Virtual Groups for Students

Want to get connected quickly? Join a UHS virtual group today!
Groups are free and do not require health insurance.

Single Session Groups

To Get Started: talk with your UHS mental health or medical provider, or call Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (510) 642-9494.

Starting a New Medication for Anxiety or Depression
Monday, 1:45-2:30pm (Aug 31 - Dec 18)
Facilitated by Raghav Suri, PsyD

This single session psycho-educational group covers the basic facts of common anxiety and depression medications, and factors that increase the likelihood of effectiveness. The group discusses tips and tricks for effective communication with your prescriber for ongoing medication management.

Holistic Sleep Wellness: Behavioral Changes to Reduce Insomnia and Sleep Difficulties
Thursdays, 1:45-2:30pm
Facilitated by Robyn Papathakis Shannon, PsyD and Xiaoxia Song, PhD

This single session psycho-educational group is based on the concept of holistic sleep wellness. It focuses on increasing your understanding of the mechanisms and habits that impact your sleep, in order to help you identify and experiment with behaviors that can improve your sleep and work for you, your body, and your life.

Worry, Stress, and Your Health
Tuesdays, 1:45-2:30pm
Facilitated by Robyn Papathakis Shannon, PsyD and Heath Schechinger, PhD

This group is focused on increasing your understanding of (1) the body’s physical sensations and responses, (2) the different ways that persistent worry about our health may impact our stress response and behaviors, and (3) strategies for coping with thoughts, behaviors, and emotions related to health, pain, and physiological sensations.

Skills and Support Groups

To Get Started: Unless otherwise stated in the description, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020, sign up via your eTang portal, talk with your UHS mental health or medical provider, or call (CAPS) at (510) 642-9494.

AAPI - Community. Voice.
Wednesdays, 4:15-5:45pm (Sept 9 - Dec 9)
Facilitated by Junichi Shimaoka, PsyD and Jeff Lee, LCSW

This is a support and discussion space for Asian (South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian), Pacific Islander and multi-racial/ethnic students. Our diverse AAPI communities are facing multiple challenges in times of pandemic and remote learning, readjusting to living with family, speaking up against systemic social injustices to the AAPI community, allyship with the Black Lives Matter movement. We discuss a range of suggested topics each week with AAPI identified staff and faculty guests. The suggested topics range from adjusting to remote learning, imposter syndrome, navigating family expectations, microaggression, xenophobia and racial injustice, intersecting identities, and to personal/emotional wellbeing, and more. Join each week as part of your regular self care or drop-in for any specific topics! To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.
The Ripple Effect: Fostering Positive Connections in the Age of Corona
Thursdays, 2:15-3pm (Oct 1 - Nov 19)
Facilitated by Jeanine Baillie, PsyD and Kusha Murarka, PsyD

This 8-week drop-in group is offered for students who are interested in raising awareness about themselves and who are seeking to make positive connections during these challenging times. This group will focus on cultivating strategies of wellness on 8 dimensions that can be used to heal, bridge divides, create connections, and stir a ripple effect of love and health to our personal and global community. The drop-in format is flexible to allow students to join at any point and still gain insight/benefit from the collective healing. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Mindfulness Meditation Drop-In
Wednesdays, 10:15-11am (Sept 30 - Nov 18)
Facilitated by Sam Tourek, PhD

Mindfulness meditation is the practice of focusing your mind on the present moment to become more aware of thoughts, feelings and sensations as they occur without judging them. In this weekly drop-in group, participants will learn general mindfulness meditation skills by doing a variety of mindfulness exercises together, discussing their experiences doing the exercises, and considering ways to apply mindfulness in daily life. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Support Connecting to an Off-Campus Mental Health Provider Drop-In
Tuesdays, 4:15-5pm (Sept 1 - Sept 29 and Nov 3 - Dec 8)
Facilitated by Alyssa Panyawai, LCSW

Are you looking to connect with either a therapist or psychiatrist in the community for ongoing care? Have you moved out of state or out of the country and are unsure how to utilize your SHIP insurance for mental health?

This weekly drop-in group is for students who need support connecting to a provider off campus and will be useful for both students with SHIP or with other insurance plans.

