

Sexual Health Group Therapy Agreement for Gay/MSM Group Therapy

Commitments and Guidelines

Welcome to the Sexual Health Group Therapy for Men. This form provides a brief description of the commitments and guidelines for group membership developed to maintain group therapeutic value and integrity and serve the needs of every member. Consequently, these commitments and guidelines support both individual and the whole group. We hope that all group members feel free to discuss these expectations within the group itself. We also welcome any ideas and suggestions that will help the group work together more productively.

Attendance Commitment:

- Group members are expected to be present each week, arrive on time, and remain throughout the entire session.
- Group members are expected to announce planned absences during a group prior to their absence.
- Group members are expected leave a voicemail with a group leader on the day of an unplanned absence from group.

Financial Commitment:

- Group members are fully responsible for their bills. Payment is due monthly, at the first group session of the month. Monthly payment includes all group sessions for the upcoming month.
- The fee for group participation is \$50.00 per session.
- Group members are charged for their place in the group and are required to pay for any missed sessions. Two uncharged absences are allowed for each 6 months of group participation.

Group Participation Commitment:

- Group members are expected to create goals for group treatment during their assessments.
- Group members are expected, as agreed upon during their Assessment, to share their treatment goals and sexual health plan with the group.
- Group members are expected to create and follow a written sexual health plan. Members are expected to disclose when they cross the boundaries listed in their sexual health plan during the next group session.
- Upon entering the group, group members are expected to stay in the group for six months. At the end of the first six months, group members may remain in the group until their treatment goals are achieved.
- Group members are expected to receive concurrent individual psychotherapy with a psychotherapist of their choice (one session per month at minimum) during their entire group participation.
- Group members are expected to discuss with the group any changes in their treatment plan or sexual health plan prior to acting upon them.
- Group members are expected to not eat, drink or smoke during group sessions.

- Group members are expected to be as honest as possible during group discussions.
- Group members are expected to express feelings, ideas and opinions in a manner that maintains the physical and personal safety of all members.
- Group members are expected to discuss within the group any contact among group members outside of the group sessions.
- Group members are expected to not engage in sexual, dating, or business relationships with other group members.
- Group members are expected to give the group a minimum three (3) sessions notice prior to ending their group participation.

Confidentiality Commitment:

- Group members are expected to protect the names and identities of fellow group members. Please be advised, confidentiality in group therapy cannot be guaranteed because the members are not held to the same legal and ethical expectation as the group leaders. However, prior to entering the group, each group member is informed of the importance of confidentiality and has agreed to the confidentiality expectation.
- The law protects the privacy of the majority of the communication between group members and leaders. In most situations, the group leaders can only release information about a member's participation to others if the member signs a written authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by state law and/or HIPAA guidelines. There are, however, important exceptions in which the leaders are required or permitted to disclose information about a member without either his consent or authorization.

The following list provides an overview of the relevant exceptions.

1. A group leader must notify the intended victim and the appropriate law enforcement agencies if he judges that a group member has an intention to cause grave harm or death to another individual.
2. If a group member's mental or emotional condition is assessed as dangerous to the member or the property of others, the group leader may disclose confidential information if it's determined disclosure is necessary to prevent the threatened danger.
3. A group leader must report any suspicion of child abuse or sexual abuse to protect the child/children involved.
4. A group leader must report the witnessing of domestic violence by minor children, even if the children themselves are not physically harmed.
5. A group leader must report any suspected abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse of an elderly person or dependent adult to protect the elderly person or dependent adult involved.
6. In cases of alleged criminal or civil liability, a group leader may be court ordered to release treatment information and/or records. If a group member files a complaint or lawsuit against one or both of the leaders, relevant information regarding that member may be disclosed in the defense of the leader(s).
7. A group leader may determine it clinically necessary to discuss some aspects of your psychotherapy with another qualified professional in order to further treatment goals. If a leader

seeks such a consultation, the group member's name nor any identifying information will be communicated.

8. A group leader may release a member's name for collections processing. However, no treatment related information will accompany the disclosure.

9. If a group member files a worker's compensation claim, a group leader must, upon appropriate request, disclose the information relevant to the claimant's condition to the worker's compensation insurer.

General Guidelines for Successful Group Therapy:

- Group therapy is most successful when group members encourage participation of everyone during group discussions. However, group members are free to talk or not talk during group sessions.
- Group therapy is most successful when group members discuss major life decisions with the group prior to acting upon them.
- Group therapy is most successful when group members develop and manage their relationships with other group members in a manner that is therapeutic and supportive of each member's treatment goals.

Consent for Treatment

Before signing this form, make sure that all of your questions and concerns have been addressed.

Your signature indicates that you understand the following:

All of the commitments and expectations described above. Michael Giancola, LMFT agrees to follow the group leader commitments and expectations. You are voluntarily consenting to and authorizing Michael Giancola, LMFT to provide group psychotherapy services.

Name of Group Member

Signature of Group Member

Date

Michael Giancola, LMFT

Date:

Group Location:

Psychotherapy Associates 8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 365
San Diego, CA 92108

Group Leader:

Michael Giancola, LMFT (MFT 53346)

Telephone: 619-964-8288

Group Time: Tuesdays, 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm