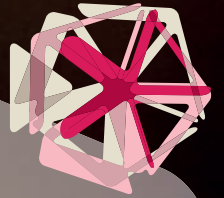


Herstel  
Talent



# PEER SUPPORT

## Training Guide



EESTI NOORTE  
VAIMSE TERVISE LIIKUMINE



Erasmus+



# PEER SUPPORT

## Training Guide

Stichting HerstellTalent





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# Preparation assignment

Self-assessment Preparation Peer support training

Name: .....

Date: .....

Which organisation do you work for: .....

The answers must be linked to your work (or work to be) as a peer supporter.

**My strengths are:**

.....  
.....  
.....

**I would like to learn/improve:**

.....  
.....  
.....

**I dislike people who:**

.....  
.....  
.....

**I get nervous when:**

.....  
.....  
.....

**I am at my best with people when:**

.....

.....

.....

**When people disagree with me I:**

.....

.....

.....

**I feel intimidated by/when:**

.....

.....

.....

**I feel good about myself when:**

.....

.....

.....

**My personal support systems include:**

.....

.....

.....

**I like people who:**

.....

.....

.....



**Some things/activities that make me feel good:**

.....

.....

.....

**When my I'm overwhelmed by emotions I:**

.....

.....

.....

**"Peer Support" for me, means:**

.....

.....

.....

**Meeting new people is:**

.....

.....

.....

**I handle disappointment by:**

.....

.....

.....

**Being a team player means:**

.....

.....

.....



What do you expect from this training:

.....

.....

.....



# Day 1

## Welcome 09.30-09.40 (Including practical announcements and purpose of the training and day) (10 minutes)

We are very pleased to meet you finally! Welcome to this peer support training! Before we get to know each other we will start with some practical announcements, the goal of this training and purpose of today.

### Practical announcements

We will share information about the building with you first. Where you can find the toilets, where you can smoke and where you can have something to eat or drink. We are here with people from different countries. In peer support it is important that we are equal to each other and for that reason we ask you to speak English in the group even to the people of your own country. We ask you to silence your phones and use them in the breaks, not during the training. You have received your training schedule. We provide you with the basic information and for more in - depth knowledge - we can provide you with some extra material. We want to share a lot with you so we have a very strict schedule. We hope it will be a very valuable training which strengthens us in our skills to support each other. Which brings us to the next part:

### What are we going to do?

The goal of this training is to provide each person with an overview of the roles and responsibilities of a peer support worker and to develop their communication, interaction, decision making and support skills. You will learn about how the recovery-orientation, empowerment, non-judgmental acceptance and trust are promoted within the peer support relationship.

We will gain knowledge about:

- **Peer Support in different situations.**
- **Providing peer support in different roles.**
- **Limits and boundaries for the sake of each individual within the relationship;**
- **An understanding of the importance of self-awareness and self-care to maintain wellness and resilience, and avoid relapse as much as it is possible to do so;**
- **Crisis management training, to provide knowledge on how to identify and safely manage a crisis situation.**
- **Intervision and implementation of peer support.**
- **An understanding of how to prepare yourself and the other person in different ways to end the peer support relationship.**

I hope we will grow and develop through the recognition and integration of several components:

- **Lived Experience** – The recollection of, and insights gained from, each participants personal experience and recovery path, will enhance their understanding of concepts being presented. As discussions and experiential learning occurs, participants will also learn from the insights shared by others.
- **Self-Awareness** – Each participant will enter training with a certain degree of awareness of their personal stressors, resilience strategies, areas of strength and areas still requiring attention. This self-knowledge has likely been heightened as a result of their lived experience and recovery path, and training has the potential to further develop each person's ability to be more self-aware.
- **Innate Interpersonal Communication Skills** – Participants will likely have already been in supportive relationships and have discovered an innate ability and a strong desire to help others. The goal in training is to further enhance each person's natural approach, making them aware of potential pitfalls and different strategies so they can build on their existing strengths. The training will have a participatory approach with experiential learning that includes opportunities to practice, such as interactive discussion, small group

exercises, individual reflection and journaling, role playing and learning from demonstrations (recorded or live) of role play scenarios.

### Today's purpose

Today's purpose is to get to know each other, and make a start in understanding what is (and isn't) peer support. Maybe you have your own purpose for this day and of this training. Feel free to set your own goals beside our goals.

### Day program day 1

This is our program for today. We start with the support document, I will explain it in a minute. Then we will introduce ourselves to each other and discuss our expectations of the training. We make a start with: What is peer support, the basic principles of peer support and in the afternoon we also discuss the roles, skills and competencies of a peer supporter in different situations. We have different moments of reflection and breaks.

09.30	Welcome
	Practical announcements
	Introduction and purpose of the course.
	Today's purpose
	Day programme
	Support document
	Introduction of the facilitators and participants
11.00-11.20	Break
	Continuation introduction
	Expectations
	Summary of the morning program
12.30-14.00	Lunch Break
	Check-in exercise
	What is peer support?
	Basic Principles
	Research on peer support
	Roles and competencies of a peer supporter
15.15-15.35	Break
	Different roles and being a peer supporter
	Peer support in different situations.
16.15-17.00	Reflection and summary of the day



## **Support document 09.40-10.10 (30 minutes)**

We are going to create a support-document to provide a safe place to learn and develop in a new group of people. In the support-document we write down our needs to take part in this training in a way which is okay for all of us. Everybody can mention what he/she needs to make this a good experience and create the best learning conditions for themselves. We speak it out loud and write it down to make a statement for ourselves about what we need and that we have the right to stand up for our needs. The ideas of others can inspire you for new ideas for our own needs. In this way we learn what is good for us and how we can take care of ourselves.

Maybe you are used to formulating group-agreements at the start of a course. Most of the time they are about do's and don'ts for others to make you feel comfortable. We think it is in the spirit of peer support to take responsibility for our own needs and to stand for what you need.

We write down the things you need to make this training a success for you. Each sentence starts with. I support myself by:

The facilitator repeats what you say to make sure she uses your own words. Then she writes it down. Sometimes we make a summary. When you are okay with the formulation used, we ask someone else what will support him/her.

Each start of the day we will start with a new support-document. We can all make suggestions of things we need to take care of ourselves during the day. Mention it to the facilitators and they will write it down.

## **Who are we? 10.10-11.00 uur (50 minutes)**

Of course we started already, now we like to get to know each other. For that reason we ask each of you three questions. Answer them shortly, we are going to know each other very well the next six days so we are just making a start. We time and give you four minutes as a maximum per person to answer this three questions:

1. Name
2. Why are you here?
3. What would you do with a million for the people of the Netherlands and Estonia and with a billion for the people of Iceland?

Who wants to start? Who is next?

## **Break 11.00-11.20 (20 minutes)**

## **Continuation introduction of the participants and facilitators 11.20-12.00 (40 minutes)**

## **Expectations - preparation assignment 12.00-12.20 (20 minutes)**

Discuss the homework/preparation assignment in groups of 2 people. Focus on your expectations of the training. Discuss with your partner your expectations of the coming six days. What do you want to accomplish? What are your personal goals? Your partner has to be someone from a different country. When there isn't enough time: feel free to discuss your expectations in the break.

## **Summary of the morning 12.20-12.30 (10 minutes)**

It is already the end of our first morning program! We started with getting to know each other and after lunch we will start with: What is peer support? Are there any important questions for now, you have to ask or remark to enjoy your lunch? Enjoy your lunch!

## **Lunch Break 12.30-14.00 (90 minutes)**

### **Check-in exercise 14.00-14.10 (10 minutes)**

Can you share a little moment from the break that's worth mentioning and where you took care of your own wellbeing?

Do you want to reflect on something that happened before the break? Feel free to share or not to share.

### **What is peer support? 14.10-14.25 (15 minutes)**

Now we are going to start with the real content of the training. We have to discuss a lot before the next break. We are going to tell you something about: What is peer support? The basic principles of peer support and the boundaries of peer support and the peer support relationship.

