

Assessing Group Behavior

Problematic Group Behavior	Healthy Group Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members talk on a superficial level and are cautious about revealing their feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members openly communicate feelings and attitudes and anticipate that other members will be helpful.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are readily critical and evaluative of each other; they rarely acknowledge or listen to contributions from others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members listen carefully to each other and give all ideas a hearing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dominant members exclude other members in decision-making; members make decisions prematurely without identifying or weighing alternatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions are reached through group consensus after considering everyone's views and feelings. Members make efforts to incorporate the views of dissenters rather than to dominate or override these views.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members focus heavily on negatives and rarely accredit positive behaviors to others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members recognize and give feedback regarding strengths and growth of other members.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are critical of differences in others, viewing them as a threat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members recognize the uniqueness of each individual and encourage participation in different and complimentary ways.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members compete for the chance to speak, often interrupting each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members take turns speaking. Members use "I" messages to speak for themselves, readily owing their own feelings and positions on matters.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members do not personalize their messages but instead use indirect forms of communication to express their feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members encourage others to speak for themselves. Members adhere to guidelines or behaviors established in initial sessions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members display disruptive behavior incompatible with group guidelines. Members resist talking about here & now or addressing personal or group problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group is concerned about its own operations and addresses obstacles that prevent members from fully participating or the group from achieving its objectives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members show unwillingness to accept responsibility for themselves or the success of the group and tend to blame the leader when things are not going well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group manifests commitment by staying on task, assuming group assignments, or working out problems that impair group functioning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members dwell on past exploits and experiences and talk about issues extraneous to group purpose. Members focus on others rather than themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members concentrate on the present and what they can do to change themselves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members show little awareness of the needs and feelings of others; emotional investment in others is limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and readily give emotional support.

Adapted from Hepworth, D.H., Rooney, R.H., and Larsen, J. (2002). *Direct social work practice*. (6th ed.). California: Brooks/Cole.

