I grow from that. This would shape or this would. I think experiences would make me believe that group can be some tool for people to grow.

Participants also described that *believing in philosophy* was a supportive factor in sustaining their motivation to begin and continue practice group work in Asia. This quote from Participant 1 described the positive connection between the *having Eastern beliefs* and *having motivation*. This participant described his belief in philosophy supported his motivation to work in group.

- P1 I have tried to integrate Buddhist teaching into our practice. I think you know I feel with my experience. Buddhist teaching gave us a total and broad space because the law of Buddha is the law of nature. If we place our way of life our practice in a law of life, a law of nature, it's broad enough for everything, for any psychological problem. I feel excited and thrilled with this finding very much. Now, I stand on Buddhist teaching and use it as our framework and guideline for practice.

The quote from Participant 4 described the positive connection between the *having Western beliefs* and *having motivation*. This participant described her belief in the philosophy that supported her motivation to practice group.

- P4 ... that's my faith to motivate me or the faith that supported me to move out, try or do stuffs like that.
- P4 ...one thing I'm pretty sure about is I think there are multiple ways to help people, no matters culture or what population. I believe that they are multiple ways because people are so different. What I'm willing. What really motivate me to do is there gotta be more way to help people in Taiwan. We adopted a lot of the counseling theories and skills from Western world. They have so many ways that people in Taiwan they have not have a chance to experience that yet. So I'm not saying that we be the way but I'm saying that they might be a way or the (removed identity information) might be a way to help them.

Participants further described the connection between the property *respecting group members* and the *having motivation* property. Participants perceived that group members' growth and group members' life experiences were also factors that motivated them to continue group work practice.

- P1 At the beginning of my practice, it's very fascinating to share painful experiences with other. I feel that to get to know painful experiences of other is being honor by other. It's like they honor me to walk with him or her along the painful experiences. I think this very fascinating to me and this honor that they give me. I feel from the deep inside me. I have to help them out. This is the deep motivation, I think. To help them, to alleviate, to better their painful experiences, so these inspired me to look for, to search, to dig into a right knowledge to help them.
- P3 What I do, I look at everything, I look at people. I look at the context of what that person is. I think one of the things that I look at it as I have only one life to live. In that life time, I can only experience my life. But I feel that's not enough for me. I want to experience many many more lives and that's the reason I really enjoy the work. Because every time I sit there for hour and half, I interview a patient and ask them about their lives. That's another life I got to experience. And so I really really have a love for enjoy certain information. But in a very very few people though I see the enjoyment of enjoying somebody life.
- P5 Sometime you feel inspired by the courage of some patients to change, to put up with all the hard chips they have in their lives.  
 Researcher Can you explain a little bit more about courage from patients?
- P5 Yes. Because some patients they rather unfortunate. They are many many bad things, negative experiences in their life. But they continue to try, continue to struggle, and grow.

The *transferring* property of the *process* sub-category was also influenced by *inner resources* of *using resources* property of the *basic self* category. This quote from Participant 6 presented how the past experience that she had gained from practicing group work was influenced by the *transferring* of her knowledge and experiences from her training in the U.S. to group work practice in Asia.

P6 I learn something. Let me talk about my background. I learn about group. I learn about counseling. I learn about how to do talk therapy from Thailand already. In term of practice, I have more than 1,000 or I think more than 3,000 in Thailand because after I graduate my Master degree. I'm still working in the counseling and group setting. It's my job too. I worked like for 5 years before I went to the U.S. to pursue my Ph.D. degree. So I already have something about counseling. And once I finished my practice in the U.S. I just extended that, not the process in my counseling but the way. In Thailand, my theoretical background or the way I work with my case is more like humanistic existential. I believe about how people find their meaning in life and how people can fully experience what they experiences, something like that. And less focus on the cognitive and also it's quite more focus on emotions and some kind of meditation, I would say some kind of Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist principle that I try to understand and apply that to the group sometime. But in the Western, they more value about how people think and change their thoughts. So I learn more from that. And I'm start to. I try to fit my experience from Thailand with the way that how people lead group in the U.S. So after another 1,000 hour during the pre doctoral intern and advance practicum, I learn oh people have emotion, people have some experiences and people have some cognition, some cognitive. So they can work together in the setting. So if they prefer some like thought change, I can lead the group in that way. If they prefer to check their experience in new thing, we just go that we. It's more like have many tool to work in a group. After I came back from the U.S. to Thailand, the fitting process, the adjusting process, it's just. I think I'm in a process of adjusting. I try to slow down myself and try to stay with my client and not try to think before them; oh this way is fit for them. So I just slow down and let the members bring what they want from the group to the group and then just share what they have and I just do what I can do to fit in their experiences. It's difficult though because sometime for this group, they want to do cognitive thing or this group, I'm too tried. I don't want to think. Something likes that somehow.

As stated before, the interaction between the *basic self* category and the *reflective experimentation* category also included the supportive relationship between the properties of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category and the *intervention* property of the *outcome* sub-category. Participant 2 expressed that her general style in group work was influenced by her trust in the group work process and her universal perspectives. The quote below presents the supportive connection from *trusting in group work* and *having a universal perspective to interventions*.

- P2 ... Thai clients. They're more resistant. It's usually how to get them to move from intellectual level into feeling level. Once you help them break that wall then usually they cooperate. That's why I'm hesitating to say because some people say would it work with Asian culture. But I think if you melt down the barrier and then get to the feeling, get to the emotion. Then they be available and more cooperative.

Participant 3 incorporated his respect for group members into his general approach in group work practice. He integrated his interests in group members into his practice and developed it to be his specific style in group work practice. These illustrations present the connection between *respecting in group members* and *interventions*.

- P3 ... What I do, I look at everything, I look at people. I look at the context of what that person is. I think one of the things that I look at it as I have only one life to live. In that life time, I can only experience my life. But I feel that's not enough for me. I want to experience many many more lives and that's the reason I really enjoy the work. Because every time I sit there for hour and half, I interview a patient and ask them about their lives. That's another life I got to experience. And so I really really have a love for enjoy certain information...
- P3 I like to see people working together. I like to see patients learning from each other. I don't want to all kind of like stuck up or anything. I know that I can cause certain effect in certain patient. I know that I can make certain changes within a patient but I think more important, you know. The one moment that I feel pretty excited about group is in the first session when I, usually in the first session one activity I do is I have everybody tell the group about their symptoms. Tell me about your symptoms and how you got here. So everybody tell about their symptom. And at the very end I say, okay we going to go around the room again. So how do you feel about coming to this group? And the funny thing is I always love to share the one phrase. This is kind of be my, what is it? Umm I don't know. Things that kind one of objectives that I have, like things that patients say, I thought I was the only one fighting this disease. And the first time I felt there are other people fighting along with the same problem, at the same direction, at the same time I am and I don't feel alone. I think I don't feel alone is one of the biggest, the best from doing group, you know. I think anyone of us, even as therapist has his or her own problems. So in often time therapist would be well, in their own problems will be a person who quite lonely. Because they suppose to be a

person who helping other people but when you get, when you are able to see, you talk to other therapist maybe. Like, wow, I'm not the only one of that. I you are able to share that concept, you can get that spirit or that experience with your patients. Often time your patients, I think, you know, have a battle with what right there.

Participant 5 described group work practice as a practice that was not limited by cultural boundaries because he had trust in the group work process. He integrated his belief in a universal perspective with his practice. This developed into his intervention style. The illustrative quote presents the relationship between *having a universal perspective* and *interventions*.

P5 ...there are certain aspect of life that can be universal which is transcendent culture boundary and I think leading the group is one of them. You can be in any culture and you can lead group and may be some minor variation according to specific culture but in general I think its universal process. In a group you need to have a leader, group dynamic is similar. May be the expression of people in the group can be slightly different. For example, Thai people, they are not be very out spoken, compare to Western people. You have to expect that and try to encourage. May be make more stronger afford in encouraging patients. Otherwise they just wait for you to speak and so on. So you have to be aware of that. So everyone can participate.

#### *Interaction of the Reflective Experimentation Category and the Cultural System Category*

In the third round interviews, participants still confirmed the connection from the previous round between *reflective experimentation* category and the *cultural system* category. Again, the emerging connections helped the researcher to develop a greater understanding about the participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia and also affirmed the *reflective experimentation* as a core concept of the participants' experiences in practicing group work in Asia.

Participants described the influence from the property *openness to practice* of the *cultural system* category to properties of the sub-category *outcome* and the sub-category

*process* of the *reflective experimentation* category. Participant 1 described his cultural background as a resource for him to develop his general style in group work practice. He also included his previous experience from training in a Western country as part of his resource and combined it with his cultural background. The illustrated quote presented the connection between the *assisting* aspect of *openness to group work practice* and the *transferring* property of the *process* sub-category.

P1 ...it's learning process. I began my work with depending on Rogerian idea and then Gestalt and some kind of Humanistic existential idea. But I don't know when we slip into Buddhist teaching. It's about 20 years ago, we went down to see Bhuddhadasa and he gave us a lot of understanding in the Buddhist teaching.

