



## **Terms and Conditions for Online Support Group Users**

Butterfly Online Support Groups are a service of the Butterfly Foundation. Our Online Support Groups are administered by professional counsellors with experience and special training in the area of eating disorders, disordered eating and body image. This service is operated from Sydney, NSW.

This service is operated by The Butterfly Foundation for the purpose of providing online support and information for people suffering with eating disorders, disordered eating and body image problems, their family and friends, free of charge for the benefit of the public. The service is provided for residents of Australia only.

Our counselling and support services are based on the information you choose to share with us. While our counsellors will make every effort to assist you with the issues or problems you identify - you are in the best position to determine how relevant this information is to your situation.

Services provided by The Butterfly Foundation are not a substitute for independent professional advice from your own or another treating health professional. Nothing contained in this site is intended to be used as medical advice or to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

The Butterfly Foundation does not accept any liability for any injury, loss or damage incurred by use of or reliance on the information.

### **Privacy and Security:**

The Butterfly Foundation operates within Australian legal requirements and standards for privacy and information management. These frameworks are intended to safeguard access and use of your information.

For further information, please read our privacy policy.

### **Confidentiality:**

When you are using Butterfly Online Support Groups your personal information is kept confidential. We will not share your information with any other organisation without your express permission, except where we are required to do so under law. This may apply in circumstances where we have a duty of care; that is when you are at serious risk of harming yourself, harming someone else or there is a child protection concern. De-identified transcripts and demographic data may be used for the purposes of training or clinical supervision or to evaluate the services provided by the Butterfly Foundation.

## **Rules for Participation in a Butterfly Online Support Group**

Acceptance of these Rules forms part of the Terms and Conditions of Use of Butterfly Online Support Groups.

## **Age Limit of Sixteen**

You must be aged sixteen or over to participate in a Butterfly Online Support Group. If you are under sixteen, please do not enter the online support room. Individuals who are under 16 can access support through our phone, email and web-counselling support service, 1800 EDHOPE.

## **Introduce yourself**

When you first enter the Online Support Group room, please announce your presence by introducing yourself, just as you would if you had just walked into a physical room, instead of a virtual one. You may like to give your first name, or just be known by the nickname you have created for entering the service.

## **Be guided by the Administrators**

Please note that, in the Online Support Room, there will always be at least one (but usually two) Butterfly Administrators. The role of the Administrators is to provide support and guidance within the group context, to ensure the rules for participation are understood and kept by all participants, and ensure that the Support Group is a safe place for all users.

## **Respect other users**

Open and honest communication is encouraged within the Support Group, but always be aware of how your words may impact on others. The 'no go' areas listed below have been chosen with the aim of keeping conversation at all times safe, non-triggering and recovery focused.

At all times, please be patient and kind with other users and try to respect other individuals' opinions, statements, ideas, and shared story or experiences, even when they may be quite different to your own.

Please also be respectful of conversational space and try not to dominate the conversation.

## **Offer support, not advice**

The Online Support Group is a space where trained and compassionate Butterfly counsellors can support you and provide guidance; it is also a space where, if you want to, you can provide really valuable support to other people who have experienced similar issues to you. However, we ask you to remember that you are there to provide support, not advice, to those around you. Everyone's experience of an eating disorder is unique, and what worked for you will not automatically work for someone else, no matter how similar their experience may sound to you. The most helpful thing you can do for them is to let them know "what worked for me", and let them decide for themselves if it might work for them too.

## **Inappropriate behaviour**

Some behaviours are inappropriate and will not be tolerated in the Online Support Group. Breach of any of the points below will result in your being warned and/or 'kicked' from the Online Support Group without further notice.

- You must not use the Online Support Group if you are affected by drugs or alcohol.
- You must not post any statement which you know is false, inaccurate, misleading, defamatory, libellous, or in violation of any law.

- You must not post any statement, ask questions or use language which may be construed as offensive, harassing, obscene, pornographic, profane, threatening, abusive or invasive of a person's privacy. This includes no swear words or abbreviated swear words.
- You must not post any statement that may be construed as discriminatory on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or any other form of illegal discrimination.
- You must not share information or tips that might be used to promote, encourage or support eating disorder thinking or behaviours ('pro-ANA', or 'pro-ED' information), or to promote, encourage or support suicide or self-harm.

If you believe someone else is behaving or posting inappropriately, please let a Butterfly Administrator know, and they will address the behaviour.

## **Other 'No-go' areas**

Some subjects or conversational topics can be unhelpful or even harmful if discussed with people who are suffering from an eating disorder. Please try to follow the guidelines below when joining in an Online Support Group discussion. A breach of these guidelines will result in your being warned, and a further breach may result in your being 'kicked' from the group.

### **No numbers**

People with an eating disorder are often focused on 'numbers'. At Butterfly we believe that sharing of numbers can be triggering to sufferers, and does not help recovery. Therefore, sharing of numbers in recovery Support Groups is not allowed. Examples of what to avoid include:- any number related to weight or weight loss, BMI, calories, kilojoules, waist measurements, clothing size, length of time you've gone without eating, how many times you've purged, numbers of repetitions of an exercise, how many laxatives you've taken.

### **No sharing links to websites, blogs, journals or other personal material**

Please do not post links to other websites, journals, blogs or other personal material. If you are aware of a website or have a journal that you think may be helpful to others, please send an email with details to a Butterfly Administrator via [support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au](mailto:support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au). If the information is deemed appropriate, reliable and accurate, we will make the link available at the next Support Group.

### **No sharing of personal contact details**

Please do not ask for or share personal contact details with others in the Online Support Group, for your own privacy and safety.

### **No suicide or self-harm talk**

Suicidal/self-harm thoughts and feelings are always serious and require urgent and individual attention. If you are having these thoughts or feelings, rather than joining an Online Support Group you should seek immediate help from a 24 hour crisis support service such as:

**Lifeline: 13 11 14**

**Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800**

**Police or ambulance: 000**

## **Temporary absence from the Online Support Group room**

If you need to leave your computer temporarily for any reason, then please first click on the 'Away' button to indicate you are not available. Be aware that if you are absent for more than 15 minutes, the Administrator may assume you are not coming back and may log you out of the session.

## **Say goodbye when leaving**

When you are about to leave the Support Group room, whether it is at the end of an Online Support Group session or earlier, please say that you are about to leave, and say goodbye to the other users and the Administrators. When users leave abruptly, without saying goodbye, it may be distressing to other users, who may worry that you have left because something has upset you, especially if you have left the group early.

## **Consequences of breaching these rules**

If a Butterfly Administrator believes someone has breached the rules for participating, she or he will post a general reminder of the rules to the whole Support Group.

If you have breached the rules by engaging in 'Inappropriate Behaviour' you will be warned and/or 'kicked' from the Online Support Group without further notice.

For other lesser breaches of the rules, your posts may be temporarily blocked so that others cannot read them. The Administrator will then send you an invitation to join them for a conversation in a private room. If the Admin is satisfied you understand what the problem was and will not intentionally breach the rules again, you will be able to return to the Support Group.

If you breach the rules again, you may be 'kicked' from the Support Group and banned temporarily or even permanently from returning.

If you have any queries, concerns or require further information relating to these Terms and Conditions, you are invited to email the National Manager - Support, Education and Collaboration.

Email: [kirsty.greenwood@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au](mailto:kirsty.greenwood@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au)