

On-Line Peer-Led Groups Project

As trauma psychologists, we're leading a [team](#) to help alleviate psychiatric distress in gay, bi and trans males who have been sexually abused or assaulted. In collaboration with [Men Healing](#), we recruited and trained 20 men who have experienced sexual abuse to deliver evidence-based online mental health interventions. A number of the Weekends of Recovery alumni are participating as peer leaders!

We have created a study website (www.peersformenshealthstudy.com/) which provides detailed information about the purpose of the study and related procedures, as well as answers to frequently asked questions about participation. The website includes links to the informed consent form and to the online screening survey, which potential participants are invited to complete to determine their eligibility. Once the online screening survey is completed, individuals who meet initial screening criteria are contacted by a member of the research team to schedule a more intensive phone screening interview, during which additional questions are asked to confirm eligibility.

For the purposes of this study, those interested in participating will need to meet these criteria:

- a) 18 years of age or older
- b) English-speaking
- c) Reporting a history of sexual abuse or assault at some point in their lifetime
- d) Identify as male
- e) Identify as at least one of the following: gay, bisexual, trans/non-binary, attracted to men, have sex with men, or who may be questioning their sexuality/gender.
- f) Experiencing emotional distress
- g) Reside in US or Canada
- h) Haven't received any psychotherapy or formal mental health counseling in past 60 days

Participants will be randomly assigned to participate in either of two online groups. Both groups will be led by peer leaders that we have carefully screened and extensively trained. They will be supervised by licensed clinical psychologists.

The online groups will last for 1.5 hours and meet weekly, for 6 consecutive weeks. Participants will be asked to complete confidential online questionnaires before the group begins, at the end of the 6-week group, after two months, and after four months.

There is a small financial stipend for participation.

It is possible that participants may feel discomfort by participating in group. However, groups will not focus on discussing the details of an individual's traumatic experiences. But, as you know, talking about the impact of such experiences may cause some distress or unwanted feelings. This study is voluntary, which means that participants can withdraw at any time and we have a large database of therapists and other treatment referrals.

However, we anticipate that participants will feel some relief in talking to peers about issues and concerns relevant to them. As well, we believe that the findings from this study will yield more information and knowledge about male-identifying survivors' abuse, as well as ways to effectively help them feel less distressed.