

Changeways Treatment Group

What is the Changeways group and what will I learn in the group?

The Changeways group is a group designed for people with depression or low mood as their main concern. The group teaches skills in problem-solving and managing your lifestyle to help with your mood. The group will work on the following:

- Identifying problems and moving them into goals for change.
- Breaking goals down into manageable steps.
- Learning about stress.
- Learning about signs, symptoms, and causes of depression.
- Understanding the effects of diet, exercise, sleep habits, caffeine, and drugs and alcohol.
- Learning about the importance of building recreation into one's daily life.
- Ways to develop a more satisfying social life.
- An introduction to assertiveness skills.
- Identifying negative and self-defeating thought patterns.
- Learning to think in a more balanced and realistic manner.

When and where does the group meet?

The group meets weekly at a Community Mental Health (CMH) clinic for 10 sessions. Each session is 2 hours long.

What do I need to bring?

You will be given handouts each week. Please bring a binder for these handouts, a pen, and reading glasses if needed.

Who will be there?

There are usually 2 group leaders who work in CMH along with group members who share similar concerns. All group members are patients, referred to the group by their clinicians.

How much do I need to share with the group?

Everyone has different levels of comfort with talking to people they are just getting to know and it's normal to feel some anxiety when starting a new group. Often people find it helpful if they are able to share with the group, but please feel free to engage in the conversation at your own comfort level.

Will this group help me?

Therapy can be very hard and can sometimes make us feel vulnerable, but can bring big rewards, too. What you get from this group or any other therapy completely depends on what you put into it. It's definitely not enough to just attend all the sessions. It's also not enough to really want things to be better. You need to be ready to make some hard choices and to start making important changes in how you approach your life.

To benefit from the group, you'll need to use the skills and information that you learn in the group in your day-to-day life between sessions. You'll decide which problems you want to work on and the group will help you create a plan for carrying out the changes you want to make. You'll be expected to read over the materials for each session, complete the exercises in the handouts, and carry out the home practice assignments you set for yourself based on your life goals.

The group is based on thorough research, which has shown that if you actively apply the skills taught in the group, there is reason to be very hopeful. Change isn't easy and you may progress slowly or quickly at times, but you can work on building a more fulfilling life and we look forward to supporting you in this! For this reason, we urge you to come to every group and do the work assigned for you between group sessions. Missing sessions impacts your ability to get what you need from the group. Your group leader can talk to you about whether you need to go to the next group if you are unable to make the sessions.

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For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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