



Peer Support Group Rules for the U.S. Pain Foundation

These rules are designed to ensure a supportive, inclusive, and safe space where participants can share their experiences, find solace in one another's company, and gain valuable coping strategies from peers.

1. **This is a Peer-Led Support Group, Not a Therapy Group.** Our group provides peer support and shared experiences. It is not a substitute for professional medical or psychological advice. Peer support group leaders are not part of your healthcare team.
2. **Confidentiality is Essential.** What is shared in the group stays within the group. We rely on everyone's respect for privacy to create a trustworthy environment.
3. **Discussion of suicidal thoughts or self-harm is not permitted.** This is not a mental health group. If you are experiencing a crisis, please do not attend the group. Immediate support is available by calling or texting the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or by dialing 911.
4. **If you'd like to speak, please raise your hand and you will be called on.** Keep focused on the topic and discussion question; and please limit your response times to be respectful of others.
5. **Maintain a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment.** Do not talk over others, offer unsolicited advice, or diagnose others. Discrimination, rudeness, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
6. **Respect Boundaries.** If someone chooses not to share, please respect their decision. Peer support group leaders should not be contacted in any way outside of the group.
7. **No Promotions or Endorsements.** This is not a space for promoting, selling, or endorsing specific treatments, products, or services. Political, religious, medication, or healthcare provider discussions are also off-limits.
8. **Alcohol, smoking, and vaping are not allowed during group sessions.** Groups are a substance-free zone.
9. **Respect the Group Environment.** If you need to adjust your position or move, please turn off your camera while doing so, as some participants may be sensitive to movement. Once you are settled, kindly turn your camera back on for confidentiality and inclusion purposes.
10. **These rules are here to maintain a safe space for everyone.** If you are not adhering to these rules, I will kindly remind you of them. In cases of ongoing violations, I may remove you from the session without prior notice.

By following these guidelines, you help preserve a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for yourself and your peers. Together, we can create a space to learn, share, and grow.

Please remember: take what you need, and leave the rest. If you find yourself needing more support, we encourage you to reach out to your care team. You are not alone—your well-being matters, and we support you in caring for yourself.