

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### Alzheimer's Disease & Dementia

#### Alzheimer's Association

608-203-8500, [alz.org](http://alz.org)

### Memory Loss Caregiver Group

Stoughton Area Senior Center, 608-873-8585  
Facilitation provided by Alzheimer's Association.  
Call the Senior Center for in-person meeting details, or visit [alz.org/wi](http://alz.org/wi) for statewide virtual support group opportunities.

### Caregivers

#### Dane County Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Family Caregiver Support 608-261-5679

### Diabetes Support Group

2nd Monday, 6:00 PM  
Stoughton Hospital, Lobby Conference Room  
900 Ridge Street, Stoughton, WI 53589  
Contact: 608-877-3498

### Grandparents &

#### Other Relatives as Parents

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 10 AM -12:00 PM  
The Rainbow Project Office  
831 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53703  
*Child care available to those in need.*  
Register: [referrals@therainbowproject.net](mailto:referrals@therainbowproject.net)  
Email: Kim at [keithun@therainbowproject.net](mailto:keithun@therainbowproject.net)

### Grief Support Groups

3rd Wednesday, 2:00 PM  
Stoughton Area Senior Center, Stoughton Room  
Facilitation provided by Heartland/Promedica

**Agrace:** virtual support groups for adults  
608-359-5252, [agrace.org/grief-support](http://agrace.org/grief-support)

### Hearing Loss Support

**Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing**  
855-359-5252, [dhs.wisconsin.gov/odhh](http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/odhh)

### LGBTQ 50+ Alliance

Meetings/groups: [bit.ly/lgbtqmadison](http://bit.ly/lgbtqmadison)  
608-255-8582, [lgbtq50plusalliance.org](http://lgbtq50plusalliance.org)

### Low Vision Support Group

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 1:00 PM  
Stoughton Area Senior Center, Stoughton Rm  
Contact: 608-873-8585

### Multiple Sclerosis Support Group

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 10:00 AM  
Stoughton Area Senior Center, Mandt Room  
Contact: 608-873-8585

### Parkinson Support Group

2nd Monday, 12:15 PM  
Stoughton Health's Community Health & Wellness Center, 3162 County Rd. B  
Contact: 608-873-8585

### Substance Abuse Groups

#### Stoughton Alano Club

500 Giles Street, 608-873-6004

#### Alcoholics Anonymous

608-222-8989  
[mtg.area75.org](http://mtg.area75.org)

#### Al-Anon Family Support

608-258-0314, [alanon-wi.org/contact-us](http://alanon-wi.org/contact-us)

#### Narcotics Anonymous

608-258-1747, [badgerlandna.org](http://badgerlandna.org)

### 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Dial: 988, online chat: [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org)

### Stoughton's Memory Cafe

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month, 9:30-11:00AM  
**Stoughton Hospital, Bryant Center**  
A relaxed social gathering for individuals with memory impairments and their care partner. Call the Senior Center at 608-873-8585 for more information.

The group is coordinated, sponsored and facilitated by members of Stoughton's Dementia Friendly Coalition.

Find us on Facebook at  
[Facebook.com/StoughtonDFC](https://www.facebook.com/StoughtonDFC)

For more information on these and other area services please contact the **Stoughton Area Senior Center:**  
**248 W. Main Street, Stoughton WI, 53589 608-873-8585** [stoughtonseniorcenter.com](http://stoughtonseniorcenter.com)

## Choosing a Support Group

### Things to Consider Before Joining a Support Group

The following is advice from the Mayo Clinic, [mayoclinic.org/support-groups](http://mayoclinic.org/support-groups). Each type of support group has its own advantages and disadvantages. You may find that you prefer a structured, moderated group. Or you may feel more at ease meeting less formally with a small group of people.

Plan to attend a few support group meetings to see how you fit in. If the support group makes you uncomfortable or you don't find it useful, try another one. Remember that even a support group you like can change over time as participants come and go.

Also be aware that you may be at a different stage of coping or acceptance than are others in the support group. Or they may have a different attitude about their situation. While such a mix can provide rich experiences, it may also be helpful or even harmful. For instance, some in the group may be pessimistic about their future, while you're looking for hope and optimism. Don't feel obligated to keep attending the group if a conflict or group dynamic is upsetting —find another group or just sit out for a while.

### Getting the Most Out of a Support Group

When you join a new support group, you may be nervous about sharing personal issues with people you don't know. So at first you may benefit from simply listening. Over time, though, contributing your own ideas and experiences can help you get more out of a support group. Remember support groups are not a substitute for regular medical care. If a support group isn't your thing but you need help coping with your condition or situation, talk to your doctor about counseling or types of therapy.

### Support Group Red Flags

Not all support groups are a good match. Some may be driven by interests of one or more members. Look for these red flags that may signal a problem with the support group:

- Promises of a cure for your disease or condition
- Meetings that are predominantly gripe sessions
- A group leader or member who urges you to stop medical treatment or who is directive in any way
- High fees to attend the group
- Pressure to purchase products or services
- Judgment of your decision or actions

Be especially careful when you're involved in internet support groups:

- Keep in mind that some online support groups are used to prey on vulnerable people.
- Be aware of the possibility that people may not be who they say they are, or may be trying to market a product or treatment.
- Be careful about revealing personal information, such as your full name, address or phone number. Understand the terms of use for a particular site and how your private information may be shared.
- Don't let internet use lead to isolation from your in-person social network.