

# The Intensive Psychotherapy Group Programme

Information booklet for members



# Welcome to the programme

The three days per week Intensive Group Psychotherapy Programme has been in operation since February 1994. The programme aims to offer an opportunity to increase understanding of your psychological, emotional and social difficulties, in order to produce inner personal change.

## Considerations

It is usual and understandable that the thought of coming into group is anxiety provoking. When we feel anxious we often turn to our usual ways of coping which may not have always been helpful. We are committed to helping people to overcome their anxiety and will do our best to make your experience manageable.

Talking about painful feelings in therapy, (which you may have suppressed as a way of coping), might cause some increased degree of distress. The therapists can assist you to address these at a pace that feels manageable.

It is important to be aware of the potential impact that your beginning to change through therapy might have upon close family and friends; they may have to adjust to your development and change is difficult for all of us.

## Attendance

In order for therapy to be effective you must attend very regularly, we think that you need to attend a **minimum of 80% of the therapy sessions** offered in a month. We keep a record of all attendances and discuss these regularly in our community meeting.

We understand that at times people need time off from therapy and that sometimes people have illness, family or child care problems.

If you are unable to attend for 80% of sessions over three consecutive months then we will discharge you from the group programme and work with you to resolve the problem/s that are affecting your attendance.

You may re-join the group programme if this is agreed with the therapist but there will be a minimum of six month break in order to give you time to resolve the problems preventing your regular attendance.

# What you can expect of the therapists

The therapists are committed to working alongside you to help you achieve your individual goals.

The therapists are dedicated to supporting group members overcome matters that trouble them.

The therapists will commence and conclude the therapy and meetings on time.

Whilst the therapy team and professionals in your care adhere to strict professional confidentiality if, in certain exceptional circumstances there is concern for your safety or that of others, we may need to inform other appropriate people, but this will be discussed with you in the first instance. All therapists who work with you in the programme will be aware of your personal circumstances.

You will be offered a review with your therapists approximately every three months. During this review you will receive feedback on your progress and have the opportunity to evaluate your therapy goals.

Following a review, the other professionals in your care will be updated on your progress.

All therapists have a core profession (i.e. nursing, occupational therapy), hold additional qualifications in psychodynamic/psychoanalytic psychotherapy and are members of professional and regulatory bodies, including Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT), United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP).

The therapists are committed to ongoing professional development.

## The groups

Emotional difficulties can often be traced back to our earlier experiences of relationships, which can lead to psychological, relational and occupational difficulties in the present.

One of the main ways in which this causes distress is by adversely impacting upon our current relationships.

By getting people together in groups we create the opportunity to look, not only at the psychological difficulties themselves, but also how they influence our relationships with others.

When we interact with each other in the groups, we are recreating the interpersonal experiences met within everyday life. Situations will emerge which can be used positively to facilitate a deeper understanding of ourselves and others.

The programme values the idea of community spirit. We recognise the importance of an individual's contribution to and the receiving of care from the psychotherapy community.

### Small talking group

There are up to four members in this group plus one therapist. The therapist will be the therapist you see for your individual session. This group is where you will have the opportunity to focus on something that you want to explore with the group. It is helpful to think about this prior to the group so that you can be prepared. This information is then shared with the other members of your medium group in the feedback session directly after this group. One of the group members from each group agrees to feedback the information on behalf of the other members in the small group.

### Medium group

There are up to eight members in this group plus two therapists. There are two medium groups on the programme. This group is where you will have the opportunity to explore your personal issues and contribute to joining with other people.

### Women and mens group

These groups are provided to give women and men the opportunities to explore issues specifically linked to women and men which may be sensitive to discuss in a mixed sex group.





### Mindfulness group

This is a group for all participants of the psychotherapy programme. It is a way to start our day in the best possible position for working in therapy.

According to leading expert and Teacher of Mindfulness Jon Kabat-Zinn, "mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non judgmentally."

This group will include some simple warm up exercises which people are encouraged to do to their own capability.

### Creative therapies – art and drama

These groups are done with your medium group participants. The idea is not to learn how to do art or be a great dramatist. They are experiences, by participating in an activity, to explore personal issues in a creative way. This can be helpful in uncovering more unconscious material and finding a different way of exploring issues.

### Community group

This group is for all participants of the psychotherapy programme. We encourage people to not only value your own therapy journey, but to also take an interest in assisting other group members. In the community group we share information about expected absence from the programme, express concern and assistance to any member who is struggling to attend, share community tasks, set weekly goals, explore any boundary issues and discuss any agenda items anyone may have.

### Individual session

An individual session with your assessing therapist is offered on a fortnightly basis apart from if your therapist is on leave. In this case it may be possible to negotiate another session if that is possible. The idea of this session is to focus on your therapy goals and progress. The things you discuss in your individual session are expected to come back into your small and medium groups rather than be something that is only shared with your therapist.

### Psycho-education group

This group is for all participants of the psychotherapy programme. It is an opportunity to learn about mental health in general and specific topics that group members are interested in connected to mental health. It is an interactive experience and group members are given the opportunity, when they feel able and with the support of therapists and other group members, to lead the group.

