

Retention



Once participants attend the first meeting, the challenge is to support their return and participation in the series of group activities. Retaining or keeping people is always a challenge. There is no known magic to retain them. Different conditions help people to return week after week. No one condition is the same for everyone. That condition, however, will compel people to return and surmount other barriers that might prevent them from attending meetings!

Things that help people to continue to participate:

- Accessibility of meeting place (transportation, childcare).
- No cost or little cost.
- Familiarity of staff, group process, or agency.
- “Seal of Approval” by a friend or trusted staff.
- A positive first impression.
- A meaningful experience that has relevance to personal life.
- Feel a cultural fit.
- Feel respect.
- Opportunity for self-expression that is respected.
- Opportunity to exercise choice, independence, control, identity
- Feeling some sense of emotional wellness from the group experience.
- Learning to improve skill, show skills, etc.
- Opportunity to express creativity or opportunity to experience something different or to learn something new
- Sincere appreciation for attendance and effort to attend.
- Gain a sense of belonging or community, feel included.
- Make friends, be with friends, experience care,
- Freedom from fear and anxiety.
- Get to know other people, learning to solve problems to make living easier.
- Feel like one is growing and making a step toward personal goals.
- Feel that the group matches personal values.