

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Effects of Psychosocial Treatment on Cancer Survivorship

*Using an Evidence-Informed Program to develop
a process model for program delivery in the practice setting*

Note: Refer to “Using What Works: Adapting Evidence-based Programs to Fit Your Needs”. Review the appropriate Modules and the handouts provided in each, in order to modify and evaluate this program to meet the needs of your organization and audience.

“Using What Works” is available online at:

http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/use_what_works/start.htm.

I. Program Administration (Type of Staffing and Functions Needed)

Therapists (2) (Required: Should have extensive psychotherapy experience, experience leading group psychotherapy and support groups, and at least minimal knowledge of cancer and cancer treatments. For breast cancer groups, at least one therapist should be female.)

- Co-lead weekly 90-minute unstructured group therapy sessions
- Facilitate discussion of intervention topics

II. Program Delivery

For additional information on modifying program materials, refer to the appropriate Module(s) for program adaptation from “Using What Works”.

A. Program Materials (*All listed materials can be viewed and/or downloaded from the Products Page*):

- **Supportive-Expressive Group Therapy: A Treatment Manual of Psychosocial Intervention for Women with Recurrent Breast Cancer:** This 173-page manual provides background information and rationale for the intervention, information on the therapeutic orientation of the intervention, and detailed guidance for addressing topics commonly discussed in cancer support groups. The manual also provides guidance to researchers interested in replicating main outcome results and/or new implementation sites interested in evaluating the impact of the intervention at their site.
- **Group Therapy for Cancer Patients: A Research-based Handbook of Psychosocial Care:** This 303-page book expands on the information provided in the treatment manual, including detailed rationale for and structure of support groups for cancer patients and additional guidance for addressing group member concerns on a range of topics.

- **Training Video Series:** This series of four DVDs illustrates the principles and techniques of supportive-expressive group therapy and shows actual group sessions with women with terminal breast cancer led by the intervention developer, Dr. David Spiegel.
 - **Process of Forming a Support Group/Detoxifying Dying:** This 60-minute video explains and demonstrates building mutual support in a group and establishing an atmosphere for direct and open communication and expression of emotion. This video also includes illustrative examples of how to help participants manage fear of dying and death through open and direct discussion.
 - **Taking Time/Fortifying Families:** This 60-minute video shows group sessions demonstrating how the proximity of death can encourage reassessment of life priorities. Tips for helping group members improve communication and interaction with family members are also included.
 - **Dealing with Doctors/Self-Hypnosis Controlling Pain:** This 60-minute video provides guidance to therapists to help group members deal effectively with doctors and other health care professionals. The video also demonstrates a simple method of self-hypnosis for managing pain.
 - **A Model Session:** This 60-minute video is a group session demonstrating the ideal application of the specific principles of supportive-expressive group therapy and general techniques of group therapy. The session focuses on fears of death and dying and plans for continuing to live life.

B. Program Implementation

The steps used to implement this program are as follows:

Step 1: Therapists self-train in the delivery of the intervention by reviewing all program materials.

Step 2: Two therapists co-facilitate weekly 90-minute supportive-expressive group therapy sessions involving 3–15 participants. As topics emerge in an emotionally expressive (rather than didactic) format during regular group sessions, therapists facilitate discussion of the following themes:

- Fears of dying and death
- Reordering life priorities
- Improving support from and communication with family and friends
- Integrating a changed self-image and body image
- Improving communication with physicians
- Learning to use self-hypnosis to manage stress and control pain

III. Program Evaluation

For additional information on planning and adapting an evaluation, review the appropriate Modules for program implementation and evaluation from “Using What Works”. http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/use_what_works/start.htm

For further assistance in designing and conducting an evaluation, consider communicating with members from NCI's Research to Reality (R2R) community of practice who may be able to help you with your research efforts. Following is a link to start an online discussion with the R2R community of practice, after completing registration on the R2R site:

<https://researchtoReality.cancer.gov/discussions>.