



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT

Psychodynamic group therapy

Psychodynamic group therapy is an open-ended, less structured group led by a specially trained clinician. Members speak freely, and the therapist attends to how they relate to one another and how the past shows up in present relationships.

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

- A fit if you're curious, want to explore patterns, and can tolerate open-ended conversation.
- Not for acute crisis, skill-building, or a structured start-to-finish program. In crisis? Call or text 988.
- Rarely free. Most psychodynamic groups are in private practice settings.

What it's used for

Depression, anxiety, personality difficulties, and relationship problems.

Complex presentations where insight into patterns and early experience matters.

For people who keep hitting the same relational problems.

WHAT TO EXPECT

1 Sessions usually run 75 to 90 minutes, with no set agenda and no homework.

2 Members may sit in silence at first; the therapist asks what you're noticing now.

3 Progress feels slower and less linear. Insight and change accumulate over time.

The evidence base for psychodynamic therapy is well-established and growing.

- A 2023 umbrella review found psychodynamic therapy is an **empirically supported treatment** for depression, anxiety, eating, somatic, and personality disorders.¹
- Across comparisons it showed no significant difference in efficacy from CBT.¹
- A 2024 review found significant effects in young adults, maintained at follow-up.²

MAKING THE MOST OF IT

Bring what happens here. Your patterns show up in the room.

Say the unsaid. Honesty, even about the group, is the work.

Give it time. Depth builds over months.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- 1 What is the leader's training in psychodynamic group work?
- 2 Is the group ongoing, or a short-term format with an end date?
- 3 Is membership open, or closed once it starts?
- 4 What does it cost? Is there a sliding scale option?

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

Psychodynamic group therapy · references keyed to the numbers on page 1.

- 1 Leichsenring, F., et al. The status of psychodynamic psychotherapy as an empirically supported treatment for common mental disorders: an umbrella review based on updated criteria. *World Psychiatry* (2023).
- 2 Bellino, S., et al. The efficacy of psychodynamic psychotherapy for young adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology* (2024).

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