

# *Dear Cousin,* Strategies to Get Your Family Tree and DNA Relatives to Respond

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"I've tried contacting my Family Tree and DNA relative matches, they don't respond."

What can you do to get your DNA matches to respond? **If you build it, they will come.**

- a. Build a Family Tree... facts, documents, photo's
- b. Set up a dedicated email for your Family Tree and DNA relatives
- c. Create a private Facebook Group

How to setup a private Facebook group:

1. Sign-in to Facebook
2. Top of page, click on Home tab
3. Left sidebar, under Create click on Group
4. Pop-up will appear, name your group, add at least one person, select privacy. (Closed group is recommended.) Click Create
5. Personalize your group, upload photo
6. Write a group description

Examples of group descriptions:

- a. Welcome. If you are related to Hugh Rooney or Sarah Campbell from Scotland, we welcome you to join us. We're sharing pictures, memories, family tree info, and having a great time catching up with each other. If you're part of the family, please join in the fun.
- b. Are you a direct descendant of a Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi resident? Are you working on your Family Tree? Have you taken a DNA test for Genealogy? If that's you, please join us. We're here to help each other make cousin matches using our DNA results and our Family Tree's.

How to Write a Description:

- a. Click on Add a Description. A box will pop-up. Write description and click SAVE.

7. Write an Announcement

Example of an announcement:

- a. Benvenuto :) Ciao! This group was started to provide a safe place for us to make family connections, share Family Tree info, identify pictures, figure out where family moved to, and enjoy our history. If you have relatives who are descendants of Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi residents, please invite them to join us.  
My name is Patricia Ann. My grandfather was... and his family was from Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi, Avellino, Italy. My great grandparents were Pasquale Marra and Benedetta Antonia Sesa. Our direct-line family names are: Marra, Sesa, DiSanto, Giammarino, DiVito, Lucadamo, Dell'Api, DiNicola, Montemarano, Basso...

How to Make an Announcement:

- b. Create a post and click SAVE. Then, click on three dots on right corner of post. Mark as announcement.

Why setup a private Facebook group? What will people share?

Information to help you figure out DNA connections and build your family tree

1. Family names and how they are related
2. Family trees
3. Photos

4. Geographic location and family vacation videos of your ancestral homeland
  5. Documents... funeral sign-in sheets, vital records, baptism records, written histories, wedding lists, history of the community
- d. Familiarize yourself with the names from your ancestral homeland by researching the records from your ancestral region. Since my region's records weren't indexed, I used the Family Search Historic Image Only Collection. Procedure... Sign-in to FamilySearch.org, click on Search, click on the Map on the continent location of your ancestors. A box will pop-up, click on the country name of your choice. Now you'll be able to access the Image-only Historical Records. Click on Show All to see the full list.
- e. Use the Regions Tab on AncestryDNA to find genetic cousins from a particular geographic community. How to use the Regions tab on AncestryDNA:

On your DNA homepage, click on View All DNA Matches, click on Regions, click on dropdown arrow, select a region.

To turn off and on the Regions Tab: On the top bar, on AncestryDNA, click on Extras. The bottom of that pop-up list is Ancestry Lab. Click on Ancestry Lab. To turn-off the new Beta tools click on Disabled. Once you have clicked on both of the beta options, the Regions Tab will be restored to your AncestryDNA results. If you want the Beta tools back, return to the Ancestry Lab and Enable them.

For your information: Contacting Ancestry Members

"With a subscription to Ancestry, you can send, receive, and reply to messages from other users. With a free guest membership, you can receive and reply to messages from other users and initiate messages to DNA matches."

<https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/Using-Ancestry-s-Messaging-Features-1460088595165-2605>

Sample letter to send to DNA relatives:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I noticed your family tree; we share common relatives. (If you've taken a DNA test, you might also write) AncestryDNA or (another DNA company) put you on my DNA relatives list. You match me and my Dad (or Mom) and several other known cousins. All of us descend from my \_\_\_\_\_ (name of relationship and relatives... such as great grandparents, John Smith and Mary Jones). They were from \_\_\_\_\_ (name of location).

I've been working on our family tree, for 5 years, and would be happy to share a screenshot of the branch of our tree where you match our family. If you send me your email, I can send you the screenshot, there's no way to send it through Ancestry's (or 23andMe, etc.) messaging system.

My email for my family tree relatives and/or DNA cousins is \_\_\_\_\_.

I look forward to hearing from you, soon.

Best to you,

(Sign your name)

Screenshots:

1. TechSmith Snagit 2019 is what I use for capturing Screenshots <https://www.techsmith.com>
2. Your computer will have a built-in screenshot or screen capturing feature.

Further Info:

Patricia Ann Kellner is a member of the Genealogical Speakers Guild:

[https://genealogicalspeakersguild.org/member\\_details.php?member=KellnerP](https://genealogicalspeakersguild.org/member_details.php?member=KellnerP)

DNA Genealogy Group of Long Island: [dgli.com](http://dgli.com) Be sure to see: Helpful Links