



Paula Verrett, MSW, CPS

THE ROLE OF PEER SUPPORT IN HEALING FROM TRAUMA

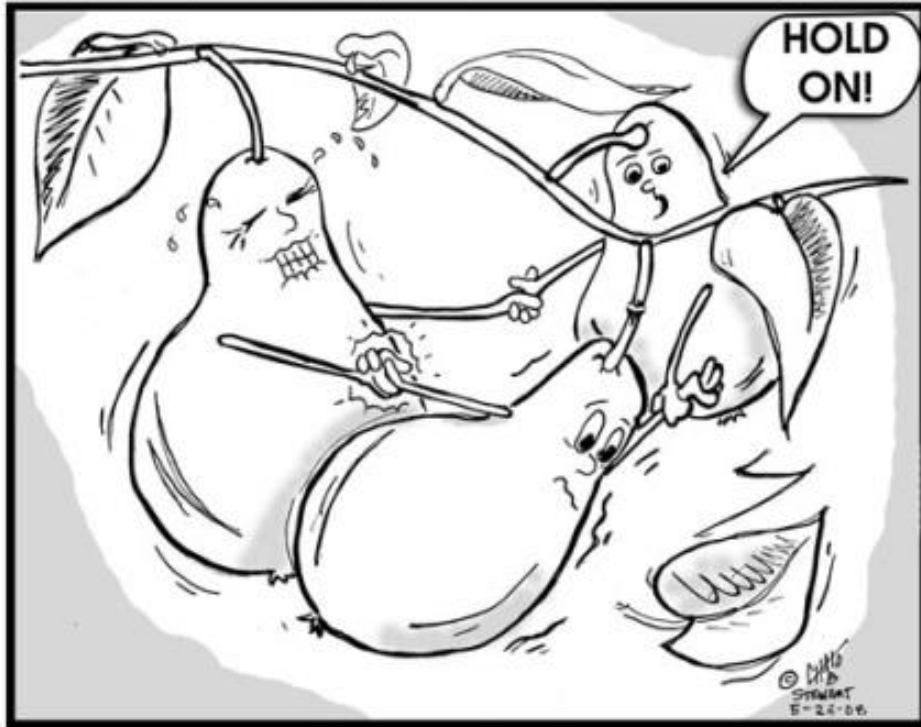
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Identify how the elements of Peer support in the treatment of survivors can promote healing and recovery.
- ✘ Identify best practice related to implementation of peer support programs in you practice.
- ✘ Identify challenges in implementing peer support into your practice and means of overcoming those challenges.

WHAT IS PEER-SUPPORT?

MentalHealthHumor.com

By: Chato B. Stewart



Pear to Pear Support

✘ What is a peer?

- + An equal.
- + Someone who has face similar challenges.

(Blanch, Filson, & Penney, (2012)

WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

“Peer support is a way for people from diverse backgrounds who share experiences in common to come together to build relationships in which they share their strengths and support each other’s healing and growth.”

(Blanch, Filson, & Penney, 2012)

PRINCIPLES OF PEER SUPPORT

- ✘ Peer support is voluntary.
- ✘ Peer support is non-judgmental.
- ✘ Peer support is empathetic.
- ✘ Peer support is respectful.
- ✘ Peer support requires honest and direct communication.
- ✘ Peer support involves mutual responsibility.
- ✘ Peer support is about sharing power.
- ✘ Peer support is reciprocal.

IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON WORLD VIEW

- ✘ Basic mistrust of others
- ✘ Belief that the world is an unsafe place/bad things will happen & they are usually my fault
- ✘ Assumption that others will not like me
- ✘ Fear & pessimism about future
- ✘ Feelings of hopelessness & lack of control
- ✘ Lack of trust in self or own thoughts, feelings, or memories

IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON RELATIONSHIPS

Survival Responses:	Patters of relating to others:	Often mislabeled by service systems as:
Fight	Struggling to regain or hold on to power, especially when feeling coerced	“Non-compliant” “Combative”
Flight	Disengaging: “checking out” emotionally	“Treatment resistant” “Uncooperative”
Freeze	Giving in to those in a position of power	“Passive” “Unmotivated”

IMPORTANCE OF SHARED EXPERIENCE

- ✘ A need to reach out to others with similar challenges.
- ✘ Common awareness of feelings of:
 - + Unsafe
 - + Vulnerable
 - + Afraid
 - + Hopeless
 - + Shocked
 - + Alone
 - + Confused
 - + Grieving



IMPORTANCE OF SHARED EXPERIENCE

✘ Mutuality:

- + Being Real—we all have a need to be real, to express our true self without judgement.
- + “Your ability to be honest about who you are, where you are and what you need are all part of being real. Connecting to others helps you get there!”

