



MC Chat Support Group Moderator Job Description

MentorCONNECT Mission: Weekly Support Groups

The mission of MentorCONNECT is to provide one-on-one and group mentoring opportunities to individuals in recovery from eating disorders.

The live chat support groups are where MentorCONNECT members come together on a weekly basis to discuss themes central to achieving their recovery goal in a group setting.

Diligent, comprehensive moderation is KEY to the success of the live chat support groups.

Who Group Moderators Report To

The support group moderator will report to the Forums Supervisor.

Forums Supervisor: Jeanette

Email: Jeanette@mentorconnect-ed.org

Forums Profile: <http://mentorconnect-edforums.org/profile/Jeanette>

Training Schedule

New Moderators will be trained by the Forums Supervisor. Training will consist of the following:

- 1) Attending two meetings as a participant (can be flexible as to scheduling)
- 2) Co-moderating two meetings with the help and support of the Forums Supervisor
- 3) Determining any additional training needs

What to Expect During Training

First two training shifts: the Moderator Trainee will simply attend and participate in the meetings, getting familiar with the chat feature, and practicing using the private chat feature which is very useful for moderators to discuss privately any issues that may arise during a meeting.

Second two training shifts: the Moderator Trainee will take on more of a leadership role in co-moderating the meeting and guiding discussions, with the Supervisor there for backup and support.

Training Conclusion: upon completion of the initial four sessions of training, readiness for lead co-moderation duties will be determined at the discretion of the Forums Supervisor. Additional training may be required periodically and can be requested whenever the new co-moderator feels it would be of benefit.

Co-Moderation

Every attempt is made to ensure that each live chat support group is co-moderated by two experienced Moderators at all times. Whenever possible, the Forums Supervisor will also be in attendance.



Moderation Shift Assignments

Each Moderator is asked to commit to a minimum of two chat support group meetings per month. Moderators may add additional meetings as their schedule permits.

Community Forums, Pro-Recovery Guidelines, Moderation Policy

Live chat support group Moderators must be thoroughly familiar with and be prepared to abide by all of the MentorCONNECT community rules prior to the beginning of the first training shift. Please discuss any questions or concerns about the Rules with the Forums Supervisor before beginning training. Forums Rules, Pro-Recovery guidelines, and moderation policies can be found here:

Forums Agreement: <http://www.mentorconnect-edforums.org/page/forums-agreement>

Pro-Recovery Talk Guidelines: <http://mentorconnect-edforums.org/page/prorecovery-policy>

Moderation Policy: <http://mentorconnect-edforums.org/page/moderation-policy/>

What to Expect During a Chat Support Group Meeting

Because attendance can range anywhere from 10 to 30 people for a chat support group meeting, providing clear instructions and keeping the group on topic are the two most important priorities.

For this reason, we have developed a system for opening every meeting that clearly explains what is expected of participants, where the topic is located, and what is and is not permitted during a meeting.

Your trainer will review this information and demonstrate how this works during your training sessions.

Opening a Meeting: Meetings begin at 8:00pm (central time) sharp. When it is 8:00pm, co-moderators will open the meeting. Here are the steps to open a meeting:

Step One: Stop all side conversations (since chat is open from 7:15-8:00pm for moderated pre-chat meet-and-greets, silencing side talk is very important for a successful meeting start).

Type "Welcome everyone! It is now 8pm and our meeting will begin. Tonight's co-leaders are (name) and (name). Everyone now please be quiet for the reading of the meeting guidelines."

Step Two: Wait until everyone is quiet. If necessary, ask again for silence and address violators by name when requesting silence of side conversations. Then type out these rules (you can just copy and paste):

Rule #1: All discussions must focus on the topic for the evening

Rule #2: Please abide by all moderator instructions at all times

Rule #3: Only pro-recovery talk is allowed so please review the Forums Rules before participating

Rule #4: Do not private chat co-moderators while they are leading meetings, and do not private chat any other member during pre or post chat or during meetings

Rule #5: If you must arrive late or leave early do not announce your leaving as it distracts from the meeting

Rule #6: Please arrive prepared to participate by locating the discussion topic in advance



What to Expect During a Chat Support Group Meeting, cont.

Step Three: Guide participants to find the discussion topic for the evening. Type the following:

To find tonight's discussion topic, go to the "Groups" tab, click on (Monday/Thursday) Night Discussion Group, click on "Month/Date Lyrics/Quote"

Wait until everyone has located the discussion topic. Then you can begin the meeting.

During the meeting: It will be important to continue monitoring the group throughout the meeting to train participants not to announce goings and comings, and to train latecomers not to break up a meeting by asking where to find the topics or homework postings. Remind latecomers who are being disruptive that the meeting has already started and they can message the leaders privately for help after the meeting has concluded.

Closing a Meeting: Before the meeting ends, announce what the homework will be. Let the group know that the chat room will be closing as soon as the meeting has concluded. Encourage everyone to continue the conversation by completing the assigned homework and posting their thoughts. Also remind the group of any upcoming events at this time.

