



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT

Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) groups for depression

Interpersonal Therapy (IPT), developed by Gerald Klerman and Myrna Weissman, is a structured, time-limited therapy built on one observation: depression rarely happens in a vacuum, it's bound up with what's happening in your relationships. IPT focuses on one of four areas: grief and loss, role transitions, role disputes, or chronic loneliness. The group shares that focus and offers each other perspective.

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

- A fit when depression links to a loss, transition, conflict, or social isolation.
- Less so if it feels primarily biological, or you want CBT-style skill-building.
- Not for acute crisis or active psychosis. In crisis? Call or text 988.

What it's used for

Primarily depression: major, persistent, perinatal, and adolescent.

Depression in the context of chronic illness or a significant life transition.

Adapted for anxiety, eating disorders, and PTSD, though depression is best-evidenced.

WHAT TO EXPECT

1 Sessions usually run 90 minutes, with a consistent structure across the program.

2 Early on you name a focus; middle sessions link recent relationship events to mood.

3 Less homework than CBT, but you're encouraged to practice new skills between sessions.

IPT has a well-established evidence base for depression across formats and populations.

- A meta-analysis of 90 studies (11,000+ people) found IPT **more effective than control**, strongest for depression and comparable to CBT.¹
- A 2021 trial of group IPT for low-income Head Start mothers found significant reductions in depression versus control.²

MAKING THE MOST OF IT

Pick one focus. Grief, role disputes, or transitions, not all.

Bring this week. Your interactions are the material.

Give it a few sessions. Patterns take time to surface.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- 1** Is the leader trained and certified in IPT?
- 2** How many sessions, and is it a closed cohort?
- 3** What does it cost? Is there a free or sliding scale option?

Ready to find a group?

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

Free to browse · No account needed · thegroupguide.com



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

Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) groups for depression · references keyed to the numbers on page 1.

- 1 Cuijpers, P., Donker, T., Weissman, M. M., Ravitz, P., & Cristea, I. A. Interpersonal psychotherapy for mental health problems: a comprehensive meta-analysis. *American Journal of Psychiatry* (2016).
- 2 Mennen, F. E., et al. Effectiveness of an interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT) group depression treatment for Head Start mothers: a cluster-randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Affective Disorders* (2021).

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