

## MW Counseling Faith-Based Encounter Group

Inspired by the “Pilgrims of Hope” theme for this Jubilee Year of 2025, licensed professional counselors Matthew Wisniewski and Matthew Welch are starting an Encounter Group Experience that will deepen your faith. Utilizing the framework from Carl Rogers’s Person-Centered approach and encounter group design, we have adapted it to combine faith and mental health as a way to fully understand the relationship between the two. This encounter group allows you the opportunity to experience God with your fellow group members as well as telling your own story about how your faith has shaped you.

Our faith-based encounter group is a safe space where people can go to discuss their struggles, fears, ambitions, and excitement about our catholic faith – anything that needs discussing. Please be aware that this is not a therapy group, so no clinical interventions will be administered; rather, a non-directive atmosphere of acceptance, understanding, and genuineness will be provided by the facilitators, truly showcasing what it means to facilitate rather than direct.

### Responses to Potential Questions

**Q: What is an Encounter Group?**

A: An Encounter Group is a type of support group that is facilitated by mental health professionals who do not push an authoritarian, rigidly structured itinerary like most forms of group therapy.

**Q: Who created the Encounter Group?**

A: Carl Rogers created our version of the Encounter Group in the 1950s to compliment his Person-Centered theory to psychotherapy. The 3 core conditions of Rogers’s Person-Centered theory are empathy (the process of understanding), congruence (“authenticity”), and unconditional positive regard (nonjudgemental attitude and acceptance).

**Q: Why attend MW Counseling’s Encounter Group?**

A: Inspired by Pope Francis’s Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee Year Theme, we wanted to create a safe space where Catholics (and non-Catholics) can come together, in a community building setting, to discuss their needs/concerns with faith-based conversations.

**Q: Who can attend these groups?**

A: Anyone aged 18 and older in the State of Ohio may participate in these groups.

**Q: Where will the groups be held?**

A: The groups will be held online via a secure, HIPAA compliant video conference call. Participants will create an account with MW Counseling LLC, and they can access the group meeting link from there.

**Q: How can I sign up?**

A: You can sign up by contacting Matthew Wisniewski at [wisniewski.mwcounseling@gmail.com](mailto:wisniewski.mwcounseling@gmail.com). He will provide the information to get your account created and offers a free 15-minute consultation to address any questions/concerns. Once your account is created, Matthew will add your name to the group member list.