



# Transitions Counseling and Consulting

Welcome Packet  
for Adult IOP Clients





## Table of Content

- 4**      What is an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)?
- 5**      Getting Ready for Group
- 6**      What can I expect on the first day of group?
- 7**      Midpoints and Discharge Sessions
- 7**      Attendance & Safety
- 8**      General Group Guidelines
- 8**      Confidentiality
- 9**      In-Group Expectations
- 10**     How to Stay in Touch with Us





## Thank you for choosing Transitions Counseling and Consulting!

We are honored to support you and your family and are committed to providing a great treatment experience.

Below please find some information about the program, resources you can access anytime, and ways you can communicate with your team here at Transitions.





# What is an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)?

IOP stands for Intensive Outpatient Program. IOPs meet three days a week for 2 ½ hours each day. Our 24 session IOP groups focus on helping group members develop and practice evidence-based skills to help them develop new ways to cope with very painful thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations. In terms of hours, it's like attending a year's worth of traditional outpatient, individual therapy in the span of 2-3 months.

The skills we teach are grounded in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), which is strongly supported by high-quality scientific research. DBT treatment is effective with a variety of concerns including anxiety, depression, coping with difficult work and/or family challenges, low self-esteem – and even self-harming behavior and suicidal thoughts.

We provide professional DBT materials in group, which explore therapy skills and concepts in detail. These skills focus on handling thoughts and feelings in a new way, so they take practice to learn. It's worth the time and effort to master them because they can be used now and throughout life. An IOP group is an ideal setting for gaining these skills because the program provides structure, dedicated time, expert guidance from a clinician, and social support from peers to stick with it.

The group focuses on mastering skills in a supportive environment, while individual therapy is a place to work in detail on concerns that require greater privacy or focus.

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# Getting Ready for Group

The lead therapist will email you information about the group including dates, times, and locations. We invite you to respond to that email to confirm that we have your correct contact information.

Our team provides regular updates on treatment topics, and we want to be sure they reach you!





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# What can I expect on the first day of group?

On the first day of IOP or PHP the group facilitator will meet you in the lobby, 5-10 minutes prior to the group start time. In this time the facilitator will make introductions, give you a brief tour of the office and group room, and go over group guidelines and expectations. Once this is completed the facilitator will walk you back to the lobby to gather the remainder of the group to start group for the day.

Once in the group room, group members take a check-in sheet, pen, and clipboard, and choose a seat. Each group member is invited to use the check-in sheet to communicate how they are feeling and how the group can help them support them that day.

The check-in sheet includes evidence-based screening measures that can help the therapist to assess safety and track progress so treatment can be adjusted to address your specific needs.



The group facilitator will lead the group in introductions and will go over the guidelines for the group, which we've included below. Each group session will include a lesson and activity plus opportunities for each member to share.

The group includes a 10-minute break for a snack and restroom break.



## Midpoints and Discharge Sessions

An introduction session is scheduled with you to discuss group expectations, answer questions, and create the treatment plan.

The midpoint session is scheduled with the goal of meeting with you to discuss progress, approximate graduation date, to begin creating an aftercare plan, and discuss any feedback.

The discharge session follows the same format as the midpoint session, and we'll also confirm group graduation date and provide treatment recommendations for follow-on care.

Based on an extensive body of research, clients achieve the best results when they regularly attended the full course of therapy appointments – and we want to help your child achieve the best possible outcome for the time you invest in therapy.

## Attendance & Safety

We understand that occasionally you might not be able to attend a group session. If that happens, please notify your therapist 24 hours in advance. This can be done via email or by calling the administrative team at our main phone number. As there is often a wait to enter these specialty groups, after three absences we may invite a waiting client to take your place in the group. We fully support and welcome your return in the future when your schedule permits attendance.

Controlled substances (nicotine, drugs, alcohol, etc.) and weapons are prohibited in our facilities.

# General Group Guidelines

## Confidentiality

- Most of what said in the group remains confidential indefinitely, which means that what was discussed in the group will not be shared anywhere else. However, it's ok for you to share what you learned in group!
  - There are a few specific things that therapists must tell others if we learn about them. These include:
    - Any thoughts, plans, or attempts to hurt yourself or someone else.
    - Any indication that a child or vulnerable adult is being harmed or neglected.
  - When we say “tell others” that may include other professionals like therapists, emergency room staff, police officers, etc. We will only tell them the minimum amount of information needed to keep you safe.
- At times, it's helpful to share other information about your treatment – but we will only do so with your written permission. Each person is unique in what they would like to share so it's best to have a conversation to ensure we are all on the same page.
- If you see one of the therapists in a public place, we will not interact with you unless you choose to say hello to us first. We do this to protect your privacy because you might not want to discuss how you know us – and it's your right to choose to tell others or not.





## In-Group Expectations

- It can be tough to start sharing in group – but it’s worth it! The more you share, the more we can offer support and feedback. Group is a safe place to practice healthy and effective relationships.
- Group is a judgment-free zone. Try not to use terms such as “good” or “bad” when talking about yourself or others. Instead, try using words such as “healthy” or “adaptive.”
- Feedback is used to support and relate to each other. Our goal isn’t to “fix” anyone. We want to understand and support each other. One way to help is to share things that worked for you in the past such as by saying, “when I experienced that, this helped me” to offer support.
- If you experience moments of strong, painful thoughts or feelings during group, first use your skills to help tolerate the distress until it lessens. If needed, you can signal to the group leader that you’d like to step out of the room to practice using a coping skill until you’re feeling better.
- As we practice healthy relationship skills together, we encourage group members to actively set boundaries around difficult topics. For instance, its ok to ask, “Can we change the subject?” There is no pressure to share why you need to set that boundary.
- Be aware of language, tone of voice, and details that might be upsetting to others. This includes discussing inpatient/residential treatment experiences, use of profanity, or other potentially triggering content.
- Tissue rule – feel your feels. In therapy we encourage you to feel your feelings. It’s a safe place. Tissue boxes are placed strategically around the room.
- We prefer that you limit the use of cellphones during group to make sure the group is private and to help limit distractions.



Although our webpage and social media pages have messaging features, please only use the OPUS Patient Portal or our main phone number for any non-emergent communications that are related to your mental health care.

***If you are in crisis or have a mental health emergency, please call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 988. If an emergency occurs, please call 911 immediately. Please also note that email and social media should never be used for urgent or emergency issues.***