



Educational Meeting Structure Templates

Many Parkinson's support groups include occasional educational meetings to help participants learn about topics related to living well with Parkinson's. These meetings may feature guest speakers, educational videos, or facilitator-led discussions.

Educational meetings can provide valuable information while still maintaining the supportive and welcoming atmosphere of a peer support group.

The templates below offer flexible structures that facilitators can use when planning an educational meeting.

Template 1: Guest Speaker Meeting

Best for: Inviting healthcare professionals or community experts to share information with the group.

Examples of guest speakers may include:

- Neurologists or movement disorder specialists
- Physical, occupational, or speech therapists
- Social workers or mental health professionals
- Exercise instructors
- Home safety or adaptive equipment specialists

Suggested Structure

Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)

Begin the meeting with a brief welcome and participant introductions.

Example:

“Welcome everyone. We’re glad you’re here today. Our support group is a place where we connect, share experiences, and learn from one another.”

Invite brief introductions or a short check-in from attendees.

Introduce the Speaker (5 minutes)

Provide a brief introduction of the guest speaker, including their professional background and the topic they will discuss.

Example:

“Today we’re pleased to welcome [Speaker Name], who will be sharing information about [topic].”

Educational Presentation (20–30 minutes)

Allow the speaker time to present their information.

Encourage speakers to focus on practical, helpful information relevant to people living with Parkinson’s and care partners.

Questions and Group Discussion (15–20 minutes)

Invite participants to ask questions or share their experiences related to the topic.

Example:

“Does anyone have a question or experience they would like to share related to what we’ve heard today?”

Community and Group Announcements (5–10 minutes)

Share any announcements related to:

- WPA programs and events
- Local exercise or wellness opportunities
- Educational programs
- Community resources

Participants may also share announcements.

Closing (5 minutes)

Thank the speaker and participants for attending.

Example:

“Thank you to our speaker for sharing their expertise with us today, and thank you all for being part of this community.”

Template 2: Facilitator-Led Educational Meeting

Best for: When a facilitator shares information or introduces a topic without a guest speaker.

Possible topics may include:

- Medication timing strategies
- Exercise and movement
- Fall prevention
- Managing non-motor symptoms
- Practical tools for daily living

Suggested Structure

Welcome and Brief Check-In (10 minutes)

Invite participants to briefly introduce themselves or share a quick update.

Facilitators may also begin with a simple conversation starter or icebreaker.

Topic Introduction (5 minutes)

Introduce the educational topic and explain why it may be helpful.

Example:

“Today we’re going to spend some time talking about strategies that can help make daily activities easier when living with Parkinson’s.”

Educational Overview (15–20 minutes)

Share information, handouts, or resources related to the topic.

Encourage practical strategies that participants may try at home.

Group Discussion and Experience Sharing (20 minutes)

Invite participants to share their own experiences or ideas.

Helpful prompts may include:

- Has anyone found something that helps with this challenge?
 - Are there strategies that have worked well for you?
 - Is there something you wish you had known earlier?
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Community and Group Announcements (5–10 minutes)

Share upcoming events, programs, or resources that may be helpful to the group.

Closing (5 minutes)

Summarize key ideas from the discussion and thank participants for sharing their experiences.

Template 3: Video or Resource-Based Educational Meeting

Best for: Using recorded educational content or printed resources to guide discussion.

Examples include:

- Educational videos
- Recorded webinars
- WPA educational resources
- Articles or handouts related to Parkinson's care

Suggested Structure

Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)

Invite brief participant introductions or a quick check-in.

Introduce the Topic (5 minutes)

Explain the topic and why it may be helpful to the group.

Example:

“Today we’ll watch a short video about balance and fall prevention for people living with Parkinson’s.”

Video or Resource Review (15–20 minutes)

Watch the video or review the educational material together.

Group Discussion (20–25 minutes)

Invite participants to share their thoughts and experiences related to the topic.

Community and Group Announcements (5–10 minutes)

Provide time for WPA announcements and member updates.

Closing (5 minutes)

Thank participants and remind them of the next meeting date.

WPA Educational Resource Option

When guest speakers are unavailable, facilitators are encouraged to use **WPA’s Parkinson’s EmPower Talks: Insights from the Experts** as an educational resource.

These recorded expert interviews feature professionals experienced in Parkinson’s care and provide valuable insights on topics related to living well with Parkinson’s. The videos can serve as a helpful starting point for educational meetings and group discussion.

Facilitators may choose to:

- Play a portion of an EmPower Talks video during the meeting
- Ask participants to watch a video before the meeting and discuss it together
- Watch the video together and guide discussion afterward

Each **Parkinson's EmPower Talks video page on the WPA website includes a set of six discussion questions provided by WPA** that facilitators can use to guide group conversation following the video.

To access the videos and discussion questions, visit:

www.wiparkinson.org

These resources can be especially helpful when in-person speakers are unavailable and allow support groups to continue offering meaningful educational conversations.

Facilitator Tip

Educational meetings are most effective when they combine **information with conversation**. Participants often learn just as much from hearing the experiences of others as they do from the educational material itself.

Encourage discussion, shared ideas, and practical takeaways whenever possible.

Educational meetings should still feel like **a supportive community gathering**, not a formal lecture.

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