



Communicating Peer Support Work

Building the Peer Support Role Together

April 5, 2022



Welcome to Zoom!

Please include in your “Display Name” your:

- **Name**
- **Pronouns, and**
- **Role (Peer/PRS or Supervisor)**

***To do this, hover over your name in the participants list, click on the three dots, and select “Change Name”*



Agenda for Today

1

Information: How can we describe the Peer Support Role?

2

Discussion: Aligning the Role

3

Information: The Unique Value of Peer Support

4

Discussion: What are the distinct contributions of Peer Support roles?

5

Information: Job Description as Communication Tool

6

Discussion: Communicating the Role



Communicating Peer Support Work

Building the Peer Support Role Together

April 5, 2022

A field of pink cosmos flowers with yellow centers, set against a bright, slightly hazy sky. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background. A dark teal horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text.

What does a person do as a Peer Supporter?



Participation

Social Change

Grounded

Personal Responsibility

Recovery Planning

Giving and Receiving

Mutual Aid

Volunteers

Mentoring

Practical Support

Lived Experiences

Relationships

Understanding

Hope

Respect

Inner Strength

Within Institutions

Community

Reject Hierarchy

Openness

Role Models

Inclusion

Learning Environment

Support

Empowerment

Paid Job

Shared Responsibility

Personal Change

Outside Institutions

Non-Judgmental

Reciprocity

Peer-Lead

Mutual Agreement

Social-Emotional Support

Shared Experiences

Direct



Indirect

Volunteer



Professional

Mutual Support



Mentoring Support

Voluntary Participation



Involuntary Participation

People-driven



Institution-driven

A vibrant field of yellow tulips in full bloom, set against a clear blue sky. The flowers are the central focus, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth. A semi-transparent white horizontal band is overlaid across the upper portion of the image, containing the text.

Laying the Foundation: Defining the role **WITHIN** the organization

The 4 Keys to a Successful Role



**Shared
Expectations**



**Strategic
Alignment**



**Organizational
Support**



Distinctiveness

Shared Expectations



Where did they come from?

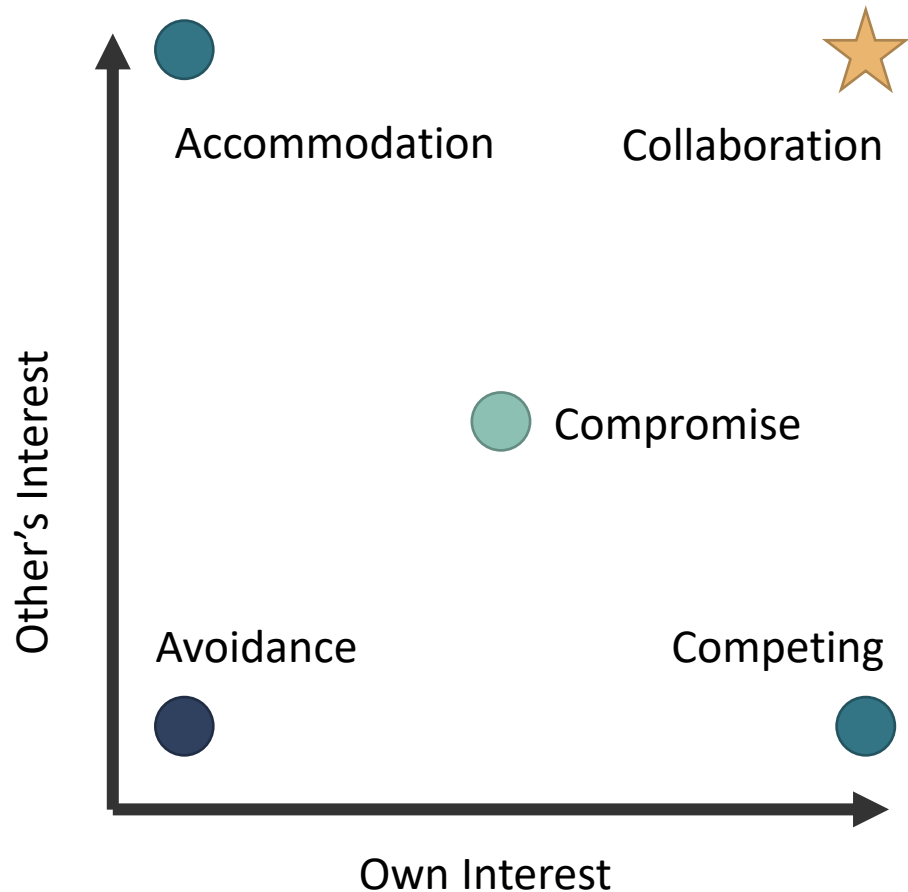
- Hiring or Careers webpage
- Training materials
- Policy documents
- Communication with supervisor
- Peer Supporter norms
- Norms within other Professions
- Organizational culture

