

Psychotherapy Group

Group psychotherapy is a great way to understand how others see you and how you get on with other people. It can help you to untie your emotional knots and see things from a new perspective. Group members learn they're not alone in the world with their problems, that there are many others who have similar experiences and feelings.

Group therapy is supportive and safe. The therapist puts in place boundaries, such as confidentiality and time limits, which are agreed by the whole group. As well as providing stability, safe boundaries and a non-judgmental stance, the therapist comments on the group process and enables members to deal with feelings and issues raised.

The group can be a powerful source of strength and support, especially in times of difficulty or crisis. Over a period of time feedback to and from others can be a catalyst for understanding and change. Group therapy provides a space for reflection - we can notice and change unhelpful patterns that have developed over the years and which sometimes make life hard to cope with. We believe that in group therapy traumatic events we have experienced in the past, but were too young, inexperienced or otherwise unable to deal with at the time, can be made sense of and understood emotionally. The group can present a 'here and now' opportunity to 'repair' past emotional injuries by learning to interact with others in progressively more healthy ways. As we gain confidence within the confidential setting of the therapy group, so our daily lives begin to become fuller and more enriched. We begin to feel more at home with ourselves and can take our rightful place in the world.

Women Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse Therapy Group - 13 Weekly sessions of 1h30

Childhood sexual abuse has remained a taboo subject. That it happens is not in doubt, yet for many its existence challenges the accepted view of a caring and compassionate society which places a high value on the safe care and development of our children, to ensure they are nurtured to adulthood free from harm and exploitation. Even in adulthood, abuse and exploitation exist, sometimes going hand in hand with domestic violence, sometimes as part of organised criminal activity connected to prostitution and the sex trade. The physical and emotional damage for the victim can often be lifelong, and requires sensitive handling that understands the trauma and can offer responses which help survivors move on.

Group Therapy provide an interactive context for healing work to take place. In the safety of group setting, participants have experience of connection, validation, commonality, encouragement and new learning as they reenter the larger, healing community. The healing work enables the individual to view the past as the bearer of important learning and as a potential resource for the present. Furthermore, the future can be embraced because of the possibilities of continued growth, hope and desired ways of being.

Dealing With Loss Support Group -8 weekly sessions of 1h30

Grief is a natural process people go through when they experience loss. People grieve over many things, including, but not limited to, the death of a loved one, broken relationships, infertility, job loss, financial distress, diagnosis with physical or mental illness, damaged or lost body parts, and lost hopes or dreams. No two people experience loss in the same way or in the same timeframe. Even close family members and spouses can grieve very differently, which can sometimes cause misunderstandings or tension. Many people do not feel well supported in their grief, yet they must find a way to work through this experience in order to lead healthy lives into the future.

Grief is painful and it is hard work. Professional counseling can be enormously helpful in times of grief. Grievers can be helped in understanding normal grief reactions, working through their

unique issues and finding meaning in their grief experiences. The eight week support group is for those who seek others who are also grieving significant losses.

Overcoming Binge-Eating Programme

10 weekly sessions of 1h30

If you're a binge eater, you're not alone. It is something that millions of people struggle with. Binge Eating is not about weight and food. It may *seem* to be, but these are just symptoms. You binge to cope with your feelings, you binge to create the illusion of feeling good and/or you binge to feel "safe" or to shut out the world. If you're a binge eater you probably already know the painful cycle of desperately wanting to binge, giving in to a binge, feeling remorse after a binge, and then promising yourself a binge will never happen again. Then you hate yourself when it does inevitably happen again. It's this cycle you need to understand before you can eat sensibly. Attempting to diet just sets you up for failure. If you understand why you depend on binge eating, you'll be in a better place to let the pattern go and find better ways to deal with emotional hunger. You need to be willing to find and explore what those issues are. You need to be willing to heal from the pain and/or anger. You will have to learn to express and talk about what you feel, and to address what your issues may be. You will need to learn to identify your own negative emotions and what triggers negative thinking. Ultimately, you need to learn to identify and cope with the stress in your life and the emotions that you feel. The ten week program will help you understand why you binge and provide you with the tools to stop.

Anger Management Programme - 10 days

Our inability to manage anger in a healthy way causes it to spread, often hurting those we love. Unmanaged anger has effects on us including depression, anxiety, stress, breakdown of important relationships, loss of employment, road rage, lack of self-esteem, feelings of shame, etc.

The programme supports people to gain insight into the impact of their early influences whilst discovering new ways of healthy expression leading to improved emotional communication. Each session begins with a period of group therapy focusing initially on the immediate pressures in the participants' lives and moving as appropriate to the roots of their anger. The group work is followed by a teaching session to deliver knowledge specifically designed to help participants resolve and manage their anger.

Stress Management Programme - 2 days

In our every day lives, much of our stress is subtle and occurs without obvious threat to survival.

Most comes from things like work overload, conflicting priorities, inconsistent values, over-challenging deadlines, conflict with co-workers, unpleasant environments, relationship problems, financial difficulties and so on. Not only do these reduce our performance as we divert mental effort into handling them, they can also cause a great deal of unhappiness and in some cases lead to depression or in very serious cases psychosis.

In general we believe psychological integration between networks of affect and cognition are central to managing stress. In other words understanding our intrapsychic (internal) process in relation to external stressors is the key to prevention and recovery of stress related problems.

We assume that emotions give us the benefit of a speedy, and more-often-than-not effective response to simple situations, at the cost of a sophisticated response to more complex ones. As such, emotions are a useful early warning signal that something may be wrong. "Emotional Analysis" is an approach we use to start to understand and decode our emotional and cognitive processes.

This programme supports people to understand the context of our thoughts, feelings and behaviour it allows us to challenge our underlying belief system, which in turn supports cognitive restructuring

Couples Workshop - 1 day

- Are you making a commitment?
 - Moving in together?
- Having a baby or getting married?
- You're already a great couple, but could you be even better together

Then this workshop is for you!

Come and join me on the Couples Workshop, invest some time in your relationship and learn techniques for communicating well. Find out how to make your couple relationship a success, discover the keys to managing conflict. Find out how to protect your relationship from risks and how to maintain a great sexual relationship on this small, religion-neutral one-day workshop.

Rebuilding Programme - When your Relationship Ends 16 Weeks of 1h30

For many people, divorce is a broken experience, and before they can go on with their lives, they need to be able to pick up the pieces. This period often includes deep emotional feelings of despair, disappointment, revenge, retaliation, hopelessness and helplessness. They need to develop a whole new orientation to the life that will come. And they need time to mourn what was hoped and to realise that the hope not manifest itself.

The emotional levels one needs to work through during and following divorce are very much parallel to the stages one goes through at the time of death. At first, there is a denial of the events that have taken place and a consequent feeling of wanting to isolate oneself from the whole situation. Then anger, wherein one blames someone else for one's predicament. The third level is bargaining: a kind of situation in which one wants to look at the ledger to see that things are equal. This is often manifest over the custody of children and property settlements at the time of divorce. Then comes a period of depression, which is where much self-hatred, self-blame and feelings of failure are present. Finally, after all of this, one comes to the acceptance of the situation and an acceptance of the self. Out of this comes hope for what can happen.

This programme makes it possible for people to work through these various levels, stage-by-stage. It is important to give this *rebuilding* period the time it needs, to awaken parts of the self that have been paralyzed, repressed or unknown. Let each self come into the next part of life with hope rather than failure!

CPD for Counsellors

Professional Development Groups

The aim of these groups is to expand our understanding and application of an integrative relational approach to psychotherapy and counselling. The group time is divided between case discussion/supervision, exploration of theory and articles and group process. Participants are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience to support the broadening of their understanding of applying theory to practice.

The specific content of the programme is determined by discussion with group members and all are encouraged to bring specific areas of interest for exploration.

The group will run on Saturdays from 10am to 2pm and will meet 8 times over the year. Participants are able to join the group during the course of the year dependent on availability. There will be a maximum of six participants per group.

The orientation of the group is an integrative relational approach to counselling and will be suitable for counsellors or psychotherapists in training and or newly qualified counsellors wishing to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Commitment to the group includes regular attendance in order to foster a mutual learning environment and to enable the group and group members to develop a deeper understanding of their processes. This commitment also includes a financial undertaking to pay for all sessions, whether or not they are attended. For more information contact Donna.

Michèle offers a variety of professional development workshops throughout the year to organisations in the statutory, voluntary and private sector. For details of forthcoming workshops and or to discuss the possibility of designing a training programme for your organisation, please contact Michèle.