Group Therapy in HWF

For case managers: the devil is in the details of our client’s lives and the emotional components that seem overwhelming. We can compromise our abilities to support our clients by allowing our own empathy to distract from our ability to help. You may experience this if you perceive an individual’s situation as hopeless or simply overwhelming. Be compassionate to yourself and your clients, but careful of your empathy. Feeling too much can trap people in others problems that inhibit positive action. Encourage people to find resources that make them strong and engage their will to succeed. There is no simple answer to finding resources for the individual’s will, but resistance to help can be a key to understanding past failures. You are on the frontline of discovering strategies for success and paths to higher evolution. I understand how complex these issues are and commend you for your work. All we can do is talk about the truth and facts of success, but every individual has their own path.

Initially, where do we begin to approach these subjects? Read through some of the data and evidence that supports therapy. If you believe that there is something beneficial to be found in the process, it makes it easier to speak to your participants about how they might find help. Not everyone will be open to the idea and might be strongly against the idea. We can only offer information that can help people make an educated decision about their well-being. Know that talk therapy (individual and group) is proven to be beneficial and on par with medication treatment often with greater long term benefits.

THE REFERRAL PROCESS AND WHAT THE CLIENT CAN EXPECT:

- If the client feels comfortable and secure to make a phone call to Tom, they will have a brief conversation to ask questions about the therapist, the process and next steps.
- There is no obligation to do anything beyond the call. The power of treatment solely rests in the hands of the client.
- If the client feels comfortable, an initial meeting is set up to talk about options for treatment. An assessment is dictated by the client who decides if group therapy is something they want to try.
- The assessment helps determine an appropriate fit into types of treatment and educates on the benefits of various treatment options.
- If a client decides to try group therapy, I ask that they come a few times in order to acclimate to the group and get a real sense of how the process works.

**Practical & Clinical Reasons for Therapy:**

- You are safe and your privacy is protected in counseling.
- Your health information is protected under the law when in therapy.
• **Free therapy is rare.** It is rare to find opportunities that provide health benefits that will enrich your life for free. The HWF provides an opportunity for care that is financially free for eligible participants. The only investment is the one you make in yourself to discover relief from suffering and a better way to live that helps you.

• **Therapy is proven to help.** There is real evidence based research from client reports and more objective measurements that indicate counseling and psychotherapy are effective, both in the short term and over longer time periods.

• **Dealing with difficult feelings and problems.** Overwhelming feelings can paralyze, terrorize or limit our ability to operate in the world. Therapy can provide a safe place to discover and find relief from personal problems.

• **You can be happier and more secure with you.** Happiness and bliss are unlimited components in your life that are exponential; there is always room to grow and find greater life satisfaction.

• **How to deal with difficult relationships?** Therapy may not be specifically about you. Relationships often present difficulties that make our lives hard. Therapy can be about working with difficult relationships that burden our own health. Learn to communicate with people and empower yourself through greater understanding and control.

• **Become empowered and feel in control in therapy.** You decide the right strategies to a higher level of functioning through strategies controlled and decided by you.

## WHY GROUP THERAPY WORKS

1. Group therapy helps you realize you’re not alone.

2. Group therapy facilitates giving and receiving support.

3. Group therapy helps you find your “voice.”

4. Group therapy helps you relate to others (and yourself) in healthier ways.

5. Group therapy provides a safety net.

6. "Group therapy studies show its efficacy," says Nina W. Brown, EdD, a professor at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va.

• **Efficacy:** capacity for producing a desired result or effect; effectiveness
• Research is the finding that the most effective groups have a common identity and a sense of shared purpose, according to a meta-analysis of 40 studies by Burlingame and others, published in the International Journal of Group Psychotherapy in 2009.

• Numerous studies, including Kivlighan’s 2012 work in Group Dynamics, have found that peer interactions tap into many therapeutic factors. In simple terms, there is healing in the process.

• In fact, according to Stanford University’s Irvin David Yalom, MD, in the 2005 book “The Theory and Practice of Group Psychology,” hearing from peers may be more helpful than receiving guidance from a therapist since peers can identify with one another. Those peer interactions appear to translate to real-world gains. In a meta-analysis of five studies, Kelly L. Callahan of Harvard Medical School found that sexual abuse survivors improved markedly after participating in group therapy (Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 2004).

• American Psychological Association’s Monitor on Psychology suggests that group therapy also meets efficacy standards established by the Society of Clinical Psychology (Division 12 of the APA) for panic disorder, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, social phobia and substance abuse.

• “Group CBT for depression can be delivered in routine care settings with good results.” Thimm, J. C., & Antonsen, L. (2014).