

Psychotherapy Guidebook

# C1 C2 PROJECT PSYCHOTHERAPY

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# **C1C2 Project Psychotherapy**

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# C1C2 Project Psychotherapy

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## DEFINITION

C1C2 projects aim to provide peer support and “counseling” on a one-to-one basis. They are based on the premise that many women go to psychiatrists and psychotherapists because it is helpful at times to talk about one’s self, one’s decisions, and one’s troubles to a person who is committed to focusing attention on you, but who is not a close friend or member of your family. Respectful attention without interpretation or analysis, without fear of challenge or interruption is helpful when trouble strikes or when decisions must be made.

No distinction is made between those who provide assistance and those who receive it (in fact, we tossed a coin). “C1” is the person focused on (counselee) and “C2” is the listener in a given session (counselor). A person could be a C2 one day and in need of a C2 another day.

## HISTORY

In recent years women have found their experiences in small group

sessions to effect profound and positive changes in their lives. For many, it may have been the first time that they were listened to both respectfully and attentively. In the nonjudgmental and unhurried atmosphere of the consciousness-raising session, women discovered again and again that what they had perceived as personal, even neurotic, problems were, in fact, the inevitable result of living in a sexist society. As the society was understood through the testimonies of group participants, a commonality of oppressions emerged. Thus, individual guilt and social isolation were replaced by concepts of political solution and the experience of sisterhood.

The focus in consciousness-raising, therefore, is primarily on individual problems as they relate to the comprehension of a society in which women are regarded as second-class citizens. Careful detailing of individual situations is an essential aspect of this process. However, when an individual demands and elicits response in the form of advice and evaluation, there may develop negative consequences both to the consciousness-raising experience and to interpersonal relationships within the group.

The guidelines for consciousness-raising and C1C2 are very similar. In both, respectful attention and freedom from challenge, criticism, and interpretation are fundamental. C1C2 is a one-to-one relationship in which C1 has the opportunity to dwell at length on the minute details of her situation.

## TECHNIQUE

The following guidelines constitute basic training for the role of C2:

1. Listen attentively and respectfully. Try to understand the situation from C1's point of view. Your goal is to help her decide what she really wants to do.
2. Do not give advice.
3. Do not be dishonest, but also do not feel obliged to express all your reactions and feelings. Your opinions are best left unsaid, especially if they are negative or critical. You do not use the methods of encounter groups.
4. Respecting C1 means accepting her at face value. It means hearing what she said, not what you think she meant. Assume that she makes sense and that if you do not understand, you are the one with the problem. Listen harder.
5. Exert no pressure on C1 — not even subtle pressure. Be careful that questions of clarification never sound like criticisms or attacks.
6. Do not feel obliged to do anything. A sympathetic ear has great value in itself.
7. Freely give any information that you happen to have that may be useful to C1, or try to help her secure that information. You might want to collect a file containing information about available community services, but be careful that giving

information is not done in such a way that it sounds like giving advice.

Self-management procedures may also be taught (Tennov, 1977) if C1 is interested in them.

## **APPLICATIONS**

Although designed as a self-help service for women, C1C2 procedures are applicable over a wide range of situations. The crucial concept is the acceptance of C1 at face value, as opposed to interpretation, especially psychoanalytic interpretation. The procedures are designed for use by parents, educators, and members of the clergy, as well as by those employed by an organized C1C2 group.

In the years since the C1C2 procedures were first presented, various groups have come into existence across the country. The major problem encountered was at the structural/financial level. It is recommended that the C2 be provided with compensation at a skilled clerical level. The purpose and value of a C1C2 project is to make the service available at low cost. It is based on the findings of outcome research, which suggest that training for psychotherapists is unrelated to effectiveness (Tennov, 1976).