

Understanding, Connection, and Hope: The Impact of Our Psychoeducation Groups



At The Maggie Oliver Foundation, we understand that healing from trauma is not linear — and that feeling safe, understood, and supported is a vital first step in any recovery journey.

Our Psychoeducation Workshops (Group 1 – Morning and Evening groups) were created to offer survivors a gentle, structured space to better understand trauma, connect with others, and begin rebuilding a sense of control and self-compassion

What We Offer: Psychoeducation Workshops

Our psychoeducation groups are not therapy, but a trauma-informed, survivor-led space that provides:

- A safe, structured environment to learn about trauma and its impact
- Accessible information on:
 - PTSD and complex trauma
 - Trauma responses (fight, flight, freeze, fawn)
 - Emotional and physiological effects of trauma
- Practical tools and coping strategies to support wellbeing
- Opportunities for peer connection and shared understanding
- Choice in participation — speaking is always optional

Each programme is delivered over a series of group sessions, supported by experienced facilitators who prioritise emotional safety, choice, and non-judgemental listening.

We recognise that everyone is at a different stage in their journey.

As part of our trauma-informed approach:

We carefully consider group readiness. Where needed, survivors may be offered alternative or additional support before joining a group.



Who the Groups Are For (Criteria)

Our psychoeducation groups are designed for survivors who:

- Are ready to engage in a group setting alongside others
- Can safely participate without requiring immediate crisis intervention
- Are open to learning about trauma and its impact
- May feel isolated and are looking for connection and understanding

What We Saw: Engagement and Participation

Across both our morning and evening groups, we saw:

- Strong and consistent attendance, with participants committing to attend sessions regularly
- High levels of engagement, including:
 - Open discussion
 - Use of chat to support accessibility
- The gradual development of:
 - Trust within the group
 - A sense of safety and belonging

Participants often began cautiously, but over time became more confident in sharing — showing the importance of gentle pacing and consistent support



The Impact: What Participants Told Us

Feeling Safe and Supported

Across both groups, participants described the space as:

- “Very safe”
- A place where they felt able to open up without judgement
- Built on trust, boundaries, and shared understanding

This sense of safety is fundamental — and something we prioritise in every group we deliver.



Reduced Isolation and Connection

One of the most powerful outcomes was that participants no longer felt alone:

- Connecting with others who understood their experiences
- Feeling validated
- Realising that their reactions to trauma were shared

This helped build a deep sense of belonging and acceptance, which is often missing for survivors

Increased Understanding and Insight

Participants developed a stronger understanding of:

- Trauma and complex PTSD
- How trauma impacts thoughts, emotions, and behaviour
- Why they feel the way they do

Many described this learning as transformative, helping them make sense of their experiences and reducing self-blame



Hope, Empowerment, and Confidence

Participants reported meaningful emotional shifts, including:

- Feeling more hopeful and less alone
- Building confidence to speak over time
- Feeling more able to be authentic

This reflects a key outcome of the programme: restoring hope and personal agency in recovery



Practical Coping and Tools

Participants gained:

- Coping strategies and grounding techniques
- Tools to manage trauma responses
- A better understanding of what support might help them moving forward

Many described the workshops as impactful and beneficial to their recovery journey

Understanding the Wellbeing Data

Wellbeing outcomes across both groups showed a mixed picture, with some participants improving, some remaining stable, and others experiencing a temporary decline in scores.

This is important to understand.

In trauma-informed work:

Increased awareness and emotional processing can temporarily lower wellbeing scores.

However, this often reflects deeper insight, emotional engagement, and progress in recovery

What participants told us — feeling safer, more understood, and more connected — demonstrates meaningful impact beyond numbers.



What We Learned

As with all our services, we continue to learn and adapt.

Both groups have provided valuable learning to strengthen future delivery:

- The importance of pacing and allowing time to process difficult content
- Building in strong grounding and safe endings to sessions
- Ensuring equal opportunities to speak and avoiding dominance in discussions
- Supporting participants to engage at their own pace
- Structuring sessions clearly while keeping content manageable

Above all, we learned that safety, choice, and connection must remain at the centre of every session.

Our Ongoing Commitment

At The Maggie Oliver Foundation, our role is to provide emotionally safe, survivor-led spaces where individuals can begin to understand their experiences and feel less alone.

Our Emotional Support Manager's priority is to ensure that:

- Survivors are supported within safe and contained environments
- Facilitators are supported to deliver trauma-informed care
- Programmes continue to evolve based on survivor feedback and learning

A Final Reflection

These groups show that impact is not always measured by quick change.

Sometimes, impact looks like:

- Sitting in a room and feeling safe for the first time
- Hearing “me too”
- Beginning to understand your own story with compassion

And that is where recovery begins.

How To Access Our Group Support Work

At The Maggie Oliver Foundation, our group programmes are designed to feel safe, supportive and at the right pace for each person's individual journey.

We understand that taking part in a group can feel like a big step. To help make this as safe and beneficial as possible, we offer a structured support pathway to ensure everyone feels ready and supported before joining.

Our Support Pathway

To access our group programmes, we ask that participants have:

Completed at least one cycle of emotional support calls with TMOF within the last 12 months

This is an important part of our approach, as it helps to:

- Build trust and connection with our support team
- Ensure you feel supported before joining a group setting
- Give you space to talk through your needs and goals
- Help us understand what support feels right for you

Our emotional support calls are a gentle, one-to-one space where you can speak to a trained ambassador at your own pace.