## Culture of the groups

- To value and desire personal change
- Self-disclosure - at your own pace - as you develop trust in the group
- Honesty about feelings towards other group members and therapists, which are shared sensitively with the group
- A willingness to consider feedback from others, which might not always match the view you have of yourself
- Interest in and acceptance of others
- To support the cohesiveness of the group by acknowledging that you are not only an individual within a group, but part of a group as a whole
- Wanting to develop compassion for your own suffering and suffering of others, and wish to work to stop self and others' suffering.



## General information

The psychotherapy programme shares the building alongside other therapy programmes that offer other forms of group and individual work.

In order to accommodate everyone, the following may be helpful:

- There is a communal lounge and a dining room available for you before and after the groups and during breaks. You are welcome to arrive half an hour before and stay for half an hour after your sessions each day.
- Please respect that there are other therapy sessions occurring throughout the day. Please help to maintain a quiet environment.
- Following national guidelines aimed at health promotion, a non-smoking policy is in operation within the building and grounds.
- Please continue to arrange any prescriptions of medication and the issue of sickness certificates with your General Practitioner (GP).
- The two therapists in your small talking group will offer you review meetings every three months to discuss your progress. You will receive feedback from the other group members prior to your review. You will be encouraged to share the content of these meetings with your group. You may request to see your therapists at any time.

***“In order to gain something from it, you have to do the work.”***

**L.G.**

### Care Programme Approach (CPA) and Your Agreed Care Plan

The aim of the Care Programme Approach is to ensure effective communication between yourself and the professionals involved in your care. You will be allocated a named professional who will be responsible for co-ordinating your care package. Whilst you are a member of the Psychotherapy Programme, a care plan will be agreed with you and your assessing therapist. This will include your own therapy goals and any risk information. A copy of this will be sent to the other professionals involved with your care.

### Carers

Any identified carers are entitled to their own assessment of needs. Should you feel that your carer might benefit from this, please mention it to your therapist.

### Advocacy

If you need independent advice or support you can contact Derby MIND on (01332) 772300. There is a notice board here in the kitchen with lots of useful information about your rights and independent support.

## Other useful numbers

Samaritans:  
**116 123**

Focusline:  
**0800 272 127**

Out of hours contact:  
In the first instance contact your GP for information held on their answer machine or diverts to Derby Health United.

***“This is the only place I have felt part of a community.”***  
**M.G.**

## Preparation sessions

Once you have accepted a place upon the programme, we have found it beneficial to offer a number of individual preparation sessions to assist you to learn more about the programme and to address any questions or concerns you might have. This may be done either on an individual basis or within a group.

## Follow-on programmes

After a planned and worked-through ending of the programme, it may be appropriate for some group members to join the weekly follow-on group. This will be discussed with individuals within the group and at review.

## On being in other therapies whilst a member of the programme

It is acknowledged that whilst some therapies may be complementary to the programme, other forms of therapy may conflict. Therefore, it is advised that you would discuss with your assessing therapist any other therapies that you may be in or intending to use during your time on the programme.

## Christmas and Easter breaks

The groups will have a one week break at Easter and Christmas. During this time there will be a member of the therapy team available for telephone support and pre-arranged individual sessions.

## Changes

Please inform either your therapists or the team administrator of any change to your name, address, telephone numbers, General Practitioner (GP) or medication.

## Support

Intensive psychotherapy can be stressful. Past group members have found it helpful to be aware of this and to try to build a network of support, i.e. from family and friends.

## Research/group member feedback and outcome measures

We strive to provide a quality service and value your participation in gathering information about your experiences of therapy. We currently use two questionnaires for this purpose. The information gathered becomes part of the case records. We also use a series of outcome measures designed to be helpful both to you and ourselves in reflecting the progress you make throughout your therapy.

## Website

The group programme is developing a website. Here we will be putting information from the group programme including a copy of this handbook. If there are any other items you think we should add to the webpages please let us know at the community meeting.

Information about our psycho-education sessions will be put up onto the website, all this information will be anonymised so that no group member can be identified and of course all of our discussions within the groups remains confidential.

We will also be using the website to display artwork from those group members who wish to do this.

# Boundaries and maintaining a safe therapeutic environment

## Punctuality and absence

The groups run on the same three days each week. It is not helpful to yourself or other group members if you miss attending or are late. It is important that as much notice as possible is given for any planned absence. You will be expected to discuss this within your group. If absences are unplanned, you are requested to phone in on each day you are not able to attend.

## Confidentiality

For group members to speak freely, they must have confidence that all discussions will remain in the group. It is therefore important that you do not talk about other group members and their lives outside of the group sessions. It is important that personal issues are not discussed at break times but rather discussed in the appropriate groups.

## Out of group contact

It would be in the spirit of the open communication required for therapy to mention within the group any contacts you have with other group members whilst not at the centre. It is expected that you will not plan to meet up or communicate with other group members away from the therapy centre. This includes the use of social media. This is in order to promote a safe boundaried setting for therapy to be effective.

