

The Effects of Large Scale, Structured, Marathon, Group Psychotherapy in Human's Improvements and Enhancements

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Abstract

In the 1960s and 1970s, self-knowledge and psychological courses started to appear in America that fast and extensively turned into one of the key social movements of that time: marathon groups. Although this specialized term is hardly ever used and heard, the different Trade Mark (™) with which the institutions holding the courses are known are very famous in America and other countries where the branches of these centers exist. These names are like EST, Land Mark, and Life Spring. Now, after half a century, this particular type of group therapy is still prevalent and expanding in Iran and other Asian countries for several years. I participated in one of these courses in Iran about 15 years ago - the first localized sample for Iran - which has been the turning point of many changes in my life. For instance, the day I started these courses I was working as a computer engineer specializing in computer networks, and today I am graduating with an MA in psychology and on the verge of entering the PhD degree in this major. However, the experience of participating in this course has no connection with changing major, specialization and field of work, which was a special effect I experienced. The uniqueness of each person's experience is one of the attractive features and characteristics of these courses. However, aside from the valuation of these effects, the extent and frequency of these effects is undeniable. In this review paper, I will make efforts to address the basic paradigms and the history of the establishment of these courses to gain a correct and scientific understanding of how these courses are effective. I believe that the first step in identifying the state and function of these courses in today's communities is to get familiar with the origin, purposes and scientific goals of this approach. I hope that the paper will be a start for deeper studies of these courses, reviewing their localized models in Asian countries, especially Iran, studying the sociological status, and their long-term effectiveness in these communities.

Keywords: Marathon, groups, Trade Mark

INTRODUCTION

According to evolutionary psychology, human is an animal defining its major part of being and existence in relationships. In a simplified way, this view calls human a social being. Eric Fromm argues that we are beings who have lost our instincts in evolution and instead have developed thought and reasoning power. Thus, our relationships with nature have been cut and as the greatest human fear, the fear of isolation and loneliness has led us to have a relationship (quoted by Feist) ^[1]. In addition, with the development of reasoning abilities, our mind has moved towards complexity. According to systemic psychology, the function of the complex mind is to create simplicity outside itself.

For instance, we think in a complex way, and inventing an invention like an air conditioner makes us experience the simplicity of everyday life, which is the comfort of summer life in different climates. Nevertheless, the point is that the untrained mind of human has been complicated according to its evolutionary need, but the conscious discernment of why

it does not function, and therefore many of the complexities of the mind, creates complexity and difficulty outside itself and not simplicity and comfort. One of the clear samples of this incidence is in the field of complexities that have appeared in the human psyche because of complex thinking, and the result is clear in the complexity of human relations.

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Moreover, as our outside world becomes more and more complex with complex manifestations of technology, and technological, stimuli and factors affect our lives more; this complexity of circumstances creates new contexts for the vicious circle of mind-relationship complexity.

According to evolutionary psychology, our brain function has evolved over millions of years. However, the complexity of the socio-economic-cultural-technological conditions around us is the result of the last 300 to 500 years, and this number is nearly zero compared to the history of evolution. Eric Fromm considers middle ages as the last period when human experienced mental security: the period when the feudal system had determined the status of everyone in society (quoted by Fichtelberg) [1]. Accordingly, systemic psychology suggests that humans build a systematic thinking-value-belief way for themselves, in line with the age to fill this gap. However, this idea is a good ideal view. It means that stepping on the path of building a systemic perspective is great for anyone to be able to see himself or herself in the context of time-place-relationship and adjust the system of relations. However, as the concept ideal shows, the ideal view is not attainable for humans. Nonetheless, being on the path, specific goals and designed aids in the modern world, as the tools thinkers devise to overcome the problems of this type of life, can help the modern human.

One of the homes that can be planned to reach this goal is to gain knowledge and awareness about the functions of the human psyche and the complexities that we create in our relationships. This is reminiscent of the common term these days (especially the last two decades), a term heard in different uses from market advertising for yellow books and methods to people's diligent efforts to achieve self-realization: self-awareness. However, what makes many attempts of self-awareness unconstructive is the way one deals with the teachings (and, of course, the tendencies of that method or its educators and promoters) and that self-awareness acts statically, descriptively, and definitively in the definition of "self". This means that as a result of the teachings, the person concludes that "I ... am ...". In this view, the person reduces his existence, which is a dynamic and constantly evolving concept, to a known and limited definition and at the same time with the end point of the line, the end of its evolution and adherence to what it has discovered (!) now declares to the world and those around it in a research and righteous way. This is a model with no relation with "self" meaning dynamic concept, "cognition" does not mean "dynamic process," and it is ruled by a certainty that has nothing to do with development. This model of definition is descriptive and one of those uses in the dominant discourse¹ in the consumer market with a commodity called "self-awareness". Nevertheless, what we mean by self-awareness in this paper from now on is self-awareness as an acquaintance with the potentials,

complexities, psychic abilities, and all the necessities that will be used in the way of self-actualization.

Thus, self-awareness in pragmatic and dynamic sense in self-awareness will be as a unique biosphere and the move towards the selective opening of ego borders and excellence. A process characterized by dynamism, pragmatism and construction, and the individual is not only selective and purposeful in realizing himself, but also intentional. Thus, the paper will accompany the change and transformation that it seeks in humans with the process of self-awareness: a process that owes its ontological view of self and the world around it. To the author, psychology was separated from philosophy according to the evolutionary base that the focus on the human psyche as one of the evolutionary needs of the "individualized humans." Psychic means the root of the words psychology, psychotherapy, psychiatry and so on. This term is originally derived from the myth of the psychic, the narrator of the mortal human, who attains the degree of immortality (becoming God). This can be a significant symbol of what our psychology has lost today: the psyche is moving towards excellence, and the separation of psychology as a pragmatic science from philosophy is supposed to explain and facilitate this process. However, with today's accepted definition science concept (Karl Popper's definition), what we will examine as progress and evolution in the human mental state is the common ground between Popper's scientific psychology and the philosophical anthropological view. However, especially in recent decades, we have seen the growth of approaches to psychology that do not necessarily address mental disorders and serve the evolution of the humans who have good degrees of generality (gestalt) of mind and psyche compared to the average (soft) society, healthy). However, these people want to create other degrees of growth and transformation for themselves.

One of the techniques that have evolved consistent with this intention is specific models of group therapy. The idea of holding these groups is about people who do not have a specific issue (disorder or disease) regarding mental health, but together they want to receive training and create experiences that are aware of the complexities of their mind and psyche and based on which they can properly manage relationships (with themselves, others and the universe). The paper intends to examine the evolution of this particular path and the effects of a particular model of group therapy, which is useful and cost-effective in many ways for our society today, on human evolution and progress.

