

Adult Support Groups for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

If you are interested in participating in one of the following groups and are currently receiving services with the Alexandria Community Services Board (CSB), please speak to your service coordinator or other provider about referral to the group. If you are not currently receiving services at the Alexandria CSB, call Intake at 703-838-6400 and request an assessment appointment to see which services would be most helpful to you.

Mental Health Groups

Anger Management

The Anger Management Group addresses topics such as:

- Anger management techniques
- Understanding cues and events that lead to anger
- Changing the aggression cycle
- Cognitive restructuring: The A-B-C-D Model and “Thought Stopping”
- Assertiveness training
- Anger and the family
- Alternatives for expressing anger

Dialectical Behavior Therapy

DBT is for anyone who has problems with distress tolerance, emotion regulation or interpersonal effectiveness. DBT is also for people who have a history of suicide attempts, suicidal thinking or engage in intentional self harm. The Goal of DBT is to create a “Life Worth Living.” DBT has four modules:

- Core Mindfulness - teaches the skill of focusing your minds attention to what you want to pay attention to.
- Distress Tolerance - teaches skills in crisis management so you can tolerate difficult situations more effectively.
- Emotion Regulation - teaches skills to help reduce frequent and intense swings in emotional states.
- Interpersonal Effectiveness - teaches skills on how to develop and maintain healthy relationships.

Women’s Empowerment and Recovery Group

This group is for Latinas who are bilingual or speak only Spanish and feel sad, depressed,

angry or empty. They may experience symptoms such as constant distress, tension or feeling disconnected from the body. They may have been hospitalized and may be taking medications. This group will help women:

- Learn how the emotional, physical and sexual abuse they experienced in the past is connected to the way they feel and act in the present.
- Learn basic self-regulation, limit setting and communication skills.
- Develop skills in assertiveness, self-advocacy, self-management and successful relationship building.
- Develop a positive self-esteem.

Grupo Saber es Poder- Trauma Recovery Group for Latina Women

Este grupo es para mujeres latinas que han pasado por una experiencia traumática y se sienten tristes, deprimidas, enojadas o vacías. Algunas toman medicinas o han sido hospitalizadas. A veces se sienten desconectadas de sus cuerpos y se sienten tensas y alteradas. En este grupo se puede:

- Aprender como el abuso emocional, físico y sexual, sea del pasado o del presente, esta relacionado a la manera que se siente una y como actúa en el presente.
- Aprender a utilizar destrezas básicas de auto-regulación, como tener límites y comunicación.
- Aprender a ser asertiva y defender tus derechos y poder establecer relaciones que le favorezcan.
- Desarrollar una imagen positiva de si misma.

Men's Group

The Men's Group is a counseling and support group for men living with a mental illness who would like a place to laugh, learn and talk about relationships, sex, work, family issues and health issues.

Mixed Adult Group

The Mixed Adult Group is a therapy group for persons who:

- Are depressed, lonely and disconnected from others
- Need support with current problems and issues
- Need a safe environment to work on improving social skills and interpersonal relationships
- Would benefit from receiving feedback from their peers and offering feedback to others

- Need a place to practice what they have learned in therapy
- Need an alternative to individual therapy

Real Women Real Lives

Real Women Real Lives is a group of women who share similar experiences with the hopes of finding mutual understanding, encouragement, challenges, guidance and support. Weekly discussions about the real issues that so many women face today include:

Relationships	Body-Image	Self-care
Health/Aging	Family Dynamics/Parenting	Assertiveness
Self-Esteem	Anxiety, Depression	Challenging Emotions

Women's Trauma Recovery Group

The Women's Trauma Recovery Group is for females over age 18 that have a history of emotional, physical or sexual abuse. The group provides skills and exercises for empowerment, helps define abuse and the effects on the mind and body and provides a healing community in which to recover and grow.

Drug, Alcohol and Dual Diagnosis Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous

The primary purpose of the AA group is to help persons come together and share their experience, strength and hope with each other as it pertains to alcoholism. Individuals may also talk about their experiences with drug addiction. The group discusses personal feelings and the unmanageable behavior that led to addiction. Lastly, the group discusses practical ways to cope with the feelings of anger, frustration and disappointment that previously led to drinking and using drugs.

Also Offered- Narcotics Anonymous

Al-Anon

Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems related to their love-ones' misuse of alcohol.

SMART Recovery Groups

Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART) is a group for people with a drug or alcohol dependency. It is an alternative or supplement to 12-step programs. SMART is a philosophical approach based on cognitive/behavioral psychology methods, particularly Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy. Central to this therapy is the recognition that people's thoughts influence their emotional or behavioral reactions. Many people believe that they respond to events, when actually it is the interpretation, or thoughts about the event that determine the behavioral reaction. Since people's thoughts are responsible for their behavior, if one can discover the types of thoughts they have that lead them to use drugs and alcohol, changing their thinking may help them to change their substance use behavior. Thought modification alone is certainly not enough for substance abuse to cease. SMART also focuses on increasing motivation to quit, handling urges without acting on them, developing new ways of coping with problems, and creating a healthy positive lifestyle. Individuals who participate in a 12-step program and would like to learn additional recovery techniques are welcome to attend.

