

# Support Group Meeting Agenda

## 1 Welcome

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## 2 Read

Group Guidelines +  
Principles of Support

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## 3 Check In

(1-2 minutes)

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## 4 Group Discussion

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## 5 Closing

Revised May 2021

# Group Guidelines

The Group Guidelines tell us how we are going to care for each other in the group. They provide the mutual consideration, acceptance and protection that are often hard to find in the real world. We will follow these guidelines at each meeting to create the sanctuary and safe place we need.

## 1 Start and stop on time

Yes, you will get home at the appropriate hour!

## 2 Time limit for check in

1-2 minutes. If each of us told our entire story at every meeting, nothing else would ever get done.

## 3 Absolute confidentiality

What we say here, stays here.

## 4 Be respectful

Give me grace and space to get through this trouble.

## 5 Be mindful of others:

no monopolizing or crosstalk

## 6 Keep it in the here and now

We're more effective when we focus on what's happening right now.

## 7 Empathize with each other's situation

Even if you don't understand, know that I am doing my very best.

# Principles of Support

The Principles of Support represent what we are striving for as we struggle to come to terms with mental illness. This is our belief system regarding universal, necessary truths that guide and strengthen us when life deals us this particular challenge.

- 1** We will see the individual first, not the illness.
- 2** We recognize mental illnesses are medical illnesses that may have environmental triggers.
- 3** We understand that mental illnesses are traumatic events.
- 4** We aim for better coping skills.
- 5** We find strength in sharing experiences.
- 6** We reject stigma and do not tolerate discrimination.
- 7** We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
- 8** We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
- 9** We embrace humor as healthy.
- 10** We accept we cannot resolve all problems.
- 11** We expect a better future in a realistic way.
- 12** We will never give up hope!

# Emotional Stages of Recovery

## Dealing with Catastrophic Events

Crisis/Chaos/Shock  
Denial; “Normalizing”  
Hoping against Hope

### Needs

Support  
Comfort  
Empathy for confusion  
Help finding resources  
Crisis management  
Reassurance  
Empathy for pain  
Permission to be numb  
Hope  
NAMI

## Learning to Cope

Anger/Guilt/Resentment  
Recognition  
Grief

### Needs

To permit and vent feelings  
To keep hope  
Education  
Self-care  
Networking  
Skill training  
To let go  
To learn the system  
Hope  
NAMI

## Moving into Advocacy

Understanding  
Acceptance  
Advocacy/Action

### Needs

To restore balance in life  
Responsiveness from the system  
To find meaning  
A sense of empowerment  
Activism  
Hope  
NAMI