

Heritage University
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Spring 2025 SOWK 487
Theories of Practice II

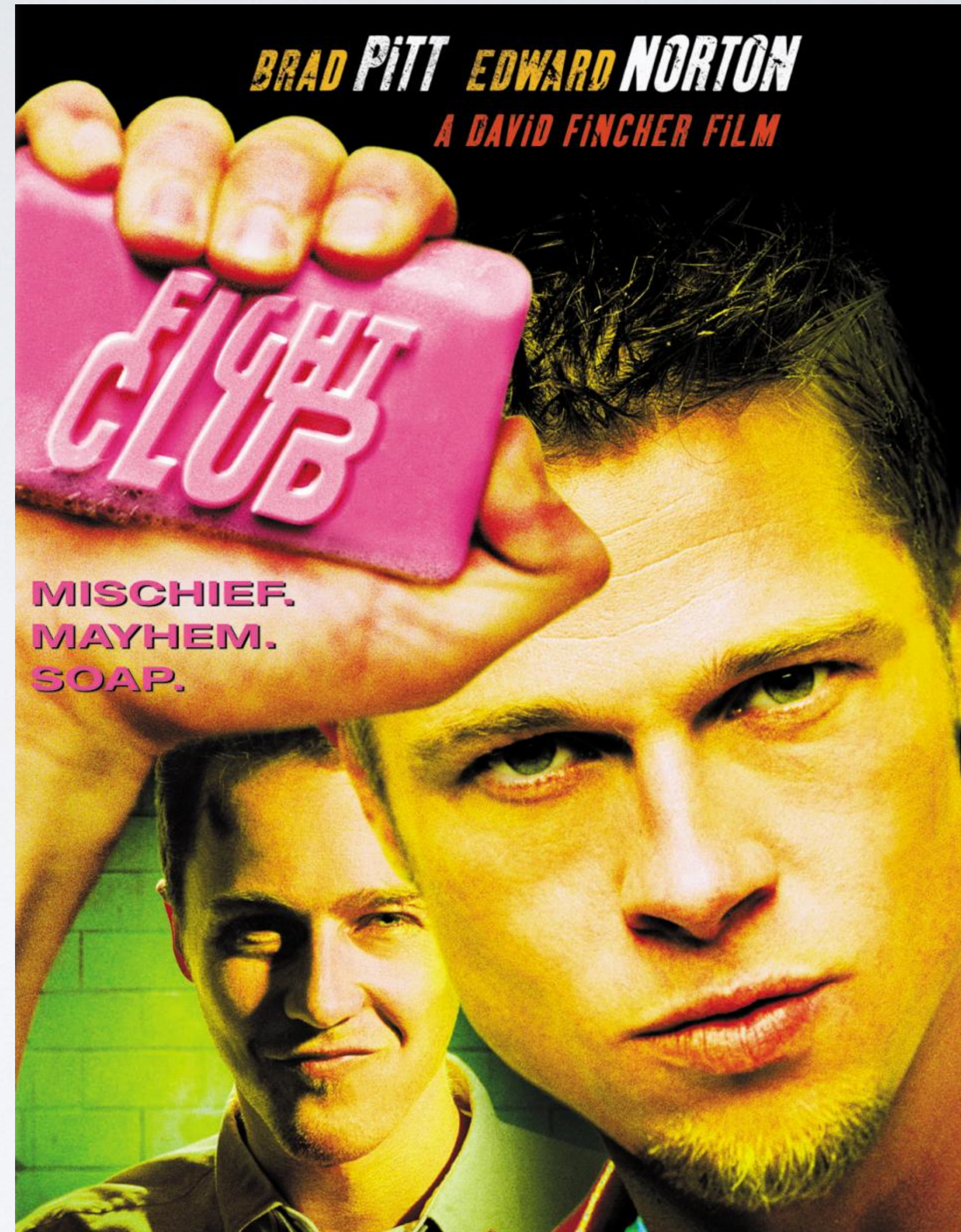
Understanding
**Social Work
Groups**



If you were to describe your day today as an animal, what animal would you it it be today and why?

