

# Group Considerations

Welcome to the *Mindful Change* group – a project of Lurline Raposo Counselling. Here are some important things I ask you to consider as a participant:

**Confidentiality:** You are expected to keep the disclosures, personal information, and identities of other group members confidential. However, you are welcome to discuss your *experience* of the group with others. Since this is a group therapy situation, we cannot guarantee privacy and confidentiality by other group participants.

We, as counsellors, have a “duty to warn” if there is a risk of imminent harm to yourself or someone else. There is also a legal requirement to report any abuse or neglect of a minor, or the witnessing of abuse by a minor to the proper authorities.

**Attendance:** You are expected to make group a priority and come every week. Each week builds on the previous week and attending regularly generates the most benefit for you and your fellow group members. If you have to be absent due to something unexpected such as an illness, please contact Lurline Raposo ahead of time by email [info@lrcounselling.ca](mailto:info@lrcounselling.ca) or text/ phone 250-619-0363.

**Confusion:** We are talking about approaching thoughts and feelings in a very different way from the way most of us have been taught. Therefore, you will be a little confused at times, especially in the beginning. I ask that you approach this confusion with openness and willingness. It is a normal part of the process, and you don't have to understand everything perfectly to benefit from it. Things get clearer through the experiential activities – simply trust that more clarity will come.

**Patience:** Most of the strategies, experiences, and techniques of this group build on one another, and it sometimes takes a while for their benefits to be obvious. "Improvement" happens at its own pace and studies show that progress often continues after the group has ended. This is especially true with a group as short as 6 weeks – it is hard to make significant change such a short time. Our hope is that the group will provide you with tools that you can continue to work with and benefit from for the rest of your life.

**Participation:** We are going to do a lot of different things -- explore concepts, engage in experiential exercises (some which are unusual), articulate what we really want in life, and encounter thoughts and feelings in new ways. Do your best to put your whole self into the experience. The more you invest in the group, the more you are likely to benefit.

**Relationships:** As we move through the series, you will build relationships with one another inside the group. To help facilitate this, I encourage you not to build relationships with one another outside the group during the program. Sometimes this can get in the way of the work that we do inside group because there are experiences going on between group members that the entire group has not shared.

**LIFE Exercises and Handouts:** Every week we will give you some exercises (things to read, worksheets, mindfulness exercises) to do between groups. These are **very important** to the process, so give them your best effort. We will do our best to limit how time-consuming they are given that everyone is busy. But these are critical for the practical application of the concepts and allow people to learn through their experiences not just from hearing me or others talk about concepts.

**Rescuing:** As we get to know one another, people will begin to share personal details about their lives, feelings, and thoughts. Our normal reaction when others are suffering is to try to help them get away from their pain. We do this by urging them to look on the bright side, offering solutions, or telling them it's going to be all right. This is referred to as "rescuing." We are going to try not to do this in our group. Not because it's a bad thing to do, but because it's a strategy for controlling and minimizing feelings. In this group, we are learning to do something different than trying to "get rid of" thoughts and feelings. This might not make complete sense right now, but we will be talking more about this in our group.

**Social Media:** We invite you to connect with our agencies through our FACEBOOK and TWITTER business accounts. However, our registration bodies prevent us from accepting clients as contacts through any *personal* social media accounts. Please remember that we cannot protect your privacy should you choose to reveal your connections to our organizations through social media. Texting and e-mails can be used for brief relaying of information.

**Our Commitment:** As group facilitators, we commit to be present, hard-working, and compassionate in the service of helping you move in the direction of the life you want to live.

## Group Member Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Postal \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the primary purpose for participating in this group?

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there a condition or diagnosis that may affect your participation?

\_\_\_\_\_

*I understand my rights and responsibilities as a group participant and the counsellors' responsibilities and expectations of group therapy. I agree to pay the negotiated fee and to participate in the group under the conditions outlined in this document.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_