

THE HEALING TRUST

Organising & Running Student Support Groups

It is recognised that these groups can form an integral, unique and important part of every Student's personal and professional growth and The Healing Trust actively encourages Members to consider forming one.

The fact is they -

- are incredibly easy to establish
- can be organised by Students themselves
- can be held anywhere – even start off in a private home
- can cost very little to run
- offer a relaxed, supportive opportunity for sharing Healing experiences
- provide a safe and quiet environment for practicing Healing
- can enable those who've not yet had any training to get a feel for Healing
- can act as a springboard for all sorts of future group activities and involvement

AVAILABILITY AND SUITABILITY OF THE PREMISES

If you decide to meet in a public place, your Local Authority will often be able to provide a list of premises or rooms for hire. Members may also have personal knowledge of viable premises – from Village Halls, Friends Meeting Rooms, Community Centres, Therapy Centres, etc.

When negotiating for the use of multi-purpose premises, check what other activities they're used for as part of the building might be used for 'noisy' activities that could coincide with your planned session, or perhaps tend to overrun. Check before you commit to booking.

Access to toilets is essential. Also access to a kitchen area/kettle is helpful, as this can add a social aspect to meetings - especially if there are biscuits or cake! Access for those with a disability must also be considered.

When looking for a venue, do bear in mind that the Support Group is representing The Healing Trust and so a certain level of professionalism is expected. It needs to be clean, fresh and reasonably quiet. It's important that decor and furniture are in good condition.

Convenient car parking would seem an obvious benefit, but town locations aren't always easy. Remember to make sure that those attending know where they can safely park.

CONNECTING WITH YOUR REGION

As the organiser of a Healing Trust Support Group, it's important that you know about the key people within The Healing Trust, e.g. Board Members and Regional Officers. You'll be part of a supportive network and, as such, try to be aware of what's happening in the Region, including workshops and exhibitions, so you can tell the rest of your group. Details of these are on the Charity's national/ regional websites, on Social Media and in 'Spiritus'.

Do make sure that you liaise with the Regional Committee. No matter how small your group, you'll be an important part of the Regional Structure – you won't be working in isolation. Ensure your Region and Central Office know that you exist by giving them details to place on websites, in 'Spiritus', etc. Letting others know about your Group may encourage them to join and support you and will also help them realise how easy it is to organise an opportunity for Healers to get together.

It's good to know that Students may also establish and run Groups as long as there is a Healer Member on hand to oversee the Group and be available for guidance when/if needed and to sign Students' Log Books.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Every Healer and Student has a copy of the 2018 edition of the Code of Conduct; it's so important that all your group members are fully familiar with it and are really rigorous in observing it – this is what ensures the continuing high reputation of The Healing Trust!

MANAGING A SUPPORT GROUP

As the Support Group leader, remember your role in motivating your group and to encourage them to actively engage in volunteering to work at a Healing Centre and at Exhibitions if they can. From January 2018, in addition to their taking the four Training course, new Students will be required to have a minimum of 40 hours of healing practice recorded in their Log Books during their training period. When Students go to Panel, the co-ordinators will expect that those who live near a Healing Centre have gained some Healing experience there, if reasonably possible. This is a wonderful way of getting more experience under the care of Healer Members, who are always there to offer support and guidance when required.

Healing Members who run Centres are always aware that Students to volunteer want to feel safe and relaxed, so that they can learn to give healing with confidence.

ORGANISING A GROUP IS SIMPLE & STRAIGHT FORWARD

Points to consider:

- How often will the Support Group meet? Will it be weekly, fortnightly, monthly etc? During a weekday or at the weekend? Daytime or evening?
- Will there be Meditation opportunities? Relaxation/visualisation sessions?

- Will you be organising any Distant Healing? Will you place names in a special book?
- How much time will you devote to healing practice (giving/receiving healing) and how much to other activities? Remember, timetables can be flexible.
- What level of refreshments will be on offer? Water, coffee, teas – biscuits or cake, either bought or maybe home-made?
- How will you fund the group? Members' open/fixed donations / find a sponsor, or ask your Regional Committee for a possible start-up allowance if you intend renting a premise.

Less obvious points to consider might be:

- Will there be provision for a 'library' for second hand books, DVDs, CDs? Or consider setting one up so that exchanges can be made among members.
- First Aid arrangements – what will you do if someone becomes ill or injures themselves? Ensure at least one member has a First Aid certificate – or organise a First Aid workshop for all members through St John's Ambulance or The Red Cross?
- How will you create opportunities for group members to air their worries and/or concerns? Allow time to share at the end of meetings – over refreshments perhaps?
- How will you deal with any member who creates a disturbance or does not seem to fit in? (This is where a Healer Member can act as a Mentor and offer guidance.)
- Will you be thinking about development opportunities for the group members – does the group want to meet up and do other things? Might they appreciate having visiting speakers? Work out a programme in advance to cover relevant topics of interest?
- Health & Safety of group members: what are the risks/hazards posed by your venue?
- Insurance – always check your Cover! Ensure the venue has a Fire Escape, etc.

REMEMBER – it's very easy for anyone, including a Student, to start a Support Group. (Mentors could be asked to drop in and would, in any case, answer any questions – sign Log Books, etc.)

A final thought: It just needs 2 people – and you have a group! Good Luck!

(Please contact Central Office for further information: tel. 01604 603247 or email: office@thehealingtrust.org.uk)