



Information Sheet for Wellness Support Space for All

Group Details

Purpose

To provide a safe, supportive and secure space for workers to focus on supporting their well-being to respond to or prevent mental health declines such as burnout, compassion fatigue and other conditions, one can be vulnerable to within their industry/work role (e.g., vicarious trauma, PTSD, and depression).

What is involved?

It is a small Telehealth (i.e., video) space (no more than ten individuals) that meet every month over six months (6 sessions in total) to work together on supporting their wellness needs. Each session will involve half the time devoted to sharing and receiving support for challenges and triumphs experienced in tending to their well-being over the past month. The other half of the session will be devoted to the facilitator, Shannon Swales, Clinical Psychologist providing experiential practices to build mental health and well-being so you can thrive within your profession.

Psychosocial topics and skills that may be explored (depending on group needs):

- Tuning into your needs (building self-awareness through mindfulness)
- Trusting yourself (value-based decision-making)
- Befriending your mind (dealing with thoughts/beliefs holding you back)
- Taking stock (understanding mental health and the conditions one is vulnerable to)
- Working smartly (job crafting)
- Respecting ourselves (boundary setting and assertive communication)
- Anger is not a dirty word (expressing anger safely)
- Turning the inner critic into an ally (compassion practice)
- Tending to our feelings (emotional regulation practices)
- Allowing rest and restorative activities
- Social well-being (making time to connect)
- Healthy lifestyle habits (hydration, movement, nutrition, and sleep)
- Understanding factors outside your control impacting your mental health (e.g., workplace, industry, culture, personality type, etc.)
- And whatever is needed and within the scope of the facilitator

What is it not?

It is not individualised, personalised psychotherapy; therefore, it should not be used as a stand-alone method to address moderate to severe mental health conditions/illnesses. I recommend that those suffering from burnout syndrome or other mental health conditions

impacting functioning to a moderate to severe level seek individual therapy first and introduce group therapy later when a level of functioning to a mild to moderate level has been achieved.

Facilitator

Shannon Swales, Clinical Psychologist

Registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

Credential ID PSY0000980023

To confirm, go to <https://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/>.

The Facilitator's Role

- Open and closes the session.
- Sets the tone for each session.
- Models appropriate group behaviour.
- Provides a safe, supportive, and secure therapy environment.
- Prepares group therapy content (i.e., psychosocial knowledge and skills).
- Encourages engagement in group shares and activities and respects the right of clients to decline to participate.
- Ensures the group guidelines are adhered to and addresses any issues that arise with this as they occur.
- Administration aspects of the running of this group.

Facilitator's Approach

I come from a space of authenticity, community, compassion, and wisdom to walk alongside you through your wellness journey. Authenticity is about showing up as the person I am in that moment and encouraging you to do the same. Community is about helping facilitate connection to provide a space where people can truly heal. Compassion is about delivering and facilitating kindness, empathy, encouragement, care and empowerment to help you grow. And wisdom is about sharing and encouraging others to share their experiences and knowledge so that others can benefit from it. I will self-disclose (where therapeutic) regarding my journey through past mental health declines while studying and working as a psychologist and the wellness practices that now support me. It is in the sharing of vulnerability that change can happen.

You can find out more about my work history, approaches, training etc. at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/shannonswales>.

Members/Clients

People who attend the group. Individuals who want to actively support their wellness to prevent mental health declines or to respond to current mild to moderate declines in mental health due to the work they do.

Meeting Details

Type Fixed. The clients who commence with the group remain the same for the group period.

Location	Online via CoviU (CoviU link and instructions to be sent upon booking and payment received). No set-up costs on your end.
Requirements	Internet access, computer or mobile device, secure and private space, and refreshments to keep you fuelled.
Frequency	Monthly for 6 months (6 sessions in total).
Date and Time	Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST, QLD). Dates/times 2024 to be advised
Length	90 minutes.
Numbers	A maximum of 10 clients.
Cost	\$486 (\$81 per session). A deposit of \$162 is required to secure a spot, and the balance is payable a week before the start date. Not meeting this date will result in forfeiting your place in the group. Please get in touch with me if there are any concerns regarding payment.