P1 As an Eastern person, you know, having background in Buddhist teaching just a little bit, I think somehow our Buddhist teaching is able to help. So as a person from academic culture, I study a lot of Western idea about psychology since my undergraduate and with being West in Buddhist tradition. I feel the sameness and difference between knowledge. But I try to integrate them because I would like to have just one bag to carry with me in order to help other. When I integrated them all together little by little, and it's here, it's right now.

Participant 1 described his cultural background as resource for him to develop his general style in group work practice. This quote illustrated the connection between *assisting* and the *interventions* of the *process* sub-category.

P1 ... Now, I stand on Buddhist teaching and use it as our framework and guideline for practice. And I think you know the response from the public is very interesting, it may be because our homeland is Thailand. It's familiar with Buddhist teaching. It's easy to communicate with the groups, with the people. They are familiar with Buddhist teaching, they may not understand that enough. But when we explain to them, we show them, they understand it quite quickly and then with this understanding we ask them to use it as a guideline to present themselves to group and analyze themselves or examine themselves. I think it works quite well.

Participant 2 also expressed the connection of *transferring* and *cultural system*.

This quote from Participant 2 presents the influences from her *cultural system* on her *transferring process*. It also resulted in a change in her personal growth.

P2 I guess it change me with my illusion. Because in the beginning part when I just returned to Thailand, I thought oh everything is bright and very much likes rosy thing but the more I do it, the more I realize there're many layers. And you have to approach it carefully. So I think what changed me that no longer be naïve and not too illusion. I don't have the false expectation or too high expectation. In the mean time, not lower to low. But not to have, like oh everything is nice and rosy. So when I approach it with expectation, let says a little bit complication that I tend to be a little bit more careful. When I first practice in Thailand, I would go in such a positive attitude and sometime people when they are not use to that style. Then they may not just understand or not respond in the beginning. Because in the beginning, part of my experience I didn't study the culture system too well.

Participant 3 described the integration of the *cultural system* category to *reflective experimentation* category. He expressed the challenge of leading groups in his cultural system as a resource for him to use in developing his general style of group work practice. This quote presents the supportive connection from *challenge* of the *openness to practice* property to the *intervention* property.

P3 In term likes group things or characteristics of Japanese people, you know, Japanese people things in group and try to keep the piece, you know. When you are try to lead a group, especially therapy group. It's more on kind of lecture instead of a group. But if you lucky you can get people into the discussion. So what's like to do group in my system, it's difficult

In the second round interviews, the participants provided descriptions that presented positive interactions of the *having motivation* property of the *process* sub-category and the *assisting* in the *openness to group work practice* of the *cultural system* category. In this round, participants continued to express that the supportive connections

from their cultures and communities sustained their motivation to begin and to continue practicing group work in Asia.

Participant 1 presents these interactions of *having motivation* and *assisting* in the *openness to group work practice* in terms of the support from his *cultural system* to his motivation to begin and to continue the process of *reflective experimentation*.

P1 I think it was the question I had since I was a small child that I talked about earlier. I would like to have this question answer. Sigmund Freud helped me a little bit, you know. Rogers is a bit better than Freud. Maslow is a bit better than Rogers because he brings us to get in touch what he calls self actualizing person. In the East, in our home land, we use to know the best person; the good person is in the name of Ariya, Ariya person. I kind of see the sameness the direction of Maslow and Buddha. I think I am a lazy person too. I don't want to bring a whole bag of Freud, Maslow, and Skinner, you know.

Often, the connection from the *culture system* to *having motivation* might originate from the *challenging* aspect of *openness to group work practice*. However, participants' still perceived it as their motivation to begin and to continue practice group work. This quote from Participant 2 presented this connection.

P2 because if you give up, who would do it. Who would break system dysfunctional pattern?

Participants didn't present only the effect from the *cultural system* category on the *reflective experimentation* category. Participants also described their perspectives on some effects from their group work practice on the community. However, participants didn't describe the changes in term of external changes, but they described changes in term of internal changes at the organizational level.

P1 I think a public is getting to know us, along the way of our work with them. During my 30 years period, people gain more kind of understanding of our work because our work is not very easy to communicate. It's more experiential, it's more abstract, it's not concrete and it's not very easy to communicate but if we have a chance to work with them directly, to put

them in our group. They learn and they see what we can do for them. So to understand our professional service, people must have a chance to participate in our directly because this thing is experiential, not by word of explanation. But they can feel our service. So it's a little by little process, that they know us.

Participant 1 further described the changes he made to the cultural system as being qualitative changes, by making changes in group members that could affect the community. These quotes presented a correlation from *reflective experimentation* and *cultural system*.

- P1 ...external setting may not change, you know. But psychologically change. You change qualitatively. I would like to say that.
- P1 Well, System, any system depends on human being and human being can change the system. So if we look at only one system, if father got benefits from group experience, we can change the atmosphere in his family. If you work in company or in an organization and you participate in group experience and you gain some understanding of life. I think this person can change the atmosphere in his or her work place. I think people change, system change. I think a counseling psychologist, the way that deal with human suffering. If you can change psychological structure of human being, he or she will change the system. They may not change externally but in term of psychological structure, he or she can change. I think the external level of the system may not be changed but psychologically, internally it will be changed. If we look at family system, a father is still a father, a mother is still a mother, he or she will cook for his or her child every morning. They do the same thing but with the different quality inside, you see. So we may not change any system externally but we change it internally. The way we change we called qualitatively not quantitatively.

Participant 2 seconded the impact from reflective experimentation process on the cultural system in terms of internal changes at the organizational level. The quote below from participant 2 describes her observation of changes in the *cultural system* from *reflective experimentation*.

- P2 ... and team work. That's certainly would improve because head of department who authorize the budget to run it, few month later she called and reported that she could feel some positive changes and they are more like a team than before.

- P2 ...with the particular nurses group when people who are senior nurses, junior nurses and you know in the medical model, usually what happen is they go by hierarchy and with that they tend to be like senior nurses would be looking down or ordering or forcing the younger one which one much respect. Then after they gone through the psychodrama, learning about each other personal life, they have more understanding and it lower their wall. That's the part that I observe the most is the group cohesion. And their universal feeling, you know feeling like somebody that they never thought would have that feeling.
- P2 ...that's what we hope to happen when they come to the group process. Once they learn about their issue. We hope from the new insight that they gain we hope that will carry on and practice that in their real life situation.
- P2 ...when we do the training group usually we do long week end, Friday, Saturday, Sunday from 9 o'clock in the morning till 4 o'clock and then we may skip one or two weekend and then we meet them for their second long weekend. So in that way, we often in the second weekend got report that actually what they learn from the first weekend. They did apply and some of their friends within the same group also make a comment that yes they have been even though just a short period of time but some development in some of the people who chose to be the person who work on the problem.

Participants further described the relationship between *reflective experimentation* and the *cultural system* in terms of the effect at the micro level. Participant 6 perceived the changes from within the group to the outside community in terms of small group changes or individual changes. The quote from Participant 2 also confirms Participant 1's concept of qualitative change.

- P6 ...the individual level, after I try to conduct the group. At the end of the group, I would have time for the group to share what they learn from the group. And after that they have something the way they response to their friend, the way they response to me. I can think of something change. From the class level, is not a community level, right, from the class level, yes some cohesiveness. I can see that the change. If you ask me about the institutional level or community level, I would say. From the group I conduct it seems the number of students who attend my group or participate in my group is just small number. It's just like hundred per semester, compare to 10,000. I don't see the big impact.

- P6 I would say that the group itself. I really like to conduct the group. I think it's the way to help people to learn from each other, to share the idea, to share the culture, to share whatever they have in the group setting or the group environment. I totally agree that. My thing is if we have chance to do something in community level. I'm not sure the group going to be an option because it's about the group, the small group. It's about the number of , we can count the number of group member. I can think about if the group member is the university administrator, that would change.

The following quote from participant 4 also presents the effect from *reflective experimentation* to *cultural system*. Participant 4 expressed the effect she saw from her group on a person in community. She described the effect from group in terms of encouraging a person in the community to continue working with the specific group of children.

- P4 ...She really has strong faith in them. Because of me as an outsider or that discussed or talked about students with her, it seemed to me she feels that she is not lonely as far as helping those students. She was empowered.

Participant 3 also presented the influence of *reflective experimentation* on the *cultural system*. He talked about the effect of his groups on the community. Once people in community noticed the change in group members, they started treating group members and the participants differently. Then it affected the group process. The quote that follows described the correlation between the *openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category to the *outcome* property of *reflective experimentation* category.

- P3 Once you see the change happen and you have the cooperation of outside from the administrator or staff. You found that patients themselves are very in tune to the little things. They are very sensitive about wow, that's nurse is very rude or something like that. But I guess once you get the cooperative about your outside system. Once the group comes in, we are able to jump to the activity right away rather than discussing the trouble and hurt feeling upon the entering group, you know. If I were in group member's shoes, I would be wow the person was like we have been waiting for you. Oh you really waiting for me, you know I think that feels nice for the patient who more likely to feel more like, it's you again or can you do something better.

