



## Topic Brief: Group Therapy for Introverts

**Date:** 4/7/2022

**Nomination Number:** 0972

**Purpose:** This document summarizes the information addressing a nomination submitted on 4/6/2022 through the Effective Health Care Website. This information was used to inform the Evidence-based Practice Center (EPC) Program decisions about whether to produce an evidence report on the topic, and if so, what type of evidence report would be most suitable.

**Issue:** The nominator requests an analysis of the benefits and harms of group therapy, with the specific concern that patients who are introverted may benefit less from group therapy or experience harms.

**Findings:** The EPC Program will not develop a new evidence product, as the information is too limited around the type and focus of group therapy for further assessment.

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### Background

Group therapy has been described as a form of psychotherapy in which a group of patients meet to discuss their problems together under the supervision of a therapist. The group size can be roughly between 5 and 15 patients. Groups may be designed to address a specific problem, such as depression, obesity, panic disorder, social anxiety, chronic pain, or substance abuse.<sup>1</sup> There are a variety of types of group therapy, such as psychoeducational groups, skills development groups, and cognitive-behavioral therapy groups.<sup>2</sup> Incorporating patient preferences related to aspects such as activity type (e.g., homework), and treatment setting and format, is associated with better outcomes in psychotherapy.<sup>3</sup>

Not every person is suited for every type of group therapy, and matching a person with the appropriate group is essential to achieving successful treatment. Group therapy might not be the best fit for some people, such as those who are uncomfortable in groups, people with significant character pathology, people who refuse to participate, who cannot honor group agreements, who need more concentrated attention than a group setting can provide, or who cannot control impulses.<sup>2</sup> A person's ability to participate appropriately in a group therapy setting can be assessed using tools such as the Group Readiness Questionnaire.<sup>4</sup>

### References

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4. Association AP. Keys to great group therapy-Seasoned psychologists offer their expertise on the art and skill of leading successful group therapy. doi: <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/04/group-therapy>.

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**Conflict of Interest:** None of the investigators have any affiliations or financial involvement that conflicts with the material presented in this report.

## **Acknowledgements**

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