



University Counseling Center

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Orientation to UCC Group Counseling Services

While there are different types of groups, they each contribute to increased well-being by fostering healing and growth in a contained environment.

Interpersonal process groups provide space to explore personal and relational issues through self-reflection and community. People often experience increased self-awareness and improvement in their relationship skills.

Psychoeducational and skills-based groups offer new knowledge on a given topic or set of coping strategies. Participants engage with others while learning and practicing their skills.

Support groups, while therapeutic, are not therapy. Members of support groups connect with others confronting similar experiences and offer one another a supportive sense of community and belonging. Members of support groups can also attend individual counseling at the UCC, and facilitators may recommend attending counseling in addition to attending the group.

Facilitators: Groups are facilitated by licensed clinicians, pre-licensed clinicians working under the supervision of a licensed clinician, or co-lead with a licensed clinician and graduate level intern. UCC groups and facilitators reflect our commitment to inclusion and multicultural appreciation.

General Guidelines: Although each group has its own culture and norms, all UCC groups follow some overarching guidelines. Interpersonal process or therapy groups require an intake appointment and referral to attend a pregroup screening appointment to join the group. A pregroup screening is a 30-minute opportunity to meet the group facilitator(s) to discuss the group and address any questions or concerns about attending. Support, skills, and psychoeducational groups do not typically require an intake, though you can meet with the facilitator prior to joining if requested. Support groups can be registered for here:

<https://counselingcenter.utah.edu/forms/support-groups-registration.php>



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Below are general guidelines that foster a safe, rewarding group experience to members:

1. Confidentiality

- a. We ask that everything said in group remains confidential and that you agree to not reveal the identity of other group members to anyone outside of the group. Although everyone is expected to maintain confidentiality, we have no control over the actual actions of others. Please talk to facilitators if you have any concerns regarding confidentiality.
- b. Facilitators are mandated to break confidentiality and report the following cases:
 - i. If you threaten imminent harm to yourself or someone else
 - ii. If you disclose knowledge of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult
 - iii. If required by the law
 - iv. If you disclose you have a communicable disease that is a serious public health risk that is not actively being treated or been reported to a healthcare professional

2. Respect

- a. Be thoughtful and intentional in providing and responding to feedback. We are here to help, not judge each other.
- b. Please respect individual differences. Diversity is fundamental to a healthy group, and respect for others' beliefs, lifestyles, religion, politics, etc. is expected. Seek to understand the views of others, know that we can agree to disagree.
- c. Please use "I" statements and speak for yourself, ask for what you need, and respectfully provide and receive feedback. Do not provide unsolicited advice or ask intrusive questions. Take responsibility for your words or actions.
- d. Everyone has the right to speak and to be heard. Please express disagreement and strong emotions such as anger in a way that does not threaten or intimidate others.
- e. Please honor silence because it provides the opportunity to process thoughts and feelings.
- f. Please refrain from making judgmental comments, interrupting others, or disrupting the group by having side conversations. No texting or phone calls are permitted during group.
- g. If you do or say something that hurts someone else, try to process and compassionately relate with any group member whose actions were perceived as hurtful or offensive, and do not hold those experiences against that person in the future.

3. Time

- a. Notice how much you talk and how much you listen, allowing space for everyone in the group to participate. I have the right to choose what I disclose in group, remain silent, or pass.
- b. Group facilitators will strive to begin and end on time. They are responsible to manage time and work to ensure that members' needs are being met.



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4. Attendance
 - a. We request that you commit to regular attendance. If you are going to be absent, please let your group members know during group when you will not be able to attend. If you need to cancel between group meetings, please notify your facilitators by calling 801-586-6826. For interpersonal or therapy groups, there is a \$5.00 no-show fee for not canceling group attendance prior to the start of group. Support groups are held on a “drop-in” basis and there are no fees for not attending or canceling.
 - b. Once referred to a group, we ask that you attend a minimum of 3 group sessions before seeking reassignment if the group does not feel like a good fit for you at that time. Entering a group setting often requires a period of adjustment (3-5 sessions) to understand how the group might benefit you and your needs, as well as gaining comfortability with the group and making connections with other group members.
 - c. Please arrive with enough time to complete the CCAPS before each session- if your group does this.
5. If for some reason you must end your participation in the group, please give at least one week’s notice in the group and plan to take time to say good bye to the group during the next group meeting.
6. Avoid comparing the significance of problems. Everyone’s distress is valid and everyone deserves space to process or gain support.
7. In support groups, socialization outside of group is permitted. In all other groups, outside group contact is highly discouraged and may have a negative impact on group dynamics.
8. If a facilitator believes your needs go beyond what group can effectively offer, the facilitator will meet with you to discuss other options and make a plan with you and better support your needs.
9. Prior to group meetings, the use of any mind- or mood-altering substances is not permitted.
10. There is no session limit for UCC group attendance. If you are eligible for UCC services, you can access group services.
11. Resources you can access in between group session if you are in crisis:
 - a. University Counseling Center: 801-581-6826
 - b. 24-hour crisis line at HMHI: 801- 587-3000
 - c. SafeUT app for 24/7 access to a counselor

Welcome to group counseling at the UCC! Contact the following people if you have concerns about group: Gretchen Anstadt, LCSW, Interim Assistant Training Director & Coordinator of Social Work training, UCC Groups Coordinator; Claudia Navarro, LCSW, Clinical Director; Roberto Martinez, LCSW, Interim Assistant Clinical Director; Scott McAward, PhD., Executive Director. Reach us at 801- 581-6826.

Name of Group

Client signature

Facilitator signature