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From the desks of

Randy Wall, Ph.D. and Joseph A. Parisi, Ph.D.

Men's Therapy Group Information

Purpose and Rationale

The primary purposes of the men's therapy groups are to provide a safe setting in which members can learn as much as possible about themselves, examine how they interrelate with others, and have opportunities to make desired changes. A basic rationale behind group therapy is that many of the emotional difficulties and problems we face result from unsatisfactory and unfulfilling relationships. Being in the group affords an opportunity to examine how we are interacting with each other in the here-and-now and to seek more productive and fulfilling ways of relating. In addition, the group offers members an opportunity to support and assist each other as personal problems are explored and solutions sought. Men are often surprised to learn how much they have in common with other men.

Participation

Each individual will proceed at a different pace. No pace is wrong and no one is forced to talk in group.

You will get more out of group therapy if you can be aware of what you are feeling and experiencing while the group is going on. You may want to take a moment during periods of the group to inwardly reflect and ask yourself what it is that you are experiencing. Any topic or issue can be raised and addressed in the context of a group session. Issues involving one's inner thoughts and feelings, relationships, and families are all appropriate topics for discussion. In this sense the group is different than a social gathering in which it is usually inappropriate to comment on what we are feeling. In group, we strive to be as honest as possible with ourselves and one another.

As group members interact with each other, it is normal that feelings will emerge spontaneously in response to statements or actions made by others. At times, these reactions may feel unsettling and uncomfortable. The most effective way of dealing with this discomfort will be to talk about it openly in the context of the group session. As in life, conflict between group members, or between members and therapists, may arise from time to time. It is vital that each member be willing to work through these uncomfortable situations through the interpersonal interactions of the group.

Initial Time Commitment and Termination

You may experience the initial weeks of group therapy as somewhat uncomfortable. The newness of the situation can evoke feelings of awkwardness and anxiety. In the early weeks members sometimes report feeling like they do not fit in and that they cannot relate to other members. Sometimes group members are uncertain if they should continue in group. It is our experience that these feelings resolve themselves. To permit a timeframe for this to occur, we require that each member commit to attending a minimum of 12 group sessions.

Prior to ending group we ask that members let the group know 2 weeks in advance.

Frequency and Length of Group Therapy Sessions

Groups meet Tuesday 8:00-9:30am, Wednesday 8:00-9:30am, and Wednesday 4:15-5:45pm. We are very respectful of the issue of time. We ask that group members do the same. We start on time and we make every effort to end on time.

Membership

Prior to entering the group, each prospective member will meet with one of the group therapists. At this meeting, we will assess a person's readiness to enter group psychotherapy, and determine if this particular group is a good fit for them. Most members will have participated in individual, couples, or family therapy with one of the two group therapists.

This group is an open group, which allows us to add new members to the group as current members graduate. The group is limited to 8 participants. There will be two psychotherapists. We will provide current group members with at least one week's notice of the addition of a new member.

Outside Contacts.

Members of the group may have contact with each other outside of the group, either accidentally or as a planned occurrence. There is no strict rule about this. However, while accidental contact cannot be avoided, we encourage each group member to decide for himself as to whether they desire contact. While extra group contact can be beneficial, it can also create the possibility of secrets and sub-grouping. It is therefore necessary that any significant out of group contact be brought back into the group for discussion.

Agreements

Group members must agree to the following:

1. *Confidentiality.* What is said in the group and the identities of the group members will forever remain confidential.
2. *Alcohol and drugs.* Members agree never to come to the group under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
3. *No Violence.* Members agree to refrain from violent behavior.

Fee

The fee is \$85 per session. Fees are paid at the beginning of the group meeting. Receipts will be distributed at that time as well. Group members will be responsible for paying for no less than 11 sessions regardless of the number of missed sessions during their initial 12 weeks. For each subsequent 12 week cycle, group members will pay for no less than 10 sessions regardless of the number of missed sessions.

Absences

One of the special/helping properties of a psychotherapy group is the cohesion and connection that develops between members. This occurs best with consistent attendance. If someone is unable to attend a session, we request that one of the therapists be notified. Failure to attend without calling at least 24 hours prior to group will result in your being charged for that missed session. Allowances will be made for emergency situations which are beyond your control. Examples include sudden illness, car problems and a sick child. Work related commitments are not treated as emergencies.

When the group has 8 or 9 members, the presence of at least 5 members is required to conduct a session on any given day. Group will be cancelled when we know 24 hours in advance fewer than 5 members can attend; however, if 20 minutes after the designated start time less than 5 members are present, the group will meet for 45 minutes. A full group fee will be charged. For a group of 6 or 7 members, at least 4 members will be required to conduct a full (90 minute) session.

We hope the above information is helpful. If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to talk with us.

Randy Wall, Ph.D.

Joseph A. Parisi, Ph.D.

I have read the above information, agree to abide by the terms, and have been given a copy for my records.

Signature: _____

Start Date: _____