SOCIAL WORK & GROUPS

What are groups used for in
social work practice?



AGENDA

- Overview of working with groups
- Practice with a development group
- Group dynamics and roles
- Working in a circle activity

WORKING WITH GROUPS

Groups?

A group is a collection of people with shared interests who come together to pursue a goal.

“Nothing truly valuable can be achieved except by the unselfish cooperation of many individuals.”

–Albert Einstein

Benefits of Groups

Mutual assistance
Connecting with others
Testing new behaviors
Goal achievement
Decision making

TYPES OF GROUPS

Treatment Groups

Support groups
Educational groups
Growth groups
Therapy groups
Socialization groups

TYPES OF GROUPS

Treatment Groups

Support groups
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Self-Help Groups

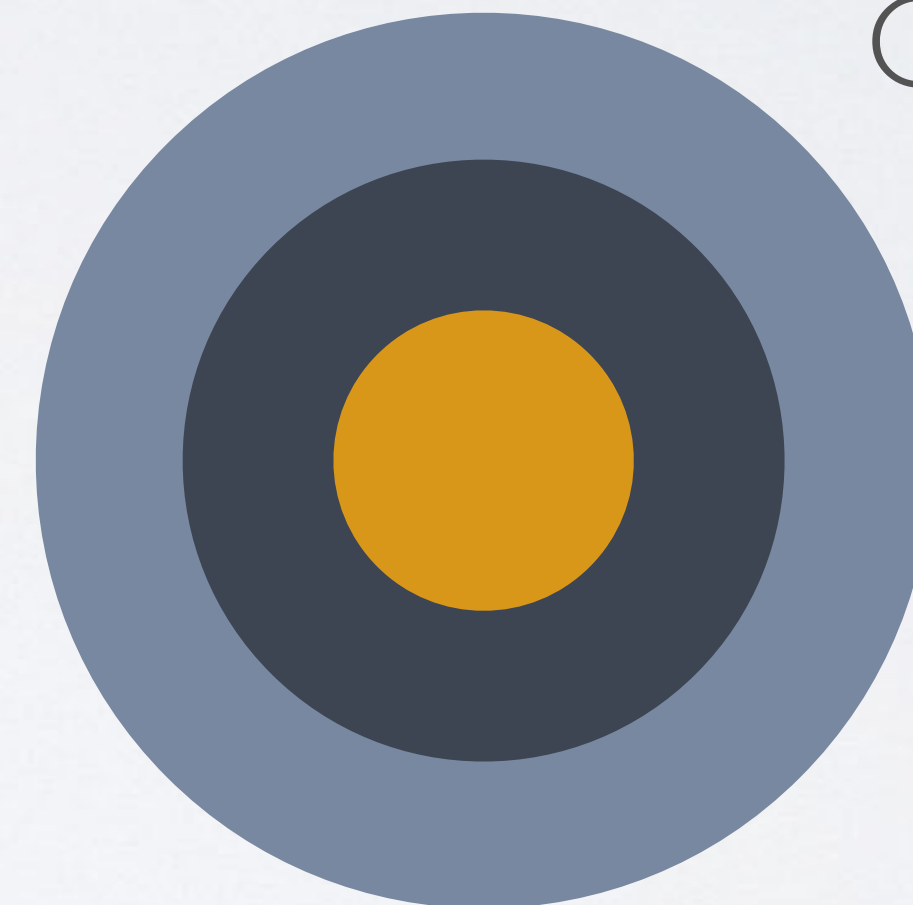
12 Step Groups
Support Groups
Online Self-Help Groups

TYPES OF GROUPS

Treatment Groups

Support groups
Educational groups
Growth groups
Therapy groups
Socialization groups

Task Groups



Community

Organization

Client

TYPES OF GROUPS

Treatment Groups

Support groups
Educational groups
Growth groups
Therapy groups
Socialization groups

