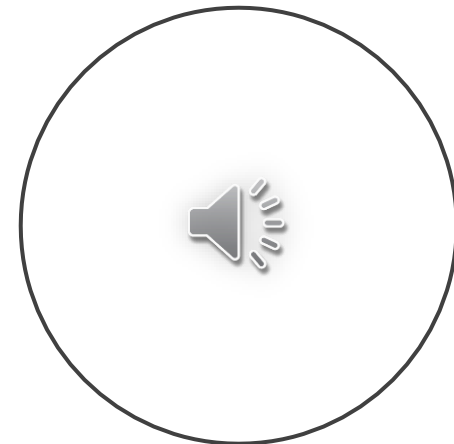




**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**

Group Leadership: 2023 Training



Our Vision:

A world free of MS.

Our Mission:

We will cure MS while empowering people affected by MS to live their best lives.



ANQUETTE
DIAGNOSED IN 2013



JOSHUA
DIAGNOSED IN 2015

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is a movement by and for all people affected by MS.
- Our voices and actions reflect diversity, equity and inclusion.
- We welcome diverse perspectives.
- We actively seek out and embrace differences.
- We want everyone to feel respected and be empowered to bring their whole selves to ensure we make the best decisions to achieve our vision.



MIKE
DIAGNOSED IN 1983



ANGELA
DIAGNOSED IN 1992



JOVANY
DIAGNOSED IN 2016



TRACEY (R)
DIAGNOSED IN 2009



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Agenda

- **Peer Connections Volunteers**
 - The role of a Self-Help Group Leader
 - Expectations
- **Managing Groups:**
 - Group Structure
 - Group Leader & Meeting Organization
 - Group Dynamics
 - Working with Guest Speakers
 - Meeting Topics & Conversation Ideas
- **Group Leader support & resources**
- **Next Steps**



Peer Connections Volunteers



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Together We Are Stronger.



Fiscal Year 2022-2024 Strategic Plan





Empower people
affected by MS to
solve everyday
challenges

All people will be informed, connected and supported by loved ones, their communities, their healthcare providers and the Society so they can live their best lives.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Together We Are Stronger.

Connection Opportunities

Community, education and group conversations

[Find a group in your area or online »](#)



Find community anytime — anywhere
[Find an online MS community »](#)

Listening ear, one-on-one conversations

[Learn more »](#)

Education, resources and support

Call 1-800-344-4867

[Learn more »](#)



Connect with others who understand MS



Build your network of support



Get connected



National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Together We Are Stronger.

Services and Support: MS Navigator[®]

Support is one-on-one and customized to each individual and family—**because every person's experience with MS is different.**

- MS Navigator Number: 1-800-344-4867
- Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m. ET, Monday-Friday
- MS Navigator Online Chat: nationalMSSociety.org
- MS Navigator Email: contactusnmss@nmss.org



Information & Resources

- Find Doctors and Resources tool
- Facebook Community & The Mighty
- New to MS Opportunities
- On Demand Learning
- Ask an MS Expert
- Black, Hispanic/LatinX, Veteran, Pediatric MS communities
- Community Programs
- Connect: Advocacy, volunteer opportunities, Walk MS and other fundraising events, share your experience

[Information & Resources](#)



Expectations

- Training
 - Complete annual training requirements
- Uphold Society Policies & Guidelines
 - Confidentiality
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
 - Code of Conduct
 - Background check
 - Positive Representation
 - Host meetings regularly
 - Respond to Society communication
 - Do not give medical advice
 - Accessibility



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Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Inclusion Policy

At the National MS Society, we are committed to embedding diversity, equity and inclusion in everything we do, and we have zero tolerance of any ill treatment towards any person in the MS movement.

Everyone who shares our vision of a world free of MS is welcome here. Hatred is not.

This work is a journey requiring commitment, accountability, transparency and courage. We know it will not be easy, but we are going to do it anyway. We are not striving for perfection, only intention and action as we move forward. We extend grace and empathy to everyone who wants to join us on this journey of learning, growth and change. However, **we will not tolerate acts of harassment and discrimination.**

The National MS Society is here for **every** person with MS — we always will be — until we find a cure. We embrace and are committed to bringing our entire MS community together, representative of all the dimensions of diversity, so that everyone feels at home and supported by their National MS Society.



Community Disclaimer for Peer Connections Participation

The National MS Society respects the rights of people with MS to obtain any and all information they want related to MS including information on wellness, medical treatments or complementary therapies, products and services. The information shared during community connections does not necessarily reflect the views or official position of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, nor carry the endorsement or support of the Society.

By choosing to participate in National MS Society-governed self-help groups, MSFriends® paired connections, and social media and online communities, you are agreeing that the Society can contact you directly in response to any posts or content that suggests risk to self and/or others. The Society reserves the right to contact you in the event that “at risk” statements or content occur.

To protect your privacy and the privacy of others, please do not record, take screenshots, or share personal information with anyone other than your staff partner.

