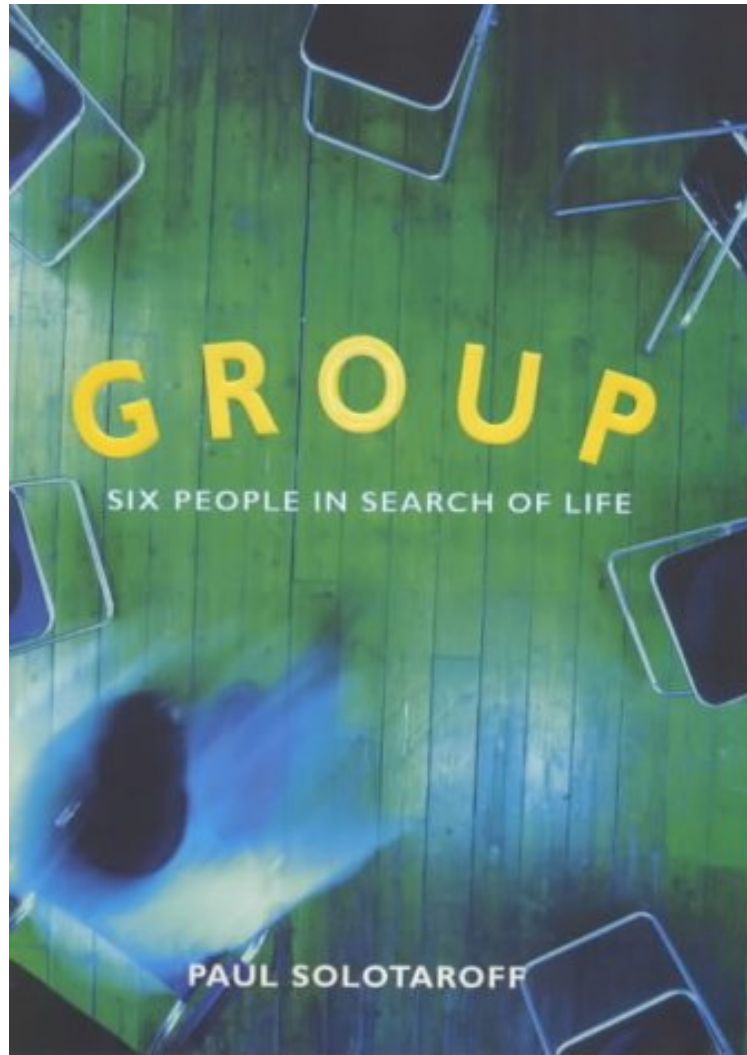


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Group - Six People In Search of a Life

Paul Solotaroff

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Paul Solotaroff : Group - Six People In Search of a Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Group - Six People In Search of a Life:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. CaptivatingBy Kevin K.This book has instantly captivated my attention. I was just going to look it over a bit and found myself absorbed into it immediately.17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Keenly observed, elegantly writtenBy Stephen ChakwinThis is a fine book, tracing the progress of group therapy involving six participants and the group leader, a psychiatrist qualified as a psychopharmacologist. The author is an acute observer of human behavior and offers deft sketches of these intelligent and troubled people and of their equally intelligent and equally troubled leader. His exploration of the dynamics of the group and of the actions of its members is acute and compassionate and his writing is fresh and articulate. This is a

richly-drawn, carefully observed sketch of human pathology and recovery. It will be hard to avoid recognizing aspects of yourself in all of these characters. The writing is clear and unobtrusively elegant. Read and enjoy. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Riveting page-turner of people fighting for their lives By A Customer Well-written, insightful account of six "average" New Yorkers in group therapy trying to overcome the pain in their lives that is holding them back from connecting with themselves and achieving happiness. The pacing is terrific and the writing is direct, clear and flowing, capturing both the characters' emotions and the observations of the writer as he follows their journey. The outcome is uncertain so that the ending provides some of the satisfaction of a good thriller, in which the loose ends are tied up, although with several twists (and not all endings are happy). I bought this book on the day of publication and read it cover to cover in 24 hours, only stopping to write notes on insights that seemed particularly relevant to my own life. And then I read it again - yes, it is that good... The main quibble I have is the fact that the group is quite non-diverse, all being white affluent heterosexual New Yorkers. Even so, I could relate to them as they revealed their self-destructive problems and pain. I recommend this book especially to those who are in group therapy or considering it, but are not fully sure of its relevance and value; this book provides a vivid illustration of just how success happens in that environment, even for those who seem to be lost causes. In summary, a great read and valuable reinforcement of the usefulness of group therapy...