*Interaction of the Basic Self Category and the Cultural System Category*

In the third round interviews participants also discussed the connection between the *basic self* category and the *cultural system* category. Participants described the relationship between *openness to group work practice* property of the *cultural system* category and *using outer resources* and *using inner resources* dimensions of the *basic self* category.

Participant 3 expressed a connection between *challenges* and *using outer resources*. He described his intention to communicate to a person in community about the effectiveness of his group work practice to change misunderstandings in community. Therefore, he attempted to make an obvious change so that people in community might be able to perceive the results from his groups.

- P3 I think the macro level because we are university; our university was taking on by national news. There's channel like PBS in Japan. We were in their 2 special program sections. And so that type of publicity helped the hospital administrator to see that the department of psychiatry was important, the necessary part of the hospital and that gave us more cooperation from the university administrators themselves. I think in the department of psychiatry itself, a lot of people are skeptical about. It's interesting you know, maybe it's the same way in the U.S. too. A lot of people when they start seeing a lot of patients and maybe this from their lack of skills or something like that, from the helping side. There's lot of people from helping side who does not believe that people will change drastically, that people will change in a very large way. A lot people think that changes in psychiatry, in psychology or counseling is often just minute, just small change. This is just my personal opinion. If you doing therapy that doesn't make drastic change, it's not perceivable change, then you not doing anything right.
- P3 it takes a lot of skills because the tool is not line up for you. You can't just take it off the book shelf and start doing it and be like I can do it. A lot of Japanese people who are in Japan who call themselves therapist also have a lot trouble. You know one of the reason that we got featured on national television is very few, almost no hospital, no organization, no therapy in Japan is, very few people has successful in group in Japan I think. For example, eating disorders 1-3 years back, our group therapy was

featured at the cognitive behavioral therapy world convention. I don't know they called world convention but it was in Japan. Anyway, in Japan, the Japanese society was looking for somebody doing the group and for Bulimia may be like 3 places doing that but the other 2 placed didn't have the result to be able to present. I think you can not present a group that not successful. So we were the only group that has any type of presentable result and actually very very positive result. And that kind of tells you that what kind of battle we are in.

*Interaction of the Awareness Category, the Basic Self Category, the Reflective*

*Experimentation Category and the Cultural System Category*

In the third round interviews, the participants provided rich details related to the integration of the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category and the *cultural system* category for the *reflective experimentation* category. The additional descriptions affirmed the *reflective experimentation* as a core concept of the participants' experiences practicing group work in Asia.

Participant 1 presented the interaction of the *awareness* category, the *reflective experimentation* category, the *basic self* category and the *cultural system* category in terms of his process to create his interventions by integrating his understanding toward his own culture. The outcome from the *reflective experimentation* process also resulted in his growth as a person and as professional group leader and evolved into his interventions.

- P1 I think it's my life journey to. Because I had a question since I was a child in an adolescent age, what life is, what the nature is. And no one seems to give me a proper satisfactory answer to that question. When I studied psychology for my bachelor degree, it was more Western. So I have question, isn't there any Thai psychologist, is the question that bring me to studying or trying to understand what life is and with the Western worldview like Rogerian or Behaviorist viewpoint or Existential viewpoint do not give me enough answer to my questions, you know. They did help me to work with our clients very effectively but I still feel that there's some unfulfilled area that I'm not totally satisfy with their explanation or knowledge. So somehow as we talked earlier. I slipped into Buddhist

teaching by going down to see Budhadasa in the South. I began do seriously study Buddhist teaching and I felt that it's a truth, it's about life, it's about anything about life, it's about our psychology, it's about our psychology problem. It's kind of you know, in Buddhist teaching seems to explain that we like to know about our life. I think I got the answer, what the life is, what the nature is and with this understanding we can live with life harmoniously, with peacefulness. I think we can live life effectively, we can work effectively, we can live with other people effective. This understanding makes us more peacefulness. And with peace of mind we have some kind of psychological strength to live. And it is the understanding that brings me to as of my question is answered. I have no question to ask because I know the answer already. I think that's kind of fascinating. We do not have any suspicious about life left. So we understand everything that happens to us. Then we can live life harmoniously and effectively.

Researcher Yes

I like this question.

Researcher I think I can see that is not separate, it's not separate the way you practice and understand group, it's the same way you develop to growth as a person.

I think to be a good counselor, you know. We have to practice it with ourselves. I think this must be the rule. Because as a counselor, you know, we don't use any technique with others but we use our heart. If it's an understanding heart, I think we cannot just work but we live with them, we share with them, you know. Based on understanding of life, it's like a knower talking with a not knower. So this knower can bring the not knower to understanding and technique will come along the way because if this not knower person, if we try hard enough to help them understand, aspect technique will come by itself to help to use just for this person. So it's kind of application of our knowing. And this becomes better and better with our experiences, I think the main point, the most important thing is we have to emerge ourselves to this reality of nature first and then we will gain understanding and with this understanding we can apply to use it with any psychological problem of others. Because as we talk earlier every problem has the same root, you see. So with our understanding, we become a better person too. And with this better person in term of psychological well being or psychological understanding of life, I think this is the best of our practice and service. So to become a good counselor, I think the subject of study is ourselves. If you have a good teacher, he will bring you gradually to examine, to study, to watch, to know about yourself little by little. And that's the way of Buddhist teaching. I think is the best way to produce counselor, I think

P1 It makes me better person. Because, you know, working with other personal and have shared their experiences in life. I think I gain better understanding of human being. I gain more understanding of life. I find

that any person either they are high rank person, either they are well-known person, either they are rich person. They all share the same psychological structure. So I think it likes Buddha said, it's a path. We are all friends who share the same psychological Dukkha. My experiences in group kind of eliminate my illusion of life. It's a path when we were young, we did look at person from their external experiences. This man is rich, this woman was from high rank family. But now I think I become more disillusion. I see people share the same psychological structure and we share the same struggle. And the only battle that we have to fight is within ourselves. We have to battle with our misunderstanding of life. We have to fight with our unknowing or misunderstanding. So before we fight with outer enemy, I think we have to fight with our inner enemy. From experiences in group, you know, this experience make me not look at life from just only one single dimension but there's a lot of details in each person life. So it makes me more careful to live with other because they do not share something that likes us. So we have to keep this as our rule as working with other. So it make me more satisfy with my life as a human being. You know, just living life in itself. It's a good experiment. It's a good experience. Well, it's reword in itself already. So it makes me more become less expect in other, less desire but more understanding. Well, I think working in group, knowing other psychological problem make me broad and real and disillusion and respect and love, everything and thanks to our life as we are what we are now.

Participants 2 expressed how the integration of her understanding of *cultural system* and *believing in philosophy* was an *outcome* of *reflective experimentation*.

P2 ...for the nurses that we talked about last time. I think it's important to know that at least in Thailand, the nurses are in their field or in their career. The most priority task for them is to take care of others. So when we work with this group who focusing themselves as a care taker, usually what we found that's the group theme is their inability to maintain their own self care because they are too busy serving the others. So knowing that can be therapeutic issue for the group then you work in that specific psychodrama and group process. Then we explore with the group. So at least they could first identify the issue that they need to work on. Then with group process and psychodrama, they can use part of expression to rehearse something that they lack of or not good at doing. So in that way, it helps preparing to be more aware to practice how to take care of themselves.

Participant 2 also described the connection between *having motivation*, *respecting group members* and *challenging*. Participant 2 described that growth in group members motivated her to continue to work in groups and to work with the administrator.

P2 ...it gives me strength to fight more with administrator. You know sometime you can get quite discourage when you got a lot of people up there who don't understand and who just don't see any important for it. And then when see the initial changes in the group and eventually it will make changes in the system. At the end the administrator will see the changes. That's worth to do it. It usually takes quite few months for them to see it.

Participant 3 further described the process of reflective experimentation as part of his process to help him reintegrate himself back into his own culture. The interaction of the *transferring* of the category *reflective experimentation* and the *gaining growth* property of the *basic self* category is illustrated by the quote below.

P3 I think being trained in the U.S. You tend to be much more forceful type person, you know trying to push your way through things and making things happen. But that because a lot of American people are more direct. So one of the things, I think the way group changing you is group is the way of reintroduction back to your own culture. It's kind of welcome back. This is the way we do. You have gone for awhile so you don't know. So the group will help you to reintegrate you back to your own culture if you have been gone for awhile. But what you learn from group. I think one of the things I learn from a group is you have to understand that I have no, I can't give a footnote or scientific evidence of this but I'm going to tell you that Japanese culture, Japanese education, Japanese society is very very lacking in the study of Sociology. I think if you watch the American news every night. The news always talk about this is America or the American something. It's always tried to defined itself, try to keep the American spirit. But the thing about old culture, people are tend to go ahead and say we are already know our culture and there's no need to study it. And so the lack of sociology is very very negative factor in trying to work with Japanese people.