## Lunch times

Whilst it may be tempting to continue to talk about what has happened in the therapy groups with other group members at lunch times it is not helpful and is a boundary issue. We do not want group members to be burdened with the dilemma of holding another group members confidence. Personal issues belong in the therapy groups where there is a therapist present to make it safe. Lunch times are for having a well deserved break before the next session.

## Mobile phones

Please respect that mobile phones will be disruptive if they go off whilst you are in group. You are therefore expected to keep them switched off during therapy.

## Gossip

"Gossip is saying behind their back what you would not say to their face"  
Author Unknown

We all have a, some people say a natural, tendency to gossip, on the Group Programme we have found that gossip can be a very destructive to trust within the group, distracting to our goals and a distorting influence on our work together. When we gossip we are often not checking the reality of what (more usually who!) we are talking about. People we don't really know can be stereotyped, scapegoated or given some other often very negative role and we don't have any way of checking the reality or otherwise of what is being said.

Our rule is that we don't gossip about one another. What we do is we check out in the group any ideas or thoughts we might have with the person or people we have a concern about.

If someone starts to gossip about other people we ask them to bring the issue or issues into group.

### Drugs and alcohol

On the group programme we have many members who have struggled very hard to be free of drugs and/or alcohol. It is important that you do not use drugs or alcohol whilst on the programme and that if you are struggling to talk with your therapist/s.

We expect people to be working at staying off drugs and alcohol before, during and after they are accepted as members of the group programme. So we will usually only accept people on to the programme who have been clear of drugs and alcohol for at least 6 months before they start the programme.

Please do not attend the group programme whilst under the influence of any non prescribed drugs or alcohol, it is not safe for you or other people. We will ask you to leave, on the day, if we think you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol and we will consider discharging you from the programme if this occurs. If you have any queries about this talk to the Therapists.

Please do not give or swap medication, including prescription medication or over the counter medication, (this includes things like painkillers etc.) with other group members, or anyone else in the service. We don't know how people will react to medication, what they may have already taken, or why they need it and the safest thing to do is to get their problem checked out by a qualified practitioner. If you are suffering pain or discomfort the best things to do is to talk to your therapist and arrange a visit to your GP.

It is expected that people remain seated throughout the talking group sessions.

Physical violence to any person is unacceptable. This will lead to instant discharge and the police will be contacted.

Willful damage to property is unacceptable and if it occurs you will be billed for the damage. The use of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs on the premises will not be tolerated and may lead to discharge.

It is encouraged that group members express their feelings. However, abusive or offensive language directed at other group members or the therapists is not an acceptable expression of feelings. Personal insults are also not acceptable. Any threatening behaviour to group members or therapists may result in the therapists asking an individual to leave the session.

There will be other users of the building and it is expected that the same level of respect is maintained towards them.

There may be exceptional circumstances when group members are given time out for reflection over a period of a week. During this time, you will be offered a meeting with your named therapist to offer support and to explore your understanding of and willingness to comply with the therapeutic values and boundaries.

Examples where time out for reflection might be implemented include:

- Serious breaches of confidentiality
- threatening behaviour
- persistent lateness
- consistently poor attendance.

## Compliments and complaints procedure

The therapy aims at helping people to become empowered and the therapists encourage open communication. You will be encouraged to express any concerns or dissatisfactions that you may have and the staff will attempt to resolve them with you. However, should it reach a point where an issue does not feel resolved, the Trust operates a complaints procedure. For information on how to implement this, please speak to your therapists or see written information displayed in communal sitting area.

The Trust also provides a compliments log for leaving any positive comments. This is held in the reception area.

***“At times it was a challenging experience, but very worthwhile and rewarding in that we are able to cope with our personal crises much more readily.”***

***First Steps group.***

***“I’ve had the privilege of spending the last year being supported and helped to understand the link between childhood trauma and adult emotional difficulties.”***

***L.F.***

## Plan of therapy days

Day and Time	Session	Room
<u>Monday</u>		
10.00am - 10.30am	Mindfulness group	Rooms 1 and 5
10.30am - 12.00noon	Women's/men's group	Rooms 1 and 5
1.00pm - 2.30pm	Medium talking groups	Rooms 2 and 6
2.45pm - 3.30pm	Individual sessions	Rooms 1, 2, 5 and 6
<u>Wednesday</u>		
10.00am - 10.30am	Mindfulness group	Rooms 1 and 5
10.30am - 12.00noon	Art/drama group	Rooms 1 & 4
1.00pm - 1.30pm	Community meeting	Room 1
1.30pm - 2.30pm	Psycho-education	Room 1
2.45pm - 3.30pm	Individual sessions	Rooms 1, 2, 5 and 6
<u>Friday</u>		
10.00am - 10.30am	Mindfulness group	Rooms 1 and 5
10.30am - 12.00noon	Art/drama group	Rooms 1 and 4
1.00pm - 2.00pm	Small talking group	Rooms 1, 2, 5 and 6
2.00pm - 2.30pm	Small group feedback	Rooms 2 and 6





**Psychotherapy Department**  
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**0300 013 4796**

(this number is charged at local rate)



**@derbyshcft**

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