For specific medical advice, contact your physician. For the opinion of the National Medical Advisory Committee of the National MS Society on any therapy, treatment or product, please contact an MS Navigator at 1-800-344-4867 or visit our website at www.nationalMSSociety.org

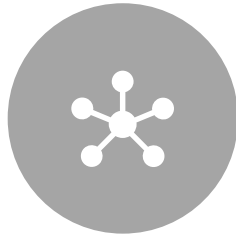
Managing Groups



Key Attributes



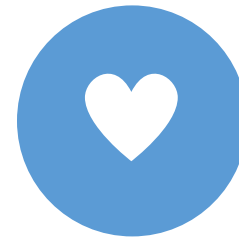
LISTENING



**SHARE
INFORMATION**



**SHARE
RESOURCES**



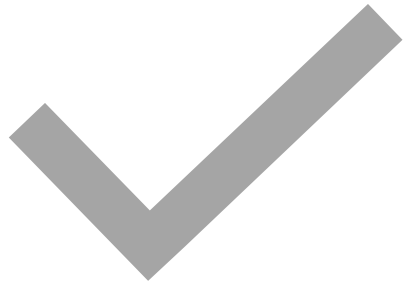
**EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT**



**PERSONAL
EXPERIENCE**



Peer Group Settings



Ground Rules



Encouraging
Expected Behaviors



Group Sharing &
Shared Leadership



Group Structure



- Overall Structure
- Welcoming Environment
- Encourage Sharing
- Keep Meetings Upbeat



Staying Organized



- Group Leader Organization
 - Email/contact list – what works best for you!
- Meeting Organization
 - Agendas
 - Disclaimer and DE&I statement
 - Review ground rules
 - What to expect during meeting
 - Welcome new members!
 - Potential conversation topics



Shared Leadership



- Creates a sense of ownership and responsibility for leadership throughout the whole group
- Get group members involved in determining the direction of the group
- Nurture & grow group members as volunteers



Group Dynamic: Perspectives



- Self-Awareness
- Personal Limitations



Group Dynamic: Behaviors




- Disruptive Behavior
- Conflict Management
- Challenging Conversations
- Crisis Support



Solution Focused Conversations



- Focus on possible solutions, not the problem itself.
- Empowerment Model
- Miracle Questions:
 - “How can we help?”
 - “Are you looking for a shoulder or suggestions?”
 - “What’s worked well before?” 



National
Multiple Sclerosis
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Together We Are Stronger.

Guest Speakers



- Risk Management
- Considerations
- Identifying Speakers
- Speaker Topics



Meeting Topics & Conversation Ideas



- Stimulating Discussion
- Topics & Questions
- Group Activities



Educational Resources



- Educational Toolkits
- Society Curriculum
- On-Demand Education
- Society Representatives

[Resources & Toolkits](#)

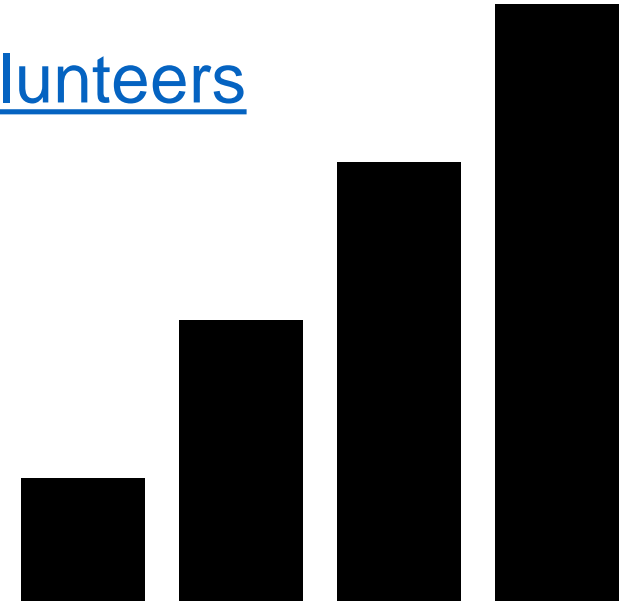


Group Leader Support, Resources & Next Steps



Group Leader Resources

- Peer Connections Resource Team:
peerconnections@nmss.org
- Peer Connections Volunteer Website:
www.nationalMSSociety.org/PeerConnectionsVolunteers
- Monthly Newsletters & Ongoing Correspondence
- Peer Connections Volunteer Facebook Page
- MS Warriors Group
- Continued Group Leadership Skill Development
- Annual Group Leadership Renewal





Group Leader Online Toolkit Resources

Peer Connections Volunteer Resources

Resources designed to support the work you do as a Peer Connections Volunteers.

- › Active Listening
- › Challenging Conversations & Crisis Support
- › Disability Language and Etiquette
- › FAQ's About Hosting In-Person Group Meetings (PDF)
- › Grassroots Marketing Resources for Group Leaders
- › Guest Speakers for Self-Help Groups (PDF)
- › MSFriends Conversations Quick Guide
- › MSFriends Establishing Boundaries
- › National MS Society Self-Help Group Safety Flyer (PDF)
- › Self-Help Group Meeting Structure Guide (PDF)
- › Self-Help Group Meeting Topic & Conversation Guide (PDF)
- › Solution Focused Conversations
- › Tips for Hosting Virtual Online and In-person Groups
- › Virtual Meeting Resources

Society Policies

Comprehensive listing of Society policies that all Peer Connections Volunteers are expected to utilize and uphold within their volunteer work.

- › Accessibility Report
- › Community Disclaimer for In Person Self Help Group Meetings
- › Community Disclaimer for Peer Connections Participation
- › Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement & Inclusion Policy
- › Medical Advice & Medicine Sharing
- › Minimizing Risk as a Society Volunteer
- › Non-National MS Society Relationships FAQ
- › Religion & Inclusivity
- › Volunteer Code of Conduct

www.nationalMSSociety.org/PeerConnectionsVolunteers



Next Steps

Annual Group Leader Renewal

- Sign off:
 - Background check
 - Code of Conduct
 - DEI and Inclusion acknowledgement
 - Group Leader training
 - Society policies & guidelines



[Group Leader Annual Renewal Sign-Off 2023](#)



Thank you!