There are different definitions of peer support around the world. As project members we discussed what peer support means to each of our organizations. This discussion is the foundation of what we use in this training.

*Peer Support may be defined as the help and support that people with lived experience of a mental illness or a learning disability are able to give to one another.*

*It may be social, emotional or practical support but importantly this support is mutually offered and reciprocal, allowing peers to benefit from the support whether they are giving or receiving it.*

Peer support can be provided in groups, individual to individual and even family to family or individual to family. There are a lot of types of peer support in different settings and situations. For now we focus on peer support in groups and one-on-one.

*Is there someone with an example of peer support in their own life? (2-3)*

*What do you think is the power of peer support?*



## **Basic principles 14.25-15.00 (35 minutes)**

Now we tell you something about the basic principles of peer support. In this part we made choices too. You can read a lot about the different basic principles on the internet, but it is also important to follow the principles of your organization.

### **Introduction 14.25-14.35 (10 minutes)**

Here you see twelve important basic principles of peer support. The core values or principles of peer support were discussed in focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys with over 1000 peer supporters.

According to a 1000 peer supporters peer support is:

1. Peer support is voluntary.
2. Peer supporters are hopeful.
3. Peer supporters are open-minded.
4. Peer supporters are empathetic.
5. Peer supporters are respectful.
6. Peer supporters facilitate change.
7. Peer supporters are honest and direct.
8. Peer support is mutual and reciprocal.
9. Peer support is equally shared power.
10. Peer support is strengths-focused.
11. Peer support is transparent.
12. Peer support is trauma-informed.

*Which one do you think is the most challenging? (discuss with the group)*

### **Exercise 14.35-14.55 (20 minutes)**

Now we will do an exercise in groups: Make groups of 4, at least one person of each country in a group and discuss the basic principles, answer the questions and give examples. Each group gets a different set of principles to discuss.

### **Summary Basic principles: 14.55-15.00 (5 minutes)**

*I hope you enjoyed your exercise, are there any things you want to mention for now?*

### **Research on peer support 15.00-15.05 (5 minutes)**

There was conducted research to the effects of peer support and we mention some of the results. Peer support can decrease symptoms of psychosis, increase self care and self esteem, hope and confidence. In the picture you see the different research papers.

## Roles and competencies of a peer support worker 15.05-15.15 (10 minutes)

Before the break we briefly discuss the roles and competencies of a peer support worker.

Like every other profession in health care a peer supporter has different roles and skills. The roles differ per organization or function you have as a peer supporter. Depending on the roles there are also different competencies. We mention some, most of the competencies will be discussed in other parts of the course. When you have questions about them for now, feel free to ask them.

### Roles:

- **Provides support.**
- **Share parts of lived experience.**
- **Advocating for people in recovery ▶ for this reason it is very important to know which laws and human rights there are in your country for people with mental health problems.**
- **Sharing resources and building skills Building community and relationships ▶ that is very important to stimulate inclusion in our society and make 'space' for peer support.**
- **Leading peer support groups ▶ we will talk about group dynamics later.**
- **Mentoring and supporting by setting goals ▶ this is in groups as in an individual peer support relationship.**

Some roles are only relevant when you have a managing position or implement peer support in an organization.

### Competencies

- **Providing services and/or training**
- **Supervising other peer workers**
- **Developing resources**
- **Administering programs or agencies**
- **Educating the public and policymakers**
- **Engages peers in collaborative and caring relationships.**
- **Provides support.**
- **Shares lived experiences of recovery.**
- **Personalized peer support.**
- **Supports recovery planning.**
- **Links to resources, services, and support**
- **Provides information about skills related to health, wellness, and recovery.**
- **Helps peers to manage crises.**
- **Values communication.**
- **Supports collaboration and teamwork.**
- **Promotes leadership and advocacy.**
- **Promotes growth and development.**

Here you see the competencies a peer supporter needs to be a good supporter.

I understand you get a lot of information by now. You can read more about it in the training guide and a lot of these competencies will be discussed in the coming days.



## **Break 15.15-15.35 (20 minutes)**

Now we have a break till 15.35. We will ask you to be back at 15.30 so we can start in time.

## **Different roles and being a peer supporter 15.35-15.55 (20 minutes)**

Especially in organizations like ours we can have different roles and also be a peer supporter. Like trainer, manager, caregiver, care-receiver, peer and peer supporter. We want to talk with you about these different roles and what this implies for you as a peer supporter. (Group discussion)

Peer support in different situations 15.55-16.15 (20 minutes)

We talked about the roles and competencies of peer support, about you and peer support in different roles and being a peer supporter. You can be a peer supporter in different settings. For example in a group or one-on-one. In a community center or in a hospital. Each setting requires different skills.

### **Informal peer support**

Naturally occurring, voluntary, reciprocal relationship(s) with peers one-to-one or possibly in a community

### **Clubhouse/Walk in centre**

Mainly psychosocial and social recreational focus with peer support naturally occurring among participants

### **Self-help, mutual peer support**

Consumer operated/run organizations/activities/programs, voluntary, naturally occurring, reciprocal relationships with peers in community settings e.g., housing, social/recreational, arts/culture, traditional/spiritual healing, recovery education/ work, anti-discrimination education/work, human rights/disability rights education work

### **Formalized/intentional peer support**

Consumer run peer support services within community settings (either group or one-to-one) focusing on issues such as education, employment, Mental Health systems navigation, systemic/individual advocacy, housing, food security, internet, transportation, recovery education, anti-discrimination work, etc.

### **Workplace peer support**

Workplace-based programs where employees with lived experience are selected and prepared to provide peer support to other employees within their workplace

### **Community clinical setting peer support**

Peer support workers are selected to provide support to patients/clients that utilize clinical services, e.g., Outpatient, A.C.T teams, Case Management, Counselling

### **Clinical/conventional MH system-based peer support**

Clinical setting, inpatient/outpatient, institutional peer support, multidisciplinary groups, recovery centres, or Rehabilitation Centres Crisis response, Crisis Management, Emergency Rooms, Acute Wards

*Which challenges can you, or have you faced in the different settings?*



## Reflection on the day 16.15-16.45 (30 minutes)

So it is the end of day 1! We learned a lot about what peer support is and in which roles and situations you can be a peer supporter. Do you have something you want to ask or mention?

What did you think of this day? Mention one word!

Tomorrow we discuss peer support conversation with the different steps and skills you need to have a peer support conversation.

Have a good evening and take care of yourself!



# Day 2

## Welcome, today's purpose and set-up of the program 09.30-09.40 (10 minutes)

Welcome on the second day of the course. I hope you had a good evening and night. Yesterday we learned about what peer support can mean in different roles and situations. So we know where and when we can provide peer support but now we have to know 'How' we provide peer support. So today is about the peer support conversation and the essential elements and skills. We start with the purpose of the conversation, then we talk about the different elements of the peer support conversation and we practice the different skills. We also discuss some basic principles and what the implications are for being a peer supporter. This is an important day because the skills we will practice today will be in all our exercises the next coming days.

## Day program

Here you see the overview/program of this day:

09.30	Welcome
	Today's purpose
	Day programme
	Support-document
	Check-in
	The purpose of the peer support conversation
	How to create a safe and free space to share?
	How to have a peer support conversation?
11.00-11.20	Break
	Practice with the first meeting
	Trust and non-judgemental acceptance
	Summary of the morning program
12.30-14.00	Lunch Break
	Check-in exercise
	Exercise listening and open ended questions
	Several things to keep in mind when having a peer support conversation
15.15-15.35	Break
	Practice with the peer support conversation
16.15-17.00	Reflection and summary of the day

## Support-document 09.40-09.55 (15 minutes)

Today we start a new support document: What do you need today to support yourself during the second day of this course? You can add new needs, remove ones when they aren't necessary anymore or maybe change them. Start your sentences/needs with: I support myself by: ..... Is there anyone who wants to add something to the support document? etc.

