



GROUP THERAPY AGREEMENT

Welcome to group therapy! Group therapy differs from individual therapy and 12-Step meetings in several important ways. The primary difference is that in group therapy cross-talk is encouraged to enhance dialogue and intimacy among group members. All members need to be present consistently for the group to be vital and healthy and sessions occur at the same time each week. A person becomes an intrinsic part of the group by agreeing to be present at a specific place and time. To come and go on a casual basis affects the group as a whole. Even if you say very little in the group, your presence matters. All members are treated equally. Usually, it takes a new member some time, perhaps many weeks, to become a part of the functioning group, and to feel the sense of belonging and the support that comes with it. Newcomers to group are often anxious until they feel more comfortable with the routine.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is perhaps the most important aspect of your therapy group. It is necessary to establish trust and cohesion in the group, and all must assume this responsibility for the group to be functional and healthy. If you share aspects of your group treatment with family, partners or friends, please limit the discussion to only what *you* have shared with the group. It is important you do not discuss what other group member's share, which could compromise their confidentiality. Group needs to be a safe place for all to come each week.

Time Commitment

A personal commitment to a group is made for a minimum period of one year. However, leaving is always an option. If in the first year you consider leaving the group, it is strongly advised that you discuss this with the group leader and members of the group before making a decision. This is important for both you and the group as a whole that if you leave it is a relational transition.

Fees, Billing and Insurance

Fees: The fees for the 2-hour group is \$85-90 per member and is the same for each person, irrespective of how many individuals are present. At least 30 days notice will be given for any fee changes.

Billing/Payment: You may pay by cash, check or credit card. You are expected to remain current with payment; therefore, credit card information will be kept on file in order for billing to remain current. You are billed for absences, except for hospitalization for medical or rehabilitative purposes.

Statements: Statements can be provided if requested and may be used to submit to your insurance carrier. Statements reflect all session charges, treatment service and code, all payments made, diagnostic code, provider TIN and license number. Foundry does not submit claims on your behalf; clients are responsible for submitting all claims to their insurance carrier.

Absences

Absences are an important issue since the absence of one group member affects the group far more deeply than that group member may realize. Therefore, your presence is important for each weekly session. This commitment is made in order to foster and promote group bonding and support, which are crucial in order to benefit from this type of therapy. For a person to achieve maximum benefit in a group, for a set time each week, the commitment to group should be the most important thing in one's weekly schedule. This includes proper scheduling in order to arrive at group on time, as chronic lateness impacts the group.

Advanced notice given to the group facilitator and/or discussion with the group (while *in* group) about a future absence would be considered an excused absence. However, repeated excused absences over a period of time may become a matter of concern to your therapist and/or other group members and may be addressed with you in your group.

Two unexcused absences in a row, without discussion with your group facilitator and/or the group as a whole, jeopardizes your participation in the group and may be grounds for you being asked to leave the group.

Cancellations

If a group is scheduled to meet during a commonly recognized holiday, it is strongly recommended that the group move to an alternate, convenient time for that week, since holiday times are normally a period of stress for recovering people. Maximum effort must be made to find a time, convenient to all, so the process of the group will not be interrupted. If the group meeting is moved and a member has previous obligations, you will not be charged for that group. In the event that group is cancelled by the group leader, then the fee for that group will be waived.

Tasks

Assignments may be given during group to support your recovery. You are expected to follow-through with any commitments you make to the group. Not following through with commitments that you make compromises your integrity and recovery and will be discussed in group. Escalating consequences results if group members continue to break commitments to the group and may jeopardize your participation in group.

Support vs. Fragmentation

Support among members is encouraged. However, fragmentation of the group can undermine the work of the group as a whole. Examples of fragmentation are engaging in a sponsor-sponsee relationship within the group, the discussion of *group issues* outside of group, and dating/sex among members. All of these divisions are referred to as “sub-groups” and can be destructive because they can lead to secrets or withholding of information from other group members. Secrets affect everyone. Recovery requires rigorous honesty and without it, the integrity of the group can be affected. Such occurrences must be discussed in group and resolved in favor of the integrity of the group.

Respect the Process

Any concerns should be communicated directly with your group leader. Please refrain from devaluing or gossiping about your group facilitator or other group members. This is to help protect the safety of the group.

Treatment Concerns

For the benefit of the individual and the group, the following conditions will be treated seriously:

1. Unusual or dangerous behavior;
2. Repeated breaches of commitments and group boundaries;
3. Other marked psychiatric symptoms, including suicidal ideation;
4. Perpetration toward others. Reporting laws will be observed.

Outside Evaluations & Referrals

When warranted, group members may be asked to consult with a psychologist, psychiatrist or obtain a physical evaluation. If a group member is found to be unable to maintain the goals of the recovery group, appropriate referrals will be made to a more intensive program.

I have read, understand and agree to the information and guidelines stated in this two-page Group Therapy Agreement.

Signature

Date

Printed Name