

Strategies for Responding to Difficult Questions

If a participant asks a difficult question, it is helpful to:

1. Listen to the entire question.
2. Repeat the question out loud.
3. Assess if the question is relevant to the current discussion/topic.
 - a. If so, respond to the question.
 - b. If not, add it to the "Parking Lot."

It is important to remember that you don't have to have all the answers. Sometimes questions will be raised that you will not know how to respond to. It's okay. When a question arises that you don't know the answer to, you can:

1. Let the group know that you are not a medical expert.
2. Refer the participant to an appropriate resource, like the National Cancer Institute. Ask the participant to report back to the group at the next session.
3. Write down the question in your notes and look it up after the session. Let the group know that you will report back at the next session. If this is the last session, ask for the participant's contact information to follow-up.
4. Also, feel free to contact your local lead facilitator with any difficult questions that you were unable to answer.

Just remember it is always better to say, "I don't know" and refer them to an appropriate resource than to make an answer up and be wrong. Don't be afraid to say that you don't know the answer.

Facilitator Notes: _____