Task Groups

Board of Directors
Task Forces
Committees
Commissions
Legislative Bodies
Staff Meetings
Case Conferences
Social Action

GROUP DEMO

Jacob's Group Format

- Review the rules
- Check in question
- Fun engaging activity
- Work on a specific topic or skill



CHARACTERISTICS OF Treatment, Self-Help, and Task Groups

Group Characteristic	Treatment Group	Self-Help Group	Task Group
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- Reason for group formation
- Facilitator
- Group member roles
- Communication patterns
- Procedures
- Group member composition
- Self-disclosure
- Confidentiality
- Evaluation of Success

CHARACTERISTICS OF Treatment, Self-Help, and Task Groups

Group Characteristic	Treatment Group	Self-Help Group	Task Group
Reason for group formation	Members' personal needs	Members' personal needs	Task to be completed
Facilitator	Mental health professional leads the group	Member led; there maybe be no appointed facilitator; a trained peer or group member may facilitate	Led by agency employee

CHARACTERISTICS OF Treatment, Self-Help, and Task Groups

Group Characteristic	Treatment Group	Self-Help Group	Task Group
Group member roles	Develop organically through interaction	Develop organically through interaction	May be assigned, appointed, or develop organically through interaction
Communication patterns	Open, conversational interaction based on members' needs	Open, conversational interaction based on members' needs	Focused on the specific task to be accomplished.

CHARACTERISTICS OF Treatment, Self-Help, and Task Groups

Group Characteristic	Treatment Group	Self-Help Group	Task Group
Procedures	Flexible or formal, depending on the group	Flexible or formal, depending on the group	Set agenda. May be structured by by-laws or Roberts' Rules of Order
Group member composition	Based on members common concerns or presenting problems	Based on members common concerns or presenting problems	Based on positions, needed talents, knowledge, or expertise

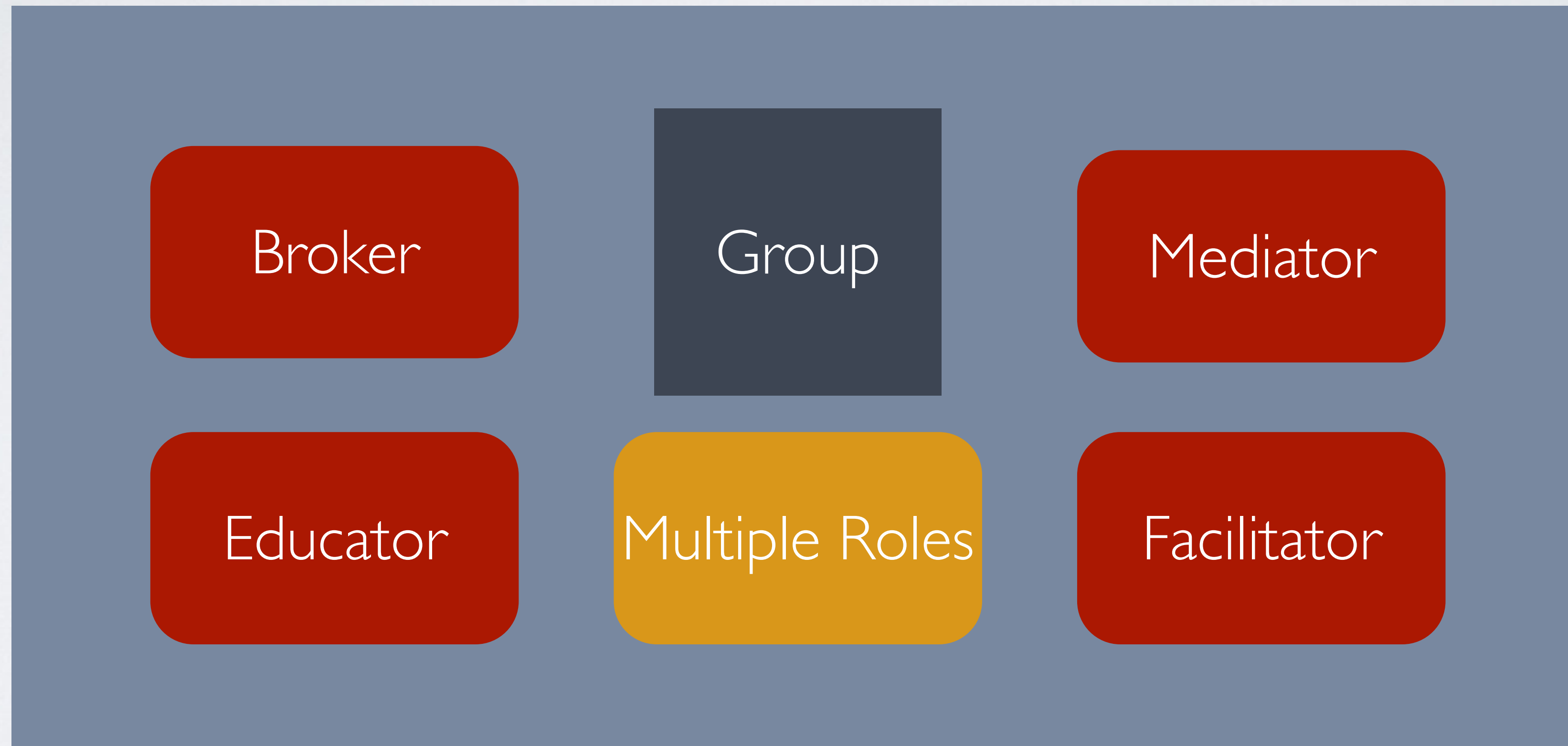
CHARACTERISTICS OF Treatment, Self-Help, and Task Groups

