

What to Expect When Attending a Support Group

What usually happens first?

- Facilitators will greet you and share how the group is set up.
- You may be given a nametag so that everyone can remember names. (We don't currently use a sign-in sheet).
- As the group begins, the [Group Guidelines](#) will be reviewed and discussed if needed.
- Next, there is Check-ins where everyone is given an opportunity to briefly introduce themselves and share a bit about how they're doing for 1-2 minutes (you may decline if you are uncomfortable sharing).
- The group discussion begins after check-ins. Facilitators encourage active participation and helps the group stay on track but center the participants' sharing and experiences over their professional expertise.

Do I need to disclose my story, situation, or any mental health diagnosis?

No. No one is required to speak. Everyone has the option to decline to speak. If you do choose to share, your information will never be shared outside of the group. You may use only your first name if this makes you more comfortable.

Why should I attend a support group?

- **A Sense of Community:** connecting with others can decrease isolation and loneliness
- **Emotional Healing:** sharing your story can be therapeutic and expressing thoughts and feelings helps with processing them and empowers more effective coping
- **To share information,** keeping each other up to date on news
- **New Perspectives and Coping Strategies:** Hearing others' experiences can provide fresh insights and practical coping techniques that you might not have considered before.
- **Access to Valuable Resources:** fostering relationships, identifying services, tools, etc. that extend beyond the meetings