

THE GROUP SCOOP

What's Going On With IASWG
Spring 2022

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PRESIDENT'S PEN

BARBARA MUSKAT

Dear group work colleagues:

Spring in Toronto usually brings on feelings of relief, hopefulness, and freedom. Temperatures rise from the cold of winter; days grow longer and the earth wakes up with new growth and greenery. In the spring of 2022, hope that the pandemic is receding is with us and many are throwing away their masks and returning to life as it was before March 2020. Their desire for freedom is understandable, but again COVID case counts are rising.

As well, the world around us is in a state of turmoil. It is important for us to think about the current war in the Ukraine, the struggle facing those within and trying to leave Afghanistan, the continuing appearance of COVID across the globe, and the ever-rising threat of climate change. All of this reminds us that we all are struggling to experience relief, hopefulness, and freedom.

The question that plagues me is how to plan in times of such uncertainty. How do we get ready for what is ahead when life is so unpredictable? These are questions that I hope that we, as social group workers, can ponder together and try to be best prepared for what comes next. What we have going for us is the belief in the power of group support and working collaboratively to work on planning and solutions.

(continued on next page)



My IASWG colleagues have provided me with hopefulness and support over the past few years. Recently a group of hard-working IASWG members offered a trial of a virtual group work camp, which appears to have been a great success. The camp used non-deliberative methods to develop a cohesive group in a relatively short period of time, with lots of fun thrown in for good measure! Bravo to the organizing group.

We are actively working on the planning for this year's symposium, which will again be held virtually. We do hope to return to an in-person format when the fates allow! In addition to an excellent selection of plenary, invitational, and workshop events, the very creative membership committee is preparing a number of entertaining/fun activities...which is just what we seem to need right now.

I hope to see you at the symposium and also hope that you spread the word widely to your group work colleagues and encourage them to attend as well.

We clearly still need hope for the near and distant future and group work can help us to get there.



A note from the newsletter committee

Please note that submissions may have been edited for clarity and length

If you have an announcement, event, or update you would like to include in the next newsletter, please contact

