

Group Psychotherapy at Lifespan Psychology

Group Psychotherapy aims to achieve a healthier integration within the individual and in their network of relationships. Focusing on the relationship between the individual and the group places emphasis on the essentially social nature of human experience. Group Psychotherapy can help people strengthen their ability to make relationships and to better understand and manage the feelings that emerge during this process i.e to mentalize. Group Psychotherapy requires a level of commitment as it takes place over months and years rather than weeks. A common treatment length is 18 months. It may benefit people who have undertaken brief or skills focused therapy yet continue to have difficulties in their lives and relationships.

It's not uncommon to approach this kind of therapy with trepidation or to fear that you're not getting the same value as you might by meeting one-to-one. However, group psychotherapy is perfectly tailored to the challenges of the modern world. The presence of others strengthens and enriches the therapeutic experience. By listening to and offering different perspectives, group therapy participants can find greater awareness and different ways forward from other people's experiences, relief at knowing their feelings are shared and a sense of hope in seeing others who have already had some success. The act of sharing prepares us for the reciprocal nature of daily life and nurtures the skills we need to form meaningful relationships in a world where this is increasingly difficult.

Our relationships, in particular our early relationships define the way we think about ourselves and others. Group psychotherapy can offer a reparative experience through which an understanding can be arrived at together about how the events of one's early life can shape our lives today, even in ways we may not be consciously aware. Groups can also provide a relational arena within which familiar dynamics or relational patterns emerge, it is thought this process of recognition, reflection and understanding that change is possible.

As well as helping with relationships with others, groups can be a place one works on the relationship with one's self; groups can be a place where we get to know ourselves better. Groups can act like a mirror that reflect back different aspects of ourselves that can then be examined, internalised and integrated; this has the potential to shift our view of and relationship to ourselves.

The groups will have a mix of gender and age, ethnicity and sexuality; and the issues people are looking to address in therapy may vary.

Group will meet weekly for 90 minutes at set times and will cost \$70 per session. There may be some Medicare rebates on a limited number of sessions.

The modality of the groups will either be Group Analytic or a Mentalization Based Therapy Group (MBT-G). Prior to joining a group you will meet with a therapist for a period of time to assess if group is a suitable treatment modality for you and if so, which particular group will best suit you. The sessions with the therapist will also prepare you for joining a group.

If you want to read more about group psychotherapy:

<https://www.groupanalysisnorth.com/what-is-group-analysis/>

<https://www.groupanalysis.org/therapyservices>

<https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2001/may/19/weekend7.weekend4>

<https://www.talkspace.com/blog/benefits-of-group-therapy/>

Referrals:

If you would like to discuss possible referrals, please contact Andrew MacKinnon on:

Email: a.mackinnon@lifespancecentre.com.au or by Phone: 0401 641 481