## Check-in 09.55-10.10 (15 minutes)

We will start with a check-in. Are there important questions or remarks on the day of yesterday? What did you do for your well-being/selfcare, last night or this morning?

## The purpose of the peer support conversation (10.10-10.20) 10 minutes

We start with the purpose of your conversation as a peer supporter.

*What do you want to achieve?*

*Imagine you are a peer going to have a talk with a peer supporter. What do you expect? (question to ask the group.)*

You can provide peer support in groups one-on-one. We first focus on one-on-one conversation because the basic attitude which is needed for being a peer supporter is the same in a group as in an individual peer support relationship.

In the peer support conversation our purpose is to provide our peer(s) an experience of hope and recovery, based on shared experiences of life, vulnerability, power and resilience. We are equal in the relationship and both of you share things to support each other. Yesterday we called this the principles of mutuality and reciprocity. We want to create a space of hope which empowers us to follow our path of recovery. We support each other by acknowledging our shared experiences. You, as a peer supporter, are an example of hope and recovery. To create a safe space like this it is important that you facilitate a 'free space' to share each other's stories and experiences.

## How to create a free and safe space to share? (10.20-10.30) 10 minutes

The next question we have to answer is: How do you create this free and safe space to share? The answer is in your basic attitude. The most important step is to 'listen'. Really listen to what someone is telling you. When you listen to people they feel they are being heard and acknowledged. For that reason it is important to listen, summarize and when you don't understand what someone is telling you: ask questions to know more and especially understand. By doing this, people feel invited to share their experiences with you. And you? You listen and ask open-ended questions.

*What are open-ended questions? Why are they important? (question to ask the group.)*

You can ask open-ended questions by being open, honest and curious.

It is also important to align with the person you speak with. For that reason listening is very important. You have to listen with all your attention and focus on your peer. So he or she will feel and think: This is time for me, it is safe to share. I don't have to be scared of unasked opinions or judgements.

## How to start a peer support conversation? 10.30-11.00 (30 minutes)

### Before the conversation

Now we can start with the conversation. Sometimes you make an appointment for example when somebody at your work knows you are a peer supporter and asks for a meeting. In other situations peer support is more spontaneous for example in a community center. Make sure you have a place to share which is okay to both of you. This can be outside while having a walk, in someone's home, in the hospital. It doesn't matter where but be sure it is okay and safe for both of you.

### Schedule for meetings

#### Step 1

When you have a first meeting with a peer it is very important to start with getting acquainted/ getting to know each other.



Topics to discuss can be:

- **What do you want to share about yourself?**
- **What do I (or others when you are in a group) need to know from you?**
- **You can also talk about what someone likes in hobbies, in spare times or someone's family.**

*Note 1: It is important to share equally so you as a peer supporter introduce yourself too.*

*Note 2: When you have a second meeting with someone, you start with aligning on how you are and what you need in this conversation. Or a neutral subject like the weather, food or what you did yesterday.*

## Step 2

When you know each other a little or when you know how you feel today it is important to set a goal for the conversation.

*Why do you think this is important? (question to ask the group.)*

It is important to speak about your expectations of the meeting because you want your peer 'going home' hopefully with the power or feeling or advice etc. he/she needs. When you talk about the expectations of the conversation you as a peer supporter can align to the peers needs.

Discuss:

- **What do you want to talk about? What's going on in your life?**
- **What do you want to achieve with the conversation?**
- **Discuss how long you want the conversation to take.**

*What is a fine length of a conversation for you? As a peer and as a peer supporter? (question to ask the group.)*

We think the average length is about 60 minutes.

## Step 3

When you set the expectations and goals of the meeting right, you can start with the conversation. Like we said, the basic attitude is the most important. So you:

- a. Listen to each other, let a person know you are listening by summarizing, asking little open, honest and curious questions to better understand. Give the other person all your attention. Prevent a long monologue from one of the peers. But also don't interrupt when it isn't necessary. When somebody talks long you can interrupt by saying for example: To be sure I understand you correctly, can I summarize what you said? Or can I ask you a question?
- b. Ask questions (open-ended) to each other about the experiences you share and about what someone learned from the experience.

*For example: When I tell you I was very sad when I lost my father, niece, two dogs and two horses in one year. You first listen and ask things like: what did your father and the horses mean to you, to let me know you listen and are interested and you want to understand what I say. But then you can ask: What did you learn about these losses?*

*What does it tell you about what is important to you?*

- c. Reflect on your own experiences and think of a way to deal with it. By sharing your reflection and the way you handled a situation you may create space for your peer(s) to find their own solutions.
- d. You only give advice when you are asked for it. Be aware that your advice has to be in line with someone's needs or questions. Offer your advice as an opportunity, not as a solid solution. So mention that it may be a helping option for the peer but that you aren't sure. Because you are not her or him.

## Step 4

Be aware of the time and remind each other of ending the conversation. It can be helpful to mention that you have fifteen minutes left, (for example) and to announce that you want to end the meeting for today. In that way you can end the conversation properly.

- **Reflect on what the meeting meant to both of you, or to the group.**
- **Ask each other if you need something for now, or if this is enough for today.**
- **End the meeting and discuss if you want to meet again and how.**

We are going to use this schedule in the coming days for all our peer support conversations. Each conversation we will focus on another step of the schedule. After the break we start with step one. We will let you practice a lot because we think it is important to create your own way to have a peer support conversation.

## **Break 11.00-11.20 (20 minuten)**

### **Practice with the first meeting 11.20-12.00 (40 minutes)**

Now we know what is important in the peer support conversation we start with practicing the first step of the peer support conversation: getting to know each other. Make groups of three people. Person A and B introduce themselves to each other. Use the hand out for ideas on how to have a first meeting. With sharing what they want to share and what they want the other to know about them. Person C observes and writes down the observations. After 20 minutes you take five minutes per group to reflect on the exercise and for person C to share his or her observations. Then we go back to the whole group and discuss your experiences together.

### **Trust and non-judgemental acceptance 12.00-12.20 (20 minutes)**

Before the break we will give you some things to keep in mind when you are having a peer support conversation. We already said that your basic attitude of being present and creating a safe space to share your story is the most important skill of being a peer supporter. We discussed that listening, asking open, honest and curious questions and providing advice on request are the most important things to do. But it is also important that a person knows that the things he or she shares are safe with you. Most of the people with mental health problems experienced trauma in their lives and for that reason have difficulties with trusting someone else. That is why it is also important to talk about confidentiality. You must know that your story is safe with the other person or persons.

When I meet my peer, here next to me. We walk outside and I meet a friend who asks: Hé, out for a walk too with your friend? And I say: I'm just hanging out doing my peer support stuff. This is ... my peer, we have a meeting right now...

*What would you think? (question to ask the group.)*

Lead a discussion with the group about how important it is to maintain confidentiality, and what this means. This is especially important in smaller communities, where people are more likely to know more of the people.

Another important thing is to accept and respect each other despite differences in convictions, principles, culture or religion. This is also called non-judgemental acceptance.

*Why do you think non-judgemental acceptance is important?(question to ask the group.)*

Being non-judgemental is most of the time more difficult than you presume. You can (non-willingly) judge with your words but also with your attitude or the tone of your voice.

Your attitude is formed by what you have learned about life and society.

And even if you rationally think in a way about a subject your emotions and body language can tell something else.

For example: I learned as a child that dying your hair is evil. Now I like hair just the way it is, blond, brown, black, red, purple or blue or what color. But when I meet somebody who normally has brown hair, and now it is dyed blue, red or even blond. Even when I like it, I think that you can see on my face or here in my voice that I think: Huh, what did she do, this is not okay...

And this is just about the beliefs and values you don't want to believe... imagine what happens with the beliefs and values you still have. They influence your communication, you and the choices you make, the words you use and the tone of your voice.

