



## **THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY GROUP**

**NPO 013-085 Reg. No. 2000/025903/08**

P O Box 652548 Benmore 2010

Tel: +27 11 234 4837

Supportgroups@anxiety.org.za

www.sadag.org

### **WhatsApp Group Rules Examples:**

- The Group hours are 8am to 6pm – no posts should be made on this Group between 6pm and 8am, unless there is an emergency situation (you can choose what hours and days you are comfortable with)
- No religious and political opinions, hate speech, racism, or vulgar language are allowed.
- Respect your peers and ensure your posts are inoffensive and not inclined to provocation.
- No advertising or spam should be allowed.
- Try, where possible, to be cognisant of the aim and purpose of the Group. A place where we can share and express our thoughts and feelings, troubleshoot and network with one another
- Post in one chunk of text, rather than several text chains.
- Switch to private messaging if the conversation becomes relevant to only a select few.
- Check your sources before sharing information that may be fake (or old) news.
- Do not post data-heavy videos/images.
- Bear in mind that tone and meaning can be misinterpreted in a text. Pick your words carefully.
- Rather phone someone if things feel they could potentially become tense, heated, misunderstood or misinterpreted
- This is a non-judgmental environment
- We are here to support each other
- Everyone should have an equal opportunity to partake in the Group
- Please be sensitive when sharing with third parties, content discussed in this Group. Sharing of a generic image or news article makes sense, but sharing sensitive and personal information does not. Ask yourself, “How would I feel if I had written or shared my story and someone posted it to their book club group for their entertainment?”
- No graphic images or videos, or images of self-harming, are allowed
- No lending, borrowing or giving of money
- Be sensitive when discussing medication, please do not mention the names of any specific medication, and when something is out of your scope, rather leave it to the professionals. Other Members of the Group may be influenced by your opinion. Remember, each person is unique and will react to treatment differently.

### **Additional Suggestions from Support Group Leaders**

- Leave the news in the newsroom, this Group is for personal support, though it is useful to know what the traffic is doing, please keep posts relevant to the Group's intention
- Posts should only be made on Monday to Friday
- The main language to be used is English, should it be a mixed Group, to avoid alienation or otherwise, translation is necessary.
- Confidentiality
- No need to do a thumbs up for every comment
- Wait and listen to each other
- Don't get personal
- No sharing of people's contact details
- Don't private message individual members without permission
- Don't add random people to the Group
- No personal chats within the Group
- Don't generalise, keep messages to your own experience
- Think before you forward – try to avoid posting irrelevant information
- This is a place to share and listen, not debate and invalidate. In a Group, people often view things through the scope of their own lived experience
- Don't be afraid to leave the Group if it is no longer serving a purpose for you. Wishing your peers well before leaving can help members feel reassured and not have to worry about your well-being.
- Only use this platform if all Group Members have access to WhatsApp
- Members should support others and avoid giving unsolicited advice.
- No private messaging between Group Members
- Disclaimer that this Group offers support, but is not run by a Mental Health practitioner
- A Person will be removed or blocked from the Group if found to be offensive/inappropriate
- Be aware of cultural sensitivities
- We are a Group run by the Group. If anything on the Group is inappropriate or unhelpful, it is each person's responsibility to let an admin member know so that it can be dealt with for everybody's best interest
- Only admins should be allowed to post on the Group
- Don't use the Group to air grievances towards others – let's rather unpack this in the meeting
- Do not share intent to self-harm or die by Suicide. If a Member is having Suicidal thoughts, it is better to contact SADAG directly or a friend/ family member that can assist in their vicinity
- Do not get angry if someone does not respond to your message, as they may have missed the question or do not have the answer.
- Try to keep to one conversation at a time to avoid confusion
- You are responsible for what you post
- When sharing on the Group, provide trigger warnings to any content that may be harmful or triggering to certain Group Members, especially video or news content
- Treat others as you would want to be treated