



What to know about CBT skills groups

CBT stands for cognitive behavioral therapy. It's based on a simple idea: thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected, and changing one can change the others. A CBT skills group teaches practical tools for doing that, in a small group led by a licensed professional.

HOW IT WORKS

- Sessions are structured, more like a workshop than open conversation. Each week covers a skill, such as catching unhelpful thought patterns or calming your body during anxiety.
- You practice between sessions. The practice is where the change happens.
- Most CBT groups run for a set number of weeks, often 6 to 12, with the same members.

DOES IT WORK?

CBT delivered in groups is one of the most studied treatments in mental health. Reviews of dozens of studies find large improvements in depression and anxiety for people who complete a group, with gains that hold after the group ends.

What a CBT group is not

- It's not open-ended talk therapy. It's skills training with a start and an end.
- It's not only for severe problems. Many people join to build coping tools early.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- ☐ Who leads the group, and what license do they hold?
- ☐ How many weeks does it run, and can I join mid-cycle?
- ☐ What does it cost, and does insurance apply?
- ☐ Is there homework, and how much time does it take?

Bring a notebook. People who write the skills down and try them between sessions get the most out of CBT groups. If a skill doesn't click, say so in group; adjusting it is part of the work.

Ready to find a group?

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Sources: Effectiveness of cognitive behavioral group therapy for depression in routine practice, BMC Psychiatry (2014); Effectiveness of group cognitive behavioral therapy for depression in adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis (PubMed).

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.

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