*How do you combine your personal opinions with non-judgmental acceptance?*

*When did you have the experience of non-judgemental acceptance?*

*What did it mean for you? (questions to ask the group.)*



Write down what was so special about this moment and what the other person did to create an environment of non-judgmental acceptance.

*What does this experience imply for you as a peer supporter? (question to ask the group.)*

### **Summary of the morning 12.25-12.30 (5 minutes)**

It is lunch break already. We talked about the purpose and the structure of the peer support conversation. We also discussed, How to create a safe space to share and what this has to do with trust and non-judgmental acceptance.

Are there important remarks before you can enjoy your lunch? We will see you back at 13.55 hour.

### **Break 12.30-14.00 (90 minutes)**

#### **Check-in exercise 14.00-14.10 (10 minutes)**

Can you share a little moment from the break that's worth mentioning and where you took care of your own wellbeing?

Do you want to reflect on something that happened before the break? Feel free to share or not to share.

#### **Exercise Listening and open-ended questions 14.10-14.50 (40 minutes)**

Following on the structure of the peer support conversation we want to do some exercise about communication skills. We start with an exercise about listening and summarizing and asking open, honest and curious questions.

I ask you to divide in groups of three people and make sure you are with someone else then the exercise before the break.

- **Person A chooses a subject he/she wants to talk about like: 'What do you like for a holiday or on the weekend or your spare time.'**
- **Person B: Listens, summarizes and asks only open, honest and curious questions. They start with: Who, Why, What, When, Where and How.**
- **Person C observes and gives a hint when there is a 'closed' question. (A closed question is one, you can simply answer with yes or no)**

Do this for 10 minutes, then change roles.

After 30 minutes we return to the whole group and discuss your experiences and observations.

#### **Several things to keep in mind when having a peer support conversation 14.50-15.15 (25 minutes)**

Before the break we want to share some other things to keep in mind when you have a peer support conversation. We already discussed that our basic attitude is the most important to create a safe place to share our stories and experiences. For that reason it is important to be present with the other person with all your attention. For that reason avoid being distracted or interrupted.

Be focussed on the non-verbal communication of the other person. Although we are not always aware of it, much communication takes place through our body language. Non-verbal cues such as body posture, facial expression and tone of voice send out messages that confirm or deny what is being said verbally. Nonverbal behaviour also adds emotional intensity to the words being said and sometimes, nonverbal cues speak louder than words. For example, a peer might express with words that she is not upset but a worried look on her face

and a flat tone of voice might be telling you otherwise. Under such circumstances, it would be appropriate to point out the discrepancy to the peer with a statement such as “Even though you are telling me that you are not feeling upset, your expression looks worried.” Effective peer supporters learn to read nonverbal cues such as bodily behaviour, facial expressions, voice related behaviour, autonomic physiological responses, physical characteristics and overall appearance of the peer. Peer supporters must also learn to pay attention to their own body reactions while interacting with peers.

Keep in mind:

- **To be in time for meetings;**
- **Remember key details and information (it may be helpful to keep short notes for yourself as reminders).**
- **Use verbal and non-verbal gestures to show interest (encouraging questions head nods)**
- **Manage feelings and attitudes so that your commitment to your peer is genuine and not faked.**

## **Break 15.15-15.35 (20 minutes)**

### **Practice Peer support conversation 15.35-16.15 (40 minutes)**

We heard and practiced a lot about the different parts of the peer support conversation and the essential elements. Now we practice with the whole peer support conversation, including all 4 steps, but we will focus on step 2.

That means that you briefly get acquainted, focus on setting the goal, and briefly discuss the subject and end the conversation properly.

For that reason I will ask you to form groups of two people. You will get a handout with the assignment.

Person A is the peer, Person B the peer supporter. Start the conversation and follow the steps of the schedule. Keep in mind that you have 30 minutes to have a whole conversation so make some appointments about time management. Choose a subject you want to discuss with your peer supporter and where you are comfortable with. Follow all the four steps:

1. Getting acquainted
2. Discuss expectations and goals of the conversation, choose one subject you want to discuss briefly. Focus on the goal of the conversation and explore different expectations and goals.
3. Talk about the subject or situation you want to discuss
4. End the conversation properly.

We will repeat this practice in the coming days with different subjects. So we will all get the opportunity to practice our skills and get used to the different steps.

### **Reflection on the day 16.15-17.00 (45 minutes)**

We are at the end of our second day! I want to read you a poem, about listening, to reflect at the end of this day.

The writer of the poem is unknown, we read it in: Peer Support Training Manual, Guideline for peer support-training in the Okanagan Health Service Area, Canadian Mental Health Association.



*When I ask you listen to me and you start giving me  
advice, you have not done what I asked.*

*When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me  
why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my  
feelings.*

*When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to  
do something to solve my problem, you have failed me,  
strange as that may seem.*

*Listen! All I ask is that you listen.*

*Don't talk or do- just hear me.*

*Advice is cheap; 60 cents will get you both Dear Abby  
and Billy Graham in the same newspaper.*

*And I can do for myself; I am not helpless.*

*When you do something for me that I can do and need  
to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and  
weakness.*

*But when you accept as a simple fact that I feel what I  
feel, no matter how irrational, then I can stop trying to  
convince you and get about this business of  
understanding what's behind this irrational feeling.  
And when that's clear, and the answers are obvious and  
I don't need advice, irrational feelings make sense when  
we understand what's behind them.*

*Perhaps that's why prayer works, sometimes for some  
people- because a higher power is mute and he or she does not give  
advice or try to fix things. A higher power just listens and lets you  
work it out for yourself.*

*So please listen, and just hear me.*

*And if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn –  
and I will listen to you.*

Do you have something you want to ask or mention?  
What did you think of this day?

For tomorrow we will ask you: 'To think about a communication sparkle you experienced today.' Have a good evening and hope to see you tomorrow.



# Day 3

## Welcome, today's purpose and set-up of the program 09.30-09.40 (10 minutes)

Welcome to the third day of the training. I hope you've got some rest and have lots of energy for today! Today's purpose is to learn about boundaries in the peer support relationship, distance and closeness dynamics and selfcare.

### Day program

Here you see the overview/program of this day:

09.30	Welcome
	Today's purpose
	Day programme
	Support-document
	Check-in
	Boundaries
11.00-11.20	Break
	Distance and closeness dynamics
	Selfcare
	Reflection and summary of the day
13.00	Lunch Break

## Support Document 09.40-09.55 (15 minutes)

Today we start a new support document: What do you need today to support yourself during this third day of the training? You can add new needs, remove ones when they aren't necessary anymore or maybe change them. Start your sentences/needs with: I support myself by: ..... Is there anyone who wants to add something to the support document? etc.

## Check-in 09.55-10.10 (15 minutes)

How are you today? Are there any questions or remarks you want to make? At the end of this day we are at 50 percent of the training. This afternoon we have time to relax! Yesterday we asked you to think about a communication sparkle you experienced during this training. Who wants to tell us something about it?

## Boundaries 10.10-11.00 (50 minutes)

### What are boundaries?

Yesterday we practiced with the peer support conversation. Now you know how to have a conversation like that. Maybe you can imagine that it is very special for people to be heard and listened to. But there are also boundaries in a peer support conversation.

In a peer support relationship safety is very important for the peer and the peer supporter. Because of this, it is important to talk about boundaries. When we talk about boundaries the first thing we have to identify is what boundaries are.

Boundaries are the formal and informal understanding of how people interact with each other. A kind of rule about what you accept and what you don't accept. Boundaries differ in different roles. For example with your



partner you have other boundaries than with your child, neighbour, friend, colleague or manager. In work you may have different boundaries as in private situations. For example you may have different boundaries than your colleagues. Boundaries are very personal but in professional work situations you are sometimes obliged by your organization to follow some boundaries. It is good to know that in this kind of situation you have a choice. It is up to you, if you follow rules that are not yours, and which don't feel right to you, we don't say it is easy. But standing for what you think is right, is important for a peer supporter. The work of a peer supporter is based on human rights, especially for people whose rights are often at stake. It is also very important to realize that there are juridical boundaries by law also (for example a sexual relationship with a child).