Group Characteristic	Treatment Group	Self-Help Group	Task Group
Self-disclosure	Expected to be high	Expected to be high	Expected to be low
Confidentiality	Group content is generally private and kept within the group	Group content is generally private and kept within the group	Group proceedings may be private but can be open to the public

CHARACTERISTICS OF Treatment, Self-Help, and Task Groups

Group Characteristic	Treatment Group	Self-Help Group	Task Group
Evaluation of success	Based on members' meeting treatment goals	Determined by group members; survival of the group indicates success as member attendance is what keeps the group	Based on accomplishment of task or mandate, or producing a product

PROFESSIONAL ROLES IN GROUPS



GROUP FUNCTIONS & ROLES

Potentially Positive Roles

Information seeker
Opinion seeker
Elaborator
Instructor
Evaluator
Energizer
Recorder



Procedural technician
Harmonizer
Compromiser
Encourager

Follower
Tension reliever
Listener

NEGATIVE AND NONFUNCTIONAL ROLES

Potentially Negative Roles

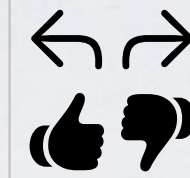
Aggressor
Blocker
Recognition seeker
Dominator
Help seeker
Confessor

Nonfunctional Roles

Scapegoat
Defensive member
Deviant member
Quite member
Internal leader

GROUP BEHAVIOR

Constructive Group Behavior



Problematic Group Behavior

Members openly communicate personal feelings and attitudes and anticipate that other members will be helpful.

Members listen carefully to one another and give all ideas a fair hearing.

Decisions are reached through group consensus after considering everyone's views and feelings.

Members make efforts to incorporate the views of dissenters or less powerful members rather than to dominate or override these views.

Members continue to keep discussions on a superficial level or avoid revealing their feelings and opinions.

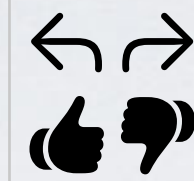
Members are critical and evaluative of each other. They rarely acknowledge or listen to contributions from others.

