

AVOIDING THE TRAPS IN TEAM & GROUP WORK

MAY 2016 ARTICLE - LLDS

While a lot of things can go smoothly, there are a number of traps in group and team work. This month's article explores five program traps which are common in any group or team program.

Consider these common program traps which may show up in a group or team process (workshop, retreat, teleclass, coaching session etc):

Trap #1 - Unclear expectations

I can't say enough about the importance of working with the group to set expectations 'these start before you step into the room in areas including:

- Marketing of our session
- Pre=program 1-1-s
- Ways of working
- Coaching Agreements
- What is important for group/.team members to know about you? What are your expectations around:
- Ownership of the group
- What is done in between sessions
- The role/responsibility of the group members

How are you creating agreements together? What needs clarification? What changes do you want to make in future programs?

Trap #2 - Too much!

Often we want to include as much as we can in service to the client without recognizing that sometimes it is too much. Consider weaning out some of the following:

- Theme areas
- Field work
- Keep it to one action item a week
- Number of coaching questions
- How much material you provide at the start

- Number of activities you include
- Different components

What will simplify your current program?

Trap #3 - Unruly participants

There are a range of participants that can show up in our rooms. Working to navigate unruly participants is a key issues. Sometimes this goes back to how we set things up – creating shared expectations, Ways of Working, and also being clear on what is acceptable and not in the room/on the phone.

People can become unruly when they do not feel safe, heard or valued. What can you do to ensure these needs are being met.

What are you noticing about your current participants? What issues have emerged?

Trap #4 - Not trusting yourself and your skills

As a group worker there is no certainty and we need to be comfortable a lot of the time in not knowing. We need to develop a deep trust in our skills, that what we need will show up in the moment, and also that the people we are working with will bring what we need to create a great experience.

As we've been focusing at the LLDS there are a number of skills which create a masterful group experience. ***What skills do you bring to the table?*** This month's strengths and stretch template can be a useful framework to use in identifying your strengths and stretch points.

Trap #5 – Underestimating our Presence

Our being, or presence, as a coach is an important instrument in our work. How we show up influences so much in our work – from how the group feels, to the environment we create. This month's template provides you a framework to explore presence, strengths and stretch points.

What adjectives would you use to describe your presence? What do others say?