Six bright, successful and remarkably self-destructive people enter into a course of dynamic group therapy in an effort to recognize and overcome their compulsions, addictions, weaknesses and family legacies. Granted unlimited access to the sessions and the patients' lives, journalist Paul Solotaroff has captured a compelling real-life drama as it unfolds. Against a ticking clock - the prescribed period of treatment is ten months - a wide range of human tragedy and comedy plays out, imbuing "Group" with the pacing of a thriller and the lure of a mystery, as we learn, finally, who triumph and who is beyond help. Under the aegis of a charismatic, maverick psychiatrist, this engaging and diverse group of strangers commiserate with, badger and urge one another along toward the goal of finding their "true story" - and that is, the life each was meant to lead, their path to happiness - rather than accepting the "false story" they were handed in childhood and are tragically living out. Accompanying the revelation of their fears, their hopes, their setbacks and recoveries are the doctor's acute psychological insights and prescriptions on dilemmas common to us all. "Group" is, from beginning to end, an absorbing journey along the often excruciating and revelatory path of self-awareness and emotional healing.

.com "It's painful to listen to yourself, at least in the beginning, but the alternative is endless suffering," says Dr. Lathon (a pseudonym), the therapist of this group. This book is not a self-help text, says author Paul Solotaroff, but a "work of narrative journalism" documenting six people living through a year of group therapy. The people and their problems are real, but their identities are disguised to protect their anonymity. Solotaroff, who was a participant in an earlier group with Lathon, is a creative, accomplished writer who brings the people to life visually as well as orally. Lathon "looked like a man with his own Learjet, or the maitre d' at a restaurant you couldn't afford." You get to know Lathon's humor, insights, and commentary on his patients. His number-one rule is hard work; next is fearless honesty. The six group members are intriguing, witty, dramatic, and in pain--like characters in an Edward Albee play. Their troubles run the gamut: substance abuse, infidelity, embezzlement, emotional abuse, loneliness, unfinished business with parents. If you've been wondering how group therapy works and what you might learn about yourself, you'll get plenty of insights. If you just like to eavesdrop on other people baring their souls of troubled, intimate details, you'll get that here, too. --Joan Price From Publishers Weekly In this perceptive account of how a group of strangers came together over the course of a year to regain a sense of equilibrium in their fast-track lives, journalist Solotaroff provides an inside look at the "talking cure." The occasionally combustible cast of six patients, afflicted with a laundry list of private demons, childhood traumas, addictions and phobias, duel with one another and with their volatile group leader, psychopharmacologist Charles Lathon. (According to the agreement hammered out between Solotaroff and Lathon, who reluctantly allowed the author to monitor the meetings, verbatim exchanges between the group members appear in the book, though names and identifying information have been altered.) The eclectic group includes an emotionally withdrawn former model, an obnoxious Wall Street whiz with a yen for coke, an overwhelmed children's rights activist in a bitter divorce fight, a boozed-out rock musician, a wimpy accountant and a slumping Broadway producer with an embezzlement rap haunting his comeback. Lathon's approach, based on "rational optimism," spurred the group members to challenge their self-imposed barriers and to accept the possibility of eventually mastering their frantic lives. Pulling back with an impassive eye, Solotaroff lets the reader experience the highly charged exchanges between these damaged souls and their well-earned epiphanies. Raw and surprisingly candid, these are real individuals fighting some of life's harshest battles; not everyone survives emotionally to tell the tale. The wealth of surprises at the book's conclusion will keep readers riveted up to the last page. (Aug.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal As a result of negative stereotyping, the popularity of group therapy for treating mental health problems has waned considerably among psychotherapists. Reflecting on his own successful experience with group therapy, journalist Solotaroff presents a fascinating account of the triumphs and risks of this method of

treatment. His journalistic instinct led him to approach his former psychiatrist, requesting permission to observe the workings of a group; members would also allow personal interviews. In return, Solotaroff promised complete anonymity. The six group members consisted of a Broadway producer, a songwriter, a fashion editor, a young Wall Street shark, an inspired children's rights activist, and a very shy accountant. Solotaroff's book is not meant to be scientific; nor is it a self-help text. The narrative reads like a juicy novel and sustains the reader's interest through the emotionally wrenching stories of each member. Recommended for large public libraries. AElizabeth Goeters, Georgia Perimeter Coll., Dunwoody Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.