

# Bipolar Education Support Talks (BEST) Treatment Group

## Who is this treatment group for?

The BEST group is designed for people with Bipolar Affective Disorder. This includes Bipolar I, Bipolar II, Cyclothymia, and Schizoaffective Disorder.

## What will I learn?

You will learn about your illness, medications, non-medication treatments, ways to cope, and ways to manage your symptoms. You should be in a stable phase of your illness before starting this group.

## The group will include the following sessions:

- Signs and symptoms
- Symptom management
- Medications and other treatments
- InterPersonal Social Rhythm Therapy (IPSRT) – This includes:
  1. Managing your mood symptoms. You will learn how to make your daily routines regular.
  2. Dealing with your interpersonal problems related to the onset of an episode. You will learn how to cope better with the psychosocial and relationship problems associated with having bipolar.
- Stabilization sheets – These sheets help you keep track of your social routines.
- Timeline – This gives a history of your illness, episodes, treatments, and any life circumstances that seem to be associated with the onset of your symptoms.
- Interpersonal inventory – This assesses the quality of your interpersonal relationships.
- Interpersonal effectiveness – You will learn how to improve your relationships.
- Grief – We will help you explore your feelings about having bipolar, grieve for your “lost healthy self”, and come to terms with how bipolar has changed your life.

## Who will be at the group sessions?

There are usually 2 group leaders who work in Community Mental Health (CMH), along with group members who share similar concerns. There are guest speakers for some sessions and also one family session.

## What will be expected of me?

Everyone has different levels of comfort with talking to people they are just getting to know. 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 take part in the conversation at your own comfort level. You have the right to confidentiality and privacy within the group.

## When and where does the group meet?

The group meets weekly for 16 weeks at Cole Harbour Community Mental Health Clinic in Cole Harbour Place at 51 Forest Hills Parkway. Each session lasts 90 minutes. **Please make every effort to attend all sessions.**

If you get sick or can't come for another important reason, **please call** before the session to let the group leaders know. Please make sure to stop by the office at some point during the week of the missed session to get the handouts so you can catch up before the next meeting. If you miss more than 2 sessions, you may be asked to join the next group to get the full benefit of the group.

The next group starts: \_\_\_\_\_

### Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

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

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If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.