

## Group Guidelines

*The Group Guidelines tell us how we are going to care for each other in the group. They provide the mutual consideration, acceptance and protection that are often hard to find in the real world. We will follow these guidelines at each meeting to create the sanctuary and safe place we need.*

1. Start and Stop on Time
2. Time limit for Check In
3. Absolute confidentiality
4. Be respectful
5. Be mindful of others; no monopolizing or cross talk
6. Let's Keep it in the here and now
7. Empathize with each other's situation

### Agenda

Welcome  
Group Guidelines  
Principles of Support  
Check-in (up to 2 min.)  
Group Discussion  
End on Time

### Guide For Check In

Share your name and briefly describe how we can support you today.

## Principles of Support

*The Principles of Support represent what we are striving for as we struggle to come to terms with mental illness. This is our belief system regarding universal, necessary truths that guide and strengthen us when life deals us this particular challenge.*

1. We will see the individual first, not the illness.
2. We recognize that mental illnesses are medical illnesses that may have environmental triggers.
3. We understand that mental illnesses are traumatic events.
4. We aim for better coping skills.
5. We find strength in sharing experiences.
6. We reject stigma and do not tolerate discrimination.
7. We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
8. We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
9. We embrace humor as healthy.
10. We accept we cannot solve all problems.
11. We expect a better future in a realistic way.
12. We will never give up hope.

# STAGES OF EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

## I. DEALING WITH CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

**Crisis/Chaos/Shock**

**Denial: “normalizing”**

**Hoping Against Hope**

**NEEDS:**

**\*Support \*Comfort \*Empathy for confusion**

**\*Help finding resources \*Crisis intervention**

**\*Prognosis \*Empathy for pain \*NAMI**

## II. LEARNING TO COPE

**Anger/Guilt/Resentment**

**Recognition**

**Grief**

**NEEDS:**

**\*Vent feelings \*Keep hope \*Education**

**\*Self-care \*Networking \*Skill training**

**\*Letting go \*Co-op from System \*NAMI**

## III. MOVING INTO ADVOCACY

**Understanding**

**Acceptance**

**Advocacy/Action**

**NEEDS:**

**\*Activism \*Restoring balance in life**

**\*Responsiveness from System \*NAMI**