

# Time for Healing During COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic not only stole our sense of “normal,” but many people also suffered the loss of jobs, homes, and even loved ones. Our shared loss is significant. People who go through experiences like this pandemic need to come together and acknowledge what happened and talk about their feelings. We’ve had to find new, creative ways to do these things while staying safe during the pandemic. But this is how communities begin to heal from their losses.



# Time for Healing During COVID-19

### Support group overview:

- It includes psychological and educational component
- It is a structured group meeting
- Discussions allow for a safe process of talking about survivors emotions and distress
- Through the participants stories, each member listen to other people who have similar experiences and reactions
- The group should not exceed 12 participants

### Group time and duration:

- 5 sessions
- 1.5 hours
- Location:
- It should be done away from the crisis/disaster area.
- It can be done in a safe facility.

### Group Agreements:

- The following information is provided to the group:
- Everything discussed in group it stays in group (confidentiality it is required)
- No one should be criticized for how they feel.
- Participants are encourage to express how they feel

## SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION

### Learning objectives:

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- Acceptance, support, and understanding from each other are expected.
- Participants are not to leave the group once it has started
- Establish Rapport with the Group

### Engagement:

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- "Listen to this song"
- Participants are asked (response is optional):
  1. Who are you?
  2. What areas of your life needs healing?
  3. Please discuss the circumstances of your loss.

### Closing the session:

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- Present a few positive areas of recovery from the group.
- The participants do not ask other members questions or details about the incident. They just listen to the person story.

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## SESSION 2: THOUGHT PROCESS

### Learning objectives:

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- Establish rapport with the Group.
- Review Experience from previous session

### Engagement:

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Select one testimony from the toolkit or invite some to share.

- Participants are asked (response is optional):  
What were your first thoughts about the incident once you got off the "autopilot" mode?

### Closing the session

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This session personalizes the experience for the participant. It makes it part of them rather than a collection of facts outside of them. The participants do not ask specific questions about the incident. They just listen to the person's story.

## SESSION 3: REACTIONS

### Learning objectives:

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- Establish rapport with the Group.
- Review Experience from previous session

### Engagement:

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Select one testimony from the toolkit or invite some to share

- What was the worst part of the incident for you personally?
- This session may last between 30-45 min. depending on the intensity of the event. Focus on the participants' emotions

## SESSION 4: TEACHING

### Learning objectives:

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- Establish rapport with the Group.
- Review Experience from previous session

### Engagement:

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- Select one testimony from the toolkit or invite some to share
- Useful information to reduce the stress at home, work, etc. is provided to all participants

## SESSION 5: RE-ENTRY

### Learning objectives:

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- Establish rapport with the Group.
- Review Experience from previous session

### Engagement:

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- Group members are prompted to ask any questions
- Participants may review some portions of the critical incident that they still consider disturbing
- Group may even bring up new issues previously not discussed

**Important:** Support groups is a good first step for helping people process their loss experience, however facilitators must have mental health specific training prior to engaging in any type of exercise with survivors.