

Group Therapy on the Edge: Adolescence, Creativity & the Anti-Group  
Craig Haen, MA, RDT, CGP, LCAT

*Assistant Clinical Director, Andrus; Yonkers NY*

*Private Practice; White Plains, NY*

*Adjunct Faculty, Drama Therapy Graduate Program; New York University*

Group therapy has long been considered optimal treatment for adolescents. However, therapists in these groups can feel as though they are working “on the edge”: of a coup occurring, of being rendered defenseless and disempowered, or of being tongue-tied. This workshop will examine current advances in adolescent neuroscience and group theory that help to illuminate the challenges of conducting treatment with teenagers. Participants will learn effective approaches to adolescent group therapy in which the experiential activities are utilized as tools for distance, containment, safe interpersonal engagement, and anchoring. Special focus will be given to engaging resistance and avoiding countertransference pitfalls.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will learn three techniques for engaging adolescent group members.
2. Participants will be able to name three consequences of immature frontal lobe development for adolescents.
3. Participants will identify three roles that adolescents frequently take on during the process of a group.