



Choose My Therapy Workshop

Goose Creek Clinic

READ THROUGH PAGES 1 & 2 BEFORE ATTENDING

Choose My Therapy is a two-session workshop designed to:

- Streamline therapy referral process and efficiently match veterans with the therapy of their choosing
- Encourage veterans to take an active role in their mental health treatment
- Provide education about effective therapy options to help veterans make an informed choice
- Enhance motivation and develop concrete therapy targets/goals

This workshop is not a long-term or standalone treatment but an entry into therapy.

What *is* therapy? Therapy involves engaging in various techniques aimed at helping you make positive emotional and behavioral changes in your life. Essentially working toward reducing symptoms, improving quality of life, and promoting recovery.

When: Wednesdays 10:30am – 11:30am

How to attend: The workshop is *virtual*. You will receive an email with a link that you will click on to join the video conference. On the date of the workshop, click the link about **five** minutes prior to the appointment and wait for the workshop to begin promptly at 1030. **Please have this packet printed or opened on computer prior to the appointment. You DO NOT need to fill these sheets out ahead of time.** IMPORTANT: If you do not see the video conference email in your inbox be sure to check your spam folder.

You will receive information about session 2 during your first class.

IMPORTANT: If you do not see the email in your inbox be sure to check your spam folder.

RALPH H. JOHNSON VA MEDICAL CENTER – GUIDELINES FOR VA VIDEO CONNECT (VVC)

1. When signing on to VA Video Connect you will be asked to enter your **name** and **contact information**. Please enter your first name and the first letter of your last name. Also, please enter your location so that we can assist you in the event of an emergency.
2. If you are using your own device for VVC appointments, try to connect with wi-fi; Sprint, Verizon and T-Mobile are free to use if you are using 4G.
3. TeleMental Health into the Home, also known as VA Video Connect, is not a suitable modality for everyone. You and/or your provider may determine services may be better offered via in-person or over TeleMental Health to a clinic.
4. If there are continuous difficulties with technology (audio/video) VVC may not be an option for you; alternatives will be given to you.
5. **Treat your VVC appointment just as you would a regular doctor's appointment at the hospital or clinic.** Be on time or notify your provider if you will be late or unable to attend. This includes wearing proper attire, conducting the sessions seated in an upright position (not lying down/in bed).
6. Ensure you have **removed possible distractions during session**: Cell phones should be turned off or on vibrate (do not text during session, do not e-mail, use the internet, or engage in any other activities on the computer during sessions); turn off televisions and radios; places pets in another room.
7. Due to the private nature of mental health appointments, you should be alone (no family or friends), unless otherwise agreed upon with your mental health provider. **Please have sessions in a private room.**
8. Be sure to **put your device at eye level** and on a solid surface vs. holding during the session to reduce distractions. Place device in a position to where the provider can consistently see your face.
9. Please be sure to have your **devices fully charged** prior to your scheduled appointment and or plugged into a power source.
10. If you are using your own device and it is an Apple IOS product, you will need to download for free "VA Video Connect" from the App Store. This will ensure that the call is secure and private (encrypted). This software will take up a certain amount of space on your device.
11. Put any other devices connected to the internet to "airplane mode." If using your phone, put "do not disturb" on so the session does not get interrupted.
12. Do not attend sessions while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. No smoking during session.

Pros and Cons of Therapy

Pros of Therapy

Examples:

- I could start enjoying fishing again.

- I could do more things with my kids.

Cons of No Therapy

Examples:

- I won't be able to keep a job because my irritability gets in the way.

- I won't be able to make it to my son's first football game.

My Therapy Goals

My *primary* therapy goal is:

Example: To not feel so anxious in public or around people I don't know.

I will know I achieved this goal if:

Examples: I can go to an event (2-3 hour concert) with my friends and not have to leave early.

My Between-Session Assignments

1. I will complete **Page 4** of this worksheet and bring it back with me to my next group session.
2. I will attend the next workshop to learn a helpful coping skill on:

First Line Treatment: Structured Therapy Protocol

(Individual OR group setting available)

Primary Symptoms	Therapy Name	Description of Therapy
Overwhelming feelings of sadness, hopelessness, withdrawing from others, lack of activity or motivation, etc.	- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Depression (CBT-D)	CBT-D explores the relationship between thoughts and emotions and focuses on changing thoughts and behaviors to improve mood (12-16 weeks) . CBT-D Information
	- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Depression (ACT-D)	Gaining greater acceptance of difficult emotions, thoughts, or circumstances. Veterans will work on identifying their values and take action to improve their quality of life (12-16 weeks) ACT-D Information
	- Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT)	IPT focuses on improving mood by supporting positive relationships. IPT helps the veteran address relationship problems caused by life changes, relationship conflicts, grief, or other issues (12-16 weeks) . IPT Information
Chronic uncontrollable worry about everyday life, panic attacks, OCD etc.	- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Anxiety Disorders (e.g., panic attacks, daily uncontrollable worry) (CBT-A)	CBT-A explores the relationship between thoughts and emotions and focuses on changing thoughts and behaviors to reduce the fears and worry (8-12 weeks) .
Substance Use	- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Use Disorders (CBT-SUD)	CBT-SUD explores the relationship between thoughts and emotions and focuses on changing thoughts and behaviors to make and maintain changes to substance uses and improve overall quality of life (12 weeks) CBT-SUD Information
	- Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET) for Alcohol and/or Substance Use	MET helps to elicit and strengthen motivation for change. It involves a brief assessment followed by a conversation with your provider aimed at helping you decide what changes, if any, you would like to make in your alcohol and/or other substance use (2-4 monthly sessions) . MET Information

