



## DIZZY TOGETHER GROUP GUIDELINES

### Highlights

- Confidentiality - Please hold in confidence what others have shared in the group. Please do not make notes containing names of other participants. Recording the session or taking photos of the group is prohibited.
- "I" Statements - Group members are encouraged to own their feelings and share during group using "I statements" versus "you should statements". Sharing from your personal experience helps us hold space for the variety of perspectives in the room and to avoid generalizations.
- Openness - Remember we are all at different places in our health journey; try to recognize that with acceptance, empathy, and not judgment.
- Right to Pass - Whenever asked a question, you always have the right to pass.
- Safe Shares - Only ever disclose information that you feel safe and comfortable sharing.
- Share the Air - If you share often during group, consider creating space for others to share.
- If you are someone who does not usually feel comfortable speaking, please let the co-hosts know how to support you in sharing when ready.
- Hand up To Share - To help maintain the flow of conversation, please raise your hand if you would like to share.
- Location - Please find a quiet, stable, and confidential space in which to participate in the group (i.e., in a private room where no one else can hear or see the session).
- Headphones are recommended if the audio might be overheard.
- Camera - Please keep your cameras turned on, and do not use blurred backgrounds.
- Computer-generated backgrounds are acceptable. Since some individuals may have a hard time using screens, you are more than welcome to turn the camera to the side as needed.

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## Detailed

### Confidentiality

- Please hold in confidence the identity of, and information about, other group members and what others have shared in the group. Please do not make notes containing names of other participants. If you see other group members out in public, please respect their privacy.
- Do not share the meeting link (i.e., Google Meet) with anyone else.
- Suppose participants want to connect with others outside of the group. In that case, they can offer their personal contact information in the meeting chat section, allowing others to reach out if they wish.

### Online groups

- Please find a quiet, confidential space in which to participate in the group (i.e., in a private room where no one else can hear or see the session). Headphones are recommended if the audio might be overheard. Anyone who is not in a confidential space will be asked to move to a secure location or welcomed back at our next session (assuming a confidential space is being used).
- Please turn your camera on, and do not use a blurred background. Computer-generated backgrounds are acceptable. We understand that people may have a hard time using screens for long durations of time, so you are more than welcome to turn the camera to the side as needed. Anyone who does not turn their camera on will be removed from the session and welcomed back at the next session (assuming the camera is turned on).
- Please refrain from walking around with the camera during group sessions, as this can be visually distracting on screen. Also, keep your camera still as much as possible (i.e., do not hold it in your hand while talking, etc.) as movement can be visually complex to look at and potentially trigger symptoms for some participants.
- Please do your best to ensure backgrounds are simple (i.e., no ceiling fans running while you are on camera, no busy patterns on walls or overloaded bookshelves). For some participants, busy backgrounds could trigger symptoms.
- Please be mindful of the personal information you share (i.e., you may want to set your username to only your first name).

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## Attendance and registration

- Members of closed groups (i.e., Dizzy Together) are asked to attend at least the first three sessions to remain registered in the group. Participants who are unable to attend these sessions will be asked to join a future session.
- Each week, a minimum of 3 participants are required to run the full 60-minute group session. If fewer than 3 participants show up, the co-hosts may choose to hold a 30-minute check-in instead.
- Group members are expected to join group sessions on time. To ensure a proper flow of conversation, any member who tries to join more than 15 minutes late will instead be asked to join the following session.
- Please let the facilitator know if you need to leave the group before the scheduled ending time.

## Taking care of yourself

- If you need to leave the session for any reason, that is completely ok, let the group know and indicate whether you intend to return.
- Participants always have the right to pass when asked a question. Please only share what you feel comfortable sharing.

## Sharing the floor

- If you share often during group, consider creating space for others to share; if you are someone who does not usually feel comfortable speaking, please let the facilitator know how they can support you in sharing when you are ready.
- During online groups, it can be tough to hear when multiple people speak at once, and therefore, turn-taking is essential. Please do not interrupt others who are speaking, and please keep your audio muted when you are not talking to reduce background noise.
- During groups, please raise your hand (either physically or using the hand reaction feature) when you would like to share.

## Creating a welcoming space for group members of varying abilities

- When interacting with group members who are using participation aids, please focus on the person rather than the aid (i.e., colored glasses, heating pads, ice packs, looking away from the screen, etc.).
- English may not be the first language for everyone. Please be patient, encouraging, and supportive of all English language levels.

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### Speaking from an "I" perspective

- Group members are encouraged to own their feelings and share during group using "I" statements versus "you should" statements. This includes experiences related to mental health, spirituality, treatment options (i.e., practitioners), etc. Sharing from your personal experience helps us to hold space for the variety of perspectives in the room and to avoid generalizations.
- Remember, we are all at different places in our healing journey. Try to recognize that with acceptance, empathy, and without judgment.

### Safety & respect for other group members:

- While participating in online groups, please close other apps and computer programs during the group and silence notifications. Please silence and refrain from using cell phones and/or other electronic devices.
- To minimize distractions, please find a comfortable place to sit for the duration of the session. See the "Online Groups" section for more details.
- To support a safe environment, we require that participants refrain from the following while attending an online group: smoking (including e-cigarettes), alcohol or drug use, violence, and self-harm. Anyone engaging in the activities above will be asked to leave. Anyone who arrives to an online group while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be removed from the session.

### Group discussion and language guidelines

- To respect everyone's position along their healing journey, and to avoid triggering conversations, the following are off limits: discussing politics or graphic details of accidents, hate speech, and inappropriate language (i.e., swear words). Members who repeatedly bring these up may be asked to leave the group permanently.
- We encourage positive discussion focused on processing emotions, sharing skills and coping strategies, and reflecting and engaging in prepared group content.

### Anti-harassment and discrimination

- We aim to create an environment that respects differences of all kinds and is committed to providing an environment free of harassment and discrimination
- Members who harass other members will be asked to leave the group.

### Food and beverages

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- Please do not eat while participating in a group session (this includes chewing gum).
- If you need to eat, please do so off camera, with your microphone muted.
- Only non-alcoholic beverages (i.e., tea, coffee, water, etc.) may be consumed during group (and on camera).

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