

## How Can PSCKY Assist You in Leading Your Parkinson's Support Group?

For over 6 years, the Parkinson Support Center of Kentuckiana (PSCKY) has been helping form and nourish support groups for Parkinson's patients and their care partners. The purpose of these groups is to provide a group dynamic where its members feel free to talk about their own personal PD situations and share tips and techniques with other participants to help improve everyone's quality of life. This sharing of information and experiences builds a special bond that can continue for as long as the group wishes to exist.

Groups normally meet monthly, but the frequency, time, location and topics discussed are completely up to each group. The style of each group may vary from the highly social (for example: a reading club, a dinner group) to the highly educational (a group that always has a guest speaker or presenter) to activity-based (a group that meets to walk together, golf, bowl or practice LSVT LOUD or BIG exercises).

The goal of each group, as appropriate, is to be self-led. At the group's first or second meeting, one or two members from the group should step forward to be the "host" for the group.

1. Hosts make sure meetings run smoothly: that attendance is taken, newcomers welcomed and the lights are turned off after the meeting!
2. Hosts receive updated information from PSCKY about Parkinson's disease, materials to distribute to group members, and news of events, seminars and conferences.

Each group decides how it will handle "hosting" duties. We recommend that each group have at least two hosts (it's always good to have a back-up!) OR rotate hosting duties monthly or quarterly so that everyone has a turn hosting.

PSCKY is here to help get the group up and running and will assist the host/s in the following ways:

- Provide the host/s with our helpful group dynamics sheet, "Best Practices for Parkinson's Support Groups".
- Give you a kit of basic PD resource information packets to get you started.
- As requested, provide you with resource materials for each of your meetings.
- Provide suggested ideas for discussion topics and arrange for special guest speakers on topics to come to your support group.
- Provide updated PD information and breaking news.
- Provide a direct contact person to call whenever needed for advice and help and who will visit your group once a quarter to see how things are going.
- Provide a monthly stipend for the host/s. This can be used to offset activities, purchase group materials or just as a "thank you" for the person who is hosting the group.
- Promote information about your group in our website and newsletters.
- Provide an introduction to our marketing specialist to answer your promotional questions and help your group advertise its presence.
- When appropriate, arrange for press coverage of special events or activities your group is doing.

**Parkinson Support Center of Kentuckiana**

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