

## Common Misconceptions about Group Therapy

### **I will be forced to share all of my deepest thoughts, feelings, and secrets with the group.**

- You decide what, how much, and when you share with the group and no one can force you to reveal anything you don't feel comfortable revealing. Most group members tends to share more about themselves when they feel safe in the group. While we recognize that sharing can sometimes be uncomfortable, we also know that many members report getting more out of group when they decide to share more personal aspects about themselves and their experiences. We encourage you to be aware of your pace for group involvement and to share when you feel comfortable doing so.

### **Group therapy will take longer than individual therapy because I will have to share the time with others.**

- Group therapy is often more efficient than individual therapy for two reasons. First, you can benefit from being in the group even during sessions when you say little but listen carefully to others. You will find that you have a lot in common with other groups members and as they work on their concerns you can learn more about yourself. Secondly, group members will often bring up issues that strike a chord with you, but that you might not have been aware of or brought up yourself.

### **I will be verbally attacked by the group leaders or other group members.**

- It is very important that group members feel safe. Group leaders are there to help develop a safe environment. Feedback is often difficult to hear. As group members come to trust and accept one another, they generally experience feedback and even confrontation as positive, as if it were coming from their best friend. One of the benefits of group therapy is the opportunity to receive feedback from others in a supportive environment. It is rare to find friends who will gently point out how you might be behaving in ways that hurt yourself or others, but this is precisely what group can offer. This will be done in a respectful, gentle way, so that you can hear it and make use of it.

### **Group therapy is second-best to individual therapy.**

- Group therapy is being recommended to you because your intake counselor believes that it is the best way to address your concerns. We do not put people into group therapy because we don't have space in individual therapy, or because we want to save time. We recommend group when it is the most effective method to help you. Your intake counselor can discuss with you why group is what we recommend for you.

### **It's hard for me to talk to people; I'll never be able to share in a group.**

- Most people are anxious about being able to talk in group. Almost without exception, within a few sessions people find that they do begin to talk in the group. Group members remember what it is like to be new to the group, so you will most likely get a lot of support for beginning to talk in the group.