Common Ground Rules for Participating in Group

1. If you are going to be late or miss a session, please call your group facilitators before group starts that day.

2. Please show your respect to your fellow group members by being on time to your group sessions and attending consistently. Foreseeable circumstances such as school projects should be completed outside of the group meeting time.

3. Work with your referring clinician and group facilitators to develop and refine your goals for group.

4. Group sessions are confidential. Members are instructed to maintain confidentially and facilitators are bound ethically and legally not to disclose the contents of the sessions in any way that could identify members of the group.

5. If you should decide not to continue in the group, we ask that you come to the group to say goodbye.

6. Interactions between members outside the group can negatively affect relations inside the group. We ask that you discuss these interactions, if they occur, in the group. Most groups discourage forming relationships with members outside of the group sessions.

While these rules are common to most groups. The group leaders and members will discuss specific ground rules when you join a specific group.

If you are interested in the services described in this brochure, simply call CAPS at 713-743-5454 to arrange a free initial consultation. Initial consultations are available throughout the week and can be scheduled at your convenience. This consultation is an opportunity for you and a CAPS clinician to determine what kinds of services will best meet your needs. These may be CAPS services or referrals to other campus and community agencies.

Fall & Spring Semester Hours
Monday & Tuesday
8:00 a.m.—7:00 p.m.
Wednesday—Friday
8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Summer and Between Semester Hours
Monday—Friday
8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
**What is Group Therapy? The Benefits of Group Therapy**

In group therapy, typically four to seven people meet weekly with one or more trained group facilitators. Members give feedback to each other by expressing their feelings about what someone says or does. This interaction gives group members an opportunity to try out new ways of behaving and to learn more about the way they interact with others. What makes this situation unique is that it is a closed and safe system. The content of the group sessions is confidential; members are asked to not disclose what was discussed outside the group.

The first few sessions of a group usually focus on orientation to group therapy, goal setting, and establishment of trust. During this time, members work to establish a level of trust that allows them to talk personally and honestly. Group trust is achieved when all members make a commitment to the group.

Research has shown that group therapy is highly effective in helping people:
- Feel supported as they face life’s challenges
- Develop positive feelings through the act of helping others
- Establish a sense of hope when they feel like giving up
- Learn by receiving feedback and observing others
- Change how they relate to others
- Become more aware of their strengths and positive qualities

**Is Group Therapy Right for Me?**

Group Therapy is a great fit for persons with concerns with:
- Feeling lonely and disconnected from others
- Self-esteem, especially around feeling accepted by others
- Difficulties forming intimate and trusting relationships with others
- A lack of positive relationships with friends, romantic partners, and/or family members

**Inside Group...**

- One of the benefits of group therapy is the opportunity to receive feedback from others in a supportive environment. It is rare to find friends who will gently point out how you might behave in ways that hurt yourself or others, but this is precisely what the group can offer. This is done in a respectful, gentle way, so that you can hear it and make use of it.
- You control what, how much, and when you share with the group. You can be helped by listening to others and thinking about how their disclosures might apply to you, but you will gain most by voicing your thoughts and feelings.
- It is very important for group members to feel safe. Group leaders are there to help develop a safe environment.
- Most people spend the first couple of sessions getting used to group. Over the span of several sessions members begin to self-disclose more and more.
- If group therapy is being recommended to you, it is because your clinician believes that it is the best way to address your concerns. Your clinician can help you develop goals that fit with group therapy and tell you what to expect once you start group therapy.
- For more information on group therapy at Counseling and Psychological Services please see our website at www.caps.uh.edu. Our website lists our group offerings and meeting times during the semester. Our website features a detailed informational video about group therapy as well.

**What do I talk about?**

Talk about what brought you to the counseling center in the first place. Tell the group members what is bothering you. If you need support, let the group know. If you think you need confrontation, let them know this also. It is important to tell people what you expect of them.

You can prepare for group by writing down answers to the following questions:

1. What is one thing that you would like to change about yourself?
2. What are some things that you can do to bring about this change in yourself?
3. What do you see as barriers to making these changes?