Participants' expressions of the interaction of the *basic self* category, the *reflective experimentation* category, the *cultural system* category and the *awareness* category varied by their experiences in group work practice in Asia. Participant 6

expressed her beliefs that having more experiences practicing group work in Asia would help her in terms of her practice and her personal growth.

- P6 I feel reading a book about the group would give me some idea how to use it and then after learn from the book, research about the group, and experiences. I realize, okay it helps, that helps. And then practice, the more hours that you see how it works, the more you get confident in... I'm not sure it's a technique. It's group. It's life.

Participant 4 shared that the more experiences she had, the more it helped her in developing group leading skills and trusting in group work.

- P4 ...maybe (identity information removed) group, I do have some experiences in leading (identity information removed) group, you know. In comparison to my other experiences in counseling, I don't think I have that much experience in leading (identity information removed) group in comparison to my other experience in counseling. Maybe I will change my mind if I have more experiences in leading (identity information removed) group. When my skills are more sharpen, maybe I will change my mind regarding the value of group, in (identity information removed) group. Because (identity information removed) is very powerful media and using (identity information removed) group can bring out other powerful therapeutic effects but since I don't have that much experience in comparison to my other experience in counseling. I don't think I saw it yet.

Participant 1 who had been practicing group work in Asia for a long time expressed his confidence in his personal style of group work practice. He integrated his understanding of the cultural system and his believing in philosophy to a successful outcome. The quote below represented the growth that he experienced at the professional and personal levels from the process of *transferring* and *reflective experimentation*.

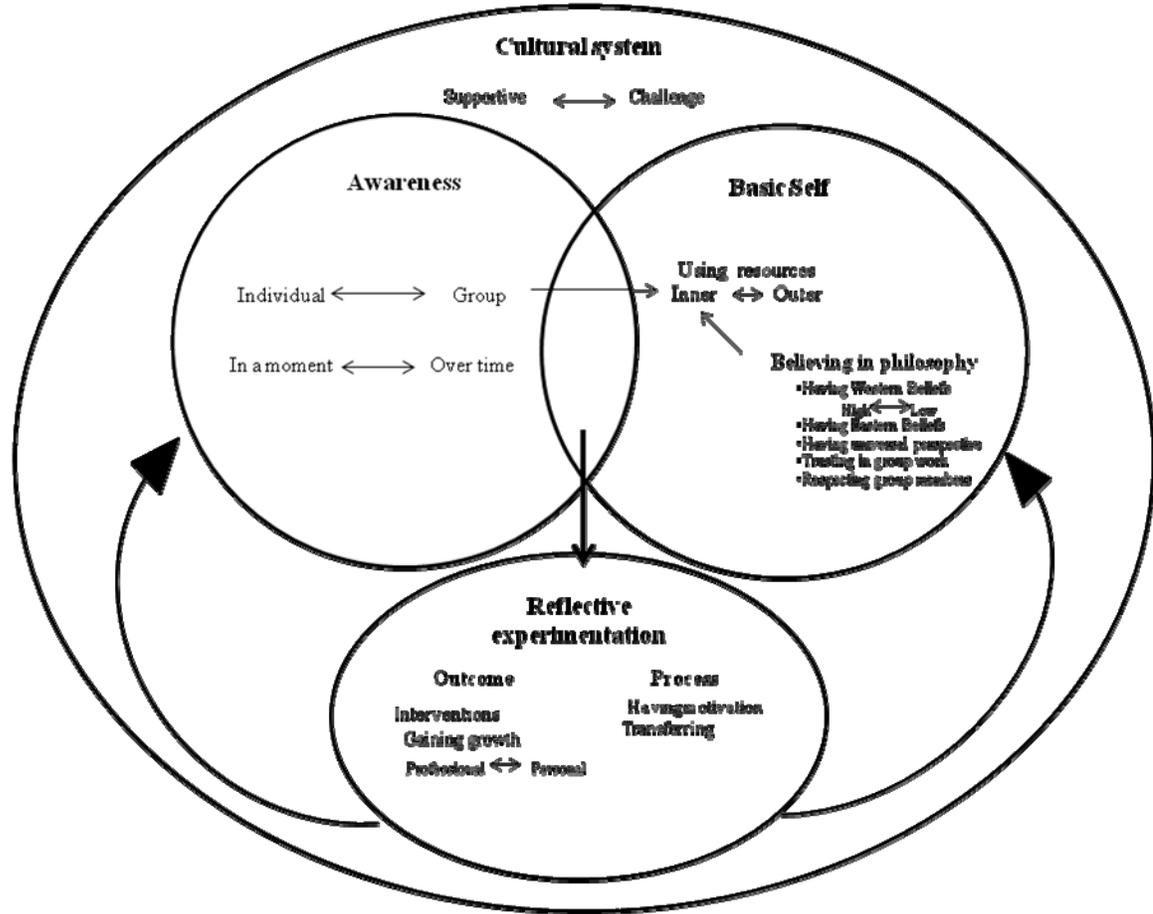
- P1 ...group is life in itself. It's not just people sit and speak to each other. It's laboratory, it's a very very good place. It's a place where people sit and look back to themselves and learn about themselves seriously with our facilitation. I think study English or Geography or Mathematics, in itself is interesting. But the most interesting lesson that we have, that we are able to learn is our self. If you are the expert with Statistic, it's okay with that. I think the most important is we know our self as it really is as a human being. And I think this is the most valuable and interesting in our life. So

it's not just the room where we sit but it's a university about life. It's not just make us understand about our self. It helps us understand everything in life, relationship between man and woman, relationship between me and you, relationship between myself and the tree and the ground and the earth and everything. I think you know these the benefits of knowing and understanding of Buddhist teaching too because Buddhist teaching is not just only for under yourself. If you understand yourself right enough, you understand the three, the nature and the mountain too. Because we cannot be our self without mountain or tree or river or ocean or fish or earth or flower, if way looks for a way for understanding life, we will understand our self is the universe, is the sky, is the three. Not just our self, but our self is everything.

Throughout the participants' descriptions regarding *reflective experimentation*, they all discussed how *awareness*, *basic self* and *cultural system* interacted with the properties of *reflective experimentation*. Participants described how the properties of *awareness* provided the basis for understanding the results of group interventions and the transferring process. Participants also described *using resources* and *believing in philosophy* as providing the basic materials for them to use in the process of *reflective experimentation*.

All interactions that were described by participants in the third round of interviews supported connections from participants' *basic self*, *awareness*, and *cultural system* related to the process of *reflective experimentation*. Figure 9 was designed to illustrate the interaction of categories, sub-categories, properties, and dimension.

Figure 9: interactions of categories, sub-categories, properties, and dimension



### Triangulation

The data in this final round were triangulated in the following two ways: The first way was to utilize of literature review to support the findings. Subsequently a member checking was conducted. During member checking, the findings of the research were discussed with the participants to ensure that their experiences were correctly understood.

#### *Literature Triangulation*

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the use of triangulation as a method to increase credibility of qualitative research. In this study, the researcher used the literature review as a way to triangulate the results from the third round data analysis.

In the third round data analysis, the researcher focused on the triangulation of the *gaining growth* property of the basic self category and interaction within and between categories. The *reflective experimentation, awareness, basic self* and *culture* were revealed in the previous analysis and the researcher discussed the literature regarding *reflective experimentation, awareness, basic self* and *culture* in the previous chapter. Therefore, the literature discussed in the previous chapter still represented the credibility of the concept of *reflective experimentation*, the concept of *awareness*, the concept of *basic self* and the concept of *culture*. Participants also consistently described the concepts of *reflective experimentation* as the main concepts in their experiences.

Posthuma (1999) included respect in the effective leadership attributes. She suggested group leaders to show respect in group members. Her discussion supported participants' description about the *respecting in group members*.

Ham (1993) discussed therapists' practices with Asian clients. He suggested that counselors or therapists should integrate Asian philosophy into planning interventions and attempting to understand Western therapeutic factors from an Eastern culture perspective. His discussion supported participants' description of the connection between *believing in philosophy* and *interventions*.

Lin (2004) suggested counselors should try to develop a multicultural counseling style compatible with their clients' characteristics. For instance, Lin suggested that practitioners should develop a multicultural counseling style compatible with Taiwanese characteristics, such as collectivism, respect for authority, the hierarchical structure of society, emphasis on family relationships, and the harmony of interpersonal relationships.

His discussion supported participants' description of the connection between *believing in philosophy* and *interventions*.

Sue and Sue (2003) described the stages of racial/identity development model. Their descriptions related to the last stage of racial/identity development, integrative awareness, individual developed his or her inner sense of security and appreciated unique aspects of their culture (Sue & Sue). Their descriptions supported participants' description regarding the *transferring* and the *gaining growth*.