iaswg.newsletter@gmail.com

Connect with IASWG



2022 IASWG Virtual Symposium

From Social Separation to Social Solidarity

June 16 - 18, 2022

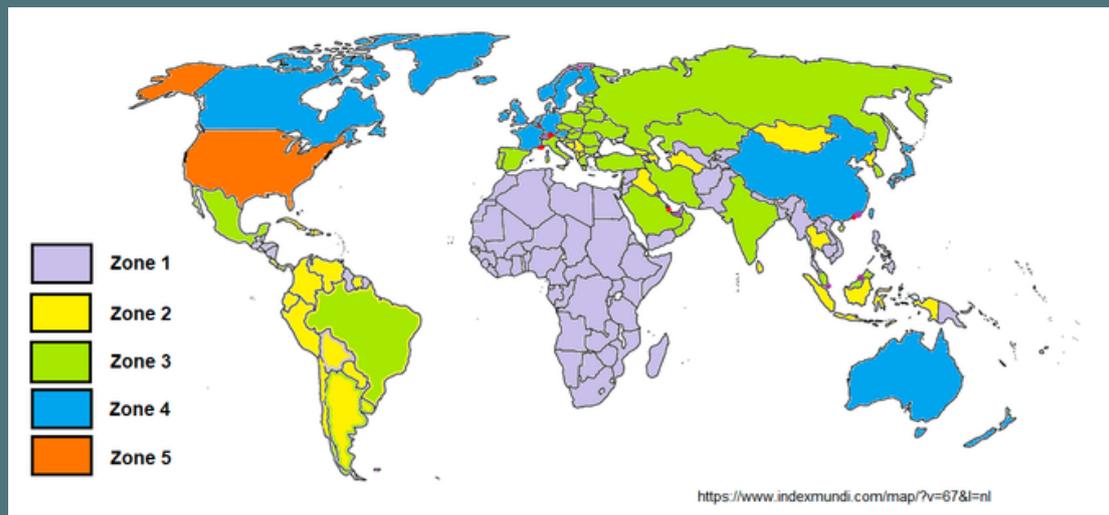
GET READY FOR THE 2022 SYMPOSIUM

June 16-18, 2022

The 2022 IASWG Virtual Symposium: From Social Separation to Social Solidarity is quickly approaching and the Symposium Planning Committee has been diligent in its efforts to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded experience for attendees. The activities begin on Tuesday, June 14th with three Pre-Symposium Institutes about field instruction, fostering meaningful connections online, and turning points in group life. Wednesday, June 15th offers two sessions with an emphasis on integrating science and art in group work practice and strategies for evaluating group work practice. To learn more about the Pre-Symposium presentations, including times, presenters, and a detailed description, [click here](#).

The symposium begins on Thursday, June 16th at 9 am (ET) and continues through Saturday, June 18th with more than 90 events in the form of plenaries, invitational workshops, the IASWG Honoree Recognition event, poster presentations, 60- and 30-minute presentations, member meet-and-greets, and the "IASWG's Got Talent" program. Events will be offered German, French, Spanish, and English, with presenters representing a diversity of countries, provinces, territories, and states within the United States. As always, presenters, and presentations represent diverse practice settings, multicultural practices, group work in underserved communities, community development, activist group work practice, as well as group work research and training. Most presentations will be recorded, and all registered attendees will receive an email a few days after the live event with links to resources and access to the on-demand videos. For a complete list of the presentations please [click here](#).

Our symposium participation is truly international with presenters and attendees from all around the world. We make efforts to be inclusive through diversified membership and symposium registration fee structures that reflect the financial realities in the world. For that reason, a model was developed, using the classification system based on the world bank data and EU classifications, according to the 2020 Gross Domestic Product (GDP, US\$ in Trillions) per capita and divided into five zones. To gain a better understanding of the zones and associated rates as well as to register for the symposium, please [click here](#).



In closing, please know that the Symposium Planning Committee, and the Membership Committee look forward to meeting you, reconnecting with you, learning from you, and sharing our collective group work experience.

Take care,
Sam Benbow, *Co-Chair Membership Committee*

[Register Here!](#)

Calling Student Volunteers!

Student volunteers are the heart, hands, and soul of the IASWG symposium. IASWG will select around 50 student volunteers to perform tasks related to session oversight, zoom tech support, and translation services. In exchange for your time and effort, the volunteer's symposium registration fee will be waived.

For more information, [click here!](#)

IASWG'S GOT TALENT!

Join us for some well-deserved fun while we enjoy the many talents of our IASWG community.

JUNE 17, 2022

4:45 PM ET / 8:00 PM GMT

JUNE 18, 2022

8:00 AM ET / 12:00 PM GMT

All talents welcome! We can't wait to see you shine!

- Each performance will be a maximum of 5 minutes
- Performances can be pre-recorded or live

[Sign up to perform here!](#)



IASWG ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcing the Special (Double) Issue of Social Work with Groups on the IASWG SPARC Program

Coming later this year, a special double issue of Social Work with Groups featuring 12 articles focused on IASWG SPARC Projects will be published. All articles are currently available online and will be featured in volume 45, issues 3 & 4. The Projects featured in the special double issue were initially proposed for SPARC awards by IASWG members in their early stages of development and demonstrate the power of group work in building human connection, developing critical competence, advancing knowledge, and promoting social justice. We're grateful that Andy Malekoff, Editor of Social Work with Groups suggested the idea of this Special Issue. Our team of Guest Editors were Brian L Kelly, Carol S Cohen, Barbara Muskat, Maria A. Gurrola, H el ene Filion Onserud, and Greg Tully. This publication comes at a great time to inspire more IASWG members to apply for an IASWG SPARC award, either for Endorsement or Endorsement and Funding.

