

Thank you for sharing the draft. This contract is well-structured, but you're absolutely right to want to avoid language that may carry legal or clinical implications when the group is being facilitated under pastoral, not licensed clinical, authority.

Below is a revised version of your Group Support Contract, with all legally and ethically sensitive language adjusted to reflect a pastoral, non-clinical, spiritual support group. I've also softened references to therapy and clarified the scope of the facilitator's role.

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## **Group Support Agreement**

Facilitated by Rabbi Shmuel Skaist

Welcome to the Men's Pastoral Support Group

This group is intended to provide a safe, structured, and sacred space for honest emotional work, personal growth, accountability, and relational healing, through a lens of spiritual support and shared experience.

In order to protect all participants and promote a respectful and productive group experience, please read and initial each item below and sign at the end. Initialing each item and signing this agreement indicates your understanding and commitment to these guidelines.

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### **1) Confidentiality and Privacy**

Confidentiality is essential to creating a safe group environment. Members are expected to honor the privacy of others by not sharing names, identifying details, or any content discussed during sessions with anyone outside the group—including friends, spouses, or sponsors.

While Rabbi Shmuel will maintain confidentiality in accordance with applicable state clergy-penitent privilege laws, please understand that true confidentiality cannot be fully guaranteed in an online format due to possible technical breaches or outside listeners. You are responsible for joining the group from a private location.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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### **2) Attendance & Punctuality**

Consistent attendance is essential for the health of the group. Barring emergencies, members are expected to attend all scheduled sessions and arrive/log in on time. If you anticipate being late or absent, please notify Rabbi Shmuel directly. Unplanned absences impact the group process for everyone.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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### **3) Group Commitment**

While participation is voluntary, you are asked to commit to an initial cycle of 12 sessions. After 12 sessions, you may renew your commitment for another cycle. If you choose not to continue, please inform Rabbi Shmuel by the 10th session so the group can process your departure respectfully.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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### **4) Group Cohesion & Boundaries**

To protect group integrity, participants agree to avoid forming exclusive or secretive relationships with one another outside of the group. If group members do interact outside sessions, it is expected that this be brought back into group discussions transparently and respectfully.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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### **5) Spiritual Reflection (“Soulwork”)**

Occasionally, reflective exercises may be offered—such as journaling, readings, or spiritual practices—to deepen your personal work. While optional, participants are encouraged to engage with these reflections sincerely. Please reach out if you need clarification or support.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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### **6) Respectful Communication**

This group encourages honesty and mutual feedback, always within a tone of respect and compassion. Disagreements are natural and welcome, but personal attacks, sarcasm, or shaming will not be tolerated. Feedback should be constructive and caring. Concerns about the group process should be directed privately to Rabbi Shmuel.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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## **7) Financial Agreement**

The cost of participation is \$150 per session. To reserve your spot, please submit a deposit of \$600 via Zelle to avivakohl@gmail.com. Your payment reserves your seat in the group, regardless of attendance. You are responsible for payment of all sessions unless an absence is due to serious illness or emergency, or the group is cancelled. Other absences should be discussed in advance with Rabbi Shmuel.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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## **8) Scope of Services**

This group is offered as pastoral support, not as psychotherapy or licensed mental health treatment. While Rabbi Shmuel is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of New Jersey, a Certified Sex Addiction Therapist (CSAT), and a trained group facilitator, he is offering this group in his capacity as a rabbi and spiritual guide. This group does not constitute clinical treatment, and participation does not establish a therapist-client relationship.

Participants in need of psychotherapy or professional counseling are strongly encouraged to seek services from a licensed mental health professional. Referrals are available upon request.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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## **9) Technology & Online Etiquette**

Sessions will be held via a secure video platform. Please participate from a quiet, private space with your camera on and your full attention present. Recording of any kind is strictly prohibited.

(Initials)\_\_\_\_\_

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## **Final Agreement**

I have read and understood the expectations described above. I agree to participate in this pastoral support group facilitated by Rabbi Shmuel Skaist and to respect the spiritual and communal nature of this work.

(Initials) \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Let me know if you'd like this formatted as a printable PDF or Word doc, or adapted for in-person vs. online groups, or for co-facilitation with a therapist.