
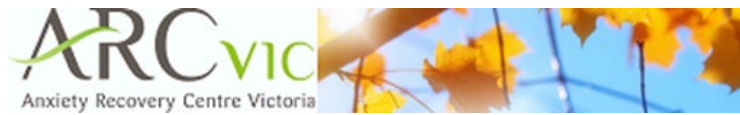


Online Support Group Guidelines

For the comfort & security of all

1. **Following on from Online Support Group Etiquette**
2. **Mobile phones** – To be switched off or on silent as a sign of respect
3. **Maintaining Confidentiality** - “What’s said in group stays in group”, we don’t use names, raise experiences or issues shared in a way which identifies any group member. **Exceptions: Duty of care (or mandatory reporting requirements) - if a member is at risk of harming themselves or others or being harmed; If a crime is being committed; Or when facilitators debrief.**
4. **People attending are to be free from Alcohol & illicit Drugs** - It is a safety issue for others & being under the influence limits our ability to be present & participate fully.
5. **ARCvic support group exit** - If you need to leave the group for whatever reason, you are free to do so but please indicate to us with a thumbs up sign, which you will find at the bottom tool bar under the reactions icon. 
6. **Boundaries around personal sharing in order to ensure the emotional safety of self and others** - Being mindful of the detail and language we use when sharing (aggressive/offensive/sexual/ disrespectful language & tone) to ensure we don’t trigger or leave others feeling vulnerable and unsafe.
7. **Technical issues:** If, due to technical difficulties, one facilitator drops out with computer problems whilst the group is running and can’t connect back into the group. The remaining facilitator needs to let the group know that the group must end and close the group. ARCvic policy is that two facilitators need to be present for groups to function for the safety and comfort of facilitators and participants.
8. **Punctuality** – Please try to arrive on time (**Zoom Group will open 5 minutes prior to start**) so group can finish on time. Please be mindful that all ARCvic facilitators are volunteers and it’s important that they are able to get out in timely manner. Also note that the virtual group door will be **locked ten minutes** after group commences. If you get disconnected from the group please see generic email in the chat feed and email the facilitators on that so they unlock the group so you can join the group again. Once participants join the group, facilitator will lock the group again.
9. **Personal information-** We request that all participants to supply phone numbers or email address if you don’t have a phone number. Participants can send their details through the chat feed to the facilitators (**being mindful not to share your chat with the group**) so that in an event of an emergency or crises, participants can be contacted to see if they are safe/well. Your personal information will not be stored or kept beyond this groups unless duty of care requirements need to be followed through.
10. **If you are feeling uncomfortable or need a private chat** – please use the private chat to communicate to facilitator (**being mindful not to share your chat with the group**)
11. **Safe Rooms (BREAK OUT ROOMS)-** If the facilitator has any concerns they may move a participant into a safe room(break out room) to make sure that everyone is ok. The facilitator will try to communicate with the participant through chat feed first to check in but



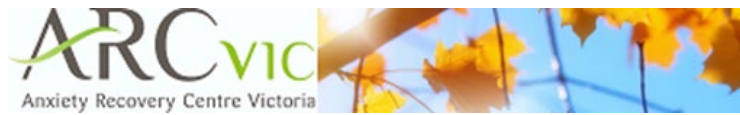
if there is no reply they will move them into the safe room (break out room) for the comfort and safety of the group.

12. Respect and Equal Participation– No 'Advice Giving' or Interrupting

- The focus of meetings is to listen, feel heard and understood while sharing strategies, rather than to 'therapize'.
- Everyone has the opportunity to participate in discussion safely and equally
- We all have a right & responsibility to share our issues & ideas in a respectful way whilst being treated with dignity. We aim for equal listening time.
- There's no obligation to speak (you can say 'pass').
- "I" language instead of 'advice-giving'. E.g. "I found that for me, was helpful".

ARCVic 'Creed' for Support Groups

- We are a group of people with a common bond, sharing our troubles, experiences, understanding, strength and wisdom. We listen, explore options, and express our feelings.
- We do not prescribe, diagnose, or give advice ... we suggest. We are accepting and non-judgemental to group members.
- We know what we share is confidential and that we have the right to remain anonymous if we choose.
- We have the right to take part in any discussion or not.
- We each have the right and opportunity to equal talking time and there is no obligation to speak. It is important that we actively listen when someone is talking and avoid having side conversations.
- We encourage "I" statements, so that everyone speaks in the first person.
- We each share the responsibility for making the group work. Having benefited from the help of others, we recognise the need for offering our help to others in the support group.



EMERGENCY & IMPORTANT NUMBERS

(24 HOURS UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED)

EMERGENCY SERVICES

AMBULANCE, FIRE, POLICE 000

CRISIS LINES

VICTORIAN SUICIDELINE 1300 651 251

SUICIDE CALL BACK SERVICE 1300 659 467

Professional telephone counselling support to people impacted by suicide or suicidal thoughts and who are unable to access supports. Up to six 50 minute telephone counselling sessions provided

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

ANXIETY RECOVERY CENTRE VICTORIA: Monday – Friday 10.00am – 4.00pm 1300 269 438
9830 0533

SANE AUSTRALIA: Monday to Friday 10am-10pm 1800 187 263
Info, guidance and referrals for mental health

Any Concerns?

If anyone is uncomfortable with anything, we invite you to discuss it with the facilitators.