The next IASWG SPARC proposal deadline is May 25, 2022. All the details are available at:

<https://www.iaswg.org/sparc-program>

(submitted by Brian Kelly and Carol Cohen)

Committees Seeking Participants

IASWG is a member-driven international organization consisting of several standing and ad hoc committees. Members are encouraged to get involved, lend their experience and skills by serving on one or more of the various committees. To learn more about the committees, please visit the IASWG website: <https://www.iaswg.org/> and select the "Committees" tab. The list of committees seeking new members and the contact information of the co-chairs are as follows:

- Chapter Development: Shirley Simon (shirleysimon@gmail.com) and Sera Godfrey-Kaplan (seragklicsw@gmail.com)
- Commission on Group Work in Social Work Education Development: Carol Cohen (cohen5@adelphi.edu) and Mark Macgowan (MMacgowan@comcast.net)
- International Issues: Mark Doel (markdoel@icloud.com) and Lorrie Gardella (lggardella@gmail.com)
- Membership: Georgianna Reilly (georgianna.reilly@gmail.com) and Samuel R. Benbow (Srbenb@ship.edu)
- Nominations and Elections: Klye McGee (kylem.mcgee@gmail.com) & Alexis Howard (alexishowardl@aol.com)
- Practice: Charles Garvin (charlesg@umich.edu) and Donna Mclaughlin (dmmclaug@bu.edu)
- Symposium Planning: Barbara Muskat (barbara.muskat@utoronto.ca)

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Name and Credentials:

Andrew Spaumer, MSW

Country:

South Africa

IASWG Chapter Affiliation:

Africa Chapter

Place of Employment and Job Title:

University of South Africa: Lecturer

**Why did you become involved in IASWG?**

I was exposed to IASWG as a 3rd-year student when we came with our lecturer to the Chicago USA conference. We presented an activity on diversity and that is when I learned about a community of professionals dedicated to make group work a dependable and reliable intervention method in addressing individual, family, and community impediments. Most importantly I joined the IASWG because I understand that alone I can be faster but with the support of a group, I can go further. This was proved when IASWG gave me the opportunity to visit the USA and Canada, but also provided a global family.

Briefly describe your group work experience and/or current group work:

The most influential group work experiences were when I used the principles of group work in my work, where clients can know and understand that they are not alone in whatever they are going through. I have witnessed clients who were feeling that their world is falling apart being sources of hope to others who shared their experiences in a group session. Growing up from a single parent, I have seen the importance of groups in tackling poverty and inequality, especially in a patriarchal society. Witnessing my mother (can't read or write) putting together a group of ladies to contribute money monthly for building projects and other projects showed me the power of group work in addressing the challenges faced by rural community. Group work is the source of encouragement and motivation especially where there are challenges. My mother managed to use the group savings to take us to University and I am continuing the legacy with my generation.



Andrew Spaumer (center in white shirt and cap with his wife in front with the walking stick) during "Lovers Hiking Adventure", a group couples outing. The photo was taken in South Africa, Tshwane (Pretoria), at the Groenkloof Nature Reserve.

Provide any relevant website (personal, LinkedIn, etc.) or contact details:

www.Andrewspaumer.com

Contact Details: +2772 888 5030

Email Address : andrew.spaumer@gmail.com (personal), spauma@unisa.ac.za

Calling All Group Workers: Online Considerations for the IASWG Standards

IASWG has developed Standards for the Practice of Social Work with Groups, which have been helpful for many people. However, they are missing items about online Social Work with Groups. We need your help!

A survey has been developed to collect your thoughts about "Online Considerations" to be added to the IASWG Standards. Your comments will go to an IASWG Committee to help ensure the Standards are relevant for online group work and will become a part of a revision of the Standards, once approved by the IASWG Board. You can remain anonymous unless you request to be contacted.

If English is not your preferred language, a survey will be sent soon in Spanish, French, and German.

Thank you for your participation!

[Fill out the survey here!](#)

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Name and Credentials:

Rahul James, BSW

Country:

Canada

School, Major/Concentration:

University of Calgary, Bachelor of
Social Work

Briefly describe your most recent internship or group work experience:

My most recent internship was with the Mosaic Primary Care Network. I worked with their Refugee Health Clinic providing a wide range of services to refugees, immigrants, and other low-income Canadian families.

What draws you to group work?

