wellspring
Calgary

Ultimate Road Trip: Book discussion group

Intended Audience

All members, including people living with cancer, family members and significant caregivers.

Program Description

"Are we there yet?" may be the key question on any road trip. The writings of thoughtful authors serve to stimulate discussion and discovery through frank and compassionate conversations with a discussion leader. Each season, a new book and author reflecting a variety of topics and genre, is used as a resource and as a challenging 'jumping-off point' for members to share insights, concerns and personal experiences, within a safe and loving circle.

Benefits and Impact

Writers and poets wrestle with what living is about and provide rich resources with which to examine our place in the world. Engaging with a group of diverse thinkers in book discussion offers a place to grow within ourselves and grow together in community. When we speak our beliefs aloud, we re-examine them and grow into new ways of seeing and being. When we admit that we don't know as much as we thought, we open ourselves to learn. When we see the humour in our own situations, we begin to laugh again, and when we laugh, we can relax and become our true selves.

What to Expect at a Session

Participants obtain their own copy of each book to read at home. The group meets every other week, highlighting ideas and concepts that affirm and/or challenge people's assumptions. Everyone in the group has opportunities to speak and to listen, offering personal ideas, stories and aha moments. Life is too important to be taken as seriously as we often do, and so there is much laughter as we read and 'travel' together.

Participant Comments

"The class has brought us closer together with laughter and sharing of knowledge, emotions and friendship."

"An awesome study of life, learning and skills in a group that willingly shares and listens."

"I am changed, changing and HAPPY!"

What the Research Says:

Book clubs allow for thought-provoking conversations and the fostering of intellectual and social connections between participants. In Columbus, Ohio an oncology nurse and a social worker from The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society created a book club for participants who had finished their cancer treatments. The group met once a month and had approximately 20 participants. Books chosen focused on topics such as general cancer information, stories of people's cancer experience, inspirational and uplifting stories, as well as fiction and non-fiction genres. The book club consistently had attendance of over 90%. Participants reported that they highly enjoyed the book club because of the energy and enthusiasm of the facilitator, the interesting books and the stimulating conversations. Furthermore, participants appreciated being with people who had gone through similar experiences with cancer (Krall C, Uscio M. 2009. Interdisciplinary Book Club: An Innovative Approach to Provide Support to Cancer Survivors. Oncology Nursing Forum. 36(3):34).

Program Frequency:

Bi-monthly, one program per session

Optimum class size: 16

Related Programs:

Healing Journey
Living Well with Cancer

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