



# SAGE Dementia Consulting

*Providing education, support, and resources  
to guide you on your dementia care journey*

## **SUPPORT GROUP GROUND RULES**

1. We recognize and respect our differences. We recognize that everyone's journey is unique to them. We respect and offer compassion to all members, even if their experiences, beliefs, and views are different than our own.
2. We acknowledge that there is no quick fix or set timetable for becoming reconciled to or accepting that our loved one has dementia. We will be patient with one another as we process our thoughts and emotions over time.
3. We encourage all group members to speak freely, as it helps build support, encouragement, and understanding among group members. We also recognize that sometimes we may prefer to listen rather than speak.
4. We are compassionate listeners. We agree that only one person will speak at a time, without interruption. We listen without judgment or criticism and offer each other acceptance.
5. We will be respectful of time constraints as we share our stories, understanding that others also need the time to share.
6. We speak only about ourselves and our experience, using "I" or "we" statements to discuss what has been helpful to us. We will not give advice unless asked.
7. We respect the privacy of each group member. We agree not to discuss any information about other members outside of the group, though we do encourage group members to communicate with one another during and after the weeks our group meets. The group leaders will respect the privacy of members except in the following circumstances:
  - 1) members who are thought to be suicidal; 2) members who threaten to harm another;
  - 3) child or elder abuse is suspected; or 4) legal subpoenas.
8. We agree to be on time to each meeting, silence our phones during the meeting, and leave the room and/or use the Zoom "mute" button when it is necessary to take an emergency call.

**Please keep these ground rules with you and refer to them from time to time to keep them fresh in your mind. Thank you!**

Adapted from:

A Leader's Manual for Dementia Care Partner Support Groups by Edward G. Shaw, M.D., M.A. (2019).