

Groups and Workshops

We presently offer group programs within three broad areas of focus including: Safety-Building Foundational Group Programs, Relational Healing Focused Group Programs and Living Fully in Present Life Group Programs. In a general sense, the Safety-Building Foundational Programs help prepare people for the Relational Trauma Healing Focused Programs which in turn help prepare individuals for later stage, Living Fully in Present Life Programs.

All group programs are co-facilitated by Avalon Centre therapists, which ensures a high standard of safety. Individual counselling sessions are offered as a preparation for group work. Not every person who comes to Avalon Centre for individual counselling chooses to participate in our specialized groups as we understand this work can be more triggering and requires a high level of commitment. Avalon therapists are responsible to take great care when making recommendations for group work to ensure that an adequate level of safety is present. We do not recommend group work when people are in a place of crisis to ensure that this significant step is manageable. Pre-group meetings are offered to each person who is exploring whether a group program may be a good fit at this time in their healing process and lives. For more information regarding our group programs, please inquire with your individual therapist at Avalon.

“I strongly believe that I am alive today because of Avalon. The people I met here, the services I got here, the support and the safety, it saved my life.”
— Client



AVALON
SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

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Counselling Services



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Individual Therapeutic Counselling

At Avalon Sexual Assault Centre our specialized therapeutic counselling is available to women and trans/two spirit/non-binary people, 16 and older, who have experienced a recent or historical sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment. We also provide individual information sessions to the non-offending parents of children who have disclosed sexual abuse and to supportive partners of clients accessing our services. Individuals who have experienced recent sexual assault are prioritized for quicker access to counselling sessions.

Over the years, we have paid careful attention in developing an emotionally safe, “stepping-stone” approach in providing our individual counselling services. This places the healing steps within phases or layers to protect individuals from feeling overwhelmed or becoming re-traumatized in the recovery work. Each phase of healing is supported through a counselling stream as outlined below. The counselling streams are time-limited due to the high demand for our services.

Our specialized sexual abuse/assault counselling supports individuals in addressing current life impacts stemming from relational trauma in such areas as safety, trust, control, self-identity, intimacy and sexuality. We also support people in understanding and linking together the broader impacts and challenges related to societal sexism and other forms of oppression. We follow a collaborative and empowering, resource-based model that recognizes each individual’s personal knowledge, skills, values and wisdom. We also strive to acknowledge each person’s unique life experiences and priorities.

Initial Consultation Sessions

Each potential client new to Avalon Centre is provided a consultation session within one to four weeks of their call. The initial consultation session provides support while mutually exploring the fit of our specialized counselling for each individual’s most important current needs.

Those who identify a serious present life safety concern including: a harmful or life threatening coping pattern, a mental health difficulty or ongoing violence by a partner, continue to be referred to appropriate specialized services in our community and may re-access our services at a time of greater safety. Individuals who have experienced a recent sexual assault are prioritized for quicker access to initial consultation sessions.

Foundations of Safety Sessions

We offer up to 10 therapeutic counselling sessions for those who are currently experiencing a heightened time of distress or crisis following a recent sexual assault or are experiencing strong flashbacks and immediate distress stemming from past sexual violation. These Foundation of Safety therapeutic counselling sessions are intended to assist people in moving through the immediate crisis. Individuals who have experienced a recent sexual assault are prioritized for Foundation of Safety Sessions.

Relational Trauma Healing Sessions

We offer between up to 20 therapeutic counselling sessions for those who have established sufficient emotional safety and support to work through past childhood sexual abuse and/or past sexual assault experiences. Former clients are able to access additional relational healing focused counselling after taking a mandatory break, which allow us to serve others who are waiting to begin.

Waitlist

We currently have a waitlist for counselling sessions addressing historical sexual abuse/assault. The length of this waitlist varies over time. We want to validate that it takes much courage in seeking specialized sexual abuse/assault counselling and that having to wait can feel discouraging.

We encourage those who are seeking more immediate support and have access to an E.A.P or personal benefit program to consider using this option while continuing on our waitlist for this specialized counselling.

Follow-up Sessions

We offer follow-up sessions to those who have completed Foundations of Safety or Relational Trauma Healing focused sessions and are no longer requiring ongoing contact. Follow-up sessions are offered on an individual basis depending upon need and are intended to assist our clients in maintaining the gains they have made. These sessions are spaced out between longer intervals. They can be helpful in supporting a transition phase for practicing skills and integrating new knowledge into daily life while having the reassurance that follow-up contact is available should individuals experience a resurgence of trauma responses. The number of follow-up sessions provided varies according to each person’s needs. Clients can also be offered these sessions during a mandatory break to help maintain the therapeutic connection and a sense of hope and safety.

Information Sessions for Parents and/or Partners

We offer up to 3 quicker to access information and support sessions to the non-offending parents of children/youth. These sessions are intended to help parents understand and respond to the aftermath following disclosure including: validating parents feelings and needs for support, naming possible impacts and trauma responses for both themselves and their child and supporting the healing journey. We also offer an individual or joint information session to partners of clients coming to Avalon Centre to provide education related to the effects of sexual assault/abuse trauma, secondary impacts for partners, and possibilities for supporting healing and recovery.