



# EVOLIBRI

Neurodiversity &  
Career Counseling

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## Group Therapy Description & Release

### Why Group Therapy?

Group therapy is a powerful therapeutic process. It is particularly effective with adolescents and young adults because it normalizes the individual's experience – many teens believe that they are the 'only ones who feel this way', and it is very powerful for them to hear their peers voice the same fears, issues, and struggles. This is particularly valuable in teens whose social challenges have reinforced isolation.

Additionally, teens and young adults are frequently more receptive to comments and reinforcement they receive from their peers. When a teenager hears a gentle challenge from another peer in a group, it may have more impact than if an adult makes the same challenge. Finally, group therapy has an 'order of magnitude' quality – each client not only benefits from his/her interaction in the group, s/he benefits from witnessing every other client's interaction with the group as well.

### What Can Participants Expect?

These therapeutic groups are **short-duration** (eight weeks), **process-focused** (they have a specific set of tasks to complete), and are **closed groups** (only a set number of pre-screened clients will be participating). All groups naturally go through a series of well-documented stages, sometimes simply described as **Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing**. The actual cognitive tasks done in the group setting build on this normal group development, so that in earlier stages, trust is being built, resistance overcome, and in later stages cognitive work can be accomplished.

Group work can be enormously powerful to the individual, and occasionally creates incredible breakthroughs. Because effective groups depend on this normal development of trust building, it is vital that all clients participate in every session so that the group can move at an even pace for all participants.

### What Happens if a Participant Misses a Session?

Because groups are like an ecosystem that needs each participant to thrive, it is essential that every client do his/her best to attend all sessions. However, we realize that emergencies do come up from time to time, and there is no penalty for missing a session. Do understand that not only is the client missing that session, but the rest of the group is *also* missing his/her participation.

## Who Runs the Groups?

Therapeutic process groups should only be run by licensed professionals who have been specially trained in psychotherapy. In California, those who are qualified include Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs), Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs), and licensed clinical psychologists (PhDs). Counseling groups (those not dealing with process changes, such as support groups) can be run by a person who has received 30 hours of group counseling training sanctioned by the State, or those who have taken graduate-level coursework in group counseling. Both types of groups may have a group co-leader, whose qualifications may be lesser than the leader's.

EvoLibri sponsors therapeutic groups whose leaders meet these qualifications, and who have expertise in this age range and/or with the neurodiverse population.

## Rules of Behavior

In order for group work to be effective, each participant must begin to trust the other members. For this reason, certain behaviors cannot be tolerated, and will be cause for dismissal from the group, without refund. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, bullying, name-calling, and derogatory remarks to others in the group. The leader of the group is solely responsible for determining when and if a member's behavior is overly disruptive to the group as a whole. Note that peer and leader 'challenging' in the group context is acceptable, provided it is done constructively.

## Payment

Group participants must pay for all sessions prior to the start of the first group session. Refunds cannot be granted less than ten business days prior to the start of the scheduled first meeting.

## Consent & Release

By signing this contract, I \_\_\_\_\_ state that I have read and understood this document; agree to hold harmless EvoLibri and its agents for any liability stemming from participation in this group; agree to fully participate in this group for the eight weeks of duration; agree to payment conditions above; and, agree to follow the rules of behavior described herein.

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Signature of Client

Date

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Signature of Parent/Guardian as applicable

Date