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Avoiding trauma reminders (e.g., specific places/situations/memories), nightmares, intrusive memories, etc.	- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)	CPT focuses on decreasing symptoms of PTSD by exploring the relationship between thoughts and emotions. Veterans work through trauma beliefs related to safety, trust, power/control, esteem, and intimacy (12 weeks) . CPT Information
	- Prolonged Exposure (PE)	PE helps veterans regain control of their lives by helping veteran’s approach trauma-related thoughts, feelings, and situations that tend to be avoided due to the distress they cause. Methods used include exposure to real-world reminders of trauma and talking through the trauma memory. (8-15 weeks) PE Information
	- Written Exposure Therapy (WET)	WET addresses PTSD symptoms by helping veterans face trauma memories in a safe and supportive environment. You will write about your trauma for the majority of the session & briefly review the experience of writing with your therapist. (5 weeks)
	- Women’s Health and Healing After Trauma (Group)	Group for female survivors of sexual trauma designed to enhance trauma recovery skills with an overall emphasis on general health and wellbeing (15 weeks, virtual)
Sleep problems	- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I)	CBT-I focuses on changing thoughts and behaviors to help with difficulties falling and staying asleep (6 weeks). CBT-I Information
Chronic Pain	- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Pain (CBT-CP)	CBT-CP focuses on changing thoughts and behaviors to improve pain management and quality of life (12 weeks) . CBT-CP Information
	- Women’s Chronic Pain Management Group	CBT-CP group with special emphasis on chronic pain for women. (10 weeks, virtual)
Relationship conflict	- Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy (IBCT) (completed w/ partner)	IBCT reduces conflict and encourages intimacy through acceptance and skills strategies (12-26 weeks)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strength at Home Treatment for users of Intimate Partner Violence 	For veterans struggling with aggression in intimate relationships. This is a comprehensive program to address abusive behaviors with the goal of decreasing abuse and improving relationships. ☑ Interested Veterans will complete an intake assessment to determine interest in the group and ensure the group will meet the Veteran's needs. Start date is TBD.
Body Image or Food related Distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intuitive Eating Group 	For those struggling with body/weight/food-related issues looking to learn how to make peace with food from a non-diet perspective. IE covers topics to include rejecting diet mentality, honoring hunger & fullness, body respect & learning coping skills without using food. This group is not appropriate for Veterans with an active eating disorder diagnosis. (12 weeks, virtual)

Second Line Treatment: Coping Skills (Class)

Coping skills classes are flexible. They are offered weekly; however, weekly attendance is not required.

Primary Symptoms	Therapy Name	Description of Therapy
Avoiding trauma reminders (e.g., specific places/situations/memories), nightmares, intrusive memories, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTSD Coping Skills Class 	Coping-focused psychoeducational class designed to enhance understanding of PTSD and equip you with basic coping skills. Fridays @ 1100 (Virtual)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTSD Growth and Recovery After Trauma Class 	Post EBP class designed to assist pts with maintaining their PTSD recovery and achieving posttraumatic growth. Tuesday @ 0900 (Virtual)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTSD Support Group Class 	Open group of veterans helping veterans with coping and managing PTSD symptoms. Sharing experiences of strength and hope as they meet to form lasting and healthy relationships in a safe, trusting, environment. Thursday @ 1500-1600 AND Friday @ 1430-1530. (Virtual)

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General distress (Anxiety, depression, difficulty coping with stressors)	- Coping Skills Class	Veterans will increase their knowledge of stress and learn different skills in order to improve healthy functioning. Thursday @ 1400. (Virtual)
Emotional Regulation	- DBT Group	Veterans will increase skills in 4 areas: mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotional regulation, and distress tolerance. These skills will help veterans be more present, gain and maintain better relationships, feel more in control of emotions, and increase tolerance for crisis situations when they come up. Monday @ 0900. (Virtual)
Communication	- Social Skills Class	Learn skills to help improve communication through the 3C's (The Catch-it/Check-it/Change-it) recovery model which focuses on developing healthy thinking patterns, problem solving and goal-setting. Tuesday @ 1400 (Virtual)
Women's Support	- GCR Women's therapeutic support group	The women's therapeutic support group's (WTSG) goal is to empower women to better manage day-to-day stressors, reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and PTSD and to improve skills to cope with challenges. WTSG also allows women to talk openly about their concerns, feelings and situations while providing a supportive environment through peer connections. Tuesday @ 1100. (Virtual)
Peer Support	- Vet2Vet - WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)	This group focuses on ways to develop and maintain a recovery lifestyle that seeks to overcome life stressors. This group uses the each-one/reach-one/teach one recovery model where the participants share their recovery stories (instilling hope) that change is possible. Thursday @ 1400 (In-person at GCR) WRAP is a prevention and wellness process group focusing on the key recovery concepts; Hope-Personal Responsibility-Education-Self-Advocacy-Support. Wednesday @ 1000 (in-person at GCR)