Considering Change- For Persons with a Drug or Alcohol Dependency

This group helps individuals with a drug or alcohol misuse to understand the process of change and learn ways to move through that process successfully. Participants will consider their relationship with alcohol and drugs to determine what changes they would like to make, regardless of why they are coming to treatment or who asked them to come.

Maintaining Change

This group is either a stand-alone group or an extension of Considering Change. The group is open to those who want to learn skills to prevent falling back into old substance misuse habits, but do not need an intensive substance abuse treatment program.

Substance Abuse Recovery Groups for Spanish Speaking Persons

Preparing for the Journey – This group is for persons who may not have decided whether or not to confront their alcohol/drug problem. The aim of the group is to reduce obstacles to change through an open and honest appraisal of self-destructive alcohol/drug abuse.

Making the Journey – This group is for persons who have already returned to abstinence and have some concrete plans for better living. The therapy looks for positive developments and affirms the possibility of increasing new sources of satisfaction and growth.

Choosing the Journey – This group is for persons in recovery from an alcohol dependency that are vulnerable to relapse. Emphasis will be on constructive change and

increasing problem solving skills. The therapy will explore the actual alcohol experience to find its personal meaning. A common group goal will be abstinence from alcohol.

Grupos de Alcohol y Drogas en Español

Preparando el Camino- Este grupo es para personas que no están seguras acerca de aceptar y cambiar su problema con alcohol o drogas. El objetivo de las sesiones será reducir la resistencia a través de una honesta y abierta evaluación de los efectos destructivos del alcohol y las drogas.

Siguiendo el Camino - Este grupo es para personas que ya no usan alcohol o drogas pero necesitan reforzar su decisión. La terapia se enfocara en estrategias para reforzar los cambios y en alternativas para aumentar nuevas fuentes de satisfacción y crecimiento.

Eligiendo un Camino - Este grupo es para personas que sufren de dependencia al alcohol o las drogas, y que son vulnerables a una recaída. El énfasis en las sesiones será reducir la resistencia al cambio y aumentar capacidades para resolver problemas. La terapia explorara el significado personal dado al alcohol o las drogas a través de las experiencias de cada participante. El objetivo será obtener la sobriedad.

Understanding Recovery

This group meets weekly and consists of twelve 75-minute sessions. Understanding Recovery provides participants with recent, research-based information about the effects of specific drugs, the recovery process, family issues during drug and alcohol use and recovery, and available community resources. The group is a component of the Matrix Program and is open to family, friends, and the community.

Matrix Program

The Matrix Program is an intensive outpatient program based on the most recent research on the effects of drugs and alcohol on the brain. The full program lasts six months with the first four months being the most intensive. Daytime and evening programs are available. Single-sex and coed programs are available. The program components include the groups listed below, as well as individual and family sessions:

Early Recovery Group- This group meets twice weekly and consists of eight one-hour sessions during the first month of treatment. In this group, participants learn many of the basic skills they need to provide a strong foundation for recovery.

Relapse Prevention Group- This group meets twice weekly for sixteen weeks and consists of thirty-two ninety-minute group sessions. These sessions help participants to maintain abstinence by providing information, support and guidance as they proceed through their recovery journey. Participants also learn to schedule activities that support

recovery.

Understanding Recovery Group- This group meets once weekly and consists of twelve 75-minute group sessions. Understanding Recovery provides Matrix Program participants, their families or supportive others, recent research-based information about the effects of the specific drugs participants may be using. The group also provides information on the recovery process, family issues during drug and alcohol use and recovery, and available community resources.

Social Support Group- This three-month group is for those who have attained a stable recovery and completed the Understanding Recovery component and three months of the intensive phase of the Matrix program. This group is a “bridge” for those who are growing their community-based recovery support systems and provides a place to discuss successes and potential challenges to recovery.

Recovery Space

Recovery Space is a gathering dedicated to the belief that “the person is never the problem.” The two main purposes of Recovery Space are to acknowledge the life-threatening effects of dependency on alcohol and illegal substances and to discuss what people can do to repair the damage that has been done.

Most of the participants have this in common: They see that substance use has an unwanted and dangerous influence over their life and they know that overcoming the influence requires a difficult and long lasting journey of change and recovery. Recovery Space may be helpful for persons who:

- are courageously meeting the challenges of the recovery journey
- have recently taken a step toward starting or restarting the recovery journey
- are considering whether they are ready, willing and able to start or resume recovery
- can observe and participate with an open mind

The goal is to gather wisdom, share skills and explore knowledge in the face of difficult life “journeys” of all kinds.

Skills to Enhance Personal Success (STEPS) - For Persons in Recovery from Alcohol or Drug Use

STEPS is for those who want to learn skills to help manage their lives better and to avoid relapse into drug or alcohol use. Meetings focus on the skills of mindfulness, tolerating distress, regulating emotions and developing interpersonal effectiveness (Dialectical Behavior Therapy skills). The class emphasizes learning to live life on life’s terms. Separate groups are available for men and for women.