Part 1: Large-scale structured marathon group therapy

Group therapy

With its long history and variety in various orientations, group therapy evokes various models, trends, and intentions, and everyone has various expectations of it according to their

¹ Discourse: The word discourse in this paper has the sociological meaning invented and used by Michel Foucault - French philosopher and society of

the 20 century. For more information, see *The Genesis of the Clinic* by Michel Foucault

own reading (or their own experiences and hearings). Thus, (and of course for a similar reason, for other specialized terms) the paper will be committed to defining and explaining details that have a clear space in the meanings of the words used and their uses.

“Recovery” vs. “Treatment”

In the 19th century, with the progress autopsy and pathology, medicine faced fundamental changes. Bichart's transformational reductionist experiments made the diseases spatial and created a scale for assessing static bodies, as well as a vast amount of explanative and descriptive information was found in the field of physical diseases (Foucault, 1994 quoted by Goli) ^[2]. The biomedical approach made disease and death the base of medical and pathological understanding, and anatomical-therapeutic teachings separated humans from the context of their natural lives, thus making the human-body relationship with natural life more distorted, inconsistent, and quantitative ^[2]. The result of this reductionist trend in biomedicine is the creation of a part of the power discourse, called medical professional dominance discourse: a discourse where the disease is like a giant that threatens the most sensitive and oldest human need, the survival need². This is where the savior of humanity, doctors, comes from the saviors of weak and painful human. What is the effect of this kind of view and the dominance of this discourse on the minds of societies empowers discourse (which cannot be examined in details in this paper see the book *Genesis* by Michel Foucault if you are interested). However, the result of this discourse is human avoidance of health care and instead fears of disease. This is what human researchers became aware of in the last decades of the twentieth century and sought to fundamentally change and replace in the human perspective. The result of that is the integrated (holistic) health system today according to Dr. Farzad Goli - Psychosomatic specialist and health researcher - is as follows: the traditional view (in biomedicine) simply recognizes normal (healthy) and abnormality (sickness) conditions and treats the person as healthy or sick. In this view, the concept of health is static and of course, desirable. Now, the new perspectives consider anomaly (sickness) and normal (health) in the health continuum as a function of degrees ranging from death to complete physical, psychological, spiritual and social health. Each person is at a certain point in the continuum, and a biological change (physiological aspect) a belief, thought, misbehavior, (cognitive-behavioral aspect) or even energy disorder, (energy aspect) can shift a person's position in this spectrum). Thus, whether medical science considers a person to as ill or healthy, he is at a certain point in the health continuum, and the only systematic and effective action is to move to the brightest point of this continuum or “superior health”. Indeed, holistic methods place the individual in a context of a dynamic relationship between the various dimensions of life and the environment (Austin 1998, quoted Goli, 2016) ^[2]. However, the traditional biology tends to focus on a part of

the individual and extracting a set of signs and symptoms from the heart of a single bio-psycho-social matrix (Nild, Anderson and Emiling 2000, quoted in Goli 2016) ^[2]. The result is that, according to a holistic and health-oriented approach, development is not based on pathological concepts, but is a process that revolves around the concept of health creation ^[2], and health creation means creating or cultivating health, just as pathogenesis being the production or development of diseases ^[2]. Indeed, as Antonovsky states this fundamental point that the factors that initiate or facilitate the process of evolutions are not necessarily the opposite or negation of the factors that cause disease. For instance, smoking may be a serious risk factor for lung cancer, and obesity can cause coronary heart disease, but once we have advanced cases of these diseases, we do not expect that smoking cessation or weight loss alone will lead to the disappearance of a malignant tumor or the opening of blocked arteries. Development in this sense calls for more factors [even in purely physiological cases like these] (Levin and Mead quoted in Goli 2016) ^[2]. Based on the continuum of health creation and well-being as fundamental concepts in the holistic approach from now on, I will use the term therapy with the concepts of “be fine” and “development”, a concept in the realization of the individual's wholeness and not a paradigm term that has a life-oriented concept. Furthermore, I will use the term client meaning “development-seeker” as a person who has taken action to optimize his life and tries to optimize his life by moving on the mental health continuum. The reason for using the old terms treatment and client in this paper is its frequent use in the main texts and sources of this paper. However, we will come across these terms in a new look in the paper. Thus, the human biosphere is a holistic picture of the individual's wholeness, and the goal of treatment is to stimulate health and interpersonal harmony in the biosphere, not to eliminate harm. This view is not only a systematic and holistic approach towards health, but also more in harmony with the living world of individuals ^[2]. Therefore, when we speak of “group therapy”, we are talking about a kind of development the human space considers the individual in relation to other humans, in self-discovery and moving in the continuum of health towards more health creation.

Interestingly, in the fifth edition of his famous book: *Group psychotherapy* after years of experience and research in the field of psychotherapy, Ervin Yalom states: In the previous edition of this book, I wrote in a positive atmosphere of psychotherapy, I called the mechanisms of change “healing” agents. Over the years, as my knowledge and experience grew, I understood that the goal of psychotherapy was not healing (which, of course, is nothing more than an illusion in our profession). On the contrary, the goal is “change and growth.” In the same book, elsewhere, he emphasizes that psychotherapy has now grown beyond revealing “pathological” aspects and aims to increase positive emotions and cognitions.

² William Galser - psychologist and creator Choice Theory - examines the existence of 5 needs in modern human genetics and considers the survival

need as a long-standing human need. For more information, see the book “Choice Theory” by William Galser, translated by Ali Sahebi

"Group" versus "Individual"

I refer to the significance of choosing group therapies for two reasons:

Firstly, in epistemological terms, knowing a person apart from his relationships does not make sense. Systemic psychology emphasizes that case studies meaning to separate content from its context is a distortion in cognition. This is specifically the case with human, as a social being whose many parts are defined by his relationships and whose thoughts, feelings and actions reach their peak when his relationships are understood properly. In a similar view, existential philosophers and psychologists consider the "existence" of man in the "existence of him in the world (Dasein)". This approach, recognizing the root of all human problems in the term basic anxiety, considers this anxiety in humans as the result of feelings of isolation and alienation from oneself and the world. This alienation, which in this view is the disease of our time for all humans, occurs in three areas: "separation from nature" (Umwelt), lack of meaningful interpersonal relationships (Mitwelt), and alienation from oneself (Eigenwelt) (quoted by Feist) ^[1]. For a long time (tens of thousands of years), it has played an essential role in the life of the human species, and the recent alienation of human and the degradation of different levels of nature to "things" for cross-sectional application in life, has brought human experience here and suffering in human subconscious (in the sense of a part of existence that is not directly studied and created). Moreover, we have other important relationships with other people and members of society in this world. What offends modern human is the degradation of other humans in society to the level of objects and having a usable and practical view of humans. The result of this kind of one-dimensional human view is that it degrades its relationships with others to the level of relationships with things and no longer experiences meaning in their relationships. When such a person looks at himself (at this level, the person ultimately has experience at the level of his ego and ego and self-realization is not possible for him at all), he will not be able to understand and produce meaning about himself and what existentialists call that alienation or elimination will be one's experience.

