

# Tips for Engaging DSMES

Do Your Prep Work



## About Our Program

We are located in the Gulf Coast of Florida. Approximately 40% of our population is over 65 years of age and more than 80% have type 2 diabetes. The majority of our participants are Black/African American and Caucasian.

## Take Extra Time to Note Lifestyle Influences

Our program mails out assessments to each participant prior to group sessions. I also obtain their history from their healthcare provider if available. I combine that information with the assessment form, noting cultural influences and health conditions, to **create a snapshot of each participant.**

Once we are in the group session, I am conscientious about who is in class and provide appropriate guidance for all participants. It helps to **meet with participants prior to class who may have a different cultural background or may be managing another chronic disease.** I encourage them to ask questions and share their experiences. I let them know I want this to be engaging so they feel empowered to share ideas and/or personal food experiences.

Important learning moments means everyone participates! For food labels, I have each person read/interpret an actual food label. I always start with what they "look at" on a food label and go from there.



For additional tips, visit  
**[DiabetesEducator.org/EngagingDSMES](https://DiabetesEducator.org/EngagingDSMES).**