



MANTRA OF HOPE
COUNSELLING SERVICES

Existential Solutions
to Life Transitions

This month's group therapy update for March 2026 focuses on how our thoughts, feelings, and actions affect each other and the world around us. We also use the REST method (Relax, Evaluate, Set Intention, Take Action) to help guide our progress.

For example, if a group member feels anxious about a new situation, they might pause to relax with a few deep breaths, evaluate what they are feeling and why, set an intention to approach the challenge with openness, and then take a small step forward. This process can help members respond thoughtfully rather than react automatically.

This worksheet gives examples of four ways to build group awareness. For each, you'll find a simple action to help you practice:

MINDFULNESS: Being aware of the present moment without judging it. Try taking a few slow deep breaths and noticing any sensations in your body right now.

LIVING KINDNESS: Wishing yourself and others safety, happiness, comfort, and freedom from pain. Practice by silently saying to yourself, "May I be safe and well," and, if you feel comfortable, extending this wish to others in the group.

FOCUSED ATTENTION: Choose one area to work on, such as self-care, self-esteem, or relationships. Set a small goal for the week related to your chosen area, like drinking more water or reaching out to a friend.

Mantra of Hope Counselling Services
4310 Sherwoodtowne Blvd
Mississauga, ON, L4Z 2G6
Telephone: 6478181385
Email: drpbhatt@gmail.com
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OPEN AWARENESS: Try to notice more of what is happening around and within you. Take a moment to glance around the room and notice three things you can see, hear, or feel.

Theme	Example in a group session	Comment
Mindfulness		
Living Kindness		
Focused Attention		
Open awareness		

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Group Therapy Example

Theme	Example in group session	Comment
Mindfulness	Mindful eating versus Mindless eating Eating when emotions tell us to eat (sad, anxious, tired) versus when the body tells us to eat (stomach growling, low energy)	Though food is a way to connect, the soup, Hakka Rice Noodles, and wafers were a bit too much. Do Different: We will try to limit overeating and be accountable
Living Kindness	May the persons in the group be safe, happy, and at ease, while being open about their struggles, which they can discuss in a confidential manner and get professional feedback	When group members opened up about their issues relating to education, employment, and future vision, we did some processing into the Cultural Context and pressures -especially from Immigrant parents of South Asian and Chinese backgrounds
Focused Attention	Self-care of one's sexual self was discussed. The point for journaling on the desire, arousal, action, orgasm cycle was suggested to understand the patterns	When a group member was asked whether they had had sexual relationships, and they answered no, the discrepancy was pointed out. A fantasy can lead to a

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		relationship. How this will impact an actual partner dyad with a real person in the future was discussed
Open awareness	In the Here and Now- to defuse from obsessive thinking, we went into three sights, two sounds, one taste, and linked it with something positive and healing Eg- Sights of rounded shapes were identified, but after closing their eyes, they were asked to name many rectangular objects in front	This helps increase our awareness of our Biases, Beliefs, self-talk, and also teaches us to detach, defuse, and Develop Equanimity- not getting hooked to Negative Self-Talk

References

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