DeLucia-Waack (1996) suggested the general guidelines that group leaders might employ when working with members from diverse cultures. One of this researcher's suggestions was to be alloplastic. Alloplastic is the process of focusing on adapting oneself to a social structure. In other words, the process of working to adjust society to better fit the needs of individual. Her suggestion supported participants' descriptions regarding the interaction of *openness to group work practice, using resources* and *intervention*.

Posthuma (1999) described the process of successful group leaders by integrating of a guideline from different theory, the group members' behaviors and then develop it to be interventions. Her suggestion supported participants' descriptions regarding the interaction of *believing in philosophy, awareness* and *intervention*.

#### *Member Checking*

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested the use of member checking as a method to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings. The researcher sent diagrams of the research findings, including the definitions to all the participants and conducted the telephone interviews. The researcher provided time for the participants to

voice their views of the findings. The participants made several general comments about the findings.

- P1 I think these whole categories. They are okay now.
- P2 I have printed out what you have sent to me. I want to say it was nicely summarize and quite impressive about how you depicted the theme and put it under each of category. It was nicely done.
- P4 I think that kind of put a very contexture or framework to my experience. I think quite often that as practitioner, we practice and we practice and we practice and sometime we don't know what in academic term that explain our skills or how we practice in counseling session until we have somebody do a study and collect everybody experiences and you know, kind of put a context to word that frame our experiences. I think that's pretty cool.
- P6 This is amazing. This is good work. It's very interesting. When you explained about the model, it's so right. It's all connected.

Participants confirmed the *awareness* category as part of their experiences of practicing group work in Asia.

- P1 Awareness is also the openness of the leader for their group members, to listen to them, to sense what's going on in the group.
- P1 the duration of awareness should be participants engaged with awareness to gain the information. I think awareness should come before information.

Participants confirmed the *basic self* category as part of their experiences of practicing group work in Asia.

- P1 Basic self is your worldview, your beliefs. Yes, it's right. Your experiences and your commitment, yes right.

Participants confirmed the *having motivation* as property of *reflective experimentation* as part of their experiences of practicing group work in Asia.

- P1 Like myself, I think is an inspiration. I think it's a feeling that I like to do something for betterment of the human. So it's not just the motivation. It's inspiration. It's something higher than motivation.

Participants confirmed the *transferring* as property of *reflective experimentation* as part of their experiences of practicing group work in Asia.

- P4 I think may be the transferring part should have it every counselor. But right now, if we put the cultural concept or cultural variable into the transferring. Well, that does kind of knew but I think transferring should have in each of counselor.

Participants also confirmed the interaction of *awareness, basic self, reflective experimentation* and *cultural system* Participants supported *reflective experimentation* as the core concepts that described their experiences of practicing group work in Asia.

- P1 I think within cultural system, we, the leaders work to pull out the awareness of the members with our personal self and they use the process of reflective experimentation. I think these what I have practice in the group, you know based on our self, in our cultural system, and then we have to be aware of our self and the members and the connected to with our personal self, with our basic self, with our belief system. We use those beliefs to influence the journey in the group. And at this cultural moment, we lead our members to reflect on their mind, their experiences, and their psyche. I think it is okay.
- P2 Yes, I think you know encountering struggle. It's part of learning experience. If you kind of keep open mind and allow it, what you call inner resources and integrated that the outer resource with the open mind, give permission for the integration of what out there, what in you, and what you believes.
- P6 It's exactly. It starts from the awareness and then it's about philosophy that I can recall from our conversation. It's exactly what we have in conversation.

### Discussion

After three rounds of interviews, the categories, properties, dimensions, and interactions were identified. The four categories, *awareness, basic self, reflective experimentation* and *cultural system* were supported without change. Connection between categories, sub-categories, properties and dimensions were clearly described and

verified. Analysis verified reflective experimentation as the central category describing Asian group leaders' experience of leading group in Asia. During the third round and member checking, the categories, properties, dimensions, and interactions achieved a level of richness and depth that naturally seemed to progress into a grounded theory related to the experiences of Asian group leaders who practiced in Asia.

### *Awareness*

The *awareness* category was strengthened by the participants' descriptions of the category as a concept that related to many properties. In the third round interviews the definition of *awareness* was strongly confirmed by participants as participants' focus on attaining awareness of current dynamics in their groups and in the individuals while attempting to develop interventions appropriate for their group members. In addition, the third round interviews revealed that the existing properties and dimensions from round two were supported, and the relationships between the properties of awareness and the properties of basic self and reflective experimentation were strengthened. The *awareness* category still consisted of two properties, *sources of awareness* and *duration of awareness*.

The *sources of awareness* property of the *awareness* category was consistently defined as the participants' descriptions related to their sources for obtaining awareness while they worked in groups. The dimension of the source of awareness, which varied along a continuum from the *awareness of individual level* to the *awareness of the group level* property was also confirmed in this round of interviews. At one end, the *awareness of group level* was consistently described by participants as a utilization of personal awareness to assist them to understand the dynamics in their groups. At the other end, the

*awareness of individual level* was also consistently defined as participants' awareness of the individual level that helped them to develop their personal styles that worked appropriately with their group members.

The second property of the *awareness* category was the *duration of awareness*. This property was still defined as the period of time that participants engaged with the information to gain awareness. The dimension of the *source of awareness* property, which varied along a continuum from in the moment to over time, were also confirmed in this round of interviews. At one end, the *awareness in the moment* was defined as the awareness that participants gained from observing group members' expressions in the groups. At the other end, participants still described *awareness over time* as the awareness that participants gradually observed information while they were working in groups.

### *Basic Self*

In the third round analysis the definition of the *basic self* category was confirmed as the participants' basic characteristics as group leaders that helped participants begin and continue their group work practice. The *basic self* category contained one sub-category, *believing in philosophy* and one property, *using resources*. The existing sub-category, property and dimensions from the second round analysis were supported in this round of interviews. The relationships between categories were strengthened. All relationships within the *basic self* category from the previous round were confirmed.

The *believing in philosophy* sub-category was consistently discussed by participants in the third round interviews. The definition of *believing in philosophy* was continually defined as a set of core beliefs that the participants possessed that they

employed in group work practice and also used to support themselves while leading groups. Participants further described their interest in group members as part of their core beliefs. This resulted in the emergence of the *respecting group members* property of *believing in philosophy* sub-category. Therefore the sub-category *believing in philosophy* contained five properties which were *having Western beliefs, having Eastern beliefs, having a universal perspective, trusting group work*, and *respecting group members*.

The *using resources* property of the *basic self* category was consistently defined as the assets participants used in the process of developing their personal style of group leadership. Participants further described a dimension of the *using resources* property. The dimension consisted of *using inner resources* at one end of the dimension and *using outer resources* at the other end of the dimension. All dimension and characteristics from second round analysis were consistently confirmed as part of *using resources*.

#### *Reflective Experimentation*

*Reflective experimentation* was revealed in the first round interviews. Participants consistently expressed their beliefs about the process of *reflective experimentation* throughout the first, second and third round interviews. Especially, during the third round of interviews the category of *reflective experimentation* was strengthened by participants' descriptions of the category as the central concept that related to many dimensions and properties in the other three categories: *awareness, basic self*, and *cultural system*.

*Reflective experimentation* was still defined as the process of starting and continuing to conduct groups, while at the same time attempting to develop interventions

which were appropriate for particular group members. The existing sub-categories, properties, dimensions, and characteristics from round two were supported, and the relationships between categories and within categories were strengthened. Participants consistently described supportive connections from *awareness*, *basic self* and *cultural system* to *reflective experimentation*. They confirmed that they utilized their awareness, their core beliefs, their perceived resources, and their understanding of their cultural system as part of their reflective experimentation process. In this round, participants also added richness to this category by providing great details regarding the *gaining growth* property and the *transferring* property. This resulted in the emergence of dimensions of both properties.

In this round of interviews, the *process* sub-category of the category *reflective experimentation* was consistently defined as the participants' process for incorporating their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice. The properties of *process* sub-category from the second round interviews were also confirmed by participants in the third round interviews. The *process* sub-category consisted of two properties which were as follows: *having motivation* and *transferring*.

The definition of *having motivation* was confirmed by participants as the inspiration, internal and external, that helped participants to begin and continue their group work practice in Asia. Participants still confirmed two of the characteristics of the *having motivation* property which emerged from the second round interviews: Being motivated by an exploring personality and being motivated by a helper identity. Participants consistently expressed that being motivated by exploring personality was a part of *having motivation* property. They expressed their collective characteristics as

people who liked challenging activities, which helped them begin and continue their practice in group work in Asia. Participants further provided rich description regarding the interaction of *having motivation* with other properties and dimensions of *awareness*, *basic self*, and *cultural system*. The emergent relationships gained depth and thoroughly described the *having motivation* property.