Overview of Chat-Based Format

Since the Group is conducted in a chat-based forum, it is recognized that traditional group dynamics may not apply in every situation. Within the limitations of a chat-based group, every attempt should be made to adhere to the fundamental group goals of:

- Positive: Pro-recovery conversation is always the #1 goal
- Proactive: Building pro-recovery problem-solving is key to all discussions
- Purposeful: All conversations should relate to that week's topic
- Progress-not-perfection: Baby steps are always emphasized
- Productive: Members should leave feeling more supported than when they arrived

Communications Basics

These simple communications basics can always be helpful when moderating meetings, responding to questions, and resolving conflicts.

- Listening skills: Listen to what the other person is saying. It is often helpful to repeat back what you have heard from the other person before responding to make sure you have understood correctly
- Speaking skills: Email and chat-based communications cut out 90% of how we "hear" each other – nonverbally through visual and body language cues. So spend time considering what you say, or type, to ensure clarity and minimize miscommunication
- Conflict resolution skills: From time to time, miscommunication may occur. Stay calm. Backtrack to discover where the misunderstanding first began. Using your listening and speaking skills, work



from that point forward to clear up any confusion. Defer resolution of conflicts with individual members to after the meeting conclusion

Moderator Responsibilities Overview

The live chat support group Moderator's responsibilities are two-fold: welcoming and orienting new members to the group, and moderating all group discussions.

Welcome and Hosting:

- Welcoming new Forums members to the live chat support groups
- Assisting new members who are attending their first group, which includes the following:
 - Locating chat and practicing group login instructions
 - Locating the posted weekly song lyrics/discussion topics
 - Participating appropriately during the meeting
 - Locating and joining the live chat support groups online homework and discussion groups
 - Participating in post-group homework opportunities via the online group
- Collaborating with Lead and/or Co-Moderator(s) to create weekly discussion topics, co-lead meetings, create and post homework assignments, and moderate homework responses

Meeting Moderation

- *Meeting Schedule:* Moderators will follow the regular meeting schedule unless alternate arrangements are made prior to meeting start:
 - Arrive five minutes prior to meeting start time to convene with co-moderator
 - Welcome new members promptly at 8pm CST using the Open a Meeting instructions
 - Moderate the meeting
 - Create and introduce homework
 - Close the meeting using the Close a Meeting instructions
 - Moderate pre- and post-chat meet-and-greets as assigned (each co-moderator will moderate either pre- or post-chat)
- *Moderator Duties:*
 - Enforce Forums & Group Rules and Pro-Recovery Talk Guidelines at all times
 - Minimize crosstalk/unrelated discussions between individual members
 - Minimize exchanges of unsolicited advice between attendees
 - Facilitate pro-recovery, optimistic outlook toward the recovery process
 - Minimize any one attendee's attempts to monopolize conversation or comment time
 - Encourage attendees who are unable to adhere to pro-recovery focus to simply listen to group discussions for the remainder of that meeting
 - Chat and/or email privately after the meeting with the Forums Supervisor to identify members who may be struggling to adhere to Forums & Group Rules during meetings . These members will be contacted privately by the Leadership Team for individual guidance



- **Online Group Moderation:**
 - The live chat support groups are considered “publicly-visible content”, and thus are jointly moderated by the Forums Moderators and the live chat support groups Moderators
 - Publicly-Visible Content Policy:
 - Once posted, all publicly-visible content will remain visible permanently
 - Moderators will not respond to requests from members for deletion of posts unless content is deemed triggering or inappropriate
 - All members are expected to abide by the Forums & Group Rules and Pro-Recovery Talk Guidelines at all times – not knowing the rules is no excuse for breaking them
 - The Forums moderators are on-call to report complaints about triggering content from other members to the Forums Supervisor for appropriate action

Where Everything is Inside the Community Forums

Accessing Chat From Within the Community Forums:

- Login to your Forums account using your unique email address and password
- Find the “Chat” tab and click on it
- Wait for the Chat feature to load (this should take only a few seconds)
- Once the Chat window is open and active, look to the upper right hand corner for a tiny dot
- To change the color of the dot from red (offline) to green (online), click it once
- Once you are online, you will then see everyone else who is online
- To participate, type your comment in the small box at the lower left hand corner of the chat window. Hit “enter” to submit your comment and it will display on the main screen

Accessing Private Chat:

- To access private chat, click on the name of the member you wish to engage in private chat, and select “private chat” from the drop-down menu beneath their name. A separate window will open and you may then engage with them in private chat (very useful for private moderator-to-moderator discussion, and for individual attendee troubleshooting)

Locating and Joining the Chat Support Group Topics and Homework Assignments:

- Find the “Groups” tab and click on it
- Select the Monday Night Support Group or Thursday Night Support Group icon and click on it to open up the group board
- All discussion topics and homework assignments will be posted inside that night’s group

Handling Requests from Forums Members for Interventions, Referrals or Information

- Participation in *MentorCONNECT* is never a substitute or replacement for professional medical guidance and care
- Serving as a volunteer Mentor, live chat support group Moderator, or *MentorCONNECT* volunteer in any capacity does not extend to offering referrals or advice about eating disorders treatment



Handling Requests, cont.

- *MentorCONNECT's* official policy is to refer those who seek additional support to NEDA, ANAD, EDReferral, Gurze or other similar website resources
- When offering resources for further information, Moderators are required to give at least 3 resources as we do not endorse particular services or providers

Additional Support

The Forums Supervisor is always available for help, support, and trouble-shooting. The live chat support groups Moderator should not hesitate to contact the Supervisor in any situation where guidance and support is needed.