One of the areas that I am interested to work in my future practice would be as an Addiction Counsellor and a group setting is one of the vital elements in helping my patients/clients in that setting. It gives them an environment where they would feel supported and would reduce the feeling of isolation and helplessness. I believe that it would play a great role in their recovery process as they would see that they are not alone in their journey.

Why did you become involved in IASWG?

I was first drawn to group work through the class I took during my BSW under Dr. William Pelech. His classes on group work inspired me to join IASWG. Unfortunately, due to my hectic schedule, I have not been able to actively take part in the activities of this wonderful organization. Now that I am done with my schooling, hopefully, this year I am able to attend all the meetings and activities.

Provide any relevant website (personal, LinkedIn, etc.) or contact details:

Email - rahuljames670@gmail.com

Linkedin page - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rahul-james-6566a6231/>

German Chapter

Studientag

REPAIR THE WORLD

Hoffnung, Menschenwürde, Demokratie
von Louis Lowy lernen



Studientag
10.06.

Register now: Study day "Repair the world - learning hope, human dignity, democracy from Louis Lowy".

102 years after Louis Lowy's birth, a study day is to be the occasion for an examination of Lowy's suggestions for our living, learning and working together. With the study day "Repair the world" on 10.06.2022 (10:00-16:30), the work of Louis Lowy is to be brought to mind and a transfer for a solidary, humane and racism-critical society is to be established. A lecture by Lorrie Greenhouse Gardella (Southern Connecticut State University, USA) and six workshops offer an in-depth study of Louis Lowy's work and practical exercises for a transfer to today. What does a society of solidarity need today? What responsibility can each individual assume? What contributions can social work and education make?

As a persecutee of the Nazi regime, Lowy created spaces under extreme conditions in the Theresienstadt ghetto and the Deggendorf Displaced Persons Camp through group work and community work, which made hope and human dignity possible. In the post-war period, he made a decisive contribution to the further development of social work with the Summer Academies in Europe, and this in the country of his tormentors. Lowy's commitment served recognition, encounter and turned against exclusion and anti-Semitism/racism. Lowy's behaviour is thus an example of the use of democratic values such as human dignity and solidarity.

The target group is social workers, social educators, students, educational professionals, civil society activists and the interested public. The study day is a cooperation event of katho NRW, Transfernetzwerk s_inn, Institut für Beratung und Supervision Aachen, Gesellschaft für Social Groupwork and Bildungsbüro der StädteRegion Aachen.

Further information and registration at: www.iaswg.de/studientag.

Long Island Chapter

On March 11th the Long Island Chapter of IASWG, in partnership with Stony Brook School of Social Welfare, hosted a 2-hour online interactive webinar titled Field Instruction and Group Work Practice; Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities. Presented by Dr. Sari Skolnik and Dr. Louise Skolnik, the workshop focused on challenges and problem-solving strategies for effective group work field instruction. Also discussed were online group work, leadership models, and manualized group practice. 37 people attended the event, which was well-received. Participants found the information useful, and since it was abbreviated due to time constraints requests were made to offer a part two in the future. Please reach out to Dr. Sari Skolnik at sarcent2@optonline.net if you are interested in receiving information.

Member Book Announcement

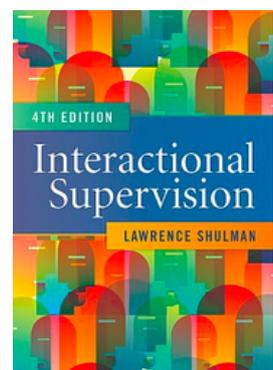
The Skills of Helping Individuals, Families, Groups and Communities, 8th edition, Cengage Publishers, 2020

This book describes and illustrates the “Interactional Model” of social work practice. This model is offered as an alternative to the traditional Medical Model. The core framework is presented and then elaborated according to modality of practice, setting population, and problem. Process recordings illustrate practice with clients, other professionals, and professional impact on other systems (e.g., hospitals, residential settings).

Interactional Supervision, 4th edition, National Association of Social Workers, 2022

The Interactional framework of practice is applied to the supervisor-supervisee interaction. Process recordings illustrate the parallel process – the way in which supervision models for front-line workers the most effective way of working with clients. The core supervision process is presented and then elaborated according to modality of supervision (e.g., individual conferences, group supervision).

