Support Groups (pre-group meeting required)

Women's Empowerment Group

This is a semi-structured support group for women utilizing various mediums of expression (painting, mixed media, music, metaphor, etc.). This group is for female undergrad students who have some history of exposure to interpersonal abuse and/or trauma (i.e. child maltreatment, bullying, exposure to domestic violence as a child, sexual assault, partner relational violence, emotional abuse, etc) with the common underlying and unifying theme of having had experiences where their sense of power and control was taken from them. The goals of this group are to empower the members to find their voice, express themselves, increase self-worth, strengthen sense of self/identity, increase agency, and process through and challenge negative societal messages, pressures, and influences.

Wednesdays, 1:00-2:30 PM
Andrea Falzone (Psychologist) & Annie Poet (Post Doctoral Fellow in Psychology)

International Student Support

This therapy group for international students will provide a safe, supportive environment where members can address the common issues and concerns faced by international students while living and studying in a foreign country. The group will focus on issues such as, but not limited to, cross-cultural adjustment, academic stress, relationships (with professors, friends, other students, and family), future goals, and other individual concerns (i.e., low mood, anxiety, self-esteem, and assertiveness).

Wednesdays, 1:30-3:00 PM
Cathie Chun-Kennedy (Mental Health Counselor) & Nadya Tucker (World Campus Case Manager)

Penn State Students on the Spectrum

This is a weekly support group for undergraduate and graduate students at University Park who have been diagnosed with or identified as having autism spectrum disorder. In the group, members will gain increased social contact and can work on interpersonal skills in a relaxed, non-judgmental environment, as well as learning new skills through both structured and unstructured discussions/activities.

Fridays, 3:30-5:00 PM
Brett Sosfield (Psychologist) & Stephanie Stanga (Psychologist)

Loss Group

This group is for students who have experienced the death of a friend, relative, or close association. It is also appropriate for those who continue to struggle with painful memories of the death of a loved one. The group will focus on adjusting to the loss and reduction in feelings of guilt, anger, depression, and powerlessness.

Mondays, 3:00-4:30PM
Maggie Doby (Mental Health Counselor) & Lauren Mazar (Doctoral Intern in Psychology)

Harm Reduction

This therapy group is for students who admit to misuse substances, including alcohol, and are interested in changing their behavior. The group focuses on personal and interpersonal issues related to behavior change and establishing a healthier way of life. This is not a 12-step drop-in group and does not require attendance.

Thursdays, 2:00-3:30 PM
Mark Johnson (Clinical Social Worker) & Paul Carawan (Mental Health Counselor)

Graduate Students & Returning Adults

These groups are designed for personal growth and self-awareness for students who are older than the typical 19-22 year old undergraduate population. Issues that will be addressed include relationship, life transitions, family of origin issues, dealing with problems and stresses in academic life, and how these issues affect feelings about ourselves and others. These groups run throughout the full academic year (fall, spring, and summer).

Wednesdays, 2:00-3:30 PM
Natalie Hernandez DePalma (Psychologist) & Lauren Mazar (Doctoral Intern in Psychology)

Women’s Therapy

This therapy group is intended for graduate women interested in gaining understanding of themselves and ways of relating more comfortably to others. Issues regarding assertiveness, intimacy, self-acceptance, family of origin issues, and expressing feelings are examples of the concerns this group may cover.

Mondays, 1:30-3:00 PM
Joyce Helfer-Kaye (Psychologist) & Abby Costello (Doctoral Intern in Psychology)

Drop-In Support Groups (no pre-group meeting required)

Women of Color Empowerment

This is a bi-weekly, open discussion group for Women of Color. This is not a therapy group and is open to both graduate and undergraduate students. The goal is to provide a supportive space for Women of Color on a majority white campus to explore what this means for them (with regard to identity, relationships, etc.), to empower and enhance their voice, and to fully embrace their Penn State experience through academic excellence and relationships-building. This group is held at the MRC in Grainger Room 217.

Wednesdays, 4:30-6:00 PM
Laura Briscoe (Psychologist) & Dayze Florencio (MRC Staff)