

ENGAGE

JOIN

PARTICIPATE

UNITE

INVOLVE

YOUNG STROKE GROUP PRESENTATION

Community Engagement

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Connecting with Your Community

After a stroke, it's completely natural to feel like your world has gotten smaller.
Many survivors retreat because their old routines feel out of reach.

While it's easy to disengage, **connecting with your community can open the door to healing, growth, and purpose.**

(Some) Benefits of Community Engagement

- Stress relief
- Reduce loneliness
- Sense of belonging
- Rediscovering self
- Sense of purpose
- New friendships

ALSO, participating in new activities stimulates the brain, supporting recovery.



(Some) Ways to Engage



**ADAPTIVE SPORTS &
ACTIVITIES**



VOLUNTEER



LOCAL GROUPS

A “Community From Home” Mindset



Many survivors think community engagement requires **physically showing up somewhere**, which can feel overwhelming.

You don’t have to leave your home to connect or contribute.

Examples:

Virtual support
groups and
events

Online classes or
workshops

Zoom book clubs

Invite a neighbor
over for a
conversation or
tea

Sharing Time

- **Kellee** is a member of a local American Legion Auxiliary group, and loves to volunteer.
- **Shelli**, a mother of three, previously worked as a paraeducator and part-time after-school art teacher. She now teaches high school Spanish part-time at a small private school and mentors a pre-K student.



Searching For Volunteer Opportunities

- **Brightest**

- a platform where you can search for local opportunities, events, and service projects. *Some opportunities are virtual, making it easy to get involved from home.*

- **United Way**

- Your local United Way chapter can be excellent resources for finding community-based organizations and volunteer opportunities.

- **Volunteer Fairfax**

- a search engine for volunteer opportunities that match your interests, skills, and availability. *Their system even has a special filter you can use to search for organizations that provide accommodations.*

- **Idealist**

- a free website where you can search for volunteer opportunities, events, and community projects based on your interests, location, and schedule.



Good Practices When Searching

1. **Look for keywords** in the description like: “*ADA accessible,*” “*flexible schedule,*” “*remote option,*” “*training provided,*” “*suitable for diverse abilities.*”
2. **Search for “Virtual,” “Remote,” or “Online” options.** These reduce barriers like travel, mobility, physical access, and tend to allow more flexibility.
3. **Check whether scheduling is flexible** — roles that require a rigid time commitment or lots of travel may present more challenges.
4. **See whether tasks are adaptable.** Roles that involve phone-based tasks, remote/online help, writing, mentoring, or virtual classes are much more adaptable than, say, physically intensive roles.
5. **Reach out if unsure about accessibility.** Contact the organization directly and ask: “*I’m very interested in this opportunity and wanted to ask if it’s accessible for individuals with ___ needs.*”

Group Reflections

- What stood out to you?
- Any thoughts, questions, or feedback?
- Personal experiences or insights to share?

Feel free to unmute, raise your hand, or drop it in the chat!

