Support Group

Welcome to the new normal.

Establish an obvious sequence/order of participants (alphabetical, whatever). Handle any technical issues that arise from the use of a virtual platform. Then, in order, have each participant read, in order, the following Group Guidelines (just read the sentence, one each):

Group Guidelines

1. Start and stop on time.
2. Time limit for Check In.
3. Absolute confidentiality.
4. Be respectful.
5. Be mindful of others: no monopolizing or cross talk.
6. Keep it in the here and now.
7. Empathize with each other's situation.

Now, everyone reads the Principles of Support to themselves. Each person picks the principle that resonates with them most. In order, have each person state which one they have selected (just read the sentence, no commentary):

Principles of Support

1. We aim for better coping skills.
2. We find strength in sharing experiences.
3. We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
4. We embrace humor as healthy.
5. We accept we cannot solve all problems.
6. We expect a better future in a realistic way.
7. We will never give up hope.

Now is the time for introductions. Set (and enforce) a time limit for everyone. People can cede the remainder of their time if desired, but must answer every question. In order, answer each question:

Introductions

1. What is your first name?
2. What is your living situation? How many people are living with you?
3. What is your work situation now?
4. What is the most pressing issue that you are dealing with right now?
5. What would you like to get out of this group?

Now it is time for the moderator of the group to start a discussion. This may be based on an issue that is most common, or most serious. By the end of the session, everyone must have a chance to talk further.

At the end, everyone again reads the Principles of Support to themselves and then, in order, reads the one that resonates with them most. The session is over.