## Different types of boundaries .

You have different types of boundaries like you see in this picture.

*Does anyone want to reflect on this? (question to ask the group.)*

To learn more about the importance of boundaries for peer workers; We show you seven quotes. The quotes are situations you may face as a peer supporter. Boundaries play a big role in it. If you think a situation is appropriate, raise your hand. If you think it is not appropriate you don't do anything. Give your first reaction, don't think about it too long. There is no right or wrong reaction. We like to discuss different opinions about boundaries.

### Quotes

Action or behaviour with people receiving services	never ok	maybe ok	always ok
Giving a hug			
Receiving a hug			
Giving the person your cell phone number			
Conneting with the person in social media			
Attending a support group meeting together			
Attending a social event together			
Having a drink together			
Deciding what is best for the person			
Narrowing choises and offering the best option for the person			
Giving the person a gift or money			
Accepting a gift or money form the person			
Inviting the person to your home			
Accepting an invitation to the person's home			
Having a sexual relationship to the person			
Having a sexual relationship with a member of the person's family			
Disclosing private information shared in confidence (not abuse or life threatening)			
Protecting the person form harmful consequences			
Offering an opinion about a prescribed medication			
Offering an opinion about alternatives to treatment			
Voicing skepticism about recovery			
Talking about personal struggles			

Talking about personal successes Being in multiple relationships with the person (sponsor and peer specialist)			
Breaking confidentiality because of suicide plan			
Being a friend			

## Break 11.00-11.20 (20 minutes)

### Distance dynamics and closeness 11.20-12.50 (30 minutes)

In the context of our personal boundaries and limits we want to discuss distance dynamics and closeness with you. When there are rules in your organization for boundaries and limits you can still ask yourself: And what are my boundaries. What do I want? How close do I want to be to a peer? It is important to keep in mind that you aren't friends, or family. If you want to be friends you have to be clear about it. But keep in mind that you probably never had met when you weren't a peer supporter. So it is very important not to suggest something you can't live up to. Sometimes people ask you to go with them on holiday, to celebrate their birthday or to cook and eat together. The peer-support relationship often makes people feel really connected to you. At that moment it is very important to keep the distance you want. And to realize that if you go on holiday or have meals together you suggest to be more than a peer supporter. When you still want this you have to be clear about the relationship and what it means to you. It is for the safety of the peer.

Because you don't want to disappoint them. Lots of us have been disappointed in relationships throughout life. It is also important for your own self care because you can't carry the whole world on your back. And some distance is important to keep a clear view.

What does it mean for the peer supporter and the interaction?

We are going to demonstrate this with a role play. Who wants to be a volunteer peer supporter.

1. Roleplay: somebody plays the role of a lonely woman
2. Roleplay: somebody plays someone who is in love with her peer supporter
3. Roleplay: somebody plays the role of someone who is very angry at the fact that you didn't text back on her whatsapp at 23.40 last night. When you awake in the morning you have 40 angry messages.

### Selfcare 11.50-12.30 (40 minutes)

As a peer supporter you care for others. But it is also very important to care about yourself. You probably are familiar with the expression: 'You can't be there for others if you don't take care of yourself.' There are different ways to care about yourself.

*Who can mention one? We will write them down on the flipchart (question to ask the group.)*

We ask you to divide in groups of three people and have a peer support conversation according to the structure we discussed yesterday following the different steps of the schedule. Focus on step 3, discussing the subject. As a subject you choose something that has to do with you struggling with self care. Person A and B are having the conversation Person C observes. Make sure you choose yourself a different role as yesterday. You have 30 minutes.

### Reflection and summary of the day 12.30-13.00 (30 minutes)

We are already at the end of this day. Thank you very much for your attention. We are very curious how you experienced today? Can you characterize it with one word? Are there any questions left about the subjects of today? And finally your question for tomorrow: 'How are you going to support yourself today?'

## Lunch break 13.00-14.00 (60 minutes)

### Afternoon alternative program



# Day 4

## Welcome, today's purpose and set-up of the program 09.30-09.40 (10 minutes)

Welcome to the fourth day of the training. I hope you enjoyed your free time yesterday.

### Today's purpose

In the first three days we discussed the basic principles and skills to provide peer support in a conversation and peer support relationship. We already mentioned that you can share your own lived experience. Today is about how you can share your lived experience as a peer supporter in an effective way which is safe for you and your peers. At the end of the day we hope that you feel safe to share what you want, in a supportive way to a peer. To explain why it is important to share your own experience we start with some theory and an exercise about recovery and empowerment. In the afternoon we talk about knowledge you gathered by lived experience and how you can share this with your peers.

### Day program

Here you see the overview/program of this day:

09.30	Welcome
	Today's purpose
	Day programme
	Support-document
	Check-in
	Recovery orientation
	Empowerment
11.00-11.20	Break
	Exercise recovery
	Summary of the morning program
12.30-14.00	Lunch Break
	Check-in exercise
	Theory about knowledge your gathered by experience
	To share or not to share your story, and how?
15.30-15.50	Break
	Practice with sharing your story
16.45-17.00	Reflection and summary of the day

### Support Document 09.40-09.55 (15 minutes)

Today we start a new support document: What do you need today to support yourself during this fourth day of the training? You can add new needs, remove ones when they aren't necessary anymore or maybe change them. Start your sentences/needs with: I support myself by: ..... Is there anyone who wants to add something to the support document? etc.

## Check-in 09.55-10.10 (15 minutes)

How are you today? Are there any questions or remarks you want to make? Yesterday we asked you to think about how you were going to take care of yourself. Who wants to share something about this?

## Recovery orientation 10.10-10.35 (25 minutes)

Like we said, we first start with an explanation about the principles of recovery to explain the importance of sharing your experiences in a peer support relationship in a supportive way. Peer support is a very important part of recovery. For that reason it is important that you - a peer supporter - know something about recovery.

SAMHSA is the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration from the USA. They use this definition of recovery: A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self directed life, and strive to reach their full potential. Another definition of recovery is the one of William Anthony (1993) He identifies recovery as "a deeply personal, unique process of changing one's attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful, and contributing life even with limitations caused by the illness.

According to SAMHSA there are 10 principles which are important for recovery. One of them is Peer Support. SAMHSA says: Peers encourage and engage other peers and provide each other with a vital sense of belonging, supportive relationships, value and rules and community.

Principle	Explanation
<b>Hope</b>	The belief that recovery is REAL. Hope is internalized and fostered by others, and it is the catalyst of the recovery process.
<b>Person-Driven</b>	Individuals define their own life goals and design their unique paths toward these goals.
<b>Many Pathways</b>	Recovery pathways are highly personalized. Recovery is non-linear, characterized by continual growth, and occasional setbacks.
<b>Holistic</b>	Recovery encompasses an individual's whole life, including mind, body, spirit, and community. The array of services and supports available should be integrated and coordinated.
<b>Peer Support</b>	Peers encourage and engage other peers and provide each other with a vital sense of belonging, supportive relationships, valued roles, and community.
<b>Relational</b>	Recovery is supported by the presence and involvement of people who believe in the person's ability to recover; who offer hope, support, and encouragement.
<b>Culture</b>	Values, traditions, and beliefs are key in determining a person's journey and unique pathway to recovery.
<b>Trauma-Informed</b>	Services and supports should be trauma-informed to foster safety and trust; this promotes choice, empowerment, and collaboration.
<b>Strengths &amp; Responsibilities</b>	Individuals, families, and communities have strengths and resources that serve as a foundation for recovery. Individuals have a personal responsibility for their own self-care and journeys of recovery. Families have responsibilities to support their loved ones in recovery and stay well themselves. Communities have responsibilities to provide opportunities and resources to address discrimination and to foster social inclusion and recovery.
<b>Respect</b>	Acceptance and appreciation for people affected by mental health and substance use challenges are crucial to achieve recovery. Self-acceptance, developing a positive and meaningful sense of identity, and regaining belief in one's self are also important.

