

Live Yes! Connect Groups Participant Guidelines



Live Yes! Connect Groups offer personalized help and support to adults or parents who have children living with types of arthritis and rheumatic conditions. Live Yes! Connect Groups offer opportunities for connection, education and empowerment. To maintain a safe, comfortable and confidential environment, the following Participant Guidelines have been designed to enhance your experience at meetings and events.

By entering an event, you are affirming that you agree to the following:

- **Minimize distractions.** Please turn off or silence electronic devices during events. Minimize potential interruptions so you can fully engage in the discussion.
- **Maintain confidentiality.** Respect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants of the group. Do not share personal details that could identify a participant. "What's shared in the group, stays in the group."
- **Be respectful of others and their ideas.** One speaker at a time. Use your electronic/physical hand and wait to be called on. Do not talk over or interrupt others. Allow everyone a chance to speak. Be mindful of the time. Don't monopolize the conversation. Use "I" statements. Don't generalize. No doctor or organization bashing.
- **Acceptance.** Be supportive, reassuring and encouraging. Avoid being judgmental, and accept people where they are at.
- **Be present and give the gift of listening.** Give your full attention to the person speaking and avoid side conversations/multitasking. Stay on topic.
- **Sharing.** Sharing feelings and personal experiences is encouraged, but not required.
- **Don't give unsolicited advice.** Don't give medical advice.
- **Focus on the positive.** Grieving your "old life" and learning to cope is normal. Focusing on recent or current accomplishments and new opportunities can help with these emotions. Be in the present. We want to help you to learn THRIVE with arthritis!
- **Exercise good judgment.** When managing pain/using pain medications. Please stay home and skip an in-person event if you have a cold, flu or any other contagious condition because many participants are on medications that compromise immune systems.
- **Solicitation.** We strive to keep our group free from solicitation. Please refrain from promoting and marketing to participants during meetings. No medication swapping allowed.
- **Répondez, S'il Vous Plaît (RSVP).** Please register if you plan on attending an event so your Live Yes! Connect Group facilitator will know how many people to expect. If you are unable to attend an event last minute, no problem, we do understand. Please let your facilitator know as soon as possible. You can register or cancel your registration on the event page.
- **We begin and end on time.** Please arrive a few minutes early so we can start on time.
- **Take care of your personal needs.** Get up and stretch, go to the restroom, grab a beverage, etc.
- **Responsibility.** Participants share responsibility to make the group work. Suggestions and ideas are welcomed and encouraged.

- **Respectful language.** Use respectful and inclusive language at all times. Avoid using offensive or insensitive language. And be mindful of the emotional impact your words can have on others.
- **Be a good citizen in real life.** Refrain from behaviors that are inappropriate, disrespectful, disruptive, abusive, profane, threatening, offensive, disparaging, discriminatory, harassing, unlawful or spam. We are inclusive of all races, ages, genders and identities. We reserve the right to immediately remove people or posts/content as seen fit, to maintain a safe and comfortable environment for all participants.
- **This is a peer-led group.** It is not a therapy group nor a substitute for professional counseling.
- **We invite you to get involved with the Arthritis Foundation.**

Online Event Etiquette

- **Join on time.** Log in a few minutes early to ensure you have the latest version of Zoom and allow time to troubleshoot connection issues.
- **Choose a quiet/private Location.** Find a quiet, well-lit space for the call. Background noise and poor lighting can be distracting.
- **Mute your microphone.** Keep your microphone muted when not speaking to prevent background noise from disrupting the conversation.
- **Camera courtesy.** Being on camera is encouraged but not required. It helps create a more personal connection. However, if your internet connection is weak or you're facing technical issues, it's Ok to keep your video off.
- **Introduce yourself.** Introduce yourself briefly before speaking.
- **Use headphones.** Using headphones or earbuds can improve audio quality and prevent echoing or feedback, plus maintains participant confidentiality.
- **Stay engaged:** Actively participate by listening attentively and contributing to the conversation when appropriate. Avoid multitasking on unrelated tasks during the event.
- **Use the "Raise Hand" feature.** If you have something to contribute, use the Zoom "Raise Hand" feature to signal that you'd like to speak. This prevents people from talking over each other.
- **Use the "Chat" feature.** For relevant questions or comments.
- **Limit background distractions.** Make sure your background is appropriate and not distracting. Consider using a virtual background if your real background is cluttered or unprofessional.
- **Be mindful of your camera.** Avoid distracting gestures, sudden movements or inappropriate behaviors or attire on camera.
- **Technical preparedness.** Familiarize yourself with the Zoom platform before the event, so you can navigate features like raising hands, using chat and joining breakout rooms.