



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT

Cultural and Community-Specific Groups

These are mental health and peer support groups designed by, for, and within a specific racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, or faith community, with that community's frameworks, language, healing practices, and values at the center rather than adapted in from outside. They differ from general BIPOC groups in their specificity: rather than serving broad populations of color together, they serve particular communities with their own histories and traditions. Examples include Indigenous talking and healing circles, promotora-led groups in Latinx communities, Black church-based programs, culturally adapted groups across Asian communities, and healing justice groups in immigrant and refugee communities.

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

- A fit for those wanting support within their community's own framework.
- Valuable with limited English or where Western frameworks don't fit.
- Severe or acute presentations may need individual clinical care first.

What it's for

The full range of concerns, held within a specific cultural framework.

Also community-specific stressors: displacement, acculturation, documentation.

For people who identify strongly with a particular cultural community.

WHAT TO EXPECT

1 Format varies widely: circles, prayer, ceremony, shared food, mutual aid.

2 Insider facilitation matters most here: elders, healers, promotoras, clinicians.

3 These reflect authentic community practice, not deviation from a model.

Community-rooted, culturally adapted care works.

- A review of 63 studies found culturally adapted interventions **outperformed non-adapted treatment**, strongest when both language and content were adapted.¹
- A Latinx-focused review found cultural adaptation **improved engagement, retention, and outcomes**, with promotoras and family central to it.²

MAKING THE MOST OF IT

Healing is communal. In many traditions, the group is the natural form.

It predates the clinic. Circles and mutual aid long preceded individual therapy.

Found through community. Local networks, not mainstream directories.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- 1** Is the group facilitated by someone from within my community?
- 2** What cultural or spiritual practices are part of the gathering?
- 3** Is it offered in my language, and where does it meet?

Ready to find a group?

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If you're in crisis, call or text 988.

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

Cultural and Community-Specific Groups · references keyed to the numbers on page 1.

- 1 Arundell, L.-L., Barnett, P., Buckman, J. E. J., Saunders, R., & Pilling, S. The effectiveness of adapted psychological interventions for people from ethnic minority groups: a systematic review and conceptual typology. *Clinical Psychology Review* (2021), 88, Article 102063.
- 2 Venner, K. L., Hernandez-Vallant, A., Hirschak, K. A., & Herron, J. L. A scoping review of cultural adaptations of substance use disorder treatments across Latinx communities. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* (2022), 137, Article 108716.

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