I will ask you to pick up some sticky notes and write down what supported you in your recovery?

We discuss the different elements.



Based on this definition and principles you could conclude that recovery is possible for everyone. For that reason we want to discuss the next statement with you:

*'As a peer supporter you have to believe that recovery is possible for everybody' (question to ask the group.)*

When you respond, we will also ask: *Why that is your answer and how do you handle this point of view as a peer supporter.*

## **Empowerment 10.35-11.00 (25 minutes)**

We talked about recovery orientation, now we will focus on empowerment and how you can include recovery orientation and empowerment in your conversations/communication.

Empowerment has everything to do with experiencing your own power. As a peer supporter it is your role to support people by finding hope and their belief in their own power (again).

*Think about: When my friend says I'm powerful, I feel powerful. Yes or no?(question to ask the group.)*

Telling people they are powerful is easy. Supporting them in such a way they feel powerful themselves is a challenge. I would say you have to seduce somebody to do things he/she had never done or dared before.

By giving them choices, to support them by being around or planning new goals and goal setting. But in a way they can be proud! Because you can believe people have power, they just have to believe and experience it themselves.

Empowerment in your communication has everything to do with asking questions.

Asking the right questions can do miracles for people and asking no questions, or trying to persuade people from your own opinions can end up in disasters.

You will experience it in an exercise. We will practice a special form of the peer support conversation. In step 3 of the conversation your peer wants to change. Discuss step 1 and 2 briefly and focus on step 3 and 4.

- 1. Form groups of 3.**
- 2. Person A is a peer and chooses a theme he/she wants something to change, Person B is a peer supporter and Person C observes and makes notes.**
- 3. You have 5 minutes to focus on step 3 of the peer support conversation and then end it briefly with step 4.**
- 4. Person B (the peer supporter) will try to persuade you to make the change following the next five rules.**
  - Explain why the person should make the change
  - Give at least three benefits that would result from making the change.
  - Tell the person how they could make the change.
  - Emphasize how important it is for them to make the change; including negative consequences of not doing it.
  - Tell/persuade the person to do it.
- 5. Change roles and start a new conversation about a theme the peer wants to change in his/her life. Following the next four rules. (for 5 minutes)**
  - Why would you want to make this change?
  - If you did decide to make this change, how might you go about it?
  - What are the best three reasons for you to do it?
  - How important would you say it is for you to make this change on a scale from 0-10 (where 0 is not important and 10 is extremely important?)
- 6. End the conversation properly.**

Thank you for coming back in time. We are very curious what you experienced during this exercise?

- 1. What did you experience?**
- 2. What did you observe?**
- 3. What was the difference between part 1 and part 2?**

## **Break 11.00-11.20 (20 minutes)**

## **Exercise about recovery 11.20-12.20 (60 minutes)**

We are going to do an exercise to demonstrate how different people experience recovery. I ask you to write one word down what you associate with recovery. I will pick up the papers.

Now you can take one of the papers and read the word. Tell us what this word according to you has to do with recovery.

You see that each person has different associations with recovery and with the recovery elements. Discuss this with the group and pay attention to all the different aspects of recovery.

## **Summary of the morning program 12.20-12.30 (10 minutes)**

## **Lunch break 12.30-14.00 (90 minutes)**

## **Check-in exercise 14.00-14.10 (10 minutes)**

Can you share a little moment from the break that's worth mentioning and where you took care of your own wellbeing?

Do you want to reflect on something that happened before the break? Feel free to share or not to share.

## **Theory about knowledge your gathered by experience 14.10-14.55 (45 minutes)**

We all have our lived experiences. Everybody has. But not everybody develops them to knowledge by experience. When you reflect on your lived experience. And ask yourself reflective questions like: What hurts the most in my experience? What helped me to recover? What didn't support me in recovery? What did I learn about myself in this situation? What does that mean to me and the people around me? Etc. You gather special knowledge about life and recovering from difficulties in life. This knowledge we call knowledge by experience. This is the knowledge you use in your peer support conversation.

I will ask you to think about (difficult) experiences and life events for you. Write them down. You don't have to make a complete list. Just think for five minutes and write down the first things you think about.

*Hand out on next page.*

Okay, thank you, now I will ask you to write down what you learned from these experiences. What did you learn about yourself? Others? And especially what supported you to recover? Write it down, next to the experiences. (5 minutes)

Thank you again. You are you. And we are all different. So for that reason I will ask you to write next to the experiences and the lessons, what you learned and what helped others in the same situation. Maybe you talked about similar experiences with someone else, or you read about it, or saw a movie etc. (5 minutes)

This combination of your experiences, your knowledge by reflection about it and the knowledge that helped others is your knowledge by experience. This is the knowledge you use as a peer supporter to align with them even if they experienced things in a different way than you did.

Write down your most important lesson you learned on a sticky note and stick it on the flap over.

*Talk with the group about the 'harvest' of different experiences.*

Even here this week we develop and grow our knowledge by experience, with every person we speak and each story we hear.



**Own experiences**  
with crisis, trauma, disabilities, recovery etc.

Knowledge from others

Reflection and analysis of yourself

Other sources like  
movies, books, blogs etc.

**Knowledge gathered by experience**  
What did you learn from your experiences?

**Expert by experiences**  
Has the skills to use his/her knowledge gathered by experience to support others.



## To share or not to share your story? And how? 14.55-15.30 (35 minutes)

As we said, peer support is an important part of recovery. An important aspect of peer support is that you share experiences and the lessons you learned from it. So as a peer supporter you share, but what, when and how?

Given the extent and severity of stigma, the decision to “come out” about mental health, trauma, or addiction is often not an easy one.

As a peer supporter, it is likely that you regularly disclose aspects of your recovery journey as a way to inspire hope and build a trusting relationship with a peer.

### Telling Your Recovery Story

As a peer supporter, you will often be called upon to share your experiences in recovery. Telling your recovery story is a valuable skill and with practice it can become a natural part of your interactions with others.

One caution about telling your story: self-disclosure needs to have a purpose. In general, the focus is on how a part of your recovery story can offer hope or motivation for a peer to move forward in their recovery. Unless you keep that in mind, it is easy to become inappropriate in your self-disclosure.

What is inappropriate? The biggest mistake is focusing on oneself. Yes, you will be sharing your recovery story, but it is vital to remember the contact with a peer is about them—not you. One effective way to avoid this is to allow the peer to lead the conversation about your experiences. So that you share when the peer asks you for it.

So let the peer ask questions about your experiences. You decide what you want to share or not.

Who wants to try? I will be the peer supporter and you can ask me questions about my experiences? Do this for five minutes, then change roles.

Some peer supporters “jump the gun” and are eager to tell their stories right away, and in great detail. But giving just enough information for the peer to ask questions is an effective way to keep the conversation focused on the peer. When the peer has more questions he/she will ask you.

## Break 15.30-15.50 (20 minutes)

### Practice with sharing your story 15.50-16.45 (55 minutes)

We started this day with theory and exercises about recovery. We concluded that peer support is an important part of recovery. And the strength of peer support has to do with sharing experiences, stories and knowledge we gathered by experience. It acknowledges peers and it gives them hope. We said that you share your experience in an equal way, when the peer asks for it and always align to the needs of the peer. Sometimes a peer will ask you to share your recovery story. What are you going to tell? That’s what we are going to practice right now. You don’t have to share your whole story.

#### Form groups of two people.

Start the peer support conversation following the steps and keep in mind that your basic attitude of paying full attention and non-judgemental acceptance is the most important part of your skills. Listen, summarize, ask open, honest and curious questions. The goal of your conversation is to share a part of your recovery story as a peer supporter with the peer in relation with the subject the peer wants to discuss.

