



PURPOSE OF GROUP: to explore the concept of hope

MATERIALS NEEDED: pens/pencils for group members
roll of paper/sheets of paper
art material (optional)

1.

-Facilitator opens group by asking group members, "What does it mean to be hopeless?"

*Many group members can probably relate to this feeling. After they have discussed the question from above, you can have them complete the following sentence:

-I was hopeless when...

-Now, ask group members, "What does it mean to have hope?"

-Hope is important because it **gives us the strength to keep fighting.**

-When you're experiencing depression or suicidal thoughts, you need *something* to motivate you to carry on

-Hope opens up the possibility that things will get better and that life is worth living

-With hope, we find meaning and the "fuel" we need to tackle the obstacles we face

-For those that feel hopelessness, finding hope can bring a sense of relief

1a. You can ask group members to think of a challenge from the past and to share how hope played a role in overcoming that challenge.

2. You can put group members into “**mini-groups**” (approx. 3-4 people in each) and ask them to go over the following questions:

- How does hope change your attitude?
- How does hope change your outlook on life?
- What did you used to hope for and what do you hope for now?
- How could we spread hope to others?
- What are some barriers to hope?
- Have you ever had “false hope”? Is false hope always a bad thing?
 - *You may need to explain the concept of false hope- someone with false hope looks forward to something that is very unlikely to happen
 - *Example: Jill’s cat disappeared 2 years ago. She’s given false hope when her parents tell her the cat will come back

3. Group members will now participate in an **activity** in which **they will further explore the concept of hope.**

- *Keep the group members in their “**mini-groups**”
- *Give each mini-group a roll of paper. Tell them to label their paper, “**Why We Have Hope...**” and to write down as many things they can think of
 - Examples: it gets us to tomorrow, it makes us a better person/parent/spouse, it gives us perspective, it reminds us of the good/positive things in our lives, etc.
 - They can list more personal things if they want
- *You can give them art material to decorate their paper (optional)
- *Allow each mini-group to present when they’re done

4.

- Facilitator can conclude group by going over **ways to bring more hope into our lives**:
 - Think of past low points in your life & remember that you made it through them. **If you’ve done it before, you can do it again!**
 - a. Recall the coping tools you used during these low points
 - Think of the success stories of others (friends, family, people you admire, etc.)
 - Use positive self-talk
 - a. Remind yourself of past successes, the people in your life who support you, the positive qualities/strengths you possess, etc.
 - b. Use positive affirmations
 - Come up with goals & steps you can take to accomplish them
 - a. Make sure they are realistic/reasonable

-Reframe the bad things that happen in your life

a. Look at them as challenges, don't look at them as failures on your part

-Continue coming to group!

a. Therapy gives us hope that things will change (i.e. our mental health, our problems, our future, our feelings, our behaviors, our relationships, etc.)

-You can end group by asking group members to list their hopes for the group member sitting to their left (or right).

-Example: "My hope for Jeff is that he maintains his sobriety"