



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) groups

A CBT (cognitive behavioral therapy) group is a structured, skill-focused group led by a licensed therapist. Each session follows a set agenda, with the aim of noticing how your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors connect, and practicing how to change the patterns that keep you stuck.

WHO IT'S FOR, AND WHO IT'S NOT

- Best if you're ready to practice skills and do a little homework between meetings.
- Not the right fit during an acute crisis. If you're in crisis, call or text 988 first.
- Not drop-in. Most groups run 8 to 20 sessions, and you join and finish with the same people.

What it's used for

Depression, generalized anxiety, social anxiety, and panic disorder.

OCD (through a version called ERP), PTSD, and eating disorders.

Insomnia, chronic pain, and substance use.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- 1 Sessions usually run 60 to 90 minutes, with a set topic each week.
- 2 The leader teaches a skill; the group discusses and practices it together.
- 3 You'll often get a handout, and something to try before the next meeting.
- 4 More structured than a support group. You won't spend most of it on how your week went.

CBT has more research behind it than almost any other psychological approach, in both individual and group formats.

- A meta-analysis of 31 studies found brief group CBT significantly improved **depression, anxiety, and self-esteem**.¹
- Group CBT for depression works when delivered by a range of trained professionals, not only psychologists.²
- For generalized anxiety, group CBT outperformed waitlist across 52 randomized trials.³

MAKING THE MOST OF IT

- **Do the practice.** Skills work when rehearsed in daily life.
- **Bring real examples.** Your week is the raw material.
- **Clumsy is normal.** Early awkwardness is learning, not failure.

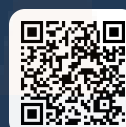
QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- 1 Who leads the group, and what is their CBT training?
- 2 What does it cost? Is there a free or sliding scale option?
- 3 How many sessions are there, and can I still join now?
- 4 How much homework is there between sessions?

Ready to find a group?

Browse 2,000+ therapy and support groups in all 50 states.

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The Group Guide is a directory, not a clinic. This handout is general education, not medical or mental health advice. Listings are written by group leaders and are not endorsements. Confirm details, cost, and fit with any group you contact. Sources on page 2.



Sources

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) groups · references keyed to the numbers on page 1.

- 1 Zhuo, C., et al. Effectiveness of brief group CBT on mental health outcomes. *Psychiatry Research* (2025).
- 2 Wong, C. P. S., et al. Effectiveness of group CBT for depression in adults. *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy* (2024).
- 3 Cuijpers, P., et al. A network meta-analysis of CBT delivery formats for generalized anxiety disorder. *Translational Psychiatry* (2025).

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