

## Ongoing Group Participation Agreement

This group agreement is intended to foster a group setting that is safe, stable, and productive so that each member can receive the most out of her experience. **Please initial each page and sign the third page indicating your agreement to these guidelines.** Thank you.

1. **ATTENDANCE AND TIMELINESS** - I agree to attend all group sessions and arrive on time or early.
2. **CONFIDENTIALITY** - I agree to keep everything I hear in the group confidential.
  - Exceptions to the therapist's confidentiality are listed in the "Consent to Treatment" form.
3. **CHECK-INS** - I agree to keep 'check-ins' at the beginning of each group short – one to two minutes.
  - During check-in, please ask for time later in the group if you have something to share or discuss.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF** - I agree to take responsibility for myself, my feelings, and my needs in the group and not to expect others to read my mind or ask me what I need.
5. **"I" STATEMENTS** - I agree to use "I" statements as much as possible in order to stay in my feelings.
  - "When *my* boss says patronizing comments to *me*, I feel worthless" vs. "*You* know how it is when *your* boss says patronizing comments. *It* makes *you* feel worthless..."
6. **SPEAKING DIRECTLY** - I agree to speak directly to the other members of the group person to person.
  - Instead of, "Willa talks too much," please speak directly to her with a statement such as, "Willa, it's hard for me to break in when you are talking and it makes it hard for me to get my needs met in group."
7. **ALLOWING OTHERS TO BE HEARD** - I agree to wait until a group member is finished speaking before interjecting.
  - Please allow time for everyone else in the group to participate at each session.
  - If you wish to break in while someone else is speaking, please raise your hand.
8. **PERMISSION TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK** - I agree to ask my fellow group member if she wants feedback before expressing what I am thinking, feeling or experiencing.
  - Everyone has the right to state that they do not want feedback from anyone at any time.
9. **IN IT TOGETHER** – Group meetings are a collective effort and we function as a team. I understand that my level of commitment and effort will directly impact my fellow group members.
10. **SOCIAL INTERACTIONS** - I agree to use my own discretion regarding social contact with other group members outside of the group.
  - If I do have any social contact with another group member, I agree to inform the group during check-in.
11. **SEXUAL AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS** - I agree not to be sexual with anyone in this group or to pursue a romantic relationship with anyone in this group until one of us is no longer participating.

12. **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS** - I agree not to use any mind-altering substances for at least 10 hours prior to group (other than prescription drugs – taken as directed).
13. **JUDGING** - I agree to avoid blanket judgments. Instead, I will describe specific behaviors and my reactions.
  - “Tina, when you make comments about purchases you make, I wonder about their significance and how they are related to your self-esteem” vs. “Tina, you are a materialistic person.”
14. **TAKING RISKS** - I agree to take risks in the group in order to get the most out of this experience.
  - You are not the only one afraid to take risks – your risk in the group will help others take risks as well.
15. **GOODBYES** – Members of the group may develop strong bonds to one another. Therefore, I agree to give the group at least a 1-2 session notice prior to leaving in order to allow for a healthy goodbye.
  - You will be missed! Your presence in this group is meaningful.
  - Goodbyes are powerful. Please allow yourself and the group to process what is happening.
  - Saying goodbye in a healthy way can be one of the most therapeutic experiences of group work.
16. Please sign below and return this entire document either via email or in person. We are looking forward to having you join us!

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## **Group Guidelines and Agreements**

### *LGBTQ Coming Out Later in Life – for Women*

Saturdays: 3:30—5:30pm

Our Group Guidelines and Agreements are intended to foster a group setting that is safe, stable, and productive, in order for you and each group member to get the most out of this experience.

Please sign and return this page indicating that you have received a copy of and are committed to these Group Guidelines and Agreements. Thank you!

\_\_\_\_\_  
Group Member's Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Group Member's Signature