However, it is clear that at all three levels of experience are continuous and no human is completely isolated from this continuum, but to the extent that he limits his human experience in these three areas, he will face the problem of more alienation, and the result is that considering the group (which is often considered as other humans in this paper) is not only effective on the enrichment of human experiences (including understanding of relationships with oneself or with others), but also necessary.

Secondly, by understanding the significance of relationships, the cognitive domain can be developed individually: Just as there are humanistic, existential, and others individual models. However, group models have always proven their own advantages. Indeed, as I discussed the importance of the group in treatment from a philosophical and theoretical point of view in the first part, I would like to examine the benefits of occupational therapy in the group from a scientific point of view and based on research in this section³. Firstly, in discussing the effectiveness of group therapy, it has to be noted that the statistical results vary in different studies. However, what the studies have clearly shown is that group therapy is an effectiveness type of psychotherapy and at least as much as individual psychotherapy is effective in creating valuable outcomes (Bamister and Larry, 1995, quoting Yalom) ^[3]. Yalom describes the therapeutic elements that reach specific therapeutic goals in a group setting in seven cases. In my opinion, these seven cases are very effective in understanding the reason for forming a group and the benefits of group therapy.

1. Hope

Hope in the client acts as a positive mental expectation. Studies have proven that the power of this mental expectation is not only inactivated like placebo, but also has a direct physiological effect on the brain (Sullivan and Molla 1980 quoted by Yalom) ^[3]. Hope is the flexibility of the mind, hope redefines the "self" so that one adapts to the parameters of the same situation (McClaw 2000, Heller Stein 2002, quoted by Yalom) ^[3].

The significant point to Yalom is that the members are an important source of hope for each other ^[3].

2. The universality of human experiences

In group therapy, especially in the early stages, as the uniqueness of the client's feelings is not confirmed, the client feels relieved. After hearing the words of other members of the group and finding similarities with their own thoughts, therapists feel more connected to the world around them. This experience is called "Welcome to the human race" ^[3].

The feeling of universality of experiences is usually a fundamental step in the treatment of patients who are full of feelings of shame, disgrace, and self-blame (Safran and Segal equated by Yalom) ^[3].

3. Provision of information

According to Yalom, group therapy motivates members to use resources that have always been in their possession. A study of successful encounter groups yielded confirmatory results. Successful members of the group did not see the group as the cause of their change, but rather as talking about the beneficial effects of the new relationships they had

³ Ervin Yalom, a famous psychologist, and psychotherapist: is valid in many aspects in the world of science. One of the main fields of his activity is group therapy and his valuable book "Group psychotherapy, theoretical topics, and applications", * 3 * is the source of teaching group therapy in many scientific centers and universities. What Yalom has compiled in his book is a collection

of his own 50 years of accurate scientific and experimental opinions in this field, as well as a collection of the results of authoritative scientific articles and researches. This book will be one of my main sources in reference to scientific and experimental materials.

established, their sports clubs, and their job satisfaction. However, more studies showed that the relationships, social associations, sports clubs, and job satisfaction did not appear miraculously in the client's life. These facilities are potentially available to the individual, but the group has made him mobilize to use these facilities and take advantage of them for the benefit of his growth ^[3].

4. Altruism

Group therapy is a unique possibility, as it is the only therapy allowing the clients to benefit the others. At the same time, group space encourages role switching. This means that the clients can sometimes appear in the group as help recipients and sometimes as help providers. In this situation, the individuals not only benefit from the support they receive but also feel that they can help others and develop positive feelings about themselves (page 35 reference?).

Yalom considers altruism as an important parameter in creating meaning in life and says, "I agree with Viktor Frankel who says that the sense of meaning can be achieved in life but it cannot be followed seriously." The meaning of life is always a phenomenon that originates from the outside and comes into being when we exalt ourselves, forget ourselves and be absorbed in someone (or something) outside ourselves ^[3]. From this view, Yalom shows the significance of group experiences in therapy with the possibility of experience creating meaning by the client.

5. Correcting the clients' behavior in a situation similar to their family status

Yalom argues that group therapy rebuilds the core family. The group acts like a time machine, taking the client back to decades ago and reviving old feelings and memories. In fact, this phenomenon is one of the major powerful sources in group therapy. Most of the clients who enter the group have had an unpleasant experience in the first and most important group in their lives, the family. In the group, family roles are recreated, with powerful / parental figures, sibling figures, deep personal inspirations, strong emotions, deep intimacy, as well as competitive and hostile feelings. As soon as the initial feeling of discomfort disappeared, eventually, the members treat leaders and other members of the group in the same way they treated their parents and siblings. Therapists recreate the initial scenarios in the family, and in successful group therapies, they experience new behaviors and do away with the dry family roles that they have been in for a long time. It has to be noted that the significant issue is not only the recurrence of early family disputes, but also the possibility of correction is possible ^[3].

6. Creating socialization techniques

Many people have the assumption that the group is a natural environment for unnatural experiences. However, group is in fact an unnatural environment for natural experiences (p. 72

reference?). The abnormality of the environment actually shows that it is laboratory and educational, and the experiences are natural in that the results and products of experiences can be used in society. Not only does the small group create a small social paradigm where the members' maladaptive behavior is clearly shown, it also becomes a laboratory that usually clearly shows the meaning and dynamics of behavior ^[3].

Individuals with proper group experience learn how to react effectively to others, learn problem-solving ways, make fewer judgments, and are better able to empathize with others. Skills will inevitably affect the client's future social exchanges and will be the cornerstone of emotional intelligence (EI) (P. 44. Reference?). For instance, the ability to empathize is a major component of EI (Kleinberg, 2000 quoted by Yalom) ^[3] and facilitates the transfer of learning from group therapy to the outside world. The human relationship without an inner sense of the world is confusing, frustrating, and repetitive because we subconsciously see others as actors playing a decisive role in our life stories without attention to their true motives and aspirations ^[3]. When the ability to empathize with the experiences gained in the group, the sense of helplessness in relationships with others gives way to mutual understanding, and takes the realm of our choices and abilities into a higher relationship. This example is a model of creating a socialization technique and its tangible result.

