

# Disruptive Group Participants

During a group session, participants may become disruptive through verbal comments or physical actions. It is important to diminish distractions and maintain the safety and comfort of everyone in the room.

## Example of disruptive behavior:

- Phone calls or texting
- Side conversations
- Inappropriate comments/insults
- Use of foul language
- Pacing or moving around the room



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## **Suggestions for dealing with disruptive behavior:**

- ❖ Prevent the behavior by setting ground rules at the beginning of the session (e.g. silence your cell phones, be respectful of others, feel free to leave the room if you need to.)
- ❖ Acknowledge the behavior
  - Keep your body language and voice neutral, remain accepting and non-judgmental.
  - Use reflections (e.g. “It sounds like you really need to take that call.”, “You are certainly having an animated conversation.”, “It seems like this is tough for you right now.”)
- ❖ Offer behavior options (e.g. “Please feel free to take the call out in the hall.”, “What could you share with the rest of the group.”, “Our staff in the front office could help you with that if you would like to go and talk with them now.”)
- ❖ Ask another staff member who is not participating in the class to speak with the disruptive participant in a location outside of the classroom.