



# GROUP WORK INTENSIVE AUCKLAND

An experiential workshop for everyone who  
leads or aspires to lead a group or team

**Led by Craig Whisker, PhD**

Certificated Psychodramatist & Educator (AANZPA)

**22 – 25 July 2025, 9am – 5pm daily**

Hou Mana Wai Mercy Wellsprings, Epsom, Auckland

**Your Investment: \$890 (no GST)**

**Online Registration: [CLICK HERE](#)**

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## Group Work Leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand Today

Group work is increasingly the most cost-effective means of providing services for New Zealanders seeking help from government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and private practices. Popular evidence-based modalities have been manualised and modularised to enable a wide variety of practitioners to deliver Cognitive-Behavioural Group Therapy (CBGT), Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), Mentalisation-Based Group Therapy (MBT-G), Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), and Substance Use Disorder Group Therapy, among others. These developments offer hope that the escalating demand for services will be able to be met, now and in the future.

Yet, the breadth and depth of roles and skills required for a group work leader to be effective in the variety of possible situations they might meet in a group or team goes beyond those generally acquired when learning manualised group leadership programmes. Group leaders must be able to assess and respond appropriately to group dynamics as they arise in the 'here and now'. This is where the human factor is required, and while this seemingly comes naturally to some group work leaders, the vast majority will need further personal and professional development to fully grasp the subtleties of working with the "basic assumptions" (Bion, 1964) of dependency, flight–fight, and pairing that affect all groups or teams. In this respect, a new group culture is required, one built on creativity and collaboration in the pursuit of each group member's unique life purpose.

This experiential workshop offers everyone who leads or aspires to lead a group or team the opportunity to engage in intensive personal and professional development over a 4-day period. Participants meet as a group led by Craig Whisker for 4 x 1.5-hour sessions per day, 16 sessions in total, to explore the particular purposes and goals that they identify and come to the workshop to achieve. This process involves self-presentation, interaction, teaching, coaching, supervised practice, making assessments, creating effective interventions, reviewing transcriptions of previous sessions, and involvement in each other's learning. No previous group work leadership experience is necessary.

### Audio Recording of Group Sessions

Each group session is audio recorded to gain a record of what occurs in case we want to refer back to particular moments in the group's work. At the end of each day, the group leader transcribes a few minutes of group work from that day and we discuss the resulting transcription during the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the following day. The transcription provides a useful medium for reviewing previous work, teaching, and deepening reflection. The group leader is also a practitioner researcher who writes and publishes on his practice of group work and the audio recordings may also be used for these purposes on the proviso that participants' anonymity is maintained and participants have the right to review, edit, or veto any relevant content prior to publication. Audio recordings are securely stored and are not used for other purposes. Participants are asked to sign an informed consent form when registering.

**Craig Whisker** is a Certificated Educator and Psychodramatist with the Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand Psychodrama Association, a Practitioner, Supervisor, and Apprentice Trainer with the British Psychodrama Association, and a member of the UK Council for Psychotherapists. His first experience of leading a group was in 1989 with nonoffending fathers of sexually abused children. He went on to be trained and supervised in group work by Max Clayton from 2000-2012. Craig currently lives in the UK and teaches on the Master of Psychotherapy programme at Warwick University where he leads personal development groups for students each week.

