



WE CAN BE STRONGER THAN DIABETES

Making the Workplace Work

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Welcome to this podcast series on diabetes brought to you by the National Diabetes Education Program or NDEP. NDEP is a joint initiative of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health. This podcast is taken from the NDEP video, Five Communities Reach Out.

My name is George Teiner. I'm a retired financial manager from Polaroid corporation. I retired 4 months ago. I was diagnosed with diabetes about 6 years ago. I know some people in Polaroid who also had diabetes. One in particular was a close friend of mine, Judy Pees, and she asked me if I would be interested in joining uh coming to some of the support group meetings which I did and eventually became a member of the steering committee of the support group. The support group, it is what it says, support. We help each other. The people who are members, who are regular attendees at the quarterly meetings, are a wide spectrum, they're the high level executive to a production worker on the floor. And they're not all people with diabetes; they are people whose spouse may have diabetes, whose children may have diabetes.

The most successful treatment for type 2 diabetes is to increase physical activity and reduce weight. And everybody knows that. And in the United States it's the most extraordinarily hard thing to do.

The work place setting offers two or three real advantages for diabetes education. One - It's a setting in which a lot of the difficulties managing diabetes surface. So that's to the employees' benefit and the corporate benefit. Second - There really are not organized settings that have any longevity where people with diabetes can go for regular educational programs.

The social interaction that takes place after the meeting is kinda key to us because again, it's an exchange of ideas between people who have diabetes.

A doctor can tell you that you're doing a great job or doing a lousy job relative to long term blood sugar tests. But, he doesn't know how you did it and he may not be able to tell you how to improve it. The best way to find that out is to ask somebody with the same problem. And we do it by getting together. It's just terrific.

Giving clues and hints and tips to each other is very important. We share ideas.

I fall off the wagon quite often, as you can see by my weight. But through the help of this group, I am trying to stop that habit and keep my blood sugar levels down.

My number one goal for Matthew is to be happy and healthy and, since he has to deal with this condition, I want to know as much as I can and this is a very convenient, accessible means for me to educate myself about how to help him.

This support group doesn't go away at eleven o'clock this morning. The support group will be here tomorrow and it'll be here next week and it'll be here the week after that, so the people have the opportunity to talk about it. It becomes a network and these people know each other, they interact, they teach each other, and that's, that's the key.

I think the biggest thing another company can learn is that, if you've got the people in your organization, let them come out and show the effects of caring about one another as human beings.

To fight diabetes by yourself, it can be done, but the medical profession provides us with dieticians, and physicians, and counselors, but a group like we have at Polaroid, helps me to maintain my focus of my disease.

To order your copy of the Five Communities Reach Out video, visit www.ndep.nih.gov or call the National Diabetes Education Program at 1-800-438-5383.

[Announcer] To access the most accurate and relevant health information that affects you, your family and your community, please visit www.cdc.gov.