Focus in this peer support conversation is step 2 (expectations and goals) and 3 sharing the story according to the subject the peer wants to talk about.

- **Person A is the peer. Person B the peer supporter.**
- **Follow step 1 of the schedule and discuss with each other the expectations of the conversation, the goals and the subject.**
- **Person A, the peer, asks the peer supporter to share some of his/her own experience about a subject the peer is struggling with.**
- **Person B the peer, shares a part of his/her story. End the conversation properly.**



- **After the conversation, discuss with each other how you experienced the sharing of the own experience of the peer supporter. How was it to share for the peer supporter? How was it helping and supporting the peer? The conversation can take 15 minutes, discuss for 5 minutes and then change roles.**

Discuss the experiences and questions with the whole group.

### **Reflection on the day 16.45-17.00 (15 minutes)**

Today we talked about recovery, empowerment, knowledge you gathered by experience and sharing your story. Are there any questions? Or remarks?

# Day 5

## Welcome, today's purpose and set-up of the program 09.30-09.40 (10 minutes)

Welcome to the fifth day of the training.

### Today's purpose

As a peer supporter you can experience all kinds of emotions. Within yourself, with your peers or with your fellow peer supporters. Sometimes peers, your colleagues or you will experience a crisis. Today we talk about crisis management, but also about implementation of peer support in your organization, intervision and group dynamics.

### Day program

Here you see the overview/program of this day:

09.30	Welcome
	Today's purpose
	Day programme
	Support-document
	Check-in
	Crisismanagement
11.00-11.20	Break
	Implementation of peer support
	Summary of the morning program
12.30-14.00	Lunch Break
	Check-in exercise
	Intervision
15.15-15.35	Break
	Evaluation intervision
	Group Dynamics
16.15-17.00	Reflection and summary of the day

### Support Document 09.40-09.55 (15 minutes)

Today we start a new support document: What do you need today to support yourself during this fifth day of the training? You can add new needs, remove ones when they aren't necessary anymore or maybe change them. Start your sentences/needs with: I support myself by: ..... Is there anyone who wants to add something to the support document? etc.

### Check-in 09.55-10.10 (15 minutes)

How are you today? Are there any questions or remarks you want to make? Yesterday we asked you to think about which part of your recovery story you want to share with others. Who wants to share something about this?



## **Theory Crisis-management 10.10-10.30 (20 minutes)**

Being a peer supporter isn't easy. The peers you share with, experienced a lot of trouble in their lives, even you as a peer can experience trouble while peer supporting. For that reason it is possible that you can face a crisis. In your personal life, with your peers, in a peer support group or with one of your colleagues. There isn't a simple solution for all the different types of crises you can face.

First we want to tell you some basic principles about the crisis in relationships. The most important question in a crisis is: What happened? Most of the times crises in peer support relationships have everything to do with an overload of emotion. When in a crisis, one's life is in danger you have to get help immediately. In all other situations you have time. To be there, present, for yourself, your peers, your group or your fellow peer supporter.

## **Exercise crisis-management 10.30-11.00 (30 minutes)**

Now we know something about a crisis I will ask you to divide into groups of four. Take a big paper and a marker. On each paper you see a different person who can be in crisis. You, your colleague, your peer or your peer support group. I ask you to discuss the following questions:

- What could be the cause of the crisis?
- What would you do in this case as a peer supporter?

Keep in mind that it is about crisis in the context of peer support and think about your own lived experience with crisis to formulate your answers.

We have 20 minutes and then we will discuss it with the whole group.

## **Break 11.00-11.20 (20 minutes)**

## **Implementation of peer support in your organisation 11.20-12.20 (60 minutes)**

Tomorrow you all know the basic principles of peer support. But then we will go back to our homes, countries and organizations. And then? How can you start with peer support and implement it in an organization? We will provide you with some basic steps which you have to keep in mind when you implement peer support.

1. The key word of peer support is free space. That is what peer support needs: free space. When something (like peer support in this case) is new you have to create space in an organization or community or whatever place you want to start with peer support. The organization has to be ready. For that reason it is important that you talk to people that have the opportunities to create free space in an organization for peer support. So directors, managers etc. people with the money and the connections to make a difference in an organization. The whole organization has to support peer support to make it a success. For that reason give the people who can make a change a clear story about: What peer support is, what you need to implement peer support and why you think it is important. It will take time to convince people of the power of peer support.
2. When the organization is convinced about the importance of peer support you can plan a program to start. (You may show the start of your plan to the people in charge in step 1). How many peer supporters do you need? 2. What will be their roles and responsibilities? 3. How will they be paid? 4. Will they be paid? 5. How are you going to reach peers? 6. Which room are you going to use? 7. How often will you have meetings? 8. Do you meet in groups or one-on-one or both?
3. Then you can start your activities.
4. Evaluate the results.

It seems simple but the most difficult part will be convincing the people who have to pay for it or who are responsible. So you have to pay a lot of attention to how you create space for your ideas.

For that reason you will get another exercise. Take paper and a pen and think about an elevator pitch which has to convince somebody about the importance of peer support in 2 minutes. You have 15 minutes to think about it. Write something down and imagine the manager of a big organization is in front of you. He/she has money but you have to convince them.

*Okay... who wants to share his/her pitch?*

## **Summary of the morning program 12.20-12.30 (10 minutes)**

### **Lunch break 12.30-14.00 (90 minutes)**

### **Check-in exercise 14.00-14.10 (10 minutes)**

Can you share a little moment from the break that's worth mentioning and where you took care of your own wellbeing?

Do you want to reflect on something that happened before the break? Feel free to share or not to share.

### **Intervision 14.10-15.15 (65 minutes)**

Being a peer supporter asks a lot of your reflection skills. Sometimes it is challenging because you face problems you experienced yourselves. These problems can trigger you but it can also cloud your view on the situation. For that reason it is important to share with your fellow peer supporters and reflect on different situations. To stay open minded and non-judgemental.

Intervision is a structured method of group consultation aimed at the professional development of the participants. During a meeting one participant is in the centre with a practical situation from his or her work. The participant describes clearly for what aspects he or she wants input (help) from the others. The other participants bring in their ideas, insights, practical tips or advice about this. This happens on the basis of equality. The participants can come from various work fields or organisations, as long as they work in a similar kind of function. Precisely the input from different angles, offers opportunities to learn from and with each other.

There are different methods to have an effective intervention session. We are going to practice one of them. For that reason we split up the group in two parts. One with Martine and one with Marlie.

The method we use is called: the incident method

1. The first step is that every person in the group can share an incident they want to discuss in intervention.
2. The second step is that the group chooses the incident they want to discuss.
3. The person whose incident is chosen, tells what happened during the incident he/she wants to discuss and formulates a question. The question has to be personal. So it always starts with 'I want your help with or I want your advice' or I want to know how I have to deal with it or I want to know what causes my inconvenience etc.
4. The other members of the group can ask questions to get a clear vision on what happened. Sometimes I compare it with a movie of the moment the incident happens. The questions have to be: open, about facts, emotions, thoughts etc. The chairman/facilitator has to prevent it from becoming a discussion. They are just questions.
5. The group is going to analyse the incident/situation. They talk about aspects that probably are the cause of the incident, the impact of different relationships, the context etc. The group analyses, draws conclusions and interprets the situation. The person who introduces the incident has to listen.
6. Then each member of the group gives advice to the introducer of the incident. It starts with: If I was you I would..... etc.
7. The introducer of the incident can respond to the advice and tell what is helpful and what isn't.
8. Every member of the group can evaluate how they experienced the intervention.

Keep in mind that you keep your basic attitude as a peer supporter of listening and non-judgemental acceptance even in an intervention group.



