

CONNECTING WITH YOUR HOME

Adapting to your home, or having your home adapt to you, is often a decision that those living with multiple sclerosis face at one point or another.

For Len Silvey, a Sacramento resident who was diagnosed in 2007 at the age of 64, the question was more targeted towards how he would adapt his home to his needs. He had been living in his house for about 12 years when he decided to remodel it to make it accessible, a process that took about two years of brainstorming and four months of construction.

“With a neurological disorder, you can be as motivated as you want, but if it’s not working, it’s not,” Len said when explaining why it was important to have a home that made it easy and comfortable to live in. “I had literally given up cooking on the stove top before the remodel and that’s where the best cooking takes place... in the fry pan!”

Some of the changes he made included widening doorways to be 36-inches, lowering countertops throughout his kitchen and bathroom by seven inches, installing faucets that turn on by touch and installing handles and doorknobs that are easy to grab or can be pushed with his knuckles if he is experiencing numbness in his hands. He also switched out his stove for induction burners which are only hot if a pan is on them, and installed an oven that doesn’t have a door but instead comes down like an elevator.



LEN LOWERED HIS KITCHEN COUNTERS BY SEVEN INCHES AND STARTED COOKING AGAIN

These changes got Len back to living a more full and independent life, one without relying on prepared or frozen meals. When looking at his house, the first thought to cross one’s mind is not “Wow, look at this accessible house,” but rather fascination that comes once Len shows the various changes he has made. But while others “ooh” and “ah” over it, Len simplifies it to the real importance: “This is about me getting a drink of water on my own.” ♦

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Registration is required for all programs. To register, please visit our Program Calendar at www.nationalMSSociety.org/can or call 1-800-344-4867.

Self-Advocacy Skills Training: Overcoming Barriers to Getting What You Need

Sunday, August 18th | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Peninsula Jewish Community Center
800 Foster City Blvd., Foster City

Whether you want to obtain approval for services or accommodations from your health plan, doctor, employer or favorite grocery store, many of the same principles apply. This practical “hands-on” workshop will offer you an opportunity to hear from communication and advocacy professionals about the most effective methods for presenting your fact-based needs to achieve maximum results.

At this workshop you will learn:

- Resources to help resolve disputes with your health provider, employer or local business
- How to enlist your elected officials to help you short-circuit problems
- How to file winning grievances
- How to identify and prepare for potential problems before they arise

Presenter Annan Paterson lives with MS and knows firsthand the importance of advocating for the needs and treatment of people with chronic conditions through her own involvement in local politics. Representatives

from congressional and statewide offices will discuss how to expedite problems with Medicare and Medi-Cal, accessibility issues, Social Security claims, and intervening with governmental issues. Community resources related to topics such as housing and discrimination will also be discussed.

Making Connections for Spouses and Partners

Saturday, July 27th | 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Cantina, 651 E. Blithedale Ave., Mill Valley

This lunch is a dedicated time for spouses and partners to discover tools to help balance personal needs while continuing to meet the needs of their loved one with MS and connect with other partners who are in a committed and loving relationship with someone who has MS. Facilitated table discussions will give everyone a chance to share their experience and find creative ways to enhance their relationship.

The registration deadline is Thursday, July 24th.

Newly Diagnosed Orientation

Wednesday, August 7th | 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
National MS Society Office
1700 Owens St., Ste. 190, San Francisco

Are you newly diagnosed with MS? A diagnosis of MS can create many unexpected emotions that leave you with a strong need to understand the changes you may be facing. This program will address the most common concerns for people who are newly diagnosed as well as family and friends who want to learn more. Join National MS Society staff and discover resources and get answers to some of your MS questions.

Learn About Cognition & MS and Chapter Programs & Services

Wednesday, August 14th | 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.
Ed Roberts Campus/Independent Living Center, 3075 Adeline St., Berkeley

Join our East Bay Self-Help Groups and Andrew Rose, LCSW/MS Specialist, for an event about Chapter resources and support. An educational National MS Society DVD about managing cognitive challenges related to MS will also be shown. Lunch will be provided.

