

# Peer Support Group: Coffee Talk 2.0

By Jennifer Maxfield-DeCarlo, Safe Harbor Clinical Director and host of the Peer Support Group

About eight years ago, I had the profound honor of seeing Irvin Yalom speak in person. Sitting in a small, intimate auditorium listening to the founding father of existentialism talk not just about the theories and techniques of psychotherapy, but about the vital importance of genuine, human connection within the therapeutic space. I felt a passion ignite in me. He credited much of his success and insight to a career-long group of therapists who met monthly. These pioneers, including Beck and Rogers, setting aside theoretical differences to delve into their own experiences, discussing their challenges, and confronting their countertransference as a way to refine their craft and themselves. They created space to acknowledge the personal impact of providing therapy.

As I sat there, I thought maybe this is why they are founding fathers. They were not only willing to be excellent in their craft, but they were willing to push the bounds of authenticity, fiercely hold to genuineness and humility so that they were not getting in the way of therapeutic process but were growing and learning. They were not shying away from using the core of who they were as the essential element of therapeutic exchange.

At Safe Harbor, we are relentlessly focused on our goal of bringing hope and healing to the broken, but we know we can only achieve that when we also provide space for our clinicians to grow, learn, and connect. That's why, starting in 2025, we're reinventing Coffee Talk: think of it as \*Coffee Talk: Yalom style\*. Each month we'll create a safe space for you, as clinicians, to explore your journey: what's working, what's challenging, and how we bring our full selves into our sessions. It's a space to be honest, to learn from one another, and to honor the power of authenticity in this work we do together. I hope you'll join us and be part of this community of growth. And who knows—perhaps, like Yalom, we'll still be learning, creating, and connecting, even decades from now.

**We hope you'll join us.**