7. Imitative behavior (observational learning)

In group therapy, sometimes one member benefits from the treatment of another member with a similar problem. This phenomenon is called indirect therapy or observational therapy. Moreover, clients learn things seeing the solutions that others with similar problems gain. Yalom emphasizes that I have no doubt that such learning occurs in group therapy ^[3].

Smarter clients retain more realism and flexibility, and sooner recognize that a change in their behavior leads to greater acceptance by others. This increase in acceptance can later change the concept of self, self-confidence and self-esteem. In addition, the person may imitate aspects of two or more other people, which are combined in turn. Although parts of others are imitated, this new composition shows a new collection that has a very creative and individual identity ^[3].

We complete this section by looking at Harry Stack Sullivan's theories⁴. He argues that the personality is almost generally the product of exchange with important people in human life. Indeed, the "self" is composed of other people's evaluations. For instance, Sullivan uses the term Parataxis Distortions to describe a person's desire to distort his or her perceptions of others. Parataxis Distortions occur in an interpersonal situation when a person communicates with another not based on the other realistic attitudes but on their own image, which is mostly imaginary. These distortions tend to persist and

⁴ Sullivan, the inventor of interpersonal theory, is one of the leading therapists and researchers in this regard.

create a vicious circle where the person anticipates that others will react in a certain way and inadvertently behaves in a way that the same reaction is expected of others. To Sullivan, Parataxis Distortions can be remedied primarily through collective approval. That is, through a comparison that one makes of interpersonal evaluations of oneself and others. Collective approval, which is one of the basic concepts of group therapy, is very helpful in this regard. Sometimes a group member changes his misunderstandings after seeing other members' views⁵ on an important event. Thus, Sullivan argues that treatment, both in goals and in concepts, is widely interpersonal and depends on group therapy (quoted by Yalom, 2017) [3].

Encounter groups

"Encounter groups" is a term used to describe group therapy for normal people. Encounter group is an inaccurate term involving different forms of groups: experimental groups, human relations groups, training groups, T-groups, individual growth groups, marathon groups, human ability groups, sensory awareness groups, and so on. Firstly, it has a brief look at the formation of these groups and the foundations needed to understand the continuation of this process, according to Yalom's book, and then examine the marathon groups as a special example of these groups. We deal with marathon groups based on other sources and specialized articles.

Before the introduction of the term encounter by Carl Rogers, some groups called experimental groups were formed and worked with the following common elements. Common elements of these groups, which are common and basic elements in the marathon model, can be seen in these aspects:

✓ Participants)

The participants in these programs were "seekers", "normal", not "patients", and "clients", and this experience is not a cure but growth.

✓ Coping process)

Encounter means face-to-face exchange is encouraged between people. Indeed, the group becomes the engine of individuals for a real encounter with themselves and others.

✓ Being experimental)

The empirical nature of these groups means that the group depends on its "now and here" experience. Indeed, in these groups, everything is formed about the current experience of the person in the moment, even if the person talking in the group is about an experience from distant times.

Moreover, elements like interpersonal honesty, emotional expression, self-disclosure, and other things that we will keep in T-groups and the effectiveness of the paper later, known as other common elements.

In the 1960s and the emphasis on personal growth for the advancement of normal people, experimental groups, called

T2 groups, expanded and became known, especially in universities and academic institutions by the famous psychologist Kurt Lewin⁶. At this time with more emphasis on group therapy as a means of education rather than therapy, it led to a more humane and broad definition of education. Here, education is no longer a process of acquiring interpersonal and leadership skills, but a comprehensive spontaneous exploration and full development of abilities. The leaders of these groups worked with normal and healthy members of society. Indeed, with people who had achieved significant success by objective standards and at the same time suffered from intense tension, insecurity and conflict of values (people like students, professors, employees and so on), they found that many members of the group wore masks, a public image that they wished to maintain at all costs. The members of those groups had no doubts about their personal adequacy. They tried not to show their frustration to others, a process that prevented them from communicating not only with others but also with themselves. Psychologists (group leaders) believed that a successful person would wear a mask, accept and try to repel with his subconscious tools all the attacks he imagines limit the current situation. Thus, a state of equilibrium is achieved, but at a high cost price. A lot of energy is spent on maintaining interpersonal and extrapersonal separation: the energy that could otherwise be spent on self-actualization.

Besides emphasizing the experiences of the here and now, T-groups added one important technique to group therapy in human relations:

1. Feedback

Lewin borrowed the term from electrical engineering. Lewin and the leaders of the T-groups argued that an important trend in society was that there were few opportunities for individuals to receive feedback from their peers, bosses, co-workers, spouses, or teachers. Feedback, which was the main subject of all T-groups, is effective when it originates from observations of here and now. This means that when the person followed the event that was happening and when the recipient shared its feedback with other members of the group, to validate it and reduce its perceptual deviation.

2. Participant observation

Not only should the members be emotionally involved in the group, but they should also observe themselves and the group simultaneously and objectively. This dual task is a difficult task, but it is essential for learning, as neither action nor mental work alone creates learning.

3. Melting

money. Other members show the real world and can rely on real and spontaneous reactions and feedback (Yalom, 2017).

⁶ Kurt Lewin, Founder of Social Psychology in America

⁵ Listening to other members instead of the therapist is one of the functions of the group. For many clients, the therapist is the one who receives the

The term, derived from Lewin's Change Theory⁷, refers to the process of not approving one's previous belief system. Motivation for change must be developed before change occurs, and the individual must be helped to re-examine many assumptions about himself or herself and his or her relationships with others. What is familiar must be unfamiliar, so many social conventions, situational signs, and routines were excluded from the T-group, and one's values and beliefs about oneself were challenged. This is similar to the general concept of examining and challenging familiar hypotheses known in psychotherapy today.

4. Cognitive tools

In T-groups, those tools were developed that made it possible to transfer experience from the group leaders to the participants during very short lectures. For instance, the tool known as Johari window (Figure 1) includes a four-home personality paradigm that shows the function of self-disclosure feedback. The goal in T-group practice is to increase the size of home A by reducing home B (blind spots) by feedback and reducing home C (hidden area) through self-disclosure and home D (unconscious) was assumed outside group limits.

5.

Figure 1 Johari window	Known to self	Unknown to self
Known to others	A	B
Unknown to other	C	D

The achievements and teachings created for the participants through this group therapy and its techniques are summarized in these three cases:

- ✓ Increased sensitivity of the participant by group processes
- ✓ Participant's increased awareness of their personality
- ✓ Increased ability of the participant to solve group problems in different areas

The leaders of the T-groups believed that individuals reached the above goals in these groups and then could benefit from these abilities in normal life.

