



What to know about group therapy

Group therapy is a small group of people who meet regularly with a trained leader to work on something together. Groups usually have 5 to 12 members. Some meet in person, some meet online, and some do both.

WHY PEOPLE CHOOSE A GROUP

You hear from people working through the same thing, which is something one-on-one therapy can't offer. Research finds that for many concerns, group therapy works as well as individual therapy. It often costs less, and many support groups are free.

WHAT A FIRST SESSION USUALLY LOOKS LIKE

- The leader explains how the group works and its ground rules, including confidentiality.
- Members talk; you can mostly listen until you feel ready. No one is forced to share.
- Sessions usually run 60 to 90 minutes.

What group therapy is not

- It's not a class where you are put on the spot or graded.
- It's not a replacement for crisis care. If you're in crisis, call or text 988.
- Joining one session is not a commitment. It's normal to try a group once and decide.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- ☐ Who leads the group, and what is their training?
- ☐ What does it cost? Is there a free or sliding scale option?
- ☐ Is the group open to new members now? How do I join?
- ☐ What happens if I miss a week?

It can take two or three sessions to feel comfortable. That's normal, not a sign the group is wrong for you. And it's okay to try more than one group and pick the best fit.

Ready to find a group?

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Sources: American Journal of Psychotherapy, Recent developments in group psychotherapy research (2020); Efficacy of group psychotherapy for anxiety disorders: 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.

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