Secure Connections LLC
A PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTICE

CONFLICT, RUPTURE, & REPAIR

Conflict is part of being human! Group therapy brings people together who have different experiences, personalities, identities, needs, and ways of relating to others. Even when everyone has good intentions, misunderstandings, disagreements, and hurt feelings can happen.

These experiences do not automatically mean that the group is unsafe or unsuccessful. In fact, learning to navigate difficult moments with support can be one of the most meaningful parts of group therapy.

However, not all conflict is healthy, and not all discomfort is therapeutic. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, threats, and repeated violations of others' boundaries are not considered ordinary disagreements.

Understanding Ruptures

A *rupture* occurs when trust, connection, or a sense of safety is disrupted.

Ruptures can happen when someone feels dismissed, misunderstood, excluded, judged, interrupted, or hurt by another member or the facilitator.

Sometimes a rupture is obvious. Other times, it may show up as silence, withdrawal, irritation, anxiety, or reluctance to return to group.

You are welcome to name a rupture, but you are never required to discuss something before you feel ready.

You Can Disagree without Disrespect

Group members are encouraged to speak authentically, including when they disagree.

We ask that you:

- Speak from your own experiences rather than make assumptions about others.
- Remain curious about perspectives different from your own.
- Avoid personal attacks, ridicule, or dismissive language.
- Respect others' boundaries, including their decision not to engage.

You do not have to agree with someone to treat them with dignity.

Intent & Impact Both Matter

Sometimes we hurt others without intending to. Other times, our intentions are misunderstood.

We can acknowledge someone's intentions while also taking seriously the impact of their actions.

Having good intentions does not erase harm. Likewise, making a mistake does not automatically make someone a bad person.

Accountability and compassion can exist together.

Repair Is an Invitation, Not an Obligation

Repair involves acknowledging what happened, understanding its impact, taking responsibility when appropriate, and considering what might help restore trust.

Repair may involve an apology, a change in behavior, a clearer boundary, or simply a better understanding of one another.

However, no one is required to forgive, accept an apology, disclose their feelings, or restore a relationship.

Repair does not always mean reconciliation. Sometimes repair means establishing respectful distance or recognizing that continued participation together is not appropriate.

You Are Not Responsible for Educating Others

Group therapy may bring together members with different cultural backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences.

You are not expected to defend your identity, prove that you belong, or educate others about discrimination or oppression you have experienced.

Questions and curiosity are welcome when expressed respectfully, but another person's identity, dignity, or humanity is not up for debate.

What Happens When Conflict Occurs?

Depending on the situation, the facilitator may:

- Pause or redirect the conversation.
- Invite members to describe their experiences and feelings.
- Help distinguish observations, assumptions, intentions, and impacts.
- Support members in identifying needs and boundaries.
- Encourage accountability and repair when appropriate.
- Meet privately with a member when clinically necessary.
- Establish additional boundaries or reconsider someone's participation if safety concerns persist.

The facility may intervene even when no member has explicitly requested help.

When a Group Member Causes Harm

Our goal is not to shame or punish people for making mistakes. However, supporting someone's growth does not mean allowing harmful behavior to continue.

Discrimination, harassment, threats, coercion, and related boundary violations will be addressed.

Depending on the nature or severity of the behavior, a member may be asked to pause or discontinue participation. Serious conduct may require immediate intervention without an opportunity for group-based repair.

Whenever appropriate, the facilitator will discuss concerns privately and help the member explore alternative support.

When the Facilitator Gets It Wrong

Therapists can misunderstand, overlook, or unintentionally hurt people, too.

You are welcome to question my decisions, disagree with my interpretations, or tell me when something I have said or done has affected you negatively.

I cannot promise that I will always get things right. I can commit to listening, reflecting, acknowledging mistakes, and taking responsibility when repair is needed.

You may raise concerns during group or contact me privately.

You Have the Right to Boundaries

You may request a pause, decline to answer a question, or choose not to participate in a particular conversation.

If you need to step away, please let the facilitator know when possible so we can check on your safety.

Taking care of yourself does not require you to manage another member's feelings or make others comfortable with your boundaries.

Our Shared Commitment

We do not expect perfection, constant agreement, or an absence of conflict.

We hope to create a space where people can be authentic, experience differences, make mistakes, establish boundaries, and grow through meaningful connection.

We can hold compassion for someone without excusing harm. We can hold someone accountable without denying their humanity. And we can honor a person's boundaries even when repair is not possible.