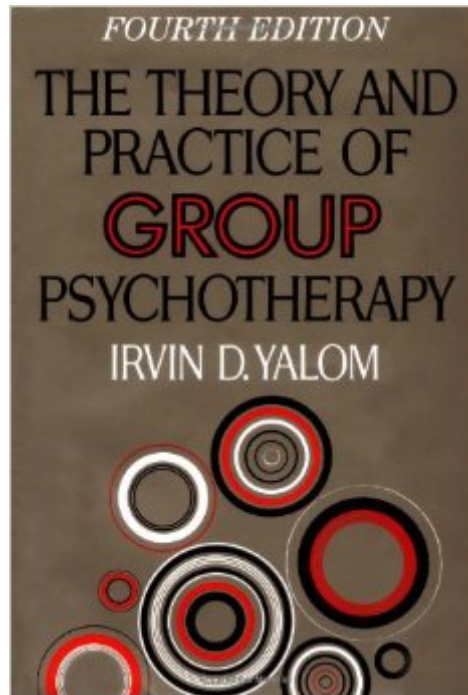


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# The Theory And Practice Of Group Psychotherapy



## Synopsis

Hailed by Jerome Frank as "the best book that exists on the subject, today and for the foreseeable future," Irvin D. Yalom's *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* has long been the standard text in its field. Indeed, in a survey reported in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, it was cited as one of the ten most influential psychiatry publications of the past decade, and it was one of the very few judged to be of "seminal or lasting value." In this completely revised and expanded fourth edition, updated to reflect the American Psychiatric Association's latest diagnostic manual, the DSM-IV, Dr. Yalom presents the most recent developments in the field, drawing on nearly a decade of new research as well as his own broad clinical wisdom and experience. This edition features new sections on combining individual and group therapy, the latest information about brief group therapy, and how to modify group work to deal with the newly emerging homogeneous focal groups (including survivor groups), as well as updated references and new clinical vignettes drawn from the author's recent practice. Throughout, Dr. Yalom has updated the style and content of the chapters, while retaining valid research and clinical observations. Illustrating the text are vivid cases from nearly two thousand group sessions that he has led over the past decade. *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* is an informative text that is at once scholarly and lively. This new edition is the most up-to-date, incisive, and comprehensive text on group therapy available today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Yalom's techniques are timeless, as long as human nature and how it plays out in social interactions transcends time and place. Thus, decades after publication, this book of group therapy lives on, whereas others, more faddish, are either narrowly focused on sufferers of the "disease of the year", or, in the case of "pragmatic", short-term "manual-based" groups which insurance companies favor, assume that all one has to do is give the patient the right recipe and 8 weeks to practice it, and they'll be cured of life-long ingrained pathological behaviors. Anyone who thinks this book is "out of touch" or demonstrates a lack of empathy by Yalom, probably has a pet style of group therapy, and an axe to grind. Often, seemingly more empathic therapists, run groups in which everyone takes turns getting sympathy, distress is "validated", whereas the patient's contribution to it is ignored, and the premise is that sufferers are misunderstood victims of a neglected disease who are finally in the hands of someone who "gets it". Usually therapists who lead such groups, don't only wish to empathize, but are driven by a wish to feed their own vision of their specialness as the champions of the underdogs. One of Yalom's greatest contributions is the effectiveness with which he used the group approach to exactly show patients how they cause their own distress--by creating a group atmosphere in which members play out their poor social skills, and get the powerful impact of peer feedback on this. He did so in a way which demonstrated genuine empathy in action: by steering members to identify (and empathize) not only with each others' misery, but with each others' strengths. Sympathy without a kick in the [...], is patronizing, and implies inequality. Sympathy with a kick in the [...]

This book is one that every graduate student in psychology or beginning therapist should read and have on their shelf. Yalom covers and discusses many important aspects of group therapy such as interpersonal learning, basic therapist tasks, the idea of working in the here-and-now, therapist transference and transparency, selection of patients, creating a group, problem patients and training the group therapist. Yalom addresses this book to new therapists just starting out, as well as therapists who have been in the field for some time. Yalom presents the new therapist with the many considerations that need to be looked at when forming a group and actually leading a group and he assists the therapists who have been in the field for some time with ways in which to sharpen or improve their skills. Yalom's book appears to be based on highly functioning upper middle class individuals who seem to have good jobs and relationships with their family, friends and spouses. One may gather this assumption from the clinical vignettes and cases that Yalom presents throughout the entire book. Yalom incorporates much of his own practical experience with individuals in the groups that he has led himself, which makes his book feel like you are reading a

novel and not a textbook per se. Although Yalom based his book on highly functioning upper middle class individuals, he never addressed the idea of group therapy with children or individuals of different ethnic backgrounds, which seem to be two important areas in today's society, especially within the realm of therapy.

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