Dominant members dismiss or bully other members in decision-making

Members make decisions prematurely without identifying or weighing possible alternatives.

GROUP BEHAVIOR

Constructive Group Behavior



Problematic Group Behavior

Members recognize and give feedback regarding others' strengths and growth.

Members are critical of others' differences.

Members use "I" messages to speak for themselves, owning their own feelings and positions on matters.

Members do not personalize their messages but use indirect forms of communication to express their feelings and positions.

The guidelines established in initial sessions become norms.

Members act in distracting or disruptive ways.

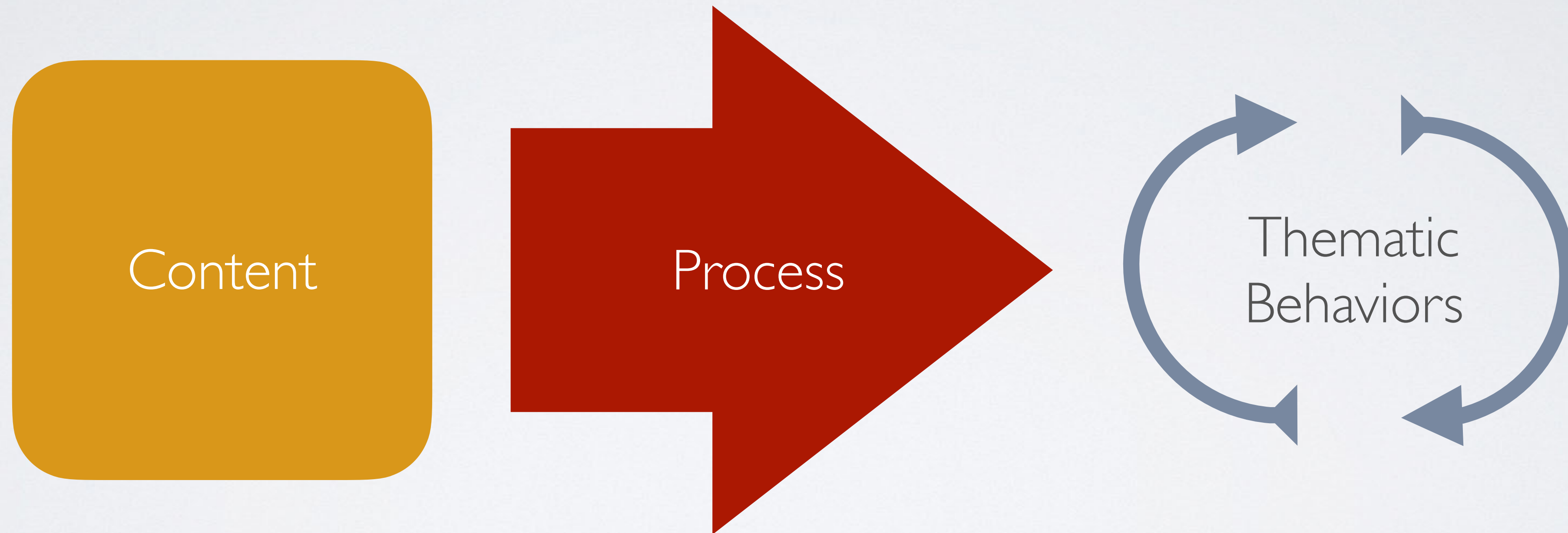
The group works out problems that impair group functioning.

Members avoid talking about the here and now or addressing personal or group problems.