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Memory & Aging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Memory & Aging Group <p>**Eligibility Requirements-any veteran over the age of 50 expressing concerns about memory, attention, and/or cognitive functioning related to aging. Diagnoses of MCI or mild cognitive issues are acceptable; however, Veterans with diagnosed moderate to advanced dementia or neurodegenerative diseases are not appropriate for this group.</p>	A structured psychoeducation and skills group that provides education about normal and abnormal cognitive aging and provide education regarding healthy lifestyle and other preventative strategies to avoid cognitive decline. Tuesday @ 2:30 (Virtual)
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Third Line Treatment: Coping Skills (Self-Guided)

No appointments. Mobile phone apps are available so that you can build coping skills completely on your own schedule. All can be found at [VA App Store](#) | [VA Mobile](#)

Comprehensive list of VA Mobile Apps for Mental Health: [VA Mobile Apps](#)

Primary Symptoms	Therapy Mobile App Name
Sleep Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBT-I Coach - Insomnia Coach
Anger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AIMS for Anger Management
General distress (Anxiety, depression, difficulty coping with stressors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mindfulness Coach - Mood Coach - COVID Coach
PTSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTSD Coach - Beyond MST - CPT Coach - PE Coach - PTSD Family Coach
Depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACT Coach
Relationship Distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Couples Coach

Other Resources

Whole Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acupuncture & Acupressure - Tai Chi Class - Veteran Spiritual Care Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talk to PCP/Group Leaders for more information - Virtual class through VA RHJ Whole Health - Weekly 20-minutes session of Christian scripture, meditation, and contemplation through VA Maine.
Charleston, SC Vet Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual and group counseling for Veterans, service members, and their families - Family counseling for military related issues - Bereavement (grief) counseling - Military sexual trauma counseling and referral - Community outreach and education - Substance abuse assessment and referral - Employment referral - Referral of other VA services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Charleston, SC Vet Center Veterans Affairs (va.gov)</u> <li style="text-align: right;">3625 West Montague Avenue North Charleston, SC 29418 <u>843-789-7000</u>

If you feel you need immediate assistance, call 911 or go to the closest Emergency Department. Additionally, you may call the Veterans Crisis line at **988** and then press **1**. The 1-800-273-8255 number will still work as well. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You will be immediately connected with a qualified and caring provider who can help.

ALTERNATIVES AND EXTRAS: SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND NON-MEDICATION OR PSYCHOTHERAPY OPTIONS

Battlefield Acupuncture (BFA)	While traditionally you may think of acupuncture as many needles all over the body, Battlefield Acupuncture is just in the ear. The theory is that the entire body is represented in the ear and by placing small needles in the surface some of the pain is able to be suppressed. This can be done with either semi-permanent needles or traditional acupuncture needles that are removed at the end of the visit.
Tai Chi	A gentle form of exercise that combines movement, meditation, and breathing to address concerns related to mental health, balance, pain, and much more. Zoom classes on Mondays and Thursdays.
VA Recreation Services	Offers opportunities to participate in a variety of activities with fellow Veterans. If interested, please contact Raymond Scott at 843-577-5011 Ext 3362 or 843-301-2759
Veterans on Deck	Sailing club with both men and women specific sail groups offered. The mission is to offer holistic support and resistance training for PTSD, MST, etc. www.veteransondeck.org , 843-566-2898
Warrior Surf Foundation	Offers opportunities for surfing, health coaching, and yoga. https://www.warriorsurf.org/
Team RWB	Team Red White and Blue - enriching veterans' lives with a focus on physical and mental health. There are a variety of local chapters of runners, golfers, climbers, etc. https://about.teamrwb.org/ https://www.facebook.com/groups/teamrwbcharlestonsc/
Charleston Area Seniors	Offers online and in-person exercise groups, meals, activities, informative clinics, and arts and crafts charlestonareaseniors.org
Heroes on the Water	Offers opportunities for kayaking and fishing Heroesonthewater.org
Charleston Therapeutic Riding	Offers adults with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy more active and fulfilling lives through therapeutic horsemanship. https://www.catr-program.org/
Hoofprints in the Sand	Offers equine therapy for TBI Survivors and Veterans with PTSD https://www.hoofprintsinsand.org
Big Red Barn Retreat	Offers outdoor activities for Veterans and first responders www.thebigredbarnretreat.org (in Blythewood, past Columbia)
SUDS: Service Members Undertaking Disabled Sports	Offers hiking/climbing, skiing and scuba diving for Veterans with a disability. https://sudsusa.org
PTSD 101 for Family and Friends	A 2.5 hour one-time, virtual workshop for loved ones to learn about PTSD. The goals of the workshop are to provide information about PTSD symptoms, PTSD treatment, communication strategies, and how to best support your loved one through their mental health care.