



**SUNSERVE COUNSELING  
AND PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES (SCPS)  
THERAPY GROUP NORMS**

**Introduction:**

Welcome. Groups will sometimes provide nurture, affirmation, and acceptance, especially when you are feeling vulnerable, lonely, or lost. Groups will sometimes provide understanding, guidance, and insight when you are seeking feedback about your life. Groups will also sometimes challenge you to reach higher and live more fully. The more of yourself you bring to a group experience, the more opportunity you will have to take away something of value for yourself from a group experience

Want to know about how our groups function? Our desire is to make groups a place where you are safe to raise your issues and concerns and where you can count on the respect and active good will of your fellow group members.

**1. Confidentiality:**

Trust is the foundation of the group process. Group safety is built on confidentiality. Therefore, members may never identify any other member of the group by name or identifying characteristics to anyone outside the group. In terms of SCPS's responsibility to clients, however, the rules of confidentiality do not apply whenever a group member is actively threatening harm to self or others, or is substantially unable to care for self, or if it is learned that a group member is abusing a minor or dependent elder. In those instances the group leader may be required to intervene.

**2. Communication and Personal Responsibility Issues:**

Group members are expected to phone the SCPS office (954) 764-5557 to let the group know when they will be late or cannot be present for a group session for closed groups, unless they have already informed the group about their planned absences in an earlier session.

Groups begin and end promptly at the times they are scheduled. Members are expected to show up on time for group and are expected to stay for the entire group session.

Group members are expected to attend all sessions of a closed group, unless special arrangements for absences have been made with the group leader and members of the group. Open groups are to be attended as you see the need.

No mood altering substances (alcohol, non-prescription or recreational drugs) should be consumed prior to attending group. Group members who come to the group session under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be asked to leave.

### **3. Interpersonal Demeanor**

Group members are expected to actively participate in the work of the group.

Disagreements between members are normal and to be expected. Verbal and/or physical/sexual intimidation and harassment of any kind among group members, however, will not be tolerated during or outside group sessions. Group members engaging in such behaviors will be counseled in the group and may be dismissed from the group if such behavior continues.

On occasion, contact with the group leader outside group time may be necessary. What is said to the group leader outside of group may be shared with other group members in group session when that is appropriate.

Consuming food and drink can distract from group work and normally will not be allowed, except when specific dietary needs require otherwise.

There is no charge for open drop-in groups; however, there is a suggested \$5 donation requested.

Additional agreements for closed therapy groups:

1. To commit to an initial set of 12 sessions before making any decision to leave the group unless, after discussion with the group leader, it is agreed that an earlier departure is appropriate for any reason
2. To attend at least two sessions of group to process my departure at whatever time I decide to end my participation in the group
3. To pay a fee for this group as agreed upon in conversation with the group leader and to pay that fee at each session of the group