The term encounter group was proposed by Carl Rogers, and this name (with a clear emphasis on the principle of encounter) replaced other names for experimental groups. Furthermore, the third influential force in psychology (was the third wave of psychological approach after Freudian psychoanalytic analysis and Skinner's behavioral psychology) emphasizing the holistic and human concept of

the individual, formed the seed of encounter groups from another aspect. Psychologists like Maslow, Allport, Fromm, Rumi, Rogers, and others opposed the mechanical model of behaviorism and deterministic analytic theory. Emphasizing conscience, will, decision, responsibility, concern for the tragic dimensions of existence, and other dimensions that have been meaningful and sometimes original in these approaches, groups with broader goals - the overall progress of the individual - they made progress on the path to "individual integrity." This perspective stressed the normality of pain and suffering and that everyone is sick. Indeed, the disease is an inhumane way to escape technocracy, and treatment is a return to the basic problems of the human state.⁸ These psychologists considered the encounter groups as the means of treatment as and believed that it was the approach to replace the medical model for the mentally ill patients. Encounter group leaders insisted that their group members should have therapeutic experience and that there were no real differences between personal growth and psychotherapy. The leaders of these groups transferred not only knowledge but also skills, and expected the group members to learn how to diagnose and resolve interpersonal problems. The goals of this group therapy were a change in behavior, attitudes, values, lifestyle, relationships with others, environment and self, and finally self-actualization.

Marathon groups

The term marathon groups was coined by Dr. Fred Stoller in his first different group experience in the summer of 1963 that turned into a popular social phenomenon in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s. However, to understand acceptability and even at some point turning this group therapy model into a trend, there is the need for a sociological study of the time in the United States, which is beyond the scope of the paper. However, the kind of view of some experts and promoters who believed in this method is interesting and justifies the huge movement of these groups. George Bach⁹ announced at a 1967 seminar for American psychologists that the most direct, effective, and economical antidote to mental health damage in his day, which included elimination and alienation, became meaningless in life, and gained the gaps created by the character fragmentation and that is the marathon groups. Moreover, Bach claimed that when every teenager could take part in a marathon, there would be no place called a juvenile correctional facility, and when every adult could take part in a marathon, we would no longer see any war in the world. Interestingly, these claims were made not only for all mental illnesses but for all social problems. Betsy Mintz - the famous New York psychologist of the time who wrote the first book on marathon groups in 1971 - considered encountered groups

⁷ Lewin's three-step change model: although it is written in the field of management and business, our discussion is interesting in line with the group therapy stages. This model refers to the three stages of melting: freezing, change, and re-freezing.

⁸ Compare this view with the view that people hide all the pain and suffering they experience behind the mask of their work and social adequacy to escape the disease name, and it was discussed in the T-groups section. This is the concept that Foucault tried to express:

Naming in human societies (constructs), like disease, are not just a name and evokes a network of meanings and valuations determined by the dominant discourse of societies and their ignorant users.

⁹ Fred Stoller (known as the father of marathon groups) and George Bach were the psychologists who created the most scientific experiments, lectures, and scientific papers on marathon groups during the 1960s and 1970s.

as the greatest human social achievement, and considered marathon groups as the best among these groups ^[4].

As the name shows, marathon group therapy is a long and continuous marathon-like process of group psychotherapy, happening at the same time - place 18, 24, 36 or 72 hours - depending on the goals of the group. What is the obvious difference between these groups in performance is the time-space issue at first glance. There are no specific standards for the location of the marathon group therapy and it is held with a very high variety. As Norman G. Dinges states in his book, the venue used can be from a completely empty environment with no facilities (like a prison) to a luxury beachfront location. [However, this diversity was assumed at the time of writing the book, but in fact there are periods from the 1980s and 1990s in the United States that was being held the luxury way on cruise ships]. Nonetheless, what Dinges emphasizes is usually heeded in both holding the courses regarding the place. Holding in an atmosphere away from the inconvenience caused by others, and a quiet and hassle-free environment with minimal external environmental stimuli is intended for group members to spend time together. Dinges' major emphasis on location is that the courses should take place preferably at home or where it is arranged to live rather than the office or counseling office or other places arranged for work ^[5]. Concerning temporal theorem, in the early models, these group therapies were performed in a non-stop time except for food and toilet and was even held without participants' permission to sleep. Over time, designing longer courses, usually the group together in a specific place, without interacting with people outside the group and their daily issues, they had a specific time to rest. Since the early 1980s, most of these courses have continued as weekends (or holidays) as 2 or 3-day courses with similar conditions.

We investigate the reason for the special function of holding a group in the form of a marathon according to Bach and scientific experience: a one-hour to two-hour therapy session is very little time for clients and therapists who want to remove their social mask and replace everyday familiar games ^[6]. Indeed, in modern (civilized) society, people practice daily in the context of the dominant discourse of society to align themselves with the commitments of society and what society calls success. Thus, to experience true freedom from those external roles and the internal defense systems that initiates and maintain these roles and to abandon defenses (even temporarily), one needs continuous and more time. Clinical results of experiments show that group-pressure is very effective and time-facilitating (accelerating), setting aside manipulating behaviors and sending the person at the heart of the actual behaviors and saying the real word in question, compared to any kind of clinical two-person interaction between client and therapist ^[6].

Marathon courses have been held in very different forms based on the goals of the group. We identify five common features of these groups from Weigel's analytical paper. We will examine the latest paper available that summarized the core features common to the marathon groups:¹⁰

1. Holding as an encounter group, but with a time of more than 80 or 90 minutes for each session up to 12 hours and the duration of the course continuously from one to 3 days: During this course, the group is placed in separate places from daily life and other people so that the presence and actions of people who have not participated in group therapy do not affect their experience. This time is applied intensively to the participants, so that they have not slept at all or at least rested
2. The focus is on the here and now. This means what matters is the experience of the members at that time whether it is the result of a narrative from the distant past, or whether created in the same group
3. Number of people 8 to 15 [However, this number was written by Weigel with a greater focus on the experiences and papers of Stoller and Bach. Nevertheless, in the same years of the 70's, based on the goals of different groups, designing of programs is seen in a completely variable number. Example of a famous psychologist and stylist - Virginia Satir - in the same years formed a course with 51 people, and soon after courses were also designed in the early 80's, for 100 to 200 people]
4. Planning is such that most of the time is spent on encounter (people's encounter with themselves and others. This encounter is more about showing (expressing) people's feelings, giving and receiving direct interpersonal feedback.
5. Marathon group therapy creates a space for participants to mesh in perfectly with themselves and the rest of the group, and the members experience then intimacy and solidarity, which is the result of insight and breakthroughs in habits that are less possible than other groups. The whole of these factors usually brings about Euphoria for the participants and the experience of feeling good about themselves.

