

COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL THERAPY GROUP FOR SOCIAL ANXIETY

Group Goals:

(Note: each group member will, with the help of the therapist(s), develop more specific personal goals.)

1. To help members learn how to overcome their social anxiety and avoidance, and to increase their self-confidence, enjoyment and effectiveness during previously difficult situations.
2. To increase members' self-confidence and self-esteem (i.e. modify the beliefs members have about themselves and others that contribute to their social anxiety).
3. To provide ongoing personal support, encouragement and guidance to each group member.

Group Norms:

1. Each member makes a commitment to attend at least 18 of the 20 group sessions. Sessions will start and end on time. Absences and late-arrivals are disruptive both to individual members and to the group as a whole.
2. Members who are unable to attend a particular group session due to unavoidable circumstances are expected to inform the therapist of this by phone (not by e-mail) at least one hour in advance of the session. (If the therapist is not in, leave a detailed message by phone.) 24 hours notice is required for not attending a one-on-one session. Whenever possible, members are expected to inform the entire group one week in advance of any absences.
3. Members may not attend a session when under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or any other recreational, mind-altering drug. Members may be asked to leave a session if they are intoxicated or high on such a drug.
4. Worksheets and self-help experiments are a core part of this therapy group. They help members extend the benefits of therapy well beyond the weekly sessions and into their world of everyday living. In joining the therapy group, members commit to devoting at least two hours per week to working on experiments and about one hour per week to completing worksheets. Members who regularly do experiments and worksheets generally make much more progress than those who do not.
5. At each session, each member works together with the therapist to design homework experiments for the following week, and to review what has been learned from trying the past week's experiments. In between sessions, the most important thing is that each member makes a sincere effort to try their experiments, because that effort will provide a valuable learning experience. Whether or not a member is able to successfully complete their experiments is less important than what they can learn from trying to do so.
6. During most group sessions, members will participate in designing, carrying out and discussing various exercises aimed at practicing how to handle anxiety-provoking situations with greater comfort and confidence. Although members are encouraged to actively participate in such exercises, no member shall be required to do so if a particular activity is too uncomfortable.
7. Members are expected to openly and honestly describe their thoughts and feelings within sessions. Hiding your true thoughts and feelings, or discussing them only outside of group meetings, will hinder you and the group from reaching your goals.
8. Group members are also expected to treat each of the other group members and therapist(s) with respect, and to not violate their rights. If you are ever uncertain how to openly and honestly describe your thoughts and feelings in a manner that is respectful to others, please consult with the therapist(s) for guidance.
9. Dating or sexual activity between members is not permitted until after the 20-session group has ended.
10. All information discussed or revealed in the group--including the identities of the group members--shall be kept strictly confidential by each member, and by the therapist.

Member's Contract:

I, [print your full name] _____, have carefully read and understand the group goals and norms described above. I commit myself to working toward these goals and abiding by these norms. I understand that I may be required by the therapist to leave the group if I repeatedly violate these norms.

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____