

BENEFITS OF SUPPORT GROUPS

1. They can boost your emotional and even physical well-being, Some people may feel too shy or embarrassed to discuss their difficulties relating to the illness. Others may feel support groups are nothing more than an emotional “hand-holding” for those who are insecure.

Research indicates attending support groups can be beneficial. Two cancer research studies indicated that patients who participated in support groups, in addition to their medical treatments, reported less anxiety and depression and actually lived longer than those who did not attend. It is speculated that having the social support of others in the group boosts the immune system by reducing the persons’ anxiety and psychological stress.

2. You can talk to others suffering with the same illness who can understand what you are going through.

It is often a relief and reassuring to find others with the same illness and understand what you are going through.

3. You can find mutual encouragement.

Support group members can encourage each other to take care of themselves.

4. You can learn more about FMS and ME/CFS. Many support groups have medical practitioners speak at their meetings. Members can advise you of where you can access information.

How do I get the maximum benefit?

support

Written by Administrator

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1. Attend each session that you can.

It is easier to establish trusting relationships if patients attend on a regular basis.

2. Don't feel obligated to speak up.

You are likely to get more out of a group if you do participate but you are not obligated to do that.

How can I find the right group?

If you have the option of more than one group to choose from, decide which things you want most from a support group.

1. Does the group have an educational component such as speakers?
2. Is the facilitator knowledgeable about group dynamics?
3. Does the leader keep the meetings focused?
4. Does the group have someone who is knowledgeable about FMS or ME/CFS?
5. If the group has sharing sessions, are you comfortable about sharing your feelings with others? Are you willing to listen to other people's difficulties?

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6. Does this group address your concerns?

7. Are you deriving benefit from the group?