Large-scale marathon groups

Marathon groups are divided into two groups based on structure. Structure-free groups usually formed with a small number of people (8 to 14 people). In these groups, given the five principles stated, the space of encounter between people goes on without a pre-determined plan and completely based on creative experiences. In these groups, Bach emphasizes a certain range for the number of people, as he argues that for groups of more than 14 people, it is difficult for people to face each other properly, subgroups and situations arise that is not constructive. Moreover, does it allow for less than 8 people to face the minimum possible encounter and create the necessary conditions. We do not intend to address this model

¹⁰ In his marathon paper - "Intensive Exercise in Intimate Relationships: The Ten Marathon Commandments. "Richard Bach explains Ten Principles in detail. See source 6 for more information

of marathon groups, which is known as Traditionally Sized Marathon Group, and we will just introduce it.

The other groups in the marathon model are structured 2, meaning that is, for every day and each part of each course day; phases and processes are predetermined and individuals build their experiences and those of the group within this framework. This marathon group therapy model can be held with various numbers and much more than the previous model, depending on the goals and design of the group (as already stated, there are up to 200 people in the literature). This marathon group therapy model is known as 3 Large Group Awareness Training (LGATs) and our purpose in the paper is to examine the effects of this particular marathon group on individuals.

Part 2: Examining the effects of LGAT groups on the development of the participants

What is effectiveness? When we talk about the effectiveness of an intervention, what phenomenon are we actually dealing with? One must first pay attention to the intervention paradigms to evaluate the effectiveness in the context of that intervention to have a clear answer. For instance, some common interventions in psychology, associated with the type of medical view of the psyche, examine the clients based on the pathological symptoms and then diagnose a disorder (or signs of the disorder) based on available scientific references (DSM-5 / ICD-11). The focus of the intervention is then determined by focusing on the approach of the psychologist (or psychiatrist). It should be psychological, and lead to the effectiveness of changes in the morbidity of the disease, whether it reduces the patient's pain or suffering or life-disruptive behaviors. Intervention and effectiveness usually bring a process to the attention of the public, although this type of view, as we have already briefly explained, is approached by humanistic, existential, holistic, integrated and positive psychological approaches. This has been challenged, and in these approaches, welfare discourse usually replaces treatment discourse, and intervention paradigms, which vary according to different approaches, redefine the expectation of effective mental health (dealing with anxiety) basic life, personality integrity, self - fulfillment, and so on.

In evaluating the effectiveness of group interventions (LGATs), in spite of the similarities we keep in the welfare discourse with health paradigms - because of the common theoretical underpinnings in this model and especially humanistic and existential approaches - we must consider a clear distance with these approaches and the type of measurement of their effectiveness. I know the reason for this distance in the definition of the consensus of science. In the middle of the twentieth century, given the culmination of scientific findings and the expansion of the effect of knowledge, Karl Popper, the English philosopher, provided a definition of science that is still cited in academic

communities. Indeed, to prevent the misuse of the word science - what had become a great tool of the power discourse in the world community a century ago with the rise of scientific results and the spread of the effect of knowledge - Popper defined scientific trends with the main condition of falsification. It is clear that the condition for the falsification of a theory is its ability to be tested. Thus, testability and falsifiability turned into the main scientific conditions and parameters of reading theories and methods known as science. This kind of view clearly covered many areas of psychology, with no tools to measure and test them directly, took them out of the realm of science and called them pseudoscience. For instance, psychoanalytic (Freudian, Adlerian, Jungian, Jungian and so on) approaches are among the most famous areas of pseudoscience. However, to the author, this naming does not reduce the validity of these approaches at all, but only reflects the limited scope of Popper's science and the weakness of current scientific tools in examining theories at the mental level.¹¹ However, in this paper, we do not want to review the methodologies and critique them, but we need to create clarity in the meanings of the words for transparency in the discussion of effectiveness and to know exactly what we are going to examine.

We return to the main question. Are marathon group therapy courses effective? If so, how much is their effectiveness and in what areas of a person's life? There have been many unscientific claims (Popper's science) about this from the very beginning. Remember what Stoller and Bach claimed from the beginning about the comprehensiveness of the effectiveness of courses: "finding a chemical for all pain, from the mental to the community levels"^[4]. The research literature also makes many claims about the effectiveness of these courses: 90% of the members of the marathon group considered this meeting as one of the most important and meaningful life experiences (Bach 1968 quoted by Yalom, 2017)^[3], 80% of the participants changed a lot as a result of one course (Stoller 1968, quoted by Yalom 2017)^[3]. Marathon method is the only factor of change, it provides learning and adaptation to new patterns of behavior, which was impossible with previous therapeutic patterns (Stoller 1968 quoted by Yalom 2017)^[3]. Marathon group therapy shows a shortcut to psychotherapy (Rachmann 1969 quoted by Yalom, 2017)^[3]. Moreover, in receiving initial feedback from course participants after the end of the program and in programs called final celebrations, we come across many phrases like fundamental changes, finding self, being born again, and so on. It is clear that the claims of the organizers and the feedback of the participants express what they are experiencing subjectively that can be examined. However, to argue effectively about effectiveness, we need methods that are more objective. Yalom states that statements like the above quotations are generally based on reports obtained from various participants and on the basis of questionnaires distributed among them shortly after the end of the session

¹¹ There are 5 other definitions of knowledge. For instance, to Thomas Kuhn, what is the subject of scientists' work is called knowledge even if it is the product of the paradigms of the time and has not been tested.

and an invalid approach for evaluation. This is because at no other time is the therapist as loyal and less objective about the group as the end time of the treatment. At this time, the client only remembers and expresses his / her positive and gentle feelings. It is not possible to express negative feelings about the group for two reasons: 1) the end of the group puts a lot of pressure on the participant, so the group members cannot express their views. As S. Asch shows in his paper "The effects of group pressure on judgment and opinion," few participants can express their objectivity despite group unity. 2) They refuse to express negative feelings to the group to avoid cognitive dissonance. In other words, as soon as a person spends a lot of time and emotions and feels positive about other members of the group, it can be difficult to value activities and question the group. If he does so, the person will enter an unpleasant phase of inconsistency^[3]. Weigel has some interesting research experience in this area. In his paper, he describes how, from an early age, he became interested in this through the conferences given at the American Psychological Association by Stoller and Bach, and had both the experience of attending courses and a few years of experience has collaborated as a course organizer. Then, for more than 20 years, he turned to other academic fields, and when he decided to re-examine the approaches and scientific results produced in the marathon research literature, he encountered almost nothing, as he promised^[4]. It is this empty space, in my view, that stems from the limitations of Popper's field of science and the weakness of current scientific research methods, eliminating the possibility of continuing the scientific study of what he generally calls pseudoscience.

