“Introduction to Group Therapy at the University of West Florida Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)”

Keya Wiggins, Ph.D.: Hello, I’m Dr. Keya Wiggins, and I’m a Licensed Psychologist and the Group Coordinator at the University of West Florida Counseling & Psychological Services.

Today, I’m going to provide you with a brief introduction to our group therapy program. This intro will include a brief explanation of the type of groups offered at UWF CAPS, the group screen process, and information about participation in group therapy.

The type of groups that are offered may vary by the semester. However, some of the most frequent groups that are offered include ‘The Coed Understanding Self and Others’ or USO group, ‘The Women’s Understanding Self and Others’ group, The ‘In, Out, and In Between’ group, and ‘The Expressive Arts’ group. Additional group offerings may include ‘Sexual Assault Survivors’ and ‘Non-Traditional Co-Ed Understanding Self and Others’.

The Co-Ed USO group is helpful for students who struggle with issues such as social anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, fear of rejection, difficulty opening up to others, concerns about trusting others, and interpersonal relationship concerns.

A variety of women’s issues are addressed in Women’s USO. Some of these issues include low self-esteem, body image concerns, sexual abuse or assault, romantic relationships, relationships with parents, and concerns about self-concept. For instance, feeling like you don’t know or understand yourself.

The In, Out, and In Between Group is for anyone struggling with issues related to their sexual orientation or gender identity. This is a supportive group that provides a safe space for members to discuss issues related to coming out, transitioning, and feelings of isolation.

Lastly, The Expressive Arts Group is for clients who would like to address issues of trauma, pain, or loss using expressive arts. This group is great for individuals who have difficulty expressing themselves with words.

Before participating in group therapy, you must have an intake appointment. If you are a new client, contact our front desk staff to schedule an appointment for an intake. When completing the paperwork for your intake, make sure that you place a check next to the group that you’re interested in.

If you are an existing client, speak to your counselor about your interest in participating in group. He or she will guide you in establishing goals for treatment and they’ll set you up with a group screen appointment.

Group screen appointments typically last 30 to 45 minutes. Before participating in group, you will meet with the counselor or counselors who facilitate that particular group. They will provide you with information about group, go over the group rules, and answer any questions or concerns that you have about being in the group. This is also an opportunity to determine if group therapy best fits your
treatment needs. If so, the group facilitators will assist you in establishing goals for treatment, and you will be invited to participate in group.

It’s perfectly normal to feel anxious before your first session of group therapy. Each week, you will check in with the front desk before the group begins. It’s important that you give yourself enough time to arrive on time.

Groups need at least five members to make for a semester. As you can see, there are ten chairs in the group room. Two are usually reserved for facilitators making that a maximum of eight members per group.

I hope you have found this introductory group video to be informative. Please see our website at uwf.edu/counseling for additional information about group.