

Frequently Asked Questions About Group:

How effective is group counseling?

Research suggests that group counseling is the treatment of choice for many issues that are common among university students. It has been shown to be as effective as individual counseling, and for some issues, it can be even more effective than individual counseling.

How can group counseling be as effective as individual counseling? I'm concerned I'll "lose out."

Most individuals are pleasantly surprised at how much they gain from participating in group. Unlike individual counseling, group therapy provides invaluable opportunities for you to connect with others who might have similar problems, practice new interpersonal skills in a group context, and gain multiple perspectives on your concerns from different group members.

What is a typical BUCC Group Like?

Members are welcome to bring any issues to the group that feel are important, and the primary focus of therapy in the group is on the interactions among group members. This occurs as members give each other feedback on their interpersonal styles and identify ways in which they feel more connected to one another.

Do I have to reveal all my deepest secrets and feelings to the group?

No, you don't have to do that! You decide how much you want to share and no one can force you to reveal your secrets or feelings. Most group members tend 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 of themselves. We encourage you to be aware of your pace for group involvement and to share when you feel comfortable doing so.

Because there are so many group members, I'm afraid that I'll have few opportunities to talk.

Figuring out how to get your needs met in group is a very common concern among members. If you find yourself needing more time in the group, we recommend that you bring it up within the group. Group is an excellent place to work on assertiveness!

I am shy by nature; I won't be able to talk as much as the other group members.

That's really ok. It's normal that some members will talk less than others in the group. You can tell the group that you're shy. We encourage group members to be respectful of individual differences. You can take your time to open up to the group.

What if a member of the group is my friend or classmate?

We recognize that it might be awkward to be in the same group with a friend/classmate. Please let group leaders know immediately if you have an existing relationship with someone else in the group. If that happens, the group leaders, in consultation with the group members, will decide how best to resolve this situation. It may work out to have both of you stay in the same group, or it may be best to have one of you find a different group to join. In the latter case, leaders will consult with you or your friend/classmate and do our best to find another appropriate group that matches your needs and schedule.

If I don't like the group, can I get out of it?

Yes, it's possible to leave the group if you're uncomfortable with it. We know that group is often uncomfortable at the beginning - if you feel this way, you are not alone! We also know that group members report feeling more comfortable after a few sessions, so most group leaders encourage their members to remain in the group for at least a few sessions before they decide to leave. If you do decide to leave the group after attending the first few sessions, most leaders ask that you come to the group one more time to say goodbye to other members.

How many people are in a typical group?

Most groups have between 6 -10 students and 2 group leaders.

What kind of people join a group?

Only BUCC students are eligible to join our groups. Students who join our groups do so with different needs and concerns. In our structured groups, group members usually identify with a specific concern related to the group theme. Our Personal Exploration groups are made up of members with a variety of concerns, including anxiety, depression, relationship problems, and self-esteem issues.

What role do the group leaders play?

Group leaders guide and facilitate self-exploration, give feedback and support, provide comments on interpersonal issues in the group, and encourage group cohesion. In our structured groups, group leaders take a more active role than in our process groups by providing instruction on specific topics related to the group theme.