Here, creating a transparent state and smart I think, occurs by the promoters of some LGATs, and that is to separate themselves from scientific and quasi-scientific models called the ontological approach. This approach has serious roots in existential philosophy and deals with humans and their communication issues (including intrapersonal, interpersonal and transcendental models) from different angles to regulate the motor of thought-feeling-human action. According to Mirhashemi,¹² humans are not machines (or robots) of totality that we can program and set up once and for all (or at least for a while) and then use forever. Rather, to be whole, humans need intentionality, observant and present about their circumstances, (thoughts and sensibilities) and their actions, and be able to choose being in line with their life intention (their personal mission) in harmony with their purpose in life (Paraphrase).

Such a view of human and his growth process is wonderful and gives us the clue to the parameters of development change. In conclusion, we do not have a clear and scientific process to determine the overall effectiveness of participating

in courses (with conventional scientific definitions). Thus, the effectiveness of these courses is defined equivalent to transformation (promotion, development and progress in the human field) a process to increase the ability instead of eliminating one's morbid symptoms, we emphasize the existential aspects of the individual with this clarity, we enter into scientific studies that focus on certain aspects.

After searching some papers and books, I found Yalom's reviews and tests in terms of effectiveness as the best. Yalom acknowledges the limitations of his method before reviewing the results of his experiments: the effectiveness of such courses is not measurable at all in laboratory spaces. Generally, we do not have an isolated space to consider the input of the system as the participants, the only effective variables as the marathon treatment group, and then the output of the system as the graduates of this group. Moreover, there is no guarantee that other effective variables will not affect participants until the follow-up. Indeed, in these studies, the main parameter of laboratory research, controlling variables, is not possible. Aware of this, Yalom has performed the tests as accurately as possible, and I will have the results of the Yalom test on both the effectiveness and the parameters Yalom has examined the highest possibility of effectiveness.

Effectiveness

The most controlled study of the effect of groups that changed personality and behavior was conducted by Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles in 1973^[3]. The participants in this study were 210 undergraduate students at the University of Oxford. This choice, of course, raises doubts about the generalizability of the test results in its time, but it is more in line with what we have today in LGAT groups regarding normal and successful people. The results of the evaluations were evaluated in three stages: before the start of the group work, immediately after its completion and 6 months after the end of the group work. In the preliminary results, in line with the level of public satisfaction experienced over the years¹³ of the marathon groups, satisfaction and effectiveness estimates are very high. Of the total population, 65% rated their experience as pleasant, 78% as constructive, and 61% as good. The interesting point is that more than 90% said that encounter groups should be a regular part of the university curriculum. It is important to note that among those who experienced positive change, maintaining change was very high: 75% of those who had changed had maintained that change for at least six months^[3].

The factors affecting the increase of effectiveness

We look at two basic perspectives in discussing how to increase the effectiveness of the course: the discussion of

¹² Dr. Fereshteh Mirhashemi is the creator of the integrated-based vision and the first designer of LGATs courses in Iran. By participating in similar courses in the United States and then localizing courses for Iranian culture (method-based), she has made the experience of participating in courses since 1992 in Iran possible.

¹³ A review of the research literature on the effectiveness of different types of marathon groups is beyond the scope of this paper. If interested, see Kilman 1976: *The marathon encounter group: A review of the outcome literature*.

effective leadership and the discussion of effective activities in the course.

Leadership

In group therapy, the person who leads the group is called the group therapist. In marathon groups, the term leadership is used for group management and the term leader (or coach) is used for group therapy. It is important to pay attention to this term, as it removes the burden of therapy from the group leader. A group that is not primarily concerned with the conventional concepts of therapy, and secondly in which the leaders may not be a therapists at all, but a life coach or a psychologist trained to lead specific groups. However, the role of the group leader in the results is critical almost confirmed by most studies. For instance, Yalom et al., stated earlier in this section, tested 10 models of the experimental group with different approaches of their time (groups like traditional T-group, encounter group, individual growth group, Gestalt group, marathon group, and so on). The interesting result was that no significant differences were found in the effectiveness of any of the ten models over the other, but significant differences were found in the effectiveness of group leadership. Yalom concluded that the leaders' behavior is not predictable from their membership in a particular ideological school, yet the performance of a group is largely the result of the group leader's behavior. In this study, in a factor analysis, performed on a large number of variables of the leader's behavior, identified four main and important functions of leadership. It should be noted that at the same time there are theoretical and ideological differences in each school and different group trends. According to the common principles, it has created the principles of factor analysis and made it possible to extract the results. These four main functions are as follows:

1. Emotional activity: to fight encounter, to be a role model with personal risk-taking and high self-disclosure
2. Compassionate empathy: support, love, warmth, acceptance, honesty, showing interest
3. Sense making: explaining, clarifying, interpreting, creating a cognitive framework for changing and translating emotions and experiences into concepts
4. Executive function: considering limitations, enforcing rules and norms, guiding towards goals, scheduling work speed, advancing trends in these 4 cases, items 2 and 3 have a strong relationship with the positive results of the group. In other words, the more compassionate and meaningful empathy, the more positive the results will be. Nevertheless, two other functions - items 1 and 4 - had a curved relationship with the result: too much or too little behavior by the leader has less positive results. Thus, the most successful leaders were those who, in terms of executive function and emotional activity, had mediocre practices and were at a high level in terms of compassion and meaning. The relationship between meaningfulness and compassionate empathy is highly significant: none of them, in groups, alone was enough to create success. Creating emotional and cognitive motivation together increases group productivity.

According to Yalom, Rogers's factors on empathy, honesty, respect, and positive and unconditional attention seem incomplete, and the leader must add cognitive function to the group ^[3]. The importance of meaning was a finding that initially based on encounter groups having anti-mental characteristics, and seemed unexpected. Nevertheless, when group members were asked at the end of the study to explain the most important event of the meetings and why it was important, it was found that members who gained something from the experience were more likely to report events that involved cognitive coherence. This led to a re-formulation of encounter groups in the same years that could still be important for the marathon groups in question (LGATs). Yalom summarizes these new results for the group leader as follows:

Let us all pour out is better to turn to let us think more about what we mean. Indeed, studies have shown that mere encouragement of the leaders to self-disclose or express emotions, whether positive or negative, is not enough to change in itself.