The *transferring* property of the sub-category *process* of the *reflective experimentation* category was defined by participants as the ways in which they were able integrate knowledge and experiences gained from training in Western countries into their group work practices in Asia. Participants began the process of *transferring* since they began training in Western countries. The process of transferring continued when they returned their home countries to practice in Asia. Participants described clearly that they began the process of transferring after beginning their training in Western countries. Participants also described the difficulty and the feelings they had during the process of *transferring*. Although the participants in the study did not describe the connections that existed between the dimensions of the *reflective experimentation* category, the participants did express that the outcome of the process of transferring was a part of their growth at both the personal and professional levels and the development of their interventions.

Additionally, in the third round interviews the participants also presented the connections of *interventions*, *gaining growth*, *having motivation and transferring* with properties and dimensions of the *awareness* category, the *basic self* category, and the *cultural system* category. These connections further helped the researcher to understand participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia and also affirmed the *reflective*

*experimentation* as a core concept of participants' experience in practicing group work in Asia.

The *outcome* sub-category was consistently defined as the participants' results from the process of integrating all their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice. The properties of *outcome* sub-category from the second round interviews were also confirmed by participants in the third round interviews.

The *interventions* property was consistently defined as participants' practicing in a group with a combination of group leadership skills and understanding about groups in a particular context. This context could be similar or different from traditional group practice processes. Participants also confirmed the characteristics of these *interventions*, which included preparing group members for the new experience, letting go of plans, and genuineness. Participants further provided rich descriptions regarding the interaction of *interventions* with others properties and dimensions of *awareness*, *basic self*, and *cultural system*. The emerging relationships had more depth and thoroughly described the *interventions* property in participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia.

In this round, the *gaining growth* property was consistently defined by participants as the advancing stages of each participant's development as a person and as a professional during the process of practicing group work in Asia. The analysis in the third round resulted in the emergence of a dimension of the *gaining growth* property. The dimension varied along the continuum from *professional development* to *personal development*. At one end of the continuum, *professional development* was defined as participants' perception of their development at the professional level while they continued to practice group work. At the other end, *personal development* was defined as

participants' perception of their development at the personal level while they continued to practice group work. Participants expressed that the process of working in group was the same as the process for developing their personal growth. The participants' group work experience levels varied. Consequently their descriptions related to the *outcome* sub-category also varied. Hence, *interventions* and *gaining growth* varied by participants' experiences in group work practice.

### *Interaction*

Several interactions between the categories and properties emerged after the second round of interviews and were discussed in the previous chapter. From this third round of interviews, the relationships from the second round were strengthened, and new relationships emerged. The relationships that appeared in the third round analysis provided thick and thorough descriptions, which added to the theory that had already emerged.

One important relationship stated in the previous chapter was the relationship between the *awareness* category and the *using resources* property of the *basic self* category. In the third round interviews, the participants still confirmed the relationship between these two categories. Participants described the integration of their *awareness of individual level, awareness of group level, awareness in a moment* and *awareness over time* into *using inner sources* and how they used it to practice and to develop their personal style in group work practice. In this round of interviews, the participants also described the interaction of *awareness* with other categories in terms of the integration of *awareness, basic self, and cultural system* into *reflective experimentation*.

In the second round interviews, participants provided descriptions that presented strong positive connections about the dimensions of *believing in philosophy* and *using resources* of the *basic self* category toward *outcome* and *process* of the *reflective experimentation* category. In this round of interviews, all connections from previous rounds were confirmed. In addition, participants provided descriptions that strengthened the positive connections between dimensions and properties of the *basic self* category and dimensions and properties of *reflective experimentation* category. The connections which emerged helped the researcher to develop a greater understanding about the participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia and also affirmed *reflective experimentation* as a core concept of participants' experiences in practicing group work in Asia.

The *having motivation* property of the *process* sub-category of the *reflective experimentation* category was consistently mentioned by participants as an important factor in their experiences in group work practice in Asia. Participants described the property *trusting in group work, using inner resources, having Western beliefs, having Eastern beliefs, respecting group members* as factors that supported *having motivation* .

Participants described using past experiences, a characteristic of *using inner resources* and *trusting in group work* as supportive factors for *having motivation* . Participants also described that *believing in philosophy* was a supportive factor to sustain their motivation to begin and to continue practice group work in Asia. The interaction between the *basic self* category and the *reflective experimentation* category also included a supportive relationship between the properties of the *believing in philosophy* sub-category and the *intervention* property of the *outcome* sub-category.

In the third round interviews, participants still confirmed the connection from the previous round between *reflective experimentation* category and the *cultural system* category. Again, the emergent connections helped the researcher develop a greater understanding about the participants' experiences in leading groups in Asia and also affirmed *reflective experimentation* as a core concept of the participants' experiences in practicing group work in Asia.

Participants described the influence from the property *openness to practice* of the *cultural system* category on properties of the sub-category *outcome* and the sub-category *process* of the *reflective experimentation* category. In the second round interviews, participants provided descriptions that presented positive interactions of the *having motivation* property of the *process* sub-category and the *assisting* in the *openness to group work practice* of the *cultural system* category. In this round, participants continued to communicate the connections from their cultures and communities sustained their motivation to begin and to continue practicing group work in Asia. Often, the connection from the *culture system* to the *having motivation* might originate from a *challenging* aspect of the system's *openness to group work practice*. However, participants' still perceived this challenge as their motivation to begin and to continue practice group work.

Participants didn't present only the effect from the *cultural system* category to the *reflective experimentation* category. Participants also described their perspectives on effects of their group work practice on the community. However, participants didn't describe the changes in term of external changes, but they described changes in term of internal changes at the organizational level. Participants further described the relationship

between *reflective experimentation* and *cultural system* in terms of the effect of their reflective experimentation process on the cultural system at the micro level.

In the third round interviews, participants also discussed the connection between the *basic self* category and the *cultural system* category. Participants described the relationship between the *cultural system's openness to group work practice* and *using outer resources* and *using inner resources* of the property *using resources* of the *basic self* category.

Throughout the participants' descriptions regarding *reflective experimentation*, they all discussed how *awareness*, *basic self* and *cultural system* interacted with the properties of *reflective experimentation*. Participants described how *awareness's* properties provided the basis to understand the results from group interventions and the transferring process. Participants also described *using resources* and *believing in philosophy* as providing the basic materials for them to use in the process of *reflective experimentation*. All interactions that were described by participants in the third round of interviews represented supportive connections from participants' *basic self*, *awareness*, and *cultural system* to the process of *reflective experimentation*.

## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION

The focus of this research was to explore the experiences of Asian group leaders who practice group work in Asia over a period of nine months. The Asian group leaders who participated in this study described their perceptions and experiences during a series of individual interviews. These interviews were transcribed, analyzed utilizing open, axial, and selective coding methods. The following grounded theory emerged from this process.

#### A GROUNDED THEORY OF THE EXPERIENCES OF ASIAN GROUP LEADERS WHO ARE LEADING GROUPS IN ASIA

Asian group leaders often integrate their basic personal characteristics and core beliefs into their group work practice. They also integrate their understanding of their own culture into their practices. In addition, their awareness that occurs at the group and the individual levels also assists them in their group work practice. Their awareness of what occurs at the group and individual levels provides the basis of understanding in their groups. They also use knowledge and experiences from the training they received in Western in their group work practice. They used inner resources, outer resources, belief in a variety of philosophies, and their understanding of their cultural system as the basic materials for a process of reflective experimentation that resulted in culturally and contextually appropriate group work. They were able, through their motivations and inspirations, to accomplish all of this and overcome challenges to their practice. Their process of reflective experimentation also resulted in both personal and professional growth. Then their growth and their developed interventions impacted their awareness,

their basic self, and their cultural system. Therefore, the process of reflective experimentation was continuous during the time Asian group leaders were working in groups and fed many levels from macro to micro.

Awareness is critical for Asian group leaders' group work practice. The participants focused on attaining awareness of current dynamics in the group. They also focused on attaining awareness of each individual in the group while they attempted to develop appropriate interventions to use in their groups. They gained awareness from two sources, group and individual. They employed both awareness of group level and awareness of individual level to help them to develop a personal style that was appropriate for their culture and also to understand the dynamics in their groups. Asian group leaders also had a varied period of time that they engaged with the information to gain awareness. They achieve awareness in a short period of time. Sometimes they may use awareness which developed gradually to help them to gain understanding while they were working in groups.

The awareness of group level and the awareness of individual level assisted Asian group leaders in making judgments regarding the interventions they needed to use in their groups. They also utilized their awareness in the moment to assist them in making appropriate interventions in groups. Awareness over time also assisted Asian group leaders to better understand the outcomes that were generated from interventions they made in their groups. The information that they collected over time accumulated and contributed to the inner resources that they called upon while working in groups.

Asian group leaders' basic personal characteristics helped them begin and continue their group work practice in Asia. One critical basic characteristic was their

belief in a variety of philosophies. Each practitioner had a core set of beliefs that they employed in group work practice and also used to support themselves while they were leading group. Asian group leaders philosophical beliefs were often influenced by Western based theory and this varied from a high reliance on Western based theories to a modest reliance on Western based theories. They also had philosophical beliefs that were influenced by Eastern philosophy. Even though Asian group leaders had varied core beliefs from high levels of Western beliefs to modest levels of Western beliefs and Eastern philosophy, they all applied their beliefs to the interventions they made in groups. Their philosophical beliefs also supported their motivation to begin and to continue group work practice.

