



## **SUPPORT GROUP FOR STUDENTS WITH ASPERGER SYNDROME**

2019-2020

SPONSORED BY COUNSELING SERVICES

### About the participants

- The group is for enrolled Trinity students who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger Syndrome, suspect they may be on the spectrum, or who find interacting with others and/or making friends to be a challenge. (The group is not well suited for students for whom social anxiety alone inhibits their ability to interact with others and/or make friends.)

### About the facilitator

- Dema Stout, M.A., has facilitated the group since fall semester of 2018. She has facilitated a San Antonio meet-up group for adults with Asperger Syndrome for several years and works with adolescents and adults individually as well.

### About the gatherings

- This is a discussion/support group, not a psychotherapy group. Therefore, no participant becomes a client of Counseling Services by virtue of participating, and no record of any meeting is kept other than attendance.
- The group meets Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 every two weeks during fall and spring semester in the Gathering Room of Counseling Services. Students may attend whenever they wish. They may arrive and depart as their availability permits.
- The group offers an informal way for students to meet each other, problem solve together, and “find their people.”
- Topics have included: how to enter into groups, looking for romantic partners, setting goals, organizational skills, and positive qualities of autism. The group generates topics for future meetings.
- When a student participates for the first time, everyone introduces themselves and reports something positive that’s happened since the group last met.
- During 2018-19, a gathering typically included two to four students and the facilitator; about 10 students participated at some time during the year.

### About the expectations

- Confidentiality: What’s said in the group stays in the group.

### Exceptions to confidentiality

- If a participant discloses an incident of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking that has been perpetrated by or experienced by the participant or any Trinity student or employee while a Trinity student or employee (regardless of the location), Texas law requires that Ms. Stout report all disclosed information about the incident to the university’s Title IX coordinator.
  - The Title IX coordinator will offer information about support resources and complaint resolution options to the victimized individual. The report to the Title IX coordinator does not initiate the complaint process, and the victimized individual will be in control over whether and how to engage with the Title IX coordinator.
  - There are three confidential sources of support on campus for a student: a Counseling Services counselor (when the student is a client), a Health Services medical provider, and the University Chaplain. These individuals are required to report the type of incident only, and no other information.
- If a group participant discloses intent to injure themselves or another person, Ms. Stout will enlist the assistance of the Counseling Services staff member who is in the office.

For questions about the group, email Dema Stout at [dema@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dema@sbcglobal.net).