Included in this price are not only the group sessions in and of themselves but the administration cost, any reporting costs, keeping up of professional development to ensure the best service to you, preparation of your session, ongoing supervision to support my ongoing practice, after session note taking and reflection, and any other ongoing overheads in running a business.

Booking Required.

Email: shannonswales@burnoutpsychologysupport.com

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Background Information

What is Burnout Syndrome?

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), burnout is a psychological syndrome characterised by "feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and reduced professional efficacy." It usually occurs among various professionals who work with other people in challenging situations.

What are Support Groups?

Support groups are a standard method to serve the needs of people experiencing similar problems in their lives (e.g., burnout). Issues that would benefit from talking with others who have similar experiences to their own.

They are a small group of people who gather to share their common problems and experiences associated with a problem condition, illness, or personal circumstances; in this case, burnout syndrome.

In the group, people can talk with others who are going through the same issue, who genuinely understand what they are going through, and who can share practical insights that can only come from firsthand experience.

What are the Potential Benefits?

- Connectedness and community (break isolation and loneliness experienced with burnout).
- Validation and normalisation of your experiences, reducing feelings of shame and increasing acceptance.
- Confidence and empowerment in being able to work through your burnout.
- Increase in resources to help you cope or prevent burnout.
- Have a safe space to be vulnerable in, to share your feelings and thoughts without judgement, allowing for a potential reduction in anxiety, and increases in self-worth and self-esteem.
- There is equality between members; no one is the expert, but we all have something to share and give the other.

What Evidence is there on the Success of Support Groups for Burnout?

There is limited research on the use of support groups for burnout syndrome. One study by Peterson et al. (2008) that compiled the data on several studies in this area concluded that using problem-based peer-support groups could help alleviate work-related stress and burnout. Gunusen and Ustun (2010), in a study conducted on female nurses at one hospital, found that nurses who received coping and support group interventions experienced a reduction in burnout, particularly in the emotional exhaustion element of burnout.

What is Group Therapy?

Group therapy is one mode of therapy that involves one to two trained professionals. Groups usually have five to 15 clients who meet regularly to address a specific problem or learn particular skills. Some clients attend group therapy only, and others combine it with individual therapy to meet their health and well-being goals.

What are the Potential Benefits of Group Therapy?

Whilst group therapy initially sounds intimidating, many people report the surprising benefits of attending. They say the connection with others who are struggling is the biggest reward. They note how their relationship with others helps normalise their experience, gain different perspectives of their problem, troubleshoot challenges, feel less ashamed for struggling and create a much-needed support network around them.

What evidence is there for Group Therapy for Burnout Syndrome?

There is evidence of the general effectiveness of group therapy programs in reducing burnout syndrome symptoms. Both Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy (REBT) have shown a reduction in burnout symptoms post-group therapy and gains maintained at six months post-therapy (Ghasemi, Herman, & Reinke, 2022; Ogbuanya, Eseadi, & Eden, 2018).

References

Ghasemi, F., Herman, K. C., & Reinke W. (2022). A cognitive-behavioural approach to teacher burnout: A randomised controlled trial of a group therapy program. *PubMed*, 9, 1-9. DOI: 10.1080/10615806.2022.2103118

Gunusen, N. P., & Ustun, B. (2010). An RCT of coping and support groups to reduce burnout among nurses. *International Nursing Review*, 57(4), 485-492. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1466-7657.2010.00808.x>

Ogbuanya, T. C., Eseadi, C., Orji, C. T., Omeje, J. C., Anyanwu, J. I., Ugwoke, S. C., & Edeh, N. C. (2018). Effect of Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy Program on the symptoms of Burnout Syndrome among undergraduate electronics work students in Nigeria. *Psychological Reports*, 122(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294117748587>

Peterson, U., Bergstrom, G., Samuelsson, M., Asberg, M., & Nygren, A. (2008). Reflecting peer-support groups in the prevention of stress and burnout: Randomised control trial. *JAN leading Global Nursing Research*, 63(5),k 429-537. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2008.04743.x#:~:text=https%3A//doi.org/10.1111/j.1365%2D2648.2008.04743.x>