Dr. Lawrence Shulman, MSW, Ed.D
Emeritus Dean and Professor,
The University at Buffalo School of Social Work



Group Activity

At the Boston Symposium (2013?), Dana Leeman and one of her students led a workshop in which they broke attendees into groups, gave them a pile of random inexpensive materials (think cotton balls, straws, balloons, etc), and instructed the newly formed groups to build something together. At the end, groups were left with a visual representation of something they had built...together. The activity stuck with me as a such a powerful beginning stage experience that I now use it in all my classes to generate cooperation, cohesion, effective decision-making, and even a bit of laughter. Here's an example of the unique creations my small groups came up with this semester.

(Submitted by Joyce Webster)



TIPS FOR GROUP WORKERS: USING ACTIVITIES

By Andrew Malekoff, Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups

In using manuals or in creating their own activities group workers should be thoughtful in deciding what activities they will use, in what context, and for what purpose. A few important questions/tips to consider were posed by Robert Vinter.

1. How prescriptive should the activity be? (i.e. is it a freewheeling activity like a game of tag or one that requires detailed instruction like chess?);
2. How is the activity regulated or controlled? (i.e. does the activity allow for some autonomy and control among the members or is it purely leader controlled?);
3. What are the relationship demands or levels of interaction required? (i.e. is it a side-by-side arts and crafts activity or a face-to-face intense role-playing exercise); and
4. What is the level of competence required? (i.e. is it an activity that will leave anyone feeling incompetent or inferior or does everyone have a reasonable chance at feeling they have successfully participated; or is it an activity that might frustrate a bit, in an attempt to help members, in part, to develop greater frustration tolerance, for example).

Participant Retention: What can you do as a facilitator?

By: Padraic Stanley, MSW, LCSW
Rush University Medical Center

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all of us in numerous ways, and our workshop participants are not an exception. Many of our participants are struggling with their health, with fears and concerns, and grappling with social isolation and loneliness.

That's why our programming is even more important during these challenging times. In addition to the vital health information they receive from our workshops, participants also have benefitted immensely from social interaction and engagement with their peers.

Even amongst participants who engage in regular social interaction, the workshops have offered a safe and affirming space to make new friends and spend time with others with similar lived experiences, which has greatly improved feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

Unfortunately, when individuals miss workshop sessions due to either not feeling well or "up to it," forgetfulness, or because of other conflicting commitments such as doctor appointments or family events. Often times those participants may feel awkward or unwelcome in re-joining the group. This is something you can help address as a facilitator.

If someone misses a group session, give them a call that day or the following day.

- Let them know they were missed - often times if we don't call, people feel discouraged and may say, "No one even noticed I wasn't there." This phone call check-in can help overcome that!
- Check in on them and offer support
- Encourage them to come to the next session
- Utilize problem-solving steps if appropriate
- Help them make an action plan for the next session
- Normalize that participants may need to miss a class or two, and that's ok! Family events and doctors appointments, as well as other commitments, are important. We always encourage participants that they should try their best to attend at least 4 out of 6 sessions to get the maximum benefit from the group!
- If there is a larger issue that could use social work follow-up or if the participant genuinely does not want to continue with the program, notify the program manager as this is important feedback to improve your programs

These small steps can improve our retention rates and the overall quality of our programs. This is just one of the many ways we can strive for excellence in our programs and make sure all of our participants feel more empowered and connected.

Register for
the
symposium
here!

A note from the newsletter committee

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iaswg.newsletter@gmail.com

Newsletter committee:

Samuel Benbow

Georgianna Dolan-Reilly

Elisa Gores

**Connect with
IASWG**



Let it Breathe, Let it Be

It is freeing
It is confining
It connects
It divides
It is calming
It is maddening
It is still
It is on edge
It is tiring
It is relaxing
It dims
It glows
It is numbing
It is renewing
It is dull
It is sacred
It is bewildering
It is illuminating

It is inevitable

Silence in the group:
It is a spiritual thing

Let it breathe
Let it be

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