

ANXIETY GROUP 10-SESSION PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL GROUP

Group Description: The Anxiety Group provides participants with a set of cognitive and behavioral skills training modules that address:

- Relaxation skills
- Cognitive restructuring
- Emotional expression

Group Objectives:

Each participant will receive education about anxiety and training in coping skills (including cognitive, emotional, and behavioral skills) to better manage the impact of anxiety and to improve the participant's overall quality of life. By the conclusion of the group, participants will have learned to:

- Engage in three types of relaxation skills
- Understand that anxiety is experienced in three parts
- Self-monitor their anxiety and their coping techniques
- Identify "self-talk" that contributes to anxiety
- Develop alternative "self-talk" that decreases anxiety
- Calm their bodies when they feel anxiety coming on
- Identify and express feelings
- Develop their coping plan to decrease anxiety

Group Structure: Each group module is designed to take one hour. Every module begins with a review of the material covered in the previous session. Due to the content of the group and the intended participants, it is recommended that group size be limited to 8 to 10 participants and that the group meet once a week.

This group is cognitive-behavioral in content and tone. Although there is room for discussion and emotion in this group, this group is not intended to be a forum for emotional uncovering work or emotional catharsis. It is solution focused, not problem focused. At several points during the modules, instructors are reminded to maintain this cognitive focus and keep the sessions structured.

Because the modules gradually build on each other, it is preferable for participants to join the group at the beginning rather than later in the module series. Handouts are included for each module.

- Module 1: Introduction and Basics
- Module 2: Breathing to Calm Your Mind
- Module 3: Using Muscles and Imagination to Calm Yourself
- Module 4: Three Parts of Anxiety
- Module 5: Self-Talk
- Module 6: STOP Negative Self-Talk
- Module 7: Sitting With Anxiety
- Module 8: Expressing Feelings
- Module 9: Summary and Self-Assessment
- Module 10: Wrap-Up & Make a Plan

Each participant will be introduced to five core guidelines that will continue as the foundation for all groups:

1. Safety comes first. To be successful in this group, the participant needs to remain safe. Active suicidal thinking and self-injurious behaviors are not safe. Remaining safe means being able to experience discomfort without becoming self-injurious or suicidal.
2. Stay positive. The participant needs to stay positive. The focus of the group is not on “war stories,” competition, negative comparisons, fruitless complaining, or bitter rages. None of these behaviors will help the participant reach his/her goals.
3. Focus on life. The focus of the group is on improving participants’ thinking and behavior. The participant needs to focus on his/her own goals and how to reach them.
4. Stay responsible. Participants are responsible for their own behaviors and feelings. The group will help participants take responsibility and take control over their negative states of mind. Ultimately, however, each participant is responsible for him/herself.
5. Avoid therapy-interfering behaviors. Self-injurious and suicidal behaviors are considered to be therapy-interfering behaviors and distractions from the goals of the group. When participants hurt themselves, they are interfering with making progress, and with their own therapy. Participants are in this group to get help. To get that help, participants need to avoid behaviors that interfere with treatment. In short, participants need to stay safe.

This psychoeducational group module is designed to promote coping skills, hope, future-orientation, and long-term planning. This module is not designed as a stand alone intervention to address the needs of inmates who suffer from severe depression or require intensive behavioral and safety interventions. However, the group may be included as part of the treatment for inmates with these difficulties.

During the first group session, each participant will be provided a form describing the focus of the groups and three group rules. Participants will be asked to agree to all the terms of the participation agreement and validate their consensus by signing the form.

Pre and post outcome testing is included to measure the effectiveness of the groups.

Handouts to Facilitate Group Process:

Handout 1A: Participation Agreement	Handout 6A: S-T-O-P Your Negative Self-Talk
Handout 1B: Group Goals and Content	Handout 6B: Putting In a New Tape
Handout 1C: Pre-Test & Self-Assessment	Handout 6C: Make Yourself Some New Tapes
Handout 2A: Learning to Relax Through Deep Breathing	Handout 6D: Monitoring Your Anxiety Log
Handout 2B: Resting Your Mind: Circles of Awareness	Handout 7A: Recognizing Body Cues to Anxiety
Handout 3A: Learning to Relax Through Progressive Muscle Relaxation	Handout 7B: Homework: Sit With Anxiety
Handout 3B: Creating a Safe Place to Rest	Handout 7C: Monitoring Your Anxiety Log
Handout 3C: Detailing Your Safe Place	Handout 8A: Expressing Emotions
Handout 3D: Tracking Your Relaxation Exercises	Handout 8B: Monitoring Your Anxiety Log
Handout 4A: Three Parts of Anxiety	Handout 9A: Is Relaxation Effective?
Handout 4B: Monitoring Your Anxiety Log	Handout 9B: Post-Test & Self-Assessment
Handout 5A: Self-Talk & Anxiety	Handout 9C: Monitoring Your Anxiety Log
Handout 5B: What Kind of Self-Talker Are You?	Handout 10A: My Coping Plan
Handout 5C: Monitoring Your Anxiety Log	
	Certificate of Completion!