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# Gestalt Group Psychotherapy With Incarcerated Schizophrenia: A Qualitative Study

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LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY  
School of Science and Technology  
in conjunction with the  
Department of Psychology

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Gestalt Group Psychotherapy With Incarcerated Schizophrenia: A Qualitative Study

by

Leslie Ann V. Dobson, M.S., M.A.

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A Project submitted in partial satisfaction of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology

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June 2012

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Each person whose signature appears below certifies that this dissertation in his opinion is adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree Doctor of Psychology.

\_\_\_\_\_, Chairperson  
Todd D. Burley, Clinical Professor of Psychology

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Haerich, Professor of Psychology

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## ABSTRACT

Gestalt Group Psychotherapy for Incarcerated Schizophrenia:  
A Qualitative Study

by

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Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California, 2012  
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In the U.S., the number of inmates diagnosed with schizophrenia is approximately four times greater than that found in the general population. Alarming, these inmates rarely receive the mental health treatment they need. Previous studies have suggested that Gestalt therapy can have beneficial affects for inmates. However, further research examining treatment models for inmates diagnosed with schizophrenia is needed. This current study examined qualitative data from a proposed Gestalt group therapy treatment model for incarcerated schizophrenia. Results from modified analytic induction demonstrated increased levels of participation, autonomy, interpersonal skills, information seeking and a reduction in psychotic symptoms. This study also provided novel insight regarding treatment methods, phases of treatment, and therapist characteristics as the humanity of the schizophrenic experience emerged.