Wellness in Action Drop-In, COVID Edition
Tuesdays, 3:15-4pm (Oct 20 - Dec 15)
Facilitated by Claytie Davis III, PhD, ABPP and Summer Jackson, LCSW

This drop-in skill building group is for students experiencing stress, mild to moderate anxiety, panic, and depression related to COVID-19. Participants will learn mental health and general wellness strategies to build personal awareness, develop coping strategies, and integrate wellness techniques into their daily routines. Participants will have an opportunity to engage in discussion, as well as to give and receive support. Topics include: self-care (e.g. sleep, exercise, nutrition), thinking patterns and mood, mindfulness, resilience, and fostering positive connections. The drop-in format is flexible to allow students to join at any point and still gain insight/benefit from the collective healing.
To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Wellness in Action Drop-In
Wednesdays, 5:15-6pm (Sept 16 - Nov 4)
Facilitated by Jeff Lee, LCSW and Zdravko Rozic

This drop-in skill building group is for students experiencing stress, mild to moderate anxiety, panic, and depression. Participants will learn mental health and general wellness strategies to build personal awareness, develop coping strategies, and integrate wellness techniques into their daily routines. Participants will have an opportunity to engage in discussion, as well as to give and receive support. Topics include: self-care (e.g. sleep, exercise, nutrition), thinking patterns and mood, mindfulness, resilience, and fostering positive connections. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Pathways to Health & Healing
Time and Date TBD, please check uhs.berkeley.edu/sosgroup for updates
Facilitated by Shanta Jambotkar, LCSW and Erin O’Connor, LCSW

This group is for students who navigate the impacts of physical injuries and/or newly diagnosed or chronic health conditions. Welcoming of all personal, social, and cultural identities, this space will build a community for coping and thriving. Themes will include the powerful connection between mind and body; how past body pain, negative thoughts, and challenging emotions can resurface with present stressors; and the interplay between healing and wellbeing. Members will exchange and co-create strategies that promote healing in their daily living. To join, call Social Services at (510) 642-6074.
Heal and Connect - Group for Survivors of Sexual Assault and Interpersonal Violence
Tuesdays, 2:30-4pm (Date TBD, please check uhs.berkeley.edu/sosgroup for updates)
Facilitated by Viviana Urdaneta, LCSW

This group provides a supportive environment to help sexual assault & intimate partner violence survivors break their silence and look at how the assault continues to affect day-to-day life. The goal of the group is to help students regain a sense of well-being and personal power. Come join others who are working towards healing of the experience and share a common understanding. Although sexual violence and intimate partner violence impacts students of all genders, this group is for those who identify as women*. The group is free and confidential. If you are interested in learning more about this group, please contact Social Services at (510) 642-6074 to be connected with a group facilitator.

Alcohol and Other Drug Harm Reduction
Group 1: Fridays, 2-3:30pm
Facilitated by Robin Walley, LCSW and Darius Taylor, MSW
Group 2: Tuesdays, 4-5:30pm
Facilitated by Justin Castello, PhD and Madeleine Kannan, MSW

This weekly group acknowledges that different goals work for different people. With the support of the group, you can work on finding the right balance for yourself, in order to get what you want from your substance use choices, without the things you don't want. Please call Social Services at (510) 642-6074, to set up an intake with an AOD counselor to get started.

Career Planning: Surviving and Thriving at UC Berkeley
Date TBD, please check uhs.berkeley.edu/group for updates
Facilitated by Kate Zuby, MS and Josh Lee

This 6-week group is designed to help clarify your values related to career planning and set goals for managing stresses associated with imposter syndrome, socio-cultural-familial influences, and indecision. The group will include exercises to increase career self-awareness and strategies for navigating challenges in academic and career planning. Students will also have the opportunity to share their experiences, and give support to their peers experiencing similar stressors.