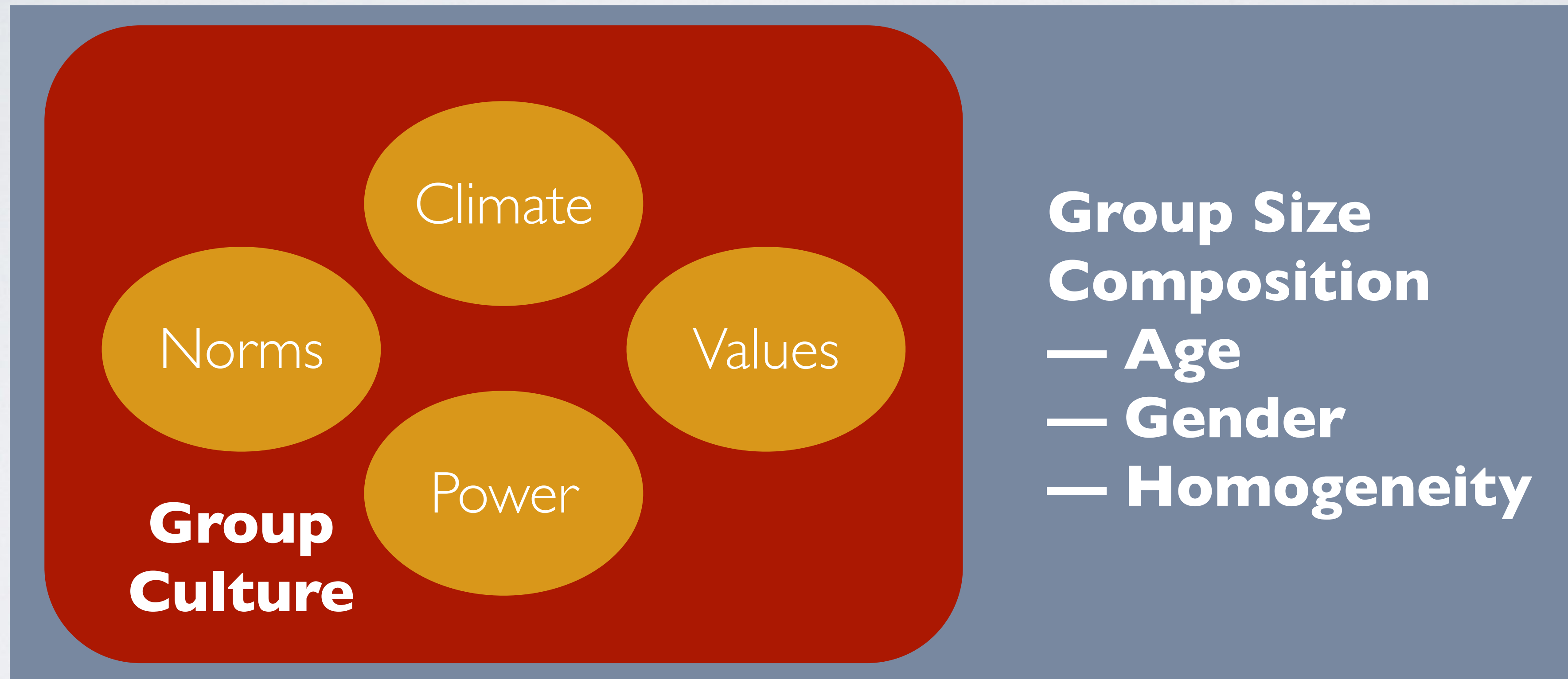
Members are attuned to the needs and feelings of others and give emotional support.

