

How to Moderate a T1D to 100 Support Group

Moderating a support group involves striking a balance between warmth and creating a safe, welcoming space, while maintaining discussions that are positive, respectful, and on track. Here are some practical tips:

Set the Tone

- Start with a warm welcome: a smile, name tags, light snacks, or a quick check-in round.
 - Keep the energy encouraging: support and laughter go a long way.
 - Gently steer away from long complaint sessions so the group feels uplifting.
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Create a Safe, Respectful Space

- Set ground rules: confidentiality, kindness, no judgment, equal speaking opportunities.
 - Watch for dominant voices – value their input, but step in to give others room.
 - If someone speaks too long, kindly guide the conversation back.
 - If new to moderating, consider role-playing challenges with an experienced leader.
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Keep It Interactive and Inclusive

- Limit introductions to 2 minutes per person.
 - Invite quieter members in with open, supportive questions.
 - Celebrate wins – whether it's reaching an A1c goal, surviving a tough week, or trying new tech.
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Mix Up the Content

- Alternate between open sharing and focused topics. Popular themes include devices, travel, food, research updates, burnout strategies, advocacy, emergency preparedness, and mental health.
 - Guest speakers can add variety, but simple open conversations often mean the most.
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Support Connection Beyond Meetings

- Use group texts, emails, or private online spaces to share reminders and resources.
 - Encourage members to check in with each other outside of meetings.
 - Consider a “buddy” program for one-on-one support between gatherings.
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Share the Load

- Rotate facilitators or let members suggest topics.
 - Gather feedback often and adjust to the group's needs.
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Mark Milestones

- Celebrate birthdays, “diaversaries” (diagnosis anniversaries), and other special moments.
- Recognize guest speakers and acknowledge meaningful group experiences.