Trusting in group work is a part of Asian group leaders' core beliefs. Asian group leaders perceived the benefits gained from group work for both themselves and their group members. They had strong feelings about the benefits gained from group work for both participants and their group members. They developed their passion towards group work practice through direct experiences as group members and also from working in groups. Asian group leaders' trusting in group work assisted them to deal with the challenges that they faced from their own cultural systems.

Asian group leaders also perceived the universal effect of their group work practice. They perceived that the positive effect of their group work practice on group members was in part due to the common nature of human beings. They expressed some universal perceptions related to therapeutic processes that were the same for all humans. Asian group leaders had confidence that many of the interventions they used in groups would not be limited by cultural differences. Their philosophical orientations were not

affected by cultural boundaries. While they practiced in group, they held a sense of respect for group members as a part of their core beliefs. Asian group leaders showed interest in group members' lived experiences and their potential to grow. Asian group leaders also held respect for their group members and the growth of group members motivated Asian group leaders to continue to work in groups and to deal with challenges from their cultural systems.

As part of their basic characteristics, Asian group leaders' utilized inner and outer resources that helped them to practice in groups. They had many assets they employed in the process of developing their personal, culturally appropriate styles of group leadership. They used both inner resources and outer resources to help them in developing their personal styles and practice in groups. In terms of inner resources, Asian group leaders utilized their past experiences from their training in the West, which included both educational and clinical experiences to develop the ways in which they work with groups. They used cultural understanding from an emic perspective. They also utilized their own intuition while they were working in groups. They used intuition when they were not sure what would work or when they ran out of choices for interventions. In term of outer resources, Asian group leaders utilized supervision to assist them in their group work practice. They utilized the current literature on group work as one of the outer resources that they use while practicing in groups. They also utilized feedback from a group member's family about group members' changes as sources to help gather information.

The critical process of Asian group leaders' experiences of practicing group work in Asia is a process of reflective experimentation. For these Asian group leaders, the reflective experimentation was a process of starting and continuing to conduct groups,

while attempting to develop interventions that were appropriate for particular group members. The Asian group leaders utilized their awareness, their core beliefs, their perceived resources, and their understanding of their cultural systems during this process of reflective experimentation.

Asian group leaders' reflective experimentation process contained two processes: One process related to how they stay motivated and the other process related to transferring and translating group work knowledge and emic knowledge into useable form. With regard to the first process, Asian group leaders' motivation to practice group work in Asia was critical to their experiences. Even though these Asian group leaders were practicing group work within situations that were not easy for them, they had the inspiration, internal and external, to help them start and continue their group work practice. They were motivated by personality characteristics that responded to challenges and by their identities as helpers. These Asian group leaders had collective characteristics as people who liked the challenging activities which helped them to start and sustain their practice in group work in Asia. Asian group leader were also motivated by their helper identity. They devoted themselves to practicing group work and helping others. These Asian group leaders' trust in group work, beliefs in various philosophies, and respect for their group members supported and sustained their motivation to begin and to continue practice group work in Asia.

The process of transferring knowledge and experiences from training in the West to practice in Asia was also critical to the experiences of these Asian group leaders. They integrated their knowledge and experiences gained from Western countries into their group work practices in Asia. The process of transferring began when they were trained

in the West. The process of transferring continued when they returned to their home countries to practice in Asia. During the process of transferring, Asian group leaders felt anxious and had curiosity about their practice because it was not easy process to get through. During the process of transferring, Asian group leaders employed inner resources they had from their past experience in practicing group work in Asia.

Furthermore, Asian group leaders expressed outcomes related to the process of reflective experimentation as growth at both the personal and professional levels and also culturally appropriate intervention development. The outcomes emerged from the process of integrating all their knowledge and experiences into their group work practice.

During the process of reflective experimentation, Asian group leaders' developed on both personal and professional levels. Asian group leaders developed as people and as professionals during the process of practicing group work in Asia. Asian group leaders grew as professionals and as group workers from their practice in group work by gaining confidence and competence in their group work practice. Their expressions of confidence varied due to their level of experience practicing group work in Asia. Asian group leaders who had high experience levels expressed high confidence in their personal style. Participants who had less group work experiences indicated that they may question their practice. These Asian group leaders also developed their growth at the personal level while they practiced group work. They perceived the process of leading and working in groups as contributing to the process of personal growth.

In terms of Asian group leaders' intervention style, these Asian group leaders practiced with a combination of their group leadership skills and an understanding of their particular context, which was in some ways similar and different from the traditional

group practice. These Asian group leaders combined their understanding of group members' cultures and group work culture in order to find ways to prepare group members for a new experience. They also accepted their authority figure status and provided specific parameters to prepare group members for a new experience in groups. They attempted to provide specific examples so that the group members would feel comfortable opening up and sharing in the groups. They also waited for group members' prompts, such as starting to open up in group, to make changes. These Asian group leaders were willing to let go of plans that they had developed beforehand to follow the needs of the group in the moment. The results from their transferring process, or integration of Western training into their current lives, also become a part of Asian group leaders' interventions.

These Asian group leaders were aware of the knowledge and values shared by their culture systems that influenced their group work practice. The cultural systems had both supportive and challenging elements which impacted their practice. They integrated their cultural knowledge and understandings into their group work practices. They also perceived the benefits of having the same culture as group members in terms of helping them to better understand group members' point of reference. Asian group leaders used their knowledge and understanding of their own cultures to develop a general approach in group practice.

They used cultural understanding as a resource to help them to develop their general style in group work practice. Asian group leaders perceived the supportive connection that existed between their cultural systems and their reflective experimentation process. For instance, their motivation to practice group work in Asia

was influenced by their cultural backgrounds. The motivation to begin and to continue group work practice was critical for Asian group leaders. Their cultures and communities sustained their motivation to begin and to continue practicing group work in Asia. With their motivations, they perceived the challenge of leading groups in their cultural system as a resource to use in developing their general style of group work practice.

Sometime Asian group leaders' cultural systems hindered their practice. The challenges from cultural systems often stemmed from misunderstandings, the cultural systems in the community, and the malpractice suits filed against others in the profession. However, Asian group leaders had ways to deal with the challenges from cultural systems. They worked with their respective communities in order to continue their group work practice. Asian group leaders were aware of some of destructive factors from their communities on their practices but they did not view these negatively. In fact, they perceived the challenges as positive because they had the knowledge and skills to deal with their communities. They provided communities with knowledge and information about their practice.

The executive administrators in Asian group leaders' respective organizations were involved in their group work practices. Sometimes they might receive support from an organization that had employed their services. Due to budgetary reasons the organizations also supported Asian group leaders' desire to run groups. Asian group leaders also had other roles within their respective communities. Most of them also taught at the university level. Their roles as professors were often related to their roles as group leaders. For example, they not only facilitated groups but they also taught students about

group work practice. Therefore, Asian group leaders also had some impact in the communities and system by training group leaders to work in the community.

Asian group leaders perceived their cultural systems as helpful factors while they worked in group. Their awareness of the individual level emerged as an important part of the supportive connection between cultural systems and their practice of group work in Asia. So they were able to integrate their knowledge and understanding toward cultural systems into their interventions. They also integrated their philosophical beliefs, their understanding of their own culture and awareness in the moment to help them understand and adjust their interventions in groups.

Additionally, Asian group leaders' processes of transferring knowledge from their training to practice were connected to their process of identifying themselves. They integrated their philosophical beliefs with the awareness at the personal level to be their own way of working with group members. They also integrated their trust in group, having a universal perspective, and respecting in group members into their intervention style in group work practice. Their cultural systems influenced their process of transferring their knowledge and experiences from training to practice. It also resulted in changes in their personal growth.

Asian group leaders who had more experiences in group work practice in Asia might have had more confidence in their practice and their growth as a person. Their group work experience levels varied so stages of gaining growth also varied. Asian group leaders who had practiced group work in Asia for a long time had more confidence in their personal style through integrating their understanding of cultural systems and their belief in various philosophies.

In summarization, Asian group leaders created their interventions and developed their growth by integrating their cultural understandings, their core beliefs and their awareness. Their awareness provided the basis to understand the results from group interventions and the transferring processes. They used inner resources, outer resources, core beliefs, and understanding of their cultural system as the basic materials in their process of reflective experimentation. They accomplished all challenges in their practice through strong motivations and inspirations. The results of their process of reflective experimentation impacted them in terms of both personal and professional growth. Then their growth and their developed interventions impacted their awareness, their basic self and their cultural system. Therefore, the process of reflective experimentation continuously carried on while Asian group leaders were working in groups.

