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National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

75
YEARS OF **PROGRESS**

Group Leadership Call: September 16, 2021 3PM EST



Hosted By:
Mollie Burns
Manager, Community Engagement
Philadelphia, PA



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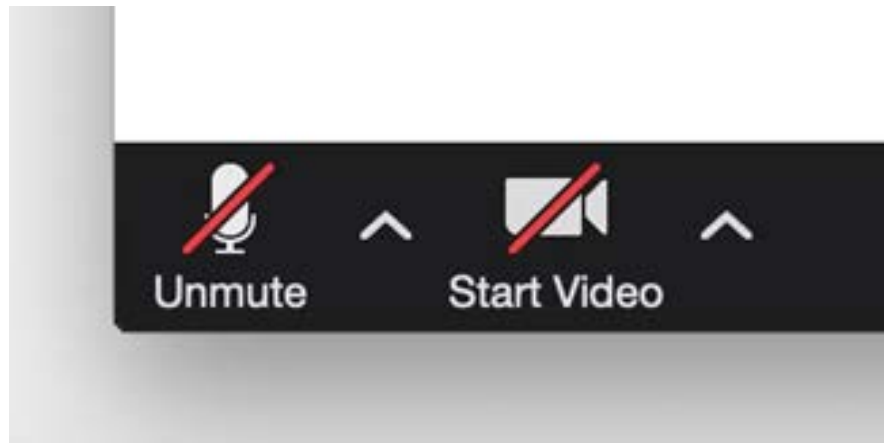
Group Leadership Call: September 16, 2021 7PM EST



Hosted By:
Sue Pandya
Manager, Community Engagement
Phoenix, AZ

Zoom Tips: Microphone and Camera

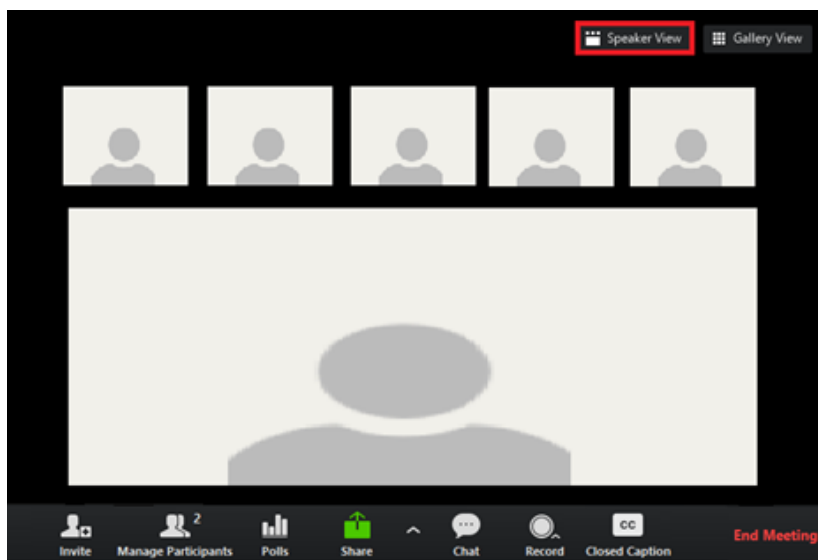
Click the microphone icon to unmute yourself and click the video icon to share your video



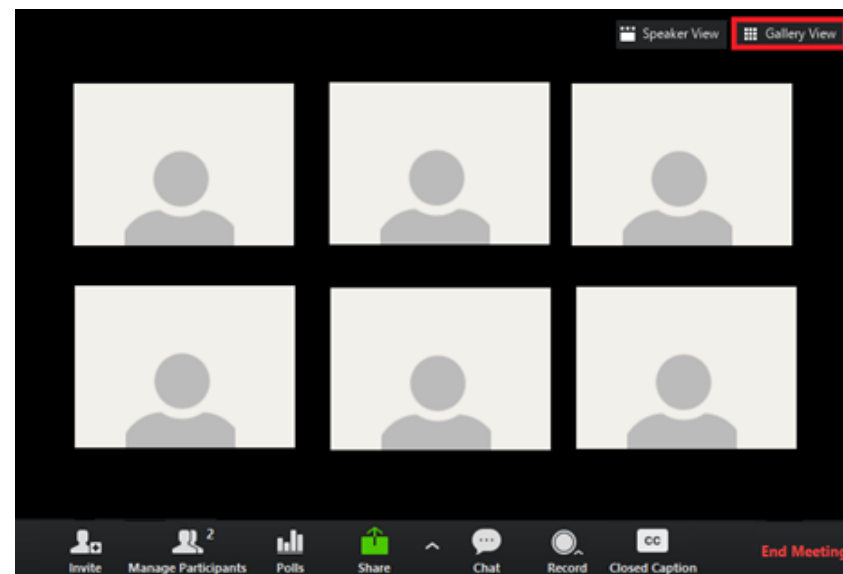
Zoom Tips: Viewing Options

Choose what works best for you using the button in the top right corner of your screen

Speaker View



Gallery View



Today's Call

- Program Announcements & Reminders
- Presentation:

Active Listening & Solution Focused Conversations

- Society and Leader Resources
- Questions, Feedback, and Discussion

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Statement

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 and value 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 mission.