Expressing anger is fundamental is better to change to there is nothing wrong with venting anger, but it is not the right decision if we do it constantly. Excessive anger review is harmful, is not associated with a high level of learning, and generally increases the risk of increasing negative outcomes. Belief in big wishes needs risk-taking should become the knowledge for leaders that risk is high in encounter groups and has nothing to do with positive achievement. High-risk groups, sometimes causing a lot of damage, do not produce high-level learners, and productive groups are safe groups.

Leaders' motto that you may not know what you have learned now, but later when you think about it, you will find the truth and you will be happy with how much you have learned should change to that you are happy now but it is not clear how you will feel later.

Given the above, group leaders can increase the likelihood of effectiveness in their groups with their effective leadership.

Effective activities

As already stated, LGAT groups are structured groups. This means that predetermined processes and procedures are in the current group. Thus, examining the effective factors in positive change and development can present many solutions for the group. As recent studies have shown that the focus on therapeutic agents is a very useful way for therapists to align their group therapy strategies with their therapeutic goals (Roden et al. 1999 Nuremberg 2000 Morgan et al. 2002 quoted by Yalom, 2017) ^[3] the focus on effective activities is a very useful way for group leaders to coordinate their group leadership strategies to be effective.

In a meta-analysis, Yalom identified the factors affecting effectiveness in the groups and then surveyed the participants

of the 20 successful groups. The conclusion was that in the ten items considered by the subjects as the most useful therapeutic agents, in order of importance, the first seven items show one of the two factors of emotional discharge or insight. This important result gives more credence to the principle we stated in the leadership section: development is a dual process that involves experiencing and reflecting that experience.

Emotional catharsis

Emotional catharsis is one of the most valued items in most of the encounter groups. However, Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles show the limitations of mere emotional catharsis. In this study, 210 members of the 30-hour encounter experimental groups were asked to identify the most important event that occurred during the group's time. They mentioned a lot of experience and expression of positive or negative emotions, but this important event had nothing to do with positive consequences for people. Indeed, the members with poor treatment outcomes and those with good treatment outcomes both cited emotional catharsis as an important event. The point is that emotional catharsis had nothing to do with the outcome of the treatment - it was necessary, but not enough. In fact, the members who only mentioned emotional discharge as an important event had experiences that are more negative in the group. Those for whom the group was most helpful typically had both emotional catharsis and cognitive learning. The ability to think about emotional experience is a key component of the development process^[3]. Additionally, in this study, examining the therapeutic factors, the two items that received the most rank were learning how to express emotions and being able to express what bothered. Both of them were more than just an act of emotionally draining. The two showed a sense of liberation and the acquisition of skills for the future. Another item that belonged to the category of emotional catharsis and was selected in a high percentage was the expression of negative and / or positive feelings to another member, showing the role of emotional catharsis in the interpersonal process. Emotional catharsis is known as part of the interpersonal process, and it is in support of Yalom's principle that no one ever benefits from revealing his or her feelings in an empty closet. The only item indicating the purest sense of mere disclosure and the members did not rate was the lightening of the burden that weighed on my heart high. In sum, the free expression of emotions is vital to the group healing process, yet it is only a part of the process and it has to be completed with the help of other elements.

Creating a cognitive structure

Group members usually face problems in integrating their emotions after strong emotional experiences^[7]. This is because the members focus is distracted from here and now - the basic parameter of sense-making to the emotional experience - and often wanders in the past and the feeling of lack or loss. If there is no special attention in the group to create this focus and cognitive structure to give meaning to emotional experiences, the probability of effectiveness and creating an atmosphere of change for the participant will be

very low in line with previous topics. In other words, the deep emotional experience in these groups breaks the emotional establishment of the individual, although the result of non-genuine defense mechanisms and suspends him in his mental space. The individual needs a new structure to establish a new position in a healthy situation, where he can establish his recent experiences in the group. This structure is not shaped on its own and only due to the collapse of previous structures and the role of the group in creating this structure is to provide meanings for individual experiences with a focus on the here and now and creating a cognitive structure that encompasses the whole of the individual experience.

It is necessary to distinguish between cognition leading to development and cognitive traps to complete the discussion of cognition. The cognition that is constructive and the result of which leads the person to development is the cognition discussed in this paper and especially discussed in completing the emotional experience. To understand cognitive traps, one must first recognize the mental need for mental understanding in psychotherapy: the need felt by both the client and the therapist^[3]. Our search for understanding has deep roots. In a paper on motivation, Maslow has suggested that humans have cognitive needs, which are as basic as the need for security, love, and self-esteem (Maslow 1954, quoted by Yalom, 2017)^[3]. He describes this natural human mental process in the healing process as follows: the clients [who came up with the idea from Maslow's point of view] automatically look for understanding too, and therapists who value mental effort join them. All of this seems so natural that we ignore the reason why the client seeks treatment. We must bear in mind that the goal of treatment is change, not self-perception. The desire to understand one is merely an interesting, engaging, and seemingly logical exercise for the therapist and the client. However, there is little evidence that knowing alone leads to change^[3]. Thus, remember, just as emotional catharsis to alienation is useless, understanding "the why's" does not apply to alienation. This mind game can even have bad consequences like mental distress in the past, deterministic orientations and the like, which critics speak of its analytical psychoanalytic approaches. In simpler words, just going for the why's, even if it really has an answer, opens doors for irresponsibility in the client's mind, which is in stark contrast to the development intention.

CONCLUSION

With a glance at the current socio-cultural-economic conditions in Iran, I will finalize the effectiveness of these courses in this section.

Unfortunately, I evaluate the current social conditions of Iran as anomic: a society that has not provided the infrastructure for the transition from the traditional to the modern era is experiencing not only the features of modernism, but also some postmodernism. Under such conditions, people are in the worst possible situation regarding each other. In this situation, holding courses with a focus on group learning and interpersonal relationships seems very effective.

In cultural sphere, I think people in society are not at a level of recognition of the modern world yet: willing to receive professional help to solve their problems. Overall, the belief in knowing the good of oneself and the ability to run things in a personal way and not considering human vulnerabilities put the public at a cultural level where personal referrals to professionals like counselors, life coaches, and so on is made very unlikely. Participating in these groups makes people face their human realities, and the experience of creating the ability to create development by them turns into a purposeful experience. This can be a great start for the individual who is looking for effective solutions.

Economically, a large number of people in the community lack the ability to pay for individual counseling courses, which are sometimes long. In this aspect, group courses can somehow solve this problem for society. In addition, after recognizing their psychological functions, individuals find investing in these aspects of their existence cost-benefit. Finally, with a health-based view, believing in the inner desire of humans to flourish and the ability of individuals to fulfill their desires, I consider LGAT courses - in case of having originality in harmony with its declared mission and

observing effective empirical principles - very effective in the current Iranian community.

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