About Group Therapy

What is group psychotherapy?
Group therapy provides a place where people with diverse experiences can share common concerns and learn from one another how to improve one's quality of life. Focusing on participants' interactions in the group and interpersonal experiences outside the group, the aim is to help members change patterns that are creating difficulties in relationships with friends, family, intimate partners, professors, colleagues, etc.

How can group psychotherapy help?
Groups can provide opportunities to:

- Identify with others who face similar challenges
- Get support in times of stress
- Increase awareness of interpersonal effectiveness by giving and receiving feedback
- Adopt more constructive and effective responses to life situations by practicing new behaviors and ways of relating to others
- Improve communication and intimacy by expressing feelings and thoughts that you have been hesitant to express

How much does it cost?
Most of our groups are fee for service, but some are offered free of charge. See the current list of group offerings to find out which groups are fee-based vs. no fee. If you've purchased the Golden Buff Student Health Insurance Plan (GBSHIP Max or Limited only), the fee is a $5.00 co-pay per group. If you have outside insurance or no insurance, the fee is $62.00 per group at the time of service. For outside insurance, contact your company and see if they will cover Wardenburg psychological services and groups in particular. If so, you can submit your bills as claims for reimbursement. Wardenburg will not bill your insurance company directly. For more info on GBSHIP plans and coverage, go to www.colorado.edu/stuhealthinsur/

How do I join?
For therapy groups, you must come in for a pre-group screening to make sure that the group you're interested in is the best fit for your needs. For existing Psychological Health and Psychiatry clients, talk with your provider about the group you'd like to join and set up a screen. For clients who are new to our clinic, call 303-492-5654 for information on scheduling an intake.

What kind of commitment do I have to make?
Group participants are expected to be present each week and to arrive on time. Groups function more effectively when group members have made a commitment and show up regularly. This allows for the building of trust, safety and relationships within the group, and enables members to talk more openly about their concerns. Regarding length of group membership, members usually commit to a minimum of one semester for therapy groups, but benefit more if they stay longer. If a member decides to leave, 2-4 weeks notice is requested, depending on the type of group.

Will it be confidential?
Confidentiality is critical to the success of a group. Group members are expected to protect each other's anonymity and work in the group. Stating it
simply: What’s said in the group, stays in the group. Breaches of confidentiality will result in dismissal from the group. Secondly, group facilitators will take steps to insure that no two members are from the same academic department.

How many people are in a group?
Psychotherapy groups will typically contain somewhere between 5-7 members with a maximum of 8. Psychoeducational groups may contain up to 10 participants.

What’s the difference between a psychoeducational group and a psychotherapy group?
The aim of a psychoeducational group is to impart information and promote skill-building related to a specific area of concern (i.e. stress management, meditation/relaxation/stretching, ADD/ADHD, depression, social anxiety). It is closer in structure to a class, and tends to be time-limited (anywhere from 4-12 sessions). Psychotherapy groups may be time-limited or ongoing, and participants may share similar or varied concerns. The focus is primarily on group member experiences and interactions in the here-and-now group process. These groups delve a little deeper to help members become more aware of how old patterns may be sabotaging their functioning in relationships, and to find new or more adaptive ways of relating. For example, psychotherapy groups will help group members work on such interpersonal issues as identifying and expressing thoughts or feelings, trust, intimacy, having more control of impulses, assertive communication/self-advocacy, and self-esteem.

What if I’m nervous or anxious about talking in groups?
Just about everyone is nervous or anxious about entering and participating in a therapy group. While group members are expected to be involved, we recognize that everyone has their own pace at which they develop feelings of safety, trust and comfort in the group. Group facilitators will be respectful of everyone’s comfort zone, and group members will assist each other in participating in a way that best promotes fellow members’ personal growth.

For additional questions, contact Joe Courtney or Sabrina Neu.