Black MS Experience Summit 2021



Black MS *Experience*

#BlackMSExperience



- Interactive, two-day virtual event to connect with others who understand the distinct experience of life with MS as a Black person.
- September 22-23, 2021
 - 1-4pm ET/12-3pm CT/11am-2pm MT/10am-1pm PT
- General programming & breakout sessions
- Register and learn more at NationalMSSociety.org/BlackMSExperience

New to MS: Navigating Your Journey



- Program for people New to MS
- Every 2nd Thursday of the month beginning October 14, 2021
- Virtual program (Zoom)
- Program content is the same each month
- Educational and engaging
- Register and learn more at NationalMSSociety.org/NewToMS

Leader Recognition



Cathy & Itty Bitty Kitty

momentummagazineonline.com/good-companions/

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Group Meetings: Active Listening & Solution Focused Conversations

Group Leader Toolkit Resources

www.nationalMSSociety.org/PeerConnectionsVolunteers

Active Listening: Tips for Providing a Listening Ear

As a Peer Connections Volunteer, you will use *listening as the key helping attribute* within your personal interactions. Providing a listening ear is the most important skill Peer Connections Volunteers bring to their interactions.

Topics (Ctrl + Click to go to the section)

Careful Listening
Active Listening
The Commonality of Experiences
Building Trust through Your Responses
Techniques & Potential Phrases/Responses
Potential Roadblocks to Communication
Takeaways

Careful Listening

Careful listening is a prerequisite for all support responses and techniques. It involves observing and responding to what is being communicated. Responding verbally to communicate listening is the most important part of support and is even more important because you lack information when doing support by telephone or email. Good listening is demonstrated by:

- Showing interest through tone of voice.
- Asking appropriate questions about what is being discussed.
- Saying things like “Yes” or “I hear what you’re saying” to convey interest.
- Offering general leads that encourage a person to continue, such as “What happened next?” or “What else?”
- Staying with the present point without jumping ahead to the next topic.
- Listening for both the facts and feelings.

Solution Focused Conversations

Many people with MS and their families seek support, understanding, information, and guidance from Peer Connections relationships. Peer Connections Volunteers, including MSFriends® and Self Help Group Leaders, who focus on empowering individuals to recognize their own strengths, brainstorm solutions and find resources are better able to meet those needs.

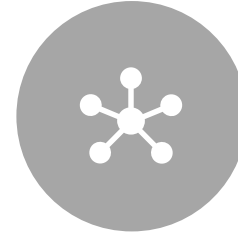
Topics (Ctrl + click to go to the section)

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How Peer Connections Help



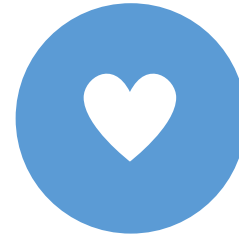
**LISTENING
EAR**



**SHARE
INFORMATION**



**SHARE
RESOURCES**



**EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT**

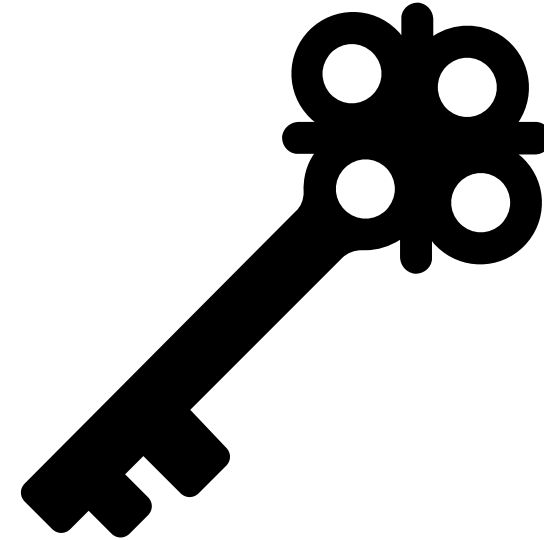


**PERSONAL
EXPERIENCE**

Keys to Active Listening

Components include:

- Restating
- Questioning
- Summarizing
- Reflecting & Validating Feelings



Communication Skills

Verbal Cues

- Tone of Voice
- Hesitancy or Rapid Pacing
- Spacing of Words or Sighs
- Silence



Important to remember your own verbal cues too!

Solution Focused Conversations



Focus on possible solutions, not the problem itself

Empowerment Model

Miracle Question: “How can I/we help?”