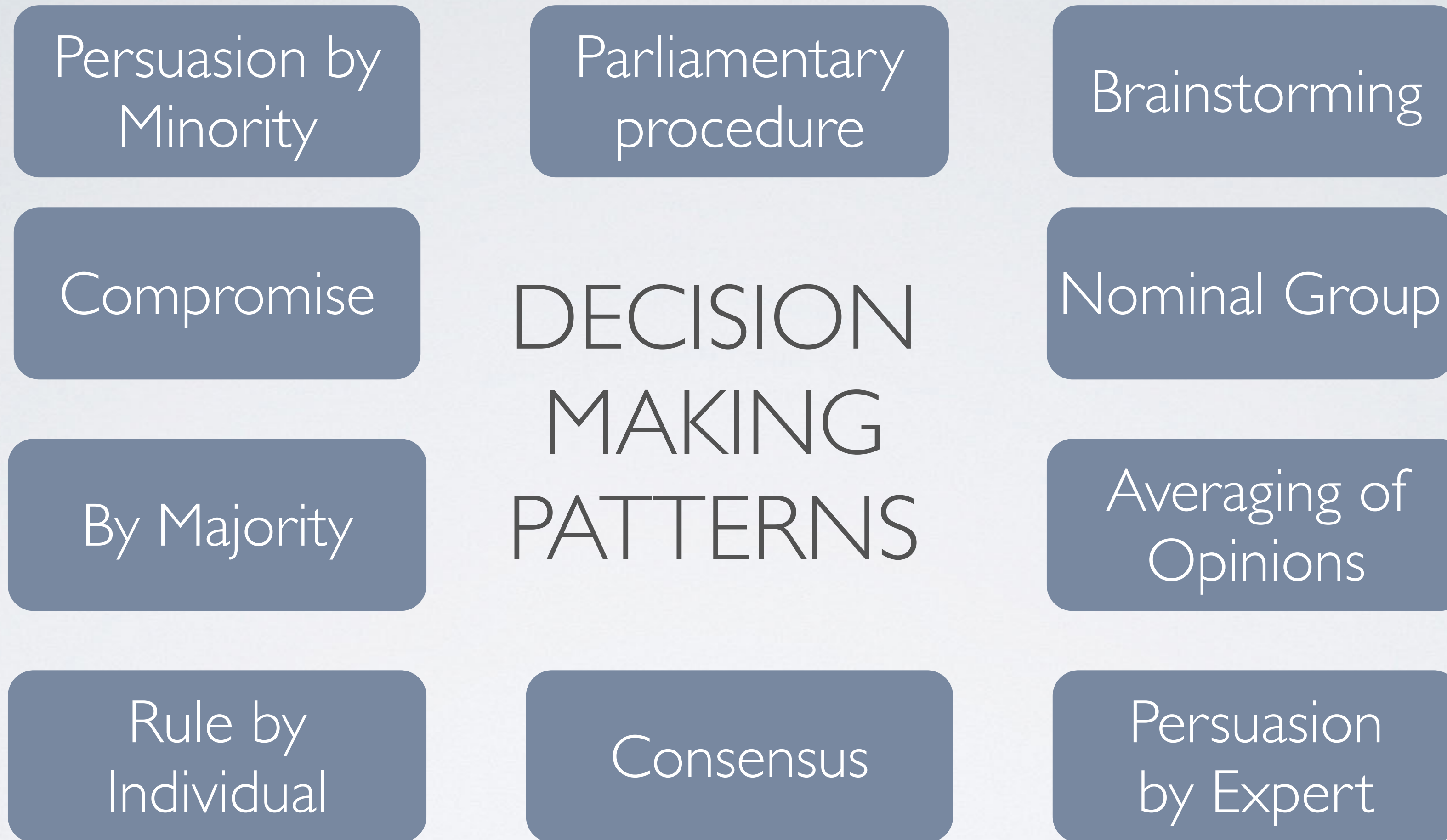
Members show little awareness of the needs and feelings of others; emotional investment in others is limited.

