

Is a support group right for you?

If you are in the midst of transition or are feeling overwhelmed by a crisis, a support group may be helpful to you. Groups exist to address a variety of life's challenges including bereavement, separation or divorce, care-giving, parenting, depression, sexual abuse, job transition, eating disorders, smoking cessation, and more.

Support groups consist of people who have been through or are going through similar experiences and circumstances. Participants share experiences, feelings, practical information, and resources that can be helpful in coping with the challenge they face.

By participating in a support group, you discover that you are not alone in your struggle and develop a sense of hope in your ability to cope.

A good support group is characterized by a set of guidelines that ensures confidentiality and respect for each person's unique experience and right to make his or her own decisions. While persons are encouraged to participate in the group's discussions, no one is forced to talk. Some persons participating in support groups also benefit from individual counseling to explore more in-depth issues of concern.

Support groups vary in how often they meet, where they meet, their number of participants, and who leads the group. The majority of support groups organized by Diakon Family Life Services meet once a week for at least six to eight weeks or longer at various church or community locations. Groups often include six to 15 participants, and a counseling professional may facilitate the group. Participants are asked to pre-register and agree to attend all possible sessions; they may also be asked to pay a limited fee. Sponsors are sought to help defray the cost of running a group.

If you believe you could benefit from a support group, please contact Diakon Family Life Services in your region through this Web site or your local Mental Health Association to obtain a listing of support groups offered in your area.

*Diakon Family Life Services
1-877-DIAKON-7, Option 6*