

Common Ground Rules for Participating in Group

1. If you are going to miss a session, please let one of the group leaders know.
2. The group meeting times have been set by the group leaders, and you are asked to adhere to those times.
3. Having a feeling is different than acting it out. Acting out your feelings (toward yourself or others) is not acceptable. The way we most respect ourselves and others is by experiencing feelings and then allowing ourselves to talk about them.
4. It is your responsibility to talk about your reasons for being in the group.
5. Group sessions are confidential. Members are instructed to maintain confidentiality and leaders are bound ethically and legally not to disclose the contents of the sessions in any way that could identify members of the group. Remember, we are building trust and safety.
6. If you should decide not to continue in the group, we ask that you come to the group to say goodbye.
7. Interactions between members outside the group can affect relations inside the group; therefore we ask that you discuss these interactions, if they occur, in the group. Most groups discourage forming relationships outside of the group sessions.

While these rules are common to most groups. The group leaders and members will discuss specific ground rules when you join a specific group.



226 Student Service Center 1

www.caps.uh.edu

(713) 743-5454

To make an appointment, call CAPS. You will be asked to come about 30 minutes early to complete some paperwork. Following this, you will meet with an Intake clinician to determine the services to best fit your needs.

There is no charge or session limit for group therapy. Students are also eligible for individual and/or couples counseling for up to 40 sessions during their tenure at UH. These services are free to students up to 10 sessions every academic year. A small fee is charged after the ten sessions, which is based on one's income.

Fall & Spring Semester Hours

Monday & Tuesday

8:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m.

Wednesday—Friday

8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Summer Semester Hours

Monday—Friday

8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON



Funded by Student Service Fees



Group Therapy

Counseling and Psychological Services

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What is Group Therapy?



In group therapy, three to seven people meet weekly with one or more trained group clinicians and talk about what is troubling them. Members give feedback to each other by expressing their feelings about what someone says or does. This interaction gives group members an opportunity to try out new ways of behaving and to learn more about the way they interact with others. What makes the situation unique is that it is a closed and safe system. The content of the group sessions is confidential; what members talk about or disclose is not discussed outside the group.

The first few sessions of a group usually focus on the establishment of trust. During this time, members work to establish a level of trust that allows them to talk personally and honestly. Group trust is achieved when all members make a commitment to the group.

The Benefit of Group Therapy



Exploring issues in an interpersonal context more accurately reflects real life. Group provides opportunities to observe your own and others interpersonal skills and to give and get immediate feedback about concerns, issues, and problems affecting one's life. Group members benefit by working through personal issues in a supportive, confidential atmosphere and by helping others to work through theirs. Research shows that group therapy is very effective (often more effective than individual therapy), especially with certain issues.

Why does Group Therapy Work?



When people come into a group and interact freely with other group members, they usually recreate those difficulties that brought them to group in the first place. Under the skilled direction of a group clinician, the group is able to give support, offer alternatives, or gently confront the person. In this way, the difficulty becomes resolved, alternative behaviors are learned, and the person develops new social techniques or ways of relating to people. During group therapy, people begin to see that they are not alone. Many people feel they are unique because of their problems, and it is encouraging to hear that other people have similar difficulties. In the climate of trust provided by the group, people feel free to care about and help each other.

What do I talk about?



Talk about what brought you to the counseling center in the first place. Tell the group members what is bothering you. If you need support, let the group know. If you think you need confrontation, let them know this also. It is important to tell people what you expect of them.

Unexpressed feelings are a major reason why people experience difficulties. Revealing your feelings—self-disclosure—is an important part of group and affects how much you will be helped. The appropriate disclosures will be those that relate directly to your present difficulty. How much you talk about yourself depends upon what you are comfortable with. If you have any questions about what might or might not be helpful, you can always ask the group.

Inside Group...



- You control what, how much, and when you share with the group. You can be helped by listening to others and thinking about how their disclosures might apply to you, but you will gain most by voicing your thoughts and feelings.
- Group therapy is often more efficient than individual therapy for two reasons. First, you can benefit from the group even during sessions when you say very little but listen carefully to others. Second, group members often bring up issues that strike a chord with you, but that you might not have been aware of or brought up yourself.
- It is very important for group members to feel safe. Group leaders are there to help develop a safe environment.
- One of the benefits of group therapy is the opportunity to receive feedback from others in a supportive environment. It is rare to find friends who will gently point out how you might behave in ways that hurt yourself or others, but this is precisely what the group can offer. This is done in a respectful, gentle way, so that you can hear it and make use of it.
- Most people are anxious about being able to talk in group. Almost without exception, within a few sessions people find that they do begin to talk in the group. Group members remember what it is like to be new to the group, so you will most likely get a lot of support once you begin talking in group.
- If group therapy is being recommended to you, it is because your intake clinician believes that it is the best way to address your concerns. We recommend group when it is the most effective method to help you. Your intake clinician can discuss with you why group is what we recommend for you.