Group Scenario-Betty

Betty is a 60 year old Caucasian woman who is in intensive outpatient treatment for alcohol dependence. She has been in groups for about a month. Betty has relapsed several times while in treatment and shares that this is because the pain of her only child being stillborn is too much to bear sometimes. She states that her dream from childhood was to be a mother and it never happened for her. Betty has a habit of deflecting on stories from her past, particularly losing her baby 15 years ago, when offered any feedback by the group. Betty is separated from her husband but refuses to talk about it.

When confronted with her seeming inability to focus on any other topics in her current life Betty will shut down and become angry. She accuses the group of being cold and callous toward her. “Isn’t the group supposed to offer me sympathy”? “If we don’t support one another then we will end up relapsing.” The group members are tired of Betty always feeling sorry for herself and using her loss to avoid the present. They have started to ignore her in response.

1. Discuss how you would therapeutically respond to Betty’s difficulties experienced in the group setting.
2. What theory from week one would you feel is appropriate for this intervention and explain why?
3. What do you think are the core issues around Betty’s behavior?
4. What issue(s) if any would you add to a treatment plan as a result of Betty’s difficulties in group?
5. What feedback would you give Betty the next time she stops someone from experiencing their pain?