ASSESSING INDIVIDUALS' PATTERNED BEHAVIORS

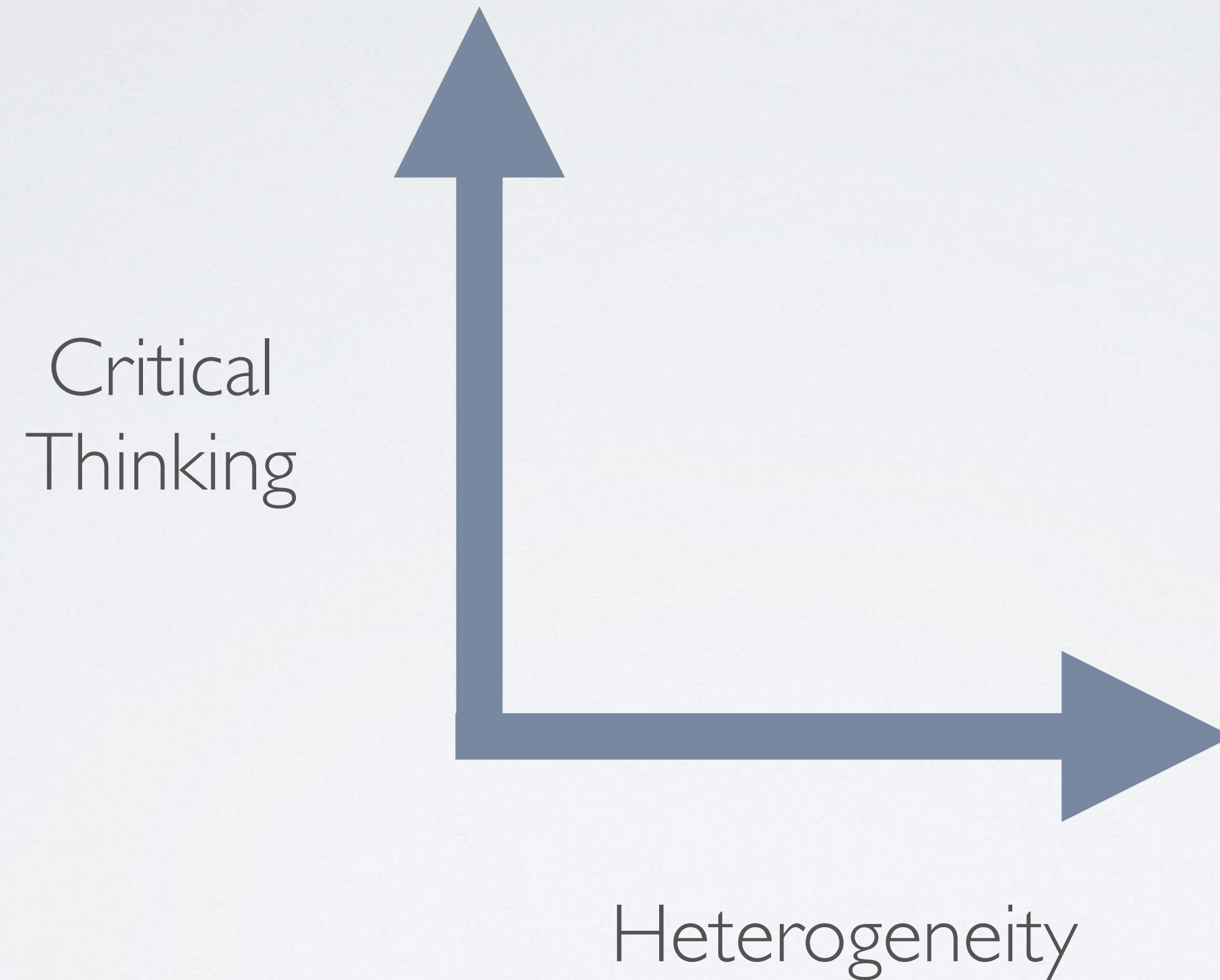


GROUP DYNAMICS AND COMPOSITION





CRITICAL THINKING AND GROUPS



CIRCLE GROUP

Following at Restorative Justice Model

- **Respect the talking piece:** everyone listens, everyone has a turn
- **Speak from the heart:** your truth, your perspectives, your experiences
- **Listen from the heart:** Let go of stories that make it hard to hear each other
- **Trust that you know what to say:** no need to rehearse: no need to rehearse
- **Say just enough:** without feeling rushed, be concise and considerate of the time of others



STUDYING AND COLLEGE LIFE

What have been some difficult aspects of college so far and how have you managed?



If you could have given yourself a piece of advice your first year of college, what would it have been?

How do you study, and what do you do when you study?