USP Undocu Wellness in Action
Tuesdays, 5-6:30pm (Sept 29 - Nov 10)
Facilitated by Bianca Barrios, PhD

This is a 6 week psycho-educational, skill building group for undocu-students experiencing mild to moderate anxiety, depression, or stress. Members will learn strategies for personal awareness, develop coping tools for status related issues, and incorporate wellness techniques to shift from surviving to thriving. This group requires a pre-screen phone appt. with the group facilitator, which you may directly schedule online via: wejoinin.com/USPmentalhealth.

Wellness in Action Toolbox
Session A: Thursdays, 3:15-4:45pm (Sept 24 - Oct 15)
Facilitated by Paige Lee, PhD and Paul Eastman, EdS
Session B: Mondays, 4:15-5:45pm (Oct 19 - Nov 9)
Facilitated by Aaron Cohen, PhD and Erly Martinez

These 4-week skill building groups are for students experiencing stress, mild to moderate anxiety, panic, and depression. Participants will learn mental health and general wellness strategies to build personal awareness, develop coping strategies, and integrate wellness techniques into their daily routines. Participants will have an opportunity to engage in discussion, as well as to give and receive support. Topics include: self-care (e.g.: sleep, exercise, nutrition), thinking patterns and mood, mindfulness, resilience, and fostering positive connections. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Self-Criticism to Kindness
Fridays, 10:15-11:45am (Oct 2 - Nov 20)
Facilitated by Amy Honigman, PhD

This group will provide a space for students to learn skills for building self-compassion and kindness, as well as opportunities to offer support to one another. Topics will include: fostering an attitude of kindness towards self & others, building self-esteem through self-acceptance, and using mindfulness/mediation to facilitate resilience & self-confidence. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.
Heart Wisdom: BIPOC Meditation and Healing Community  
Fridays, 11am-12:30pm (Oct 9 - Nov 13)  
Facilitated by Amber Jaiza Jones, LCSW

This group is offered for students who identify as Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color as an opportunity to center the healing of our individual and collective wellbeing in solidarity, and engage in meditation with a supportive community. Each session will begin with meditation instruction and a 20-30 min guided meditation practice, followed by exploration of a topic or theme related to cultivating resilience in difficult times. This group welcomes both students who are new to meditation and experienced meditators. This group requires a pre-screen appointment. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

HeartSpeak: USP Support Circle  
Thursdays, 3:30-5pm (Begins Oct 1, Ongoing)  
Facilitated by Diana Peña, PhD

This weekly support space for undocumented students will center community building as a foundation for wellness, racial-trauma healing, and resilience during difficult times. Each virtual session will offer conversational support, healing strategies, and brief meditation skill practice. No prior experience required. This group requires a pre-screen phone appt. with the group facilitator, which you may directly schedule online via: wejoinin.com/USPmentalhealth.

BIMOC Black, Indigenous, Men of Color Healing Circle  
Tuesdays, 3:15-4:45pm (Sept 29 - Dec 8)  
Facilitated by Adisa Anderson, PhD

This healing circle is offered for self-identified Black, Indigenous, Men of Color who want to build community through shared solidarity, discuss ways to be rooted in resilience, and explore ways to be centered in mind, body, and spirit. We discuss the complexities of navigating life at UC Berkeley including our intersecting identities, microaggressions and “isms”, academics, career, family, relationships, and maintaining holistic well-being. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Black Womxn’s Sister Circle  
Mondays 3:30-5pm (Sept 28 - Dec 7)  
Facilitated by Amber Jaiza Jones, LCSW and Geneé Jackson, PhD, BHC

The weekly group is designed to provide a supportive space for undergraduate and graduate self-identified womxn of African descent to explore the challenges of navigating life at UC Berkeley. It provides a weekly opportunity to engage in cultivating self-care and wellness practices, to build meaningful connections, and create a mutually supportive and inclusive community. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Graduate Men’s Support  
Thursdays, 1:30-3pm (Sept 17 - Dec 3)  
Facilitated by Richard Chiovarelli, PsyD

This weekly support group is offered for students who self-identify as male grad students who wish to come together to discuss the challenges of being a grad student, ways to deal with the hurdles & hassles of school, find ways to connect with others, discuss relationship issues, and consider ways to manage stress & live a balanced life as a Berkeley student. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Asian and Asian-American Womxn Support  
Thursdays, 2:15-3:45pm (Oct 1 - Dec 10)  
Facilitated by Yi Du, PhD and Chiyon Won, PsyD