What has worked for you in the past when you were feeling afraid and uncertain?

Leader: Hello, Mary. How are you today?

Member: Not good. I've been depressed lately. My MS is acting up and I'm feeling tired all the time. My husband and daughter just don't get it.

Leader: *That sounds awful. I can understand why you have been feeling depressed.*

Member: Yeah. It has been so bad that I really haven't been able to go to work. I stayed home three days last week and haven't been able to do much around the house. My family should know that I'm exhausted. My daughter told me that I look fine. I think she thinks I'm lazy.

Leader: *Those must have been some very depressing days—missing work and feeling that your family doesn't understand.*

Member: I spent most of the day in bed or on the sofa. It was really too much for me to deal with.

The conversation is focused on the problem. You can almost feel the group member getting more and more depressed as she is reminded of her difficult week.

Leader: Hello, Mary. How are you today?

Member: Not good. I've been depressed lately. My MS is acting up and I'm feeling so tired. My husband and teenage daughter just don't get it.

Leader: That sounds very frustrating. *Have there been days that you've felt less depressed than others?*

Member: A few. I was able to keep focused and get some work done from home. I also read a book with my daughter and helped with her homework — which we enjoyed.

Leader: *What do you think made those days better?*

Member: I'm not really sure. To be honest, I think it was my attitude toward the day. I was just as tired, but I was determined not to let it ruin the day. I also told my family in the morning that it was a high fatigue day, and that seemed to help. They said they were glad that I told them.

Our leader has acknowledged our group members feelings, but then moved her focus to the days that didn't feel as difficult. That subtle change in conversation helped her to see what she could do differently (solutions) to manage her distress.

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Society & Leader Resources

Peer to Peer Connection Opportunities



Join the Peer Connections Volunteers Facebook Group

Connect. Support. Encourage. Relate.



Click Here

A place for National MS Society volunteers to interact with other Self-Help Group leaders, MS Friends, and Peer-to-Peer volunteers. This group provides access to valuable resources and offers a safe environment for collaboration and idea-sharing so you can best support your group members and fellow MS community.



MS Warrior Leader Support Group

*A Support Group for
MS Group Leaders*

*Join us on Zoom
3rd Thursday of the month @ 4pm (EST)*

*Meeting ID 84207053474
Passcode- Warrior*

*Contact Monica at
SPEAKMSTOME@GMAIL.COM*

In Person Meeting Guidelines- Updated!

Resources for Meeting in Person

For Peer Connections Volunteers

- › Resources for Peer Connections Volunteers
- › Group Leadership Call Recordings
- › Educational Resources & Toolkits
- › Resources for Meeting in Person



SHARE

Like 11

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Share

Like the rest of the world, the National MS Society is navigating how best to ramp back up and move through our transition to normalcy. These resources are intended for self-help groups who want to meet in person. By implementing guidelines consistently across the country, we hope to advance Society priorities, increase connection opportunities, and bring groups back together safely.

For questions about bringing your group together in-person or any of the resources listed below, please reach out to your staff partner or peerconnections@nmss.org.

- › June 17, 2021 (In-Person Meeting Training & Society Guidelines) [call recording](#) and [slides](#)
- › [Volunteer In-Person Meeting Guidelines \(PDF\)](#)
- › [FAQ Resource Document \(PDF\)](#)
- › [National MS Society Self-Help Group Safety Flyer \(PDF\)](#)
- › [Self-Help Group Meeting Disclaimer- IN PERSON \(PDF\)](#)
- › [CDC prevention recommendations](#)
- › [MS and COVID-19](#)

Ask an MS Expert Program Series

- Weekly on Fridays from 1-2pm ET in English
- The 3rd Wednesday of each month from 7-8pm ET in Spanish
- Quarterly for Veterans

Rehabilitation: Mobility Intervention Strategies

Friday, Sept. 17 | 1:00 PM EDT – 2:00 PM EDT

The goal of rehabilitation is to improve and maintain your function - an essential component of comprehensive MS care. From the time of diagnosis onward, rehabilitation specialists provide education and strategies designed to promote your health and wellness, reduce fatigue, and help you function optimally. Join us as talk with Herb Karpatkin, Associate Professor of the Physical Therapy program at Hunter College, City University of New York, and Cinda Hugo, Associate Professor and MS Researcher at VA Portland Health Care System and Oregon Health & Science University, about mobility intervention strategies for those with minimal and advanced walking or gait difficulties.

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national-MS-society](https://linkedin.com/company/national-MS-society)

2021 Monthly Leadership Call Dates

Third Thursday of the month:

October 21

November 18

December 16

2 sessions to pick from:

3pm ET/2pm CT/1pm MT/12pm PT

7pm ET/6pm CT/5pm MT/4pm PT

