



What to know about peer support groups

A peer support group is led by people with their own lived experience, not by a therapist. Members support each other as equals. Many of the groups in our directory are peer-led, and most are free.

HOW PEER SUPPORT IS DIFFERENT FROM THERAPY

- No one diagnoses or treats you. Peer support is connection and shared experience, not treatment.
- The leader has been through something similar themselves. That's the point.
- Peer support works well alongside therapy, and many people do both.

WHY IT HELPS

SAMHSA, the federal behavioral health agency, reports that peer support helps people stay engaged in recovery and can reduce return trips to the hospital. Talking with someone who has been there reaches places professional help sometimes cannot.

What peer support is not

- It's not therapy, and the leader is not your clinician.
- It's not a waiting room for real help. For many people, it is the help.
- It's not a commitment. Most groups are fine with you coming once to see.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- ☐ Is the group drop-in, or do I sign up first?
- ☐ Is it connected to a larger organization?
- ☐ How does the group handle privacy and confidentiality?
- ☐ Is it okay to come once and just listen?

If the first group doesn't feel like your people, that's information, not failure. Peer groups vary a lot by personality. Trying a second one is common and worth it.

Ready to find a group?

Browse 2,000+ therapy and support groups in all 50 states.
Free to browse. No account needed.

thegroupguide.com



Scan with your phone camera

Sources: SAMHSA, Peer Support Workers for Those in Recovery (samhsa.gov); Peer Support in Mental Health: Literature Review (PMC).

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.