Learn About the Basics of Disability Benefits & Chapter Programs and Services

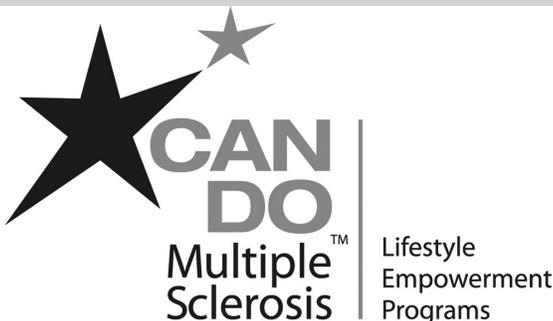
Sunday, July 28th | 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
National MS Society Office
1700 Owens St., Ste. 190, San Francisco

Join our SF Young at Heart Self-Help Group and Andrew Rose, LCSW/MS Specialist, for a basic overview of disability funding programs and how to access them. A review of Chapter programs and services will also be included. A light dinner will be provided.

Samuel Merit Study

Do you have problems walking or keeping your balance? Have you fallen in the last 12 months? If you answered yes, consider this study looking at placing small amounts of weight on the body to see if it improves your ability to balance and move more easily. Participants will come to Samuel Merritt University in downtown Oakland once for four hours. You will be asked to complete several surveys and tests that measure how well you can maintain your balance, stand up, walk, and turn. You will be allowed to rest whenever needed.

You will be given two free movie tickets upon completion. Gail Widener, Ph.D. and Diane Allen, PT, Ph.D. are the researchers conducting this study funded by the National Institutes of Health. If interested, please call the Research Laboratory at Samuel Merritt University at 510-869-6511, extension 4411.



THE POWER TO BE MORE THAN YOUR MS

www.mscando.org

CAN DO MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS: ONE-DAY JUMPSTART PROGRAM

Saturday, August 10th

Four Points by Sheraton, Pleasanton

This free program is where people with MS and their support partners learn the knowledge, skills and tools to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors and actively co-manage their MS. Register online by visiting www.mscando.org or by calling 1-800-367-3101.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

North Bay

- Newly Diagnosed Orientation - August 7, 5:30 p.m., Petaluma
- CogniFitness: Keeping the Mind Moving - August 17 & 24, 11:30 a.m., Novato
- Picnic 'til Sundown - September 19, 5:00 p.m., Glen Ellen

Central Valley

- MoBand Concert - July 11, 8:00 p.m., Modesto
- Newly Diagnosed Orientation - August 6, 6:30 p.m., Modesto
- The Changing Landscape of Insurance – August 21 at 6:30 p.m. and September 21 at 1:00 p.m., Modesto and Sonora

Greater Sacramento

- Depression in MS - July 17, 6:30 p.m., Sacramento
- Newly Diagnosed Orientation - August 1, 6:30 p.m., Carmichael
- Overcoming Barriers to Getting What You Need - August 24, 10:00 a.m., Vacaville
- Connecting through Clay – September 7, 11:00 a.m., Chico
- Recharge Your Battery: Tips for a Better Night's Sleep - September 16, 6:30 p.m., Carmichael

South Bay

- Free From Falls: A Comprehensive Fall Prevention Program for People with MS - Mondays: July 1- August 19, 5:30 p.m., Marina
- Morning Mingle - July 18, August 15, September 26, 11:00 a.m., Santa Clara
- Newly Diagnosed Orientation - August 6, 7:00 p.m., Santa Clara

- Overcoming Barriers to Getting What You Need - August 17, 10:30 a.m., Santa Cruz
- Everyday Matters: Living Your Best Life with MS - Saturdays: September 7 - October 5, 9:30 a.m., Santa Clara
- Friday Family Fun - September 27, 6:30 p.m., Santa Clara

SELF-HELP GROUPS

ALAMEDA COUNTY

- **Alameda** - Sharon: 510-521-6260, Ray: 510-522-5210
- **Berkeley: Lunch Group (meets periodically)** - Toni: 510-653-4534
- **Central Berkeley** - Audrey: 510-287-6543
- **East Bay: Lesbians** - Nora: 510-313-3862
- **Fremont** - Kim: 510-793-0765
- **Oakland** - Katrina 510-523-1891
- **Oakland: African Americans** - Karen: 510-757-3290
- **Oakland: Latinos** - Elsa: 510-777-1414

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

- **Brentwood: MS for Lunch Bunch** - Kathy: 925-286-7674, Julie: 925-513-4686
- **Mt. Diablo (Concord)** - Cindy: 925-677-0737, Jan: 925-372-0859
- **El Cerrito** - Elizabeth: 510-549-2154

MARIN COUNTY

- **Corte Madera (Group does not meet in July or August)** - Vicki: 415-892-7370
Anita: 415-892-5548

SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY

- **San Francisco: Young at Heart Group** - George: 415-724-0064, Ann: 415-573-8949

SAN MATEO COUNTY

- **Foster City** - Eli: 650-377-1970
- **San Mateo** - George: 650-281-7646