## Break 15.15-15.35 (20 minutes)

## Evaluation intervision 15.35-15.45 (10 minutes)

## Groups Dynamics 15.45-16.15 (30 minutes)

The most important part of being a peer supporter is your skill to create a safe and free space to share experiences and to gather hope and empowerment through them. You can do this like we said one-on-one but also in a group. It doesn't differ a lot. You still follow the steps from getting to know each other, discussing expectations and goals, having the conversations and ending the conversation. The difference is that in a group you have to deal with group dynamics. We want to share some theory about group dynamics with you and what it implies for you as a peer supporter.

When you manage a group as a peer supporter it is important to stay as equal as possible to the other group members. This is a challenge because you also have to manage the group.

When you start a new peer support group it is important to get to know each other. A group has to develop. People have to know how other people are and this process takes some time. Just as in a one-on-one peer support relationship trust and safety are very important. A shared purpose will help. This is the second step of our conversation structure. It is also very important to listen to each group member individually especially if they have a different opinion than others. They don't have to agree with each other, they share in the hope, they inspire each other.

*What could be the purpose of a peer support group? (question to ask the group.)*

*Why is it important to have a purpose for the peer support group? (question to ask the group.)*

What we know from group dynamics is that people want space to be themselves with their own ideas but they also want to know which direction you're going. Make it clear with each other. Which expectations there are and how you can meet each other somewhere in between. When you decide -for example- to have no structure in your group, and everybody commits to that perspective, it is okay. But when you don't talk about it, and there is no structure, I can assure you there will be people frustrated or angry or what else. So it has to be clear, or to be clear that it isn't clear.

The second thing important to know is that each group has individuals as participants, with unique skills and characters. For you as a group leader/ peer supporter it is important to know your group. To know what their strengths and weaknesses are so that you can support them by weakening their weaknesses and strengthening their strengths. This is comparable to step 3 of the peer support conversation. You use your expert knowledge to listen to each group member and think about what he or she might need to feel empowered.

To create an open atmosphere in your group, it is important to train your people in being open minded but also speak out when they experience problems or things they don't like. Tackle problems as soon as possible. Especially for people with a lot of distrust it's very important to learn that you can talk about problems and that speaking out can solve hurt feelings for example, even when you still disagree with someone else. Open communication is central to good team dynamics, so make sure that everyone is communicating clearly. Include all of the forms of communication that your group uses – emails, meetings, and shared documents, for example – to avoid any misunderstanding.

## Reflection of the day 16.15-17.00 (45 minutes)

We are at the end of the fifth day. We discussed different subjects. Are there any reflections or questions for now? Take care of yourselves and we are looking forward to meeting you tomorrow!

# Day 6

## Welcome, today's purpose and set-up of the program 09.30-09.40 (10 minutes)

Welcome to the sixth and last day of the training.

### Today's purpose

This is the last day of the training so we talk about how to end the peer support relationship. There is also space for questions, thoughts about the future and saying goodbye.

### Day program

Here you see the overview/program of this day:

09.30	Welcome
	Today's pupose
	Day programme
	Support-document
	Check-in
	Ending the peer support relationship
	Practice with ending the peer support relationship
11.00-11.20	Break
	Good bye exercise
	Summary of the morning program
12.30-14.00	Lunch Break
	Check-in exercise
	Questions
	Future
15.15-15.35	Break
	Evaluation
	Certificates
16.15-17.00	Party!!

## Support Document 09.40-09.55 (15 minutes)

Today we start a new support document: What do you need today to support yourself during this last day of the training? You can add new needs, remove ones when they aren't necessary anymore or maybe change them. Start your sentences/needs with: I support myself by: ..... Is there anyone who wants to add something to the support document? etc.

## Check-in 09.55-10.10 (15 minutes)

How are you today? Are there any questions or remarks you want to make? Yesterday we asked you to think about which part of your recovery story you want to share with others. Who wants to share something about this?



## **Theory about ending the peer support relationship 10.10-10.35 (25 minutes)**

It is always wise for the peer supporter and peer to discuss in the initial meeting how long their involvement is going to be. The peer supporter also will remind the peer of this fact occasionally, especially when the supporting relationship is near its end. This avoids sudden endings that might leave the peer with feelings of abandonment.

Frequently, the

peer supporter and peer, after working for some time together, develop strong feelings for each other and the thought of ending the relationship can be felt as a significant loss for both of them. Some peers react to the coming loss of the supporting relationship by becoming superficial and distant. Other peers might deal with the future loss by bringing up new issues or talk about a crisis that they feel needs further peer support. These kinds of changes in a consumer's behaviour will serve as a red flag for talking about possible feelings of the coming separation, anxiety and loss. Such a process will help the peer supporter and the peer to put proper closure to the supporting relationship.

If further peer support is not feasible or necessary, the peer supporter can help the peer to look at other support systems that could be put into place before the support relationship comes to an end.

Because ending relationships are difficult for most people (especially when they felt heard, and valued in the relationship sometimes for the first time in their lives) it is important to talk about how you want to end it. And what symbolizes that for the peer and the peer supporter and in which way you will give space for both of your emotions.

*Group discussion about the end of the peer support relationship. Did you experience a 'Goodbye' which was special? Have you ever said goodbye to a peer? What do you think is important when you end the relationship with your peer?*

## **Practice peer support conversation - ending the peer support relationship 10.35-11.00 (25 minutes)**

Now form groups of two people for the last time. Have a peer support conversation where you discuss 'How you will say goodbye to each other'.

Person A will be the peer.

Person B Peer supporter.

Start with step 2: The goal of the conversation is "How will you say goodbye to each other and end the relationship." Of course you can personalize this theme.

Then talk about this theme in step 3. End the conversation properly and carefully in step 4. Because this exercise is about ending the relationship, focus on step 4 of the peer support conversation schedule.

## **Break 11.00-11.20 (20 minutes)**

## **Exercise Goodbye 11.20-12.20 (60 minutes)**

After six days of hard work together we will say goodbye to each other today. For that reason I will ask you to get 18 little papers or cards or something to write upon. Write down a compliment or a memory or something else you want to share. Start your little letter with: Dear... and then the name and give your personal message. Also write one for yourself! You don't have to name your own name, just give a message. Here are 18 envelopes with the names of all the participants. Put the cards or papers in the right envelope and you will have a nice remembrance of this training.

or

Here you see a lot of cards. Pick one out which covers your feelings about the last six days. We will share our memories in the group.



## **Summary of the morning program 12.20-12.30 (10 minutes)**

So on our last day we talked about ending the peer support relationship. Are there any questions for now?

## **Lunch break 12.30-14.00 (90 minutes)**

## **Check-in exercise 14.00-14.10 (10 minutes)**

Can you share a little moment from the break that's worth mentioning and where you took care of your own wellbeing?

Do you want to reflect on something that happened before the break? Feel free to share or not to share.

## **Questions 14.10-14.45 (35 minutes)**

We are nearly at the end of the training. At this moment there is time to ask everything you still want to know about peer support. We will also discuss the questions we had during the training. Feel free to share and ask everything you want to know. I can't promise we have all the answers but we will give it a try.

## **Future 14.45-15.15 (30 minutes)**

So for now... the future... I think it is a nice idea to write or draw something you think about when you hear about the future. So your future wish for you as a peer supporter, or your future wish for peer support in your country... organization... community etc.

## **Break 15.15-15.35 (20 minutes)**

## **Evaluation 15.35-16.00 (25 minutes)**

We are at the end of the training! We really enjoyed providing this training for you. We are very curious to know how you experienced the training.

- 1. For that reason we ask you to get a paper and write down what you learned this week.**
- 2. Now crumple the paper and throw it through the room.**
- 3. Take a paper from the floor, uncrumple it and write down if the goal of the training is accomplished?**
- 4. Crumple again, throw it away, take another crumple and write down the tips for the trainers.**
- 5. Crumple the papers and throw them to the trainers.**

## **Certificates 16.00-16.30 (30 minutes)**

**Party!!!**







