



LDSG Inc.

Lung Disease Support Group Inc.

LDSG Inc. (Lung Disease Support Group Inc.) is a not-for-profit charitable organization committed to providing information, education and support to people affected by lung disease and to generating broad awareness about COPD and other lung conditions.

History

Having a local support group for those diagnosed with pulmonary disease was always on the mind of Brenda Cunningham and a group of Pulmonary Rehabilitation graduates that met twice a week to exercise and share stories over a cup of coffee. Brenda had recently become the Sudbury and Area Ambassador for TEAM|COPD a group based in Toronto, whose mandate was to promote awareness of COPD at the grass roots level. On World COPD Day November 15th 2006 she arranged to have a display at an area mall. Renee Bertrand from Medigas joined here and they passed out information and talked to the people as they wandered by. It was at this point Brenda realized that a support group just might be achievable. Over coffee the following morning Brenda presented the ideas she and Renee had discussed to the group and recruited Bruce Eyre, Neldra Burke, Jeanne Hoffman, Betty Janveau, Lucie Wunsch and Marjory Ruttan to work with her as the Founding Committee. This dedicated group launched the Lung Disease Support Group on April 30th 2007, with a membership of 20. By April 30th 2008, on LDSG's 1st anniversary, membership had increased to 66 individuals, the official logo and slogan were completed, and the organization was incorporated.

Vision

To reach out and make the general population aware that Lung Disease is an ever increasing threat to our health. To improve the quality of life for those diagnosed with lung disease.

Mission

To create a greater awareness of lung disease and to provide education and support for patients, their families, caregivers, health care professionals, and the general population, thereby improving the quality of life for all people affected by lung disease

Role of LDSG Inc.

Providing support to those affected by Lung Disease through meetings, discussion groups, trips, events, and home and/or hospital visitations when allowed. Our aim is to help our members improve their quality of life. Providing educational opportunities for members by increasing their knowledge of Lung Disease and how it can be managed. We accomplish this through the use of guest speakers, thus keeping them informed on the advances being made in respiratory care.

Board of Directors

The organization is governed by an elected Board of Directors which is comprised of volunteers who are constantly striving to raise the profile of LDSG and to bring education to the public.



LDSG Inc.

Lung Disease Support Group Inc.
1720 Paris Street Apt 202
Sudbury, ON. P3E 3C2



LDSG Inc.
Lung Disease Support Group Inc.

IT'S ALL ABOUT SUPPORT

I cannot emphasize enough the importance for a strong external support system for those of us living with Lung Disease. Thirty five years ago I was the *supporter* today I am the *patient* so I truly understand both sides of this issue.

My introduction to Lung Disease was through my Dad, and I shall never forget how it affected him. He refused to accept the physician's diagnosis of emphysema and continued working until he finally had a heart attack before he slowed down. I was there when he fought the battle to quit smoking, one which he never did quite win and one he felt he had to hide from us. I was there when he cried because he was terrified, lashed out in anger and frustration at those within reach when he felt he could take no more, and finally withdrew from the community because he felt useless and eventually he gave up. There was no support other than his family for my dad back then, no group of people who understood what he was dealing with, no one to assure him **"You're not alone Walter,"** no one to say **"It's okay, we all feel this way from time to time"**. I loved my dad dearly, but did not understand what he was dealing with. I had no idea what was going through his mind or of the emotions that were raging within him. How could I? I was a healthy young woman I couldn't possibly understand.

I could sit with my Dad and talk today; it would probably go like this: "I know Dad isn't it terrible to watch your life slip through your fingers while you sit hopelessly by; with very little option but to let it happen. Yes Dad I too feel that I have let my family down, I cannot take care of them, I was the rock and now I'm reduced to begging for crumbs of their time, patience, and understanding. Sitting by while they do all the work I used to do that is when I am not pushing myself until I am exhausted just to prove I am still who I used to be. Yes dad I understand because I have experienced all the emotions you did maybe to a different degree but I am walking in the shoes you walked. Finally I understand." Yes I could connect with my Dad now in everyway.

Yes fear has played a major role in my life, as has anger; hopelessness, depression, uselessness and anxiety these emotions have all had starring roles. Not everyone is as vocal or as open and in your face as I am and my overwhelmed family is evidence of that. I am not knocking the support of family or friends in any way in fact those that have a strong family support base are very fortunate. However it is just as important to have the opportunity to talk to someone who has or is experiencing what you are, where you do not have to keep back anything for fear of hurting or frightening a loved one. Many of us keep a stiff upper lip; a life goes on attitude so just accept it, but in the end we all need to hear someone say **"I understand"** and really believe they mean in.