This group is for students who self-identify as females of any Asian or Asian-American background and seek a safe space to share experiences about identity, navigating between Asian & American values, school stress, and family & relationship issues.
BIWOC Black, Indigenous, Womxn of Color Healing Circle  
Tuesdays, 2:15-4pm (Sept 29 - Dec 15)  
Facilitated by Cynthia Medina, PhD and Treajané Brown, MA

This healing circle is designed for self-identified Black, Indigenous, Womxn of Color who wish to come together to create community, connect with one another for mutual support, and discuss the challenges and complexities of life at Cal related to relationships, intersecting identities, coping and holistic well-being, microaggressions and “isms”, imposter syndrome, navigating systems/the university environment, and other topics of interest. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

BIPOC Queer Womxn’s Support Circle  
Tuesdays, 2:15-3:45pm (Oct 13 - Dec 15)  
Facilitated by Amber Jaiza Jones, LCSW

This support circle is designed for students who identify as Black, Indigenous, or Womxn of Color who love womxn*, regardless of other identities or labels. Together we will build a supportive, affirming, confidential community where we can discuss our multiple intersecting identities, coming out, self-esteem, relationships, gender identity, spirituality, holistic wellness, and other topics of interest. All BIPOC students “who experience life through the lens of womxn in body, spirit, identity--past, present, future, and fluid are welcome” (GenEq)—including BIPOC students who identify as nonbinary, trans, gender nonconforming, gender diverse, and cis-womxn. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Graduate Women’s Support  
Mondays, 5-6:30pm (Sept 14 - Dec 7)  
Facilitated by Linda Zaruba, PhD

This support group is offered for self-identified female graduate students who wish to come together to share the challenges and struggles of being a grad student, discuss ways to balance school & personal life, discuss relationships with advisors and peers, increase self-confidence, and develop relationships with other women in grad school. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Grief and Loss Support  
Wednesdays, 3:15-5pm (Sept 30 - Nov 18)  
Facilitated by Christine Chih-Ting Chang, PhD & Jevon Rice, MS

This 8-week support group is for students who have had a significant person in their life die more than 3 months ago. The group provides a safe space to learn about the grieving process, share experiences of loss, and give & receive emotional support. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.

Understanding Self and Others  
Fridays, 3:15-4:45pm (Oct 2 - Nov 20)  
Facilitated by Sasha Blum, PsyD & Kusha Murarka, PsyD

This 8-week therapy group is designed to foster greater self-awareness and more satisfying relationships by exploring how your background and upbringing affect your relationships, becoming more aware of your thoughts and feelings, and exploring your “here-and-now” feelings with other group members. To learn more and get started, register at tinyurl.com/capsgroup2020.
**Myths and Truths about Group Counseling**

**MYTH**

Group counseling is second best to individual counseling.

I'm uncomfortable speaking up, I will never be able to speak in a counseling group.

I will be the only one with my problem in the group. No one else will understand me.

I will be forced to share my concerns and worries with strangers.

The group facilitators or the other group members will judge me.

Group members will share my secrets with their friends.

I will be verbally attacked in Group Counseling.

**TRUTH**

Group counseling has been found to be just as effective as individual counseling in improving mental health. In some cases, group counseling has been found to be more effective than individual therapy.

Many people feel anxious about speaking up in groups. Group members usually find that over time they start to feel safe enough to participate.

Group members find it helpful to learn that others are going through similar issues, and find it supportive to learn new ways to cope and grow through adversity.

Group members share when they feel comfortable and only what they wish to share. All group members have the right to “pass” if they do not feel comfortable sharing in the moment.

The Group facilitator’s role is to promote a brave and non-judgmental space and to facilitate discussion.

Group members are asked to respect the privacy of other group members and to agree to not share any identifying information outside the group.

Group facilitators and members ensure the group is a brave space where group participant agreements are agreed to and respected. A benefit of group is receiving wisdom, feedback, and ideas from both peers and group facilitators in a respectful and supportive manner.