

CBT Group – Winter 2023 (IN PERSON)

The *Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Group* (CBT Group) is an 8-week group created to help students manage both the behaviours and thoughts which can accompany low mood and anxiety. If you find that small tasks pile up on you and feel overwhelming and endless, or notice that small events seem to send you spiraling into fear or despair, this group might be a good fit for you! Each group will involve a teaching component, where you will learn practical and evidence-based strategies for coping with issues like low motivation and stressful “worst case scenario” thinking. You will also be encouraged to come up with an “ultimate goal” which you hope to achieve at the end of the 8-week group, and we will help you break that goal down into small and manageable weekly steps. Sharing your personal experiences and getting support and input from fellow group members and the facilitators is also a key part of the CBT group experience.

Time:	Tuesdays, 1:30pm – 3:00pm
Dates:	Feb. 7 th – April 4 th (weekly for 8 weeks, with no group on March 14 th)
Location:	Counselling & Clinical Services group room (SUB 2-600)
Facilitators:	Becky Ponting, M.Ed., Registered Psychologist Chelsea Hobbs, M.Ed., Registered Provisional Psychologist

Group Structure:

Group Information Session (virtual)	Tuesday January 24th from 1:30pm – 2:30pm. <i>Remotely attending this information session is the first step necessary to apply for and potentially attend the CBT group</i>
Week 1 (Feb. 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Setting manageable immediate and ultimate (longer term) goals
Week 2 (Feb. 14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catching automatic thoughts • Noticing mood shifts • Understanding the purpose of emotions
Week 3 (Feb. 21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning to challenge automatic thoughts • Problematic patterns of thinking
Week 4 (Feb. 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging automatic thoughts: examining the evidence! • Generating balanced, accurate & helpful thoughts, and how to focus on them
Week 5 (Mar 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New thought: now what? • Making changes and following through

Week 6 (Mar 21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding in new behaviours • How to get moving when your motivation is low
Week 7 (Mar 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive psychology and the science of happiness
Week 8 (April 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relapse prevention • Planning for the days ahead

Group Eligibility:

- In a group therapy environment, much of the focus is on the delivery of psychoeducational content and fostering a dynamic where all participants feel safe and comfortable to share their experiences as they relate to the content of the group. Given this structure, psychologists are unable to provide the necessary assessment and intervention in a group setting to clients who need more focused one-on-one care. ***As such, in order to participate in group, it is important that you are not currently at risk of harming your self or others.*** If you are currently at risk of harming yourself or others, please contact CCS to book an Initial Consultation or phone ACCESS 24/7 at 780-424-2424 to access community mental health supports.
- Groups are open to those clients who are not currently receiving individual therapy.

Group Requirements:

- **If you are unable to attend the first session, you will not be able to attend the remainder of the group.** The first week sets the foundation for the following sessions and outlines the process for a safe group therapy experience for all. As result, attendance at the first session essential. If you miss two group sessions in a row, you will also lose your place in the group. Each group session builds on the next, and regular attendance is key for a successful group therapy experience.
- During the group, you are asked to:
 - Limit distractions and *no multi-tasking* (e.g. place cell phone on airplane mode)
 - Have writing materials ready (paper, pen, handouts)
 - Bring a water and/or snack if that would help you to feel more comfortable
- You will receive meeting reminder e-mails from the reception desk two days before the next group meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please reply to the e-mail or phone **reception (780-492-5205)**. Otherwise, you do not need to respond to the reminder email.
- Homework will be assigned weekly in order for you to have a chance to put your new skills into practice. It is especially important that homework is completed between sessions as this not only allows you to become more adept at utilizing these new skills, but also ensures that you will be able to contribute to group discussion.

- To maximize all participants' comfort, group members are expected to demonstrate respect for others' experiences and comments. You are also required to treat others' information as confidential - "what is said in the group, stays in the group" - and to keep private the identities of group members. Sessions are NOT to be recorded or digitally captured in any way. It is a breach of confidentiality if anyone who is not a current group member can see or hear the group proceedings.
- Prior to the start of group, you will need to complete an online consent form about the procedures and expectations regarding your participation in this group program, along with other demographic forms and symptom inventories. A link to these forms will be sent to your email following the Group Information Session. The group facilitators will review the consent form with all group members on the first day of group. If you have any questions or concerns about the forms, you are welcome to email the facilitator (ponting@ualberta.ca).

How to Register Your Interest in Therapy Groups at CCS:

1. From the [website](#), click the "Register for Group Information Session" link below the group you are interested in and complete the sign-up form.
2. Attend the Group Information Session on **Tuesday January 24th from 1:30pm – 2:30pm**. Here, you will learn more about the content, structure, and expectations for the group and you will have a chance to meet the group facilitators. The facilitators will also explain the criteria for being in a therapy group and also answer questions you might have. ***You must attend the info session to be eligible to sign up for the group.***
3. Shortly after the Group Information Session, you will receive an email with consent forms and demographic information to fill out. If you are still interested in attending the group, fill out these forms within two days of the info session. ***If you are no longer interested in the group, you don't need to fill out the forms!***
4. Two days after the Group Information Session, students who have submitted their completed consent forms will be contacted by email and provided confirmation that they are enrolled in the group.
5. If we have more people interested than we have space in the group, we will randomly draw names until the group is full. The remaining students will be offered alternate means of support, including an Initial Consultation.
6. If the group facilitators determine that you would not receive adequate support in a group format, we will contact you and offer therapeutic alternatives. Facilitators will have the final say as to whether group treatment is suitable for a prospective group applicant.