



# DARING TO DREAM

## SUPPORT GROUP OUTLINE

### Introduction

Living with a chronic illness often brings unique challenges that can make dreaming and setting goals feel daunting or even impossible. Physical limitations, unpredictable symptoms, and emotional struggles like fear or self-doubt can overshadow the natural human desire to hope for and work toward a meaningful future. Yet, dreaming is essential for fostering purpose, resilience, and joy in life. This support group explores how individuals with chronic illnesses can reconnect with their dreams by reframing expectations, finding flexibility, and celebrating progress, no matter how small. Together, we'll create a space to share experiences, overcome barriers, and rediscover the courage to dream in the face of life's uncertainties.

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

- Greet participants and briefly introduce the purpose of the group.
- Share group guidelines: confidentiality, respect, and equal participation.
- Icebreaker: Ask each participant to share their name, their chronic illness (if comfortable), and one small dream or hope they currently hold.

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#### 2. Setting the Stage: The Power of Dreams (read intro above)

- Briefly discuss why dreaming and setting goals are important for emotional well-being and quality of life.
- Acknowledge the unique challenges faced by people with chronic illnesses in pursuing their dreams.

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#### 3. Group Discussion: Exploring Barriers to Dreaming (20 minutes)

- Prompt participants to reflect on and share:
  - What makes it hard to dream when living with a chronic illness?

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- How have societal expectations, physical limitations, or emotional struggles impacted their ability to dream?
  - Validate experiences and encourage a safe space for sharing.
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#### **4. Reframing Dreams: Dreaming in a Chronic Illness Context (10 minutes)**

- Discuss the concept of adapting dreams to align with individual capabilities and circumstances.
  - Share examples of "modified dreams," such as pursuing smaller, flexible goals or finding new passions.
  - Invite participants to brainstorm ways they could reframe a dream to make it more attainable.
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#### **5. Tools and Strategies for Dreaming with Chronic Illness (5 minutes)**

- Introduce practical strategies to support dreaming and goal-setting, including:
    - **Breaking dreams into smaller, manageable steps.**
    - **Practicing self-compassion and celebrating small wins.**
    - **Balancing dreams with self-care and rest.**
  - Encourage participants to share tools or strategies they've found helpful.
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#### **6. Success Stories: Finding Inspiration (15 minutes)**

- Share a few inspiring stories (from the facilitator or external sources) of individuals with chronic illnesses who pursued meaningful dreams.
  - Optionally, ask participants if they would like to share personal victories, no matter how small.
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#### **7. Creating a Personal Dream Plan (homework)**

- Suggest that participants identify one dream or goal they'd like to pursue, along with 1-3 small, actionable steps to get started.
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## **8. Closing Reflections and Takeaways (5 minutes)**

- Invite participants to share one insight, takeaway, or action they're excited to try.
- Reaffirm the importance of dreaming and offer encouragement.
- Provide resources for further support (e.g., books, websites, or local programs).