

Group Therapy Guidelines

Comprehensive preparation for group requires being fully informed about:

Confidentiality. Joining a group means you agree not to discuss other group member's lives with non-group members in any way. You may say anything to anyone about yourself or the group leader, but not about any other group members. This agreement helps you feel and be safe in discussing everything of importance with your group. It extends permanently even after formal treatment ends. Guard Zoom links and Passwords Very carefully.

Unless he specifically agrees not to, Dr Bob will not keep secret important clinical material, whatever the source, and will share with appropriate discretion in group, all important personal material from his communications and individual and couple therapy with a member, including relevant emails from other family members.

All emails to and from Dr Bob and between other group members are copied to the whole Group and carefully kept confidential. This agreement enables the functional/open communication necessary for real intimacy. Dr Bob's outgoing emails are coded by Google Plus.

Initial Time Commitment. In order to prevent folks from fleeing in conscious or unconscious scare (about 5%), you are contracting for six sessions and will be charged for all six. Six sessions will allow getting the feel of group treatment, to begin fulfilling the written treatment contract and allow group therapy a reasonable beginning. Only if you bring up and discuss in detail incapacitating discomfort each of these 6 sessions, would it be appropriate to say good-byes to the group.

Stopping Treatment. When you decide to stop treatment, please announce it to the group and then come at least 3 more times. This will allow you and the rest of the group to say important good-byes and work-through everyone's feelings about your leaving. You must say 2 or 3 "Goodbyes" each of these 3 sessions after announcing you're leaving, to allow enough time for both complete goodbyes [often avoided or discounted in everyday life], and the other members' usual business of the Group.

You will be charged for these 4 sessions if you leave the group without notice or without attending all 4 sessions. Later, in four to six months, an individual session would likely be quite useful, to consolidate and maintain your learnings and changes.

Attendance. Because of the therapeutic importance for you and the rest of the group, you will be expected to attend group meetings on-time. The group really loses power if folks are regularly late. Since out-of-network insurance will not pay for missed sessions, you will pay at the usual rate for missed sessions. If you Must miss for over one month because of illness or business, you need to arrange a leave of absence during a group meeting. Clients can ask for/ arrange 1 No-Charge absence after 6 months in group, and each 6 months thereafter.

Electronic Recordings. Group meetings are video recorded. These recordings are a vital part of your treatment. They will be used only for professional purposes and are usually erased and recorded over about every 4th session. Your attendance in the group represents approval and permission for this procedure.

It is critically important that you arrange to see the recording within a week/ASAP after any group session you have missed, so you'll be emotionally connected to current group content. You'll also be expected to watch several sessions which you did attend, to see and hear yourself as you are seen and heard by other people, and to notice things you missed, or understood differently. Please note your thoughts and feelings while watching a video and share at the very beginning of the next meeting.

Observation. Groups are occasionally observed by professionals or graduate students for advanced training. All professional and ethical standards will be carefully maintained. Your participation in group constitutes permission for this infrequent (1-2 a year) observation.

Relationships/Members. Groups often meet informally after or between regular sessions, and these contacts are an important part of your therapy. Social contact with other group members is strongly Encouraged, and please remember to share during Group your feelings from outside of Group contact, positive and negative. These feelings need to be brought back and discussed in the group to strengthen intimacy skills. When something important is shared outside of our weekly sessions, it is Not kept “private”, and is always shared/processed in regular group sessions.

Dating, romance, and sex between group members are agreed to be Inappropriate, unless a couple comes to the group already paired. This agreement is designed to allow safe exploration of developing non-romantic friendships between men and women without the ordinary complications. It teaches how the other sex can be available for close, supportive, non-romantic friendship, and the agreement extends permanently, even after ending treatment. Most clients need to learn experientially how to be friends with the other sex without romance, a Very useful aspect of group therapy.

Drugs and Alcohol. It is important that you: 1) not be intoxicated on alcohol or drugs during group meetings; and 2) that you not smoke during groups, which would endanger yourself and the group.

Financial Arrangements. Your group fee will be \$_____ per week, and you’ll be expected to stay current. You will be charged for all meetings whether or not you attend. Monthly payment in advance by the end of the first session of the month is expected, unless your cash flow requires bi-weekly or weekly payment, which can be arranged during a group session. Fee increases will be announced in advance.

Time. Your group meets from _____ to _____ on _____; groups meet for 90 minutes weekly. Length of group may be temporarily adjusted if size changes significantly, and temporarily less than 5 members or more than 8 is very unusual.

Growth Groups. A Full Day or Afternoon extended Group therapy experience will be available yearly. They are similar to weekly groups, but allow time for longer, more intensive work using hypnosis and self-hypnosis. Weekly groups sometimes arrange a Full Day Group limited to members only, or sometimes including spouses. I strongly encourage group members to participate in an extended group or few – they’re extremely helpful, and cost-effective.

When Dr Bob’s away, the Group usually arranges a no-charge leaderless group at a member’s home or some other private venue. Very infrequently, a guest therapist may lead the group, charged at the usual rate. Both leaderless groups and guest therapists offer Important healing experiences not available when I’m present.

date
Group Member _____

Bob Dick, PhD, CGP, AC
Therapist