(Wilkinson, 2002)

- ## ✘ Common experience in peer support can be understood as the formation of authentic relationships where shared experience is explored rather than assumed.

(Blanch, Filson, & Penney, 2012)

BENEFITS OF PEER SUPPORT

- ✘ Emotional support
- ✘ Sharing information and advice
- ✘ Increased social network, friendship & reconnection
- ✘ Becoming empowered
- ✘ Finding hope and positive role models
- ✘ Achieving insight
- ✘ Learning coping skills
- ✘ Reducing symptoms

(Goodwin & Patton, 2007)

MORE BENEFITS OF PEER SUPPORT

- ✘ Peer support contradicts many of the negative messages received through traumatic experiences and service systems about who you are and what you are capable of.
- ✘ Focus on human experience allow for exploration of the totality of life experience

(Blanch, Filson, & Penney, 2012; Davidson et al., 1999)

WHAT DOES PEER SUPPORT LOOK LIKE?

- ✘ Formal Support Groups
- ✘ Activity-focused peer support
- ✘ Educational activities
- ✘ Informal and one-on-one peer support—Peer Specialists
- ✘ Advocacy

(Blanch, Filson, & Penney, 2012)

LOCATION

- ✘ Independent, unincorporated peer support groups
- ✘ Peer-run programs
- ✘ Peer support staff working in mainstream behavioral health programs

(Blanch, Filson, & Penney, 2012)

CERTIFIED PEER SPECIALISTS IN WI

✘ What is a WI CPS?

- + A person with the self-defined lived experience of recovery
- + Formal training
- + Committed to serving as a role model of recovery and assisting others to find their individual paths to recovery.

(WI Division of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, n.d.)

TRAINING OF WI CPS

- ✘ Require 40 hours minimum
 - + Wisconsin is developing an state curriculum with training tentatively scheduled to begin Spring 2017.

CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR WI CPS

- ✘ 20 Hours every 2 years
- ✘ Minimum Requirements:
 - + 1.5 hours in Cultural Competence
 - + 1.5 hours Ethics and Boundaries
 - + 1.5 hours Trauma Informed Care
 - + 1.5 hours Peer Specialist Specific
 - + 1.5 Substance Use Disorders

(http://www.wicps.org/uploads/1/8/1/4/1814011/recertification_2015.pdf)

ROLE OF A WI CPS

- ✘ Use personal recovery experience as a tool to inspire and support others
- ✘ Provide resources information
- ✘ Identify and support peers in crisis
- ✘ Facilitate self-direction and goal setting
- ✘ Communicate with other providers
- ✘ Peer support is the core of all services provided by a WI CPS!
 - ✘ (WI Division of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, n.d.)

WHERE CAN I FIND A WI CPS?

- ✘ Inpatient and Outpatient clinical settings
- ✘ Comprehensive Community Services
- ✘ Community Recovery Services
- ✘ WI Department of Veterans Affairs
- ✘ Community Support Programs
- ✘ Crisis Stabilization/Intervention services
- ✘ Aging & Disability Resource Centers
- ✘ Peer-Run Organization—Iris Place

(WI Division of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, n.d.)

CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTING PEER SUPPORT

- ✘ Lack of qualified peers
- ✘ Self-care needs of peer specialist
- ✘ Financial challenges—How do we pay for their service and wages?
- ✘ Boundaries
- ✘ Others?

SOME SOLUTIONS

- ✘ Hire people who are qualified to do the job, ie. Are Certified Peer Specialist and have work experience.
- ✘ Clear job description.
- ✘ Provide accommodations for self-care.
- ✘ Provide competency based training and continuing education opportunities
- ✘ Use a qualified and knowledgeable supervisor
- ✘ Enforce requirements and personal responsibility

(New Jersey Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association, 2010)

**QUESTIONS,
COMMENTS,
CLARIFICATIONS,
KNOCK, KNOCK JOKES?**

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Paula Verrett, MSW, CPS
Recovery Specialist
NAMI Fox Valley
920-954-1550
211 E. Franklin Street
Appleton, WI 54911
paula@namifoxvalley.org