

Lisa S Powell PhD, CGP, EMDRIA Certified
Licensed Psychologist, PSY 22286

**GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY
CONTRACT**

The following rules are important and necessary, in our experience, for you to derive maximum benefit from group therapy.

ATTENDANCE

1. You are expected to attend every group session, be on time, and to remain throughout the session; that weekly group time is considered the priority for that time slot. If you cannot be present, call the office so your absence will be known from the beginning. If you know you will not be present at the following week's session, please announce that fact in the current meeting. Steady and consistent attendance is imperative.
2. All members agree to work actively on the problems that brought them to group by putting feelings into words, not actions. Most individuals stay in group for at least one year. This is not a requirement and you shouldn't remain in group if you are not benefiting from it. However, if you do experience a lack of progress, it is important to discuss it with the group at least one month before leaving. The exploration of one's lack of progress is often very beneficial.
3. All sessions will be charged for, regardless of the reason for absence. Group membership continues whether you are present or not, and no one can substitute for you in your absence. If you expect a prolonged absence of a month or more because of work commitments, illness, etc., you may request for an exception to this rule, and this will be handled in a group session.

PROCEDURE IN THE GROUP

1. Central to group therapy is expressing your feelings openly and honestly. You are expected

to take responsibility for sharing your feelings, your fantasies as well as your dreams. All feelings about fellow group members, including the therapist, are important to express. No subject is out of bounds. Feelings of anger, sex, spirituality and those associated with money are so rarely dealt with that they deserve special attention in the therapeutic group.

2. While outside content and details of our lives is kept to a minimum, you are strongly encouraged to bring any life circumstance that requires a major decision to the group.
3. Any interaction between two or more group members outside the group is important to group process, and will be considered group business to be discussed in group sessions. Sub-group secrets tend to impede an individual's progress. The relationships made in group are to be used therapeutically, not socially. For example, more is usually gained therapeutically by talking in the group about your wish to go to dinner with someone in the group than by secretly doing it.

Remember discharging energy/feelings of group material outside of group can be detrimental to the process.

4. Time boundaries of the group are strictly abided by. Refrain from engaging in the group process prior to the commencement of group while in the waiting room, as well as the temptation of continuing the group process afterward e.g. in the elevator or the parking lot afterward. Group will begin at its designated time; and it will end on time regardless of where the group or group members may be in the process.
5. The use of alcohol or other mind-affecting drugs, prior to a group session, interferes with therapy. Please do not consume alcohol or other mind-affecting drugs prior or during group.

6. Consumption of food is not permitted during group.
7. Cell phones must be turned off or completely silent during the group. If you have an emergency and require access to your phone during the please announce that to the group at the beginning of session.
8. Identity of other group members, as well as material revealed within the group is privileged and confidential. Discussion of the group with spouses and other intimates should be restricted to discussion of your own reactions and experiences. If others are mentioned, care should be taken to avoid revelations of a personal nature and you should be sure identification of persons is not possible. It is each person's responsibility to protect the names and identities of fellow group members.

TERMINATION FROM THE GROUP

1. Termination should be planned. On joining the group, members agree to remain until the problems that brought them to group have been resolved. The group is open-ended, i.e. individual members will come and go, but the group will continue. Leaving the group is an important process and will provoke feelings and fantasies in you and others, which need to be shared and explored.
2. No sudden terminations, such as telephone terminations, or any termination without discussion with the entire group can be accepted as reasonable or therapeutic. If you are thinking about leaving the group, mention of this fact must be made in the first half of a group session, and then at least one month is recommended for the group to deal with this important development. Leaving and being left are events with such an

impact upon people's lives that as much time as possible should be allowed for reactions to be examined.

PAYMENT OF FEES

1. The weekly group fee is \$90.00 per session. Payment is due at the beginning of the first session of every month. You will be paying for all upcoming scheduled sessions for the current month at that time. e.g. February 2021 has four Tuesdays therefore \$360 (\$90x4) is due at the February 2nd session; but March has five Tuesdays therefore \$450 (\$90x5) is due at the March 2nd session.
2. IvyPay: If you are not paying by check or cash please ensure you are set up on IvyPay. You will receive a link via text instructing you to set up your credit card. Once set up, a charge will be put through to your credit card at the beginning of each month. You will receive a text confirming the charge.
15. Unlike the common taboo of speaking about one's feelings concerning money, you will be encouraged to address any feelings connected to money during group sessions. Feelings about the fee, unpaid balances are often especially useful to explore.