



## *THE GROUP INTERVIEW PROCESS*

The group interview process is sometimes compared to a lengthy job interview. This short description will highlight and clarify what is entailed in interviewing for a psychotherapy group.

The goal of interviewing is to clarify how the group works, the intricacies, and ups and downs of group work. Exploring two basic questions is helpful: Will the group meet your needs and goals? Will you be a fit for this group?

The steps to a group interview include the following:

- 1) A short phone conversation, emphasizing a basic description of the group, its goals, and other particulars.
- 2) Interviews lasting between two to three hours to specifically outline group characteristics, obstacles and benefits. A series of questions are asked to elicit material, feelings and issues that will most likely surface in group participation, or have surfaced in previous groups. If you are currently in individual therapy, a request is made to have phone contact with your therapist, specifically to address his/her knowledge of your fit for group. A request will sometimes be made to speak to a prior group therapist. The interview is conducted in two (or three) sessions; one session may be on the phone.
- 3) An acknowledgment that the four page *Group Guidelines* have been reviewed and agreed to by you; completion of the *Psychotherapy Group Screening Question List*, including discussion of the completed questionnaire.

4) Permission to announce your name to the current group, so as to avoid any significant relationships prior to joining the group.

5) A prior notice to the group of your arrival, usually between two and four weeks.

6) PLEASE NOTE: You will notice it may take between four and eight weeks to join a group. At times, a group that you may be best suited for you is full, which would require additional wait time. *ON RARE OCCASIONS* I will ask a group member to delay his joining the group, due to one of two reasons: a) Not all the group members are in attendance on the day you are planning to join; b) Something significant and unforeseen has happened in the group, and your arrival will most likely not benefit you or the group for that particular week(s). You will be kept informed of these factors that affect the joining process.

Hopefully this will help clarify the group interview and minimize frustration that can be experienced in response to the many facets of this process. Thank you for your patience and understanding. At any point of the interview and joining process, as well as when you are in group, please feel encouraged to ask questions and to comment regarding your concerns.