#### Limitations

This study employed a grounded theory methodology to generate, clarify, and validate concepts describing Asian group leaders, specifically Thai, Taiwanese, and Japanese clinicians, who practiced in Asia. The methodology included specific procedures to increase the trustworthiness of the findings. The procedures addressed credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability throughout the research process. However, as in any research, limitations to the findings were considered.

Several procedures were used to increase credibility. The first one was prolonged engagement. The researcher employed prolonged engagement with the participants of this study. Prolonged engagement helped build trust between the researcher and participants and also provided opportunities to check for misinformation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participants were interviewed several times over a period of nine months to

collect information regarding their experiences. The researcher employed the basic counseling skills in developing trust and rapport with participants. The researcher was also aware that working with the participants for a longer period of time may have had an impact on the findings.

The next procedure used to enhance credibility was the use of data triangulation. Triangulation was a strategy that used multiple sources and methods in data collection (Maxwell, 2005). This method reduced the chances that the research conclusion reflected systematic biases or limitation of sources (Maxwell). The research used multiple literature reviews to triangulate the findings. A literature review was conducted after each round of interviews and coding was completed. The main findings from each round of interviews were compared to current literature to provide another level of credibility for the findings. However, the review of the literature may have limitations due to limited resources in the current literature in Asia group leaders' experiences.

One important procedure used to enhance the credibility of this research was controlling researcher bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This researcher was aware of her personal values and expectations regarding the research in this study. During the data collection phase, this researcher used the journaling method to enhance the awareness of her own values which might have influenced the research. The researcher, who had experiences in leading groups in Asia and in the U.S. and also trained in an U.S. institution, bracketed her assumptions and biases concerning the Asian group leaders experiences of leading groups in Asia. These assumptions included: a) Asian group leaders should develop appropriate intervention that fits with Asian group members b) Asian group leaders should integrate their cultural knowledge into their group work

practice. The researcher utilized the aid from a consultant to identify further biases.

However, even though the researcher was able to identify her biases and was able to limit the impact of her biases upon analysis and theory, the biases were still part of the researcher's worldview, which affected the data analysis.

The next procedure used to enhance credibility was member checking. Member checking was the systematic feedback of research data and conclusions from participants. This technique ruled out the possibility of misunderstanding (Maxwell, 2005). The interviews were conducted with four of the participants. Two participants were no longer available. Member checks gave the participants an opportunity to ensure that their experiences were reflected in the findings. It was also an opportunity to discuss their experiences of participating in a research study. One limitation to this research was that only four of six participants were available for the member check.

This study included detailed descriptions of the context of the study and the research procedures to enhance transferability of this research. Transferability was the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings. However, there were several factors to consider related to transferability. This research had a limited number of participating countries. This is essentially a study of Thai, Taiwanese, and Japanese group leaders. It was also specific to Western-trained clinicians and did not necessarily reflect the experiences of those trained in Asia. There were also the limitations inherent in any qualitative study. The study was not generalizable, but readers should still be able to decide if the results are applicable or useful to their settings based on the context and descriptions provided by the researcher.

Dependability and confirmability were addressed using a single technique, the confirmability audit. The confirmability audit required an audit trail, which included raw data, analyzed data, process notes, research development notes and materials (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For this study, an audit trail was kept and will be made available for others to replicate the study. As stated previously, the audit trail of this research included the raw data analyzed data, process notes, and research development notes. However, original transcripts and all other research products will be available if needed and helps support the trustworthiness of the findings.

The researcher and participants shared similar cultural backgrounds and English was not their first language. Even though the researcher and participants could communicate in English, there were some difficulties due to the language barrier. The researcher still had some difficulty explaining, understanding and also analyzing data in English. The researcher utilized consultants to explain, understand and also analyze research data in English. Sometimes, the participants also had some difficulty expressing their feelings and thoughts in English. The researcher utilized her counseling skills to help participants express their feeling and thoughts. The researcher was willing to wait for participants to find the English words that represented what they wanted to communicate.

This study met the criteria of trustworthy research. Through the using of techniques that promoted credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, the grounded theory not only represented the experience of the participants but also provided information useful to other settings and studies. The major limitations of the study were the use of telephone interviews to collect data, the use of the literature for

triangulation, the limitations of member checking, the language barrier of the researcher and participants, and the data might did not include the experience of group leaders who had graduated from institutions where English wasn't the predominant language.

### Implications

This qualitative research study resulted in a grounded theory of the experience of Asian group leaders who were leading groups in Asia. The existing theory may be beneficial to the practices of counselor educators, Asian group leaders in training, and future research in Asian group leadership.

### *Counselor Educators*

This theory provided a description of the experiences of Asian group leaders who were leading groups in Asia. The information might be useful to counselor educators. The theory provided detailed descriptions of the process which Asian group leaders used to transfer their experiences and knowledge from training in the West to their practice in Asia. This process began during their training in the West. Counselor educators may utilize the theory as a tool to understand Asian counseling students' transferring process. Counselor educators might also use this theory to develop their own awareness in the Asian counseling students' process of making decisions about the applicability of Western and Eastern beliefs to group work practice. Counselor educators might support Asian counseling students to understand their transferring process by encouraging them to explore their cultural system while they are training in the West. This theory also provided the details of the challenges that existed from cultural systems to Asian group leaders' group work practice. Counselor educator might apply this information in their

training of counseling international students in terms of the challenges trainee might face in their practices.

Additionally, this theory of Asian group leaders who were practicing in Asia provided a detailed description of the interventions Asian group leaders developed and practiced in groups. Counselor educators may utilize this information in their teaching of group work in multicultural context. This information may be good example of how group leaders in Asia practice with the process of integration between cultural understanding and group therapy theory.

This theory of Asian group leaders who were practicing in Asia provided rich descriptions of Asian group leaders' motivation and how motivation increased from group work practice. They also emphasized risk-taking and responsiveness to the group during reflective experimentation process. Counselor educators may utilize this information in their group work teaching by designing learning experiences that encouraged group leaders in training to take risks and be aware and responsive to the group.

#### *Asian Group Leaders in Training*

This theory provided a description of Asian group leaders who practiced in Asia. The information included group leaders' actions, thoughts, and feelings during the process of reflective experimentation. These descriptions provided valuable information for Asian group leaders in training to utilize as they lead groups. The theory also described Asian group leaders' feelings during the process of transferring and challenges they faced. The awareness of the transferring process and these challenges may assist Asian group leaders in training in identifying challenges and preparing themselves to deal

with challenges. Asian group leaders in training may also have benefits from the description of the motivation processes. They may use the information to develop their internal and external motivation. In addition, this theory provided rich descriptions of the interventions that Asian group leaders developed and practiced in groups. Asian group leaders in training may benefit from the variety of interventions that Asian group leaders utilized while leading group.

Additionally, this theory of Asian group leader practicing in Asia provided rich descriptions of Asian group leaders' motivation and the increasing of motivation from group work practice. They also emphasized risk-taking and responsiveness to the group during reflective experimentation process. These descriptions provided valuable information for Asian group leaders in training to utilize as they prepare themselves to lead groups in Asia.

#### *Future Research*

This grounded theory research explored the experiences of Asian group leaders who practiced in Asia. From this research, the researcher gained understanding of Asian group leaders' experiences in practicing in Asia included their awareness, their basic self, their reflective experimentation, and their perception about cultural system. All of these are critical for Asian group leaders in their practice in groups. Counselor educators, group work practitioners and researchers might use this research as the foundation for further research in any of these areas. Future research might further consider developing the understanding of Asian group leaders' transferring process. For instance, studies might include Asian group leaders training to develop more understanding about their transferring process.

Future research might also expand the understanding toward Asian group leaders' experiences of leading group in Asia by including the group leaders who had graduated from institutions where English was not the predominant language or use participants' native language in the research.

### Conclusion

This grounded theory emerged from Asian group leaders' descriptions of their perceptions and experiences of leading counseling and therapy groups in Asia. The systematic study and resulting information addressed gaps in the literature and research regarding Asian group leadership. The emergent theory described how Asian group leaders worked in group and what processes and factors impacted their practices.

Asian group leaders who practiced in Asia developed their interventions and their personal and professional style through the integration of their cultural understanding, their core beliefs and their awareness of group and individual levels. Their awareness of group and individual levels provided the basic resources and aided them to understand the results of their group interventions and their processes of transferring Western training to Asian group work implementation. They employed inner resources, outer resources, core beliefs, and understanding of their cultural system as the basic materials of the process of reflective experimentation. Their motivations and inspirations helped them meet all of the challenges in their practice. The results from their processes of reflective experimentation impacted them in both personal and professional growth. Then their growth and their developed intervention impact back into their awareness, their basic self and their cultural system. Therefore, the process of reflective experimentation continuously goes on while Asian group leaders are working in groups.

The existing theory may be beneficial to the practices of counselor educators in terms of teaching group work and training group leaders. Asian group leaders in training may also benefit from this theory by understanding the process of what might happen to them in group work practice and therefore be able to prepare themselves.

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