Becoming a member of a support group means **"You are not Alone!" "There is not a question you need fear to ask; nor a fear you cannot discuss and when someone says I understand they do"** That is what support is all about. by Brenda Cunningham.



LDSG Inc.
Lung Disease Support Group Inc.

WHAT LDSG INC. HAS MEANT TO ME

When I was first told I had pulmonary fibrosis I was really angry at my doctor for her slow diagnosis, at the specialist for his poor prognosis, at fate, at the world, at everyone and everything. I was also very frustrated because I was given very little information on the disease and my prognosis.

Other than my daughter who I did not want to over-load with my needs, my closest support systems were people who all lived out of town. My friends who live here are all like ostriches...if you do not talk about it or admit it exists then it doesn't, so there was not too much support there yet again.

My family doctor suggested I go to pulmonary re-hab where I met Brenda, Tim and a few other members of LDSG Inc. who told me about the group, the meetings, the outings, etc. At first I just tuned them all out but gradually I came to see that they all had a more positive attitude toward life in general and there own conditions in particular. I decided to give LDSG a try, attended a few meetings, met more people, went to few educational seminars and learned a lot more about lung diseases in general. I even met someone who had the same condition I had when I joined LDSG Inc.'s Discussion Group as well.

This group in particular has been very helpful to me. When I am depressed or frustrated or anxious I can just go there and sound off. The caring and understanding and support I have received from these people has been wonderful. I hope I have been able to assist others in some small way.

Having to accept the fact that I now require the use of oxygen was a real obstacle for me. Again the understanding and support from the LDSG members and Brenda in particular has eased my transition and acceptance of the fact I am changing faster than I would like, but that I can still enjoy to the fullest what time I have left.

The new friendships I made and my growing involvement in LDSG has been a blessing in my life at a time when I can sure use one.

I would encourage anyone with a lung disease to join LDSG Inc. They will not regret it.

by Carole



LDSG Inc.
Lung Disease Support Group Inc.

THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME MY LIFE BACK

Over the years, my illness has left me feeling useless and rejected by society. Since joining the Lung Disease Support Group one of the most important changes in my life, is that I have learned to like the person I am, a person of quality, and someone worth knowing. I have made many new friends and with their help, I realize that I am not alone. The people who go to this group are non-judgmental and many have had very similar lives. Many of the topics discussed are often very difficult to talk about, but in a way, are often uplifting. Only a few years ago, I would never have revealed such intimate details about my life to anyone much less a group of people. The Lung Disease Support Group has given me the courage to look inside myself and although I may not always like what I see, I am able to talk about not only what I fear but also what I hope to accomplish. Joining the Lung Disease Support Group can make a difference in you life, it certainly has for me. I am comfortable in a way I have never felt before.

I am lucky and grateful to have found such a group of supportive friends, for without the group I believe I probably would still be stuck in my depressive state. So thank you.

Thank You for giving me my life back.

By Tim



LDSG Inc.
Lung Disease Support Group Inc.

"IT REALLY IS ALL ABOUT SUPPORT"

Three years ago I joined the Lung Disease Support Group and I believe it is probably one of the best decisions I have made.

I have been ill for many years and most of the time I was an emotional wreck and convinced that no one else experienced what I was going through. Not only was I scared, really scared, but depressed, and anxious all the time and alone, so alone. When I first started attending the meetings I just sat back and listened not sure how things were going to go nor what to expect. Although I attended the meetings regularly I never participated nor stayed to socialize after the meeting was over. It was probably around 6 months when I not only began to feel more relaxed and join in at the meeting and attending the monthly socials as well. They were a great group but I still felt the need for something deeper so I requested that time be allotted for members to discuss their health concerns at the General Meetings. The Board of Directors took my request under consideration but proposed that maybe it would be better to hold 2 hour meetings twice a month for those members that wished to participate and asked that as I brought the subject up, could I take this project on. Although hesitant I accepted with the help of a couple others and found a place to hold the meetings. Attendance was low at first but the results were productive from the start. Some meetings leave you feeling emotionally drained while others lift your spirits. Giving becomes as important as taking, listening as valuable as talking. No matter what your diagnosis, Asthma, COPD, Pulmonary Fibrosis, Asbestosis or any of the many others it is so important to be able to share you feelings. I have certainly been helped by attending the Discussion Group meetings and I know others have too. As my disease progresses it is good to know that there are people I can go to who will listen and understand. Baring your soul to a stranger is not easy but no one stays a stranger for long when they join LDSG.

By Tim