“People with personal experiences of substance use, employed to explicitly use those experiences in supporting patients”

VS.

“Recovery role models to help patients engage with and develop personal recovery plans....promote key concepts of individual recovery such as hope, empowerment, personal responsibility, and social inclusion.”

Shared Expectations



Building Together

- Best Approach: Collaboration
- Talk about interests or needs, not positions

Strategic Alignment

How does the role line up with what drives the program?



Peer Support

Skills, Domains, Values



Program

Mission, Goals, Leadership



This works best if it is done at multiple levels:

- ✓ **Organization** (mission, goals, leadership)
- ✓ **Team** (team responsibilities, team culture, recovery orientation)
- ✓ **Individual** (specific goals and strategies, recovery attitudes)

Organizational Support

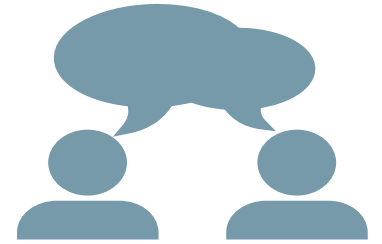
Includes (but is not limited to):



**Program-Related
Training**



**Peer Support
Training**



**Supervision
Support**

Cultural

Risk Factors

- Professional culture of "just deal with it"
- Moral blame for shortcomings
- Role is socially undervalued
- Discussion of own mental health needs seen as "unprofessional"
- Stigma or hostility from coworkers

Protective Factors

- Normalizing mental healthcare and self-care
- Supportive organizational culture
- Collective efficacy
- Reducing stigma and social valuing

Structural

Risk Factors

- Overworked and underpaid
- Ambiguity of the purpose of self-disclosure
- Lack of stability in role and expectations
- Lack of access to professional counseling or peer support

Protective Factors

- Clear roles and expectations
- Strong supervisory working alliance
- Formal peer support groups
- Access to supervision from senior peers
- Autonomy in carrying out role
- Rewards and recognition

Individual

Risk Factors

- Isolation
- Loss, trauma, and stress at work
- Cumulative minority stress
- Intense self-criticism
- Sense of internal struggle

Protective Factors

- Self-compassion
- Self-efficacy
- Interpersonal connection
- Stress inoculation (preparing for likely stressors)
- Sense of purpose



DISCUSSION 1: Aligning the Role

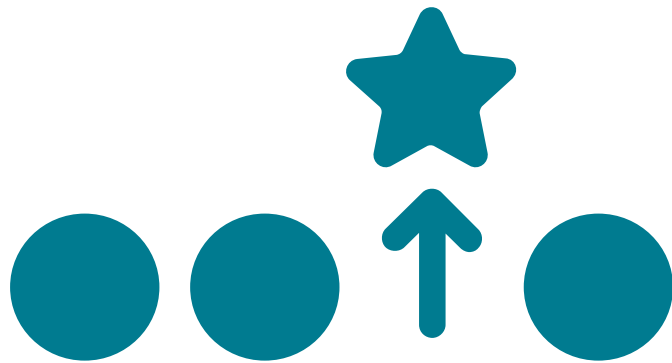
1. When has sharing expectations improved your ability to work together with team members?
2. When has it felt like your role is well aligned with your organization?
3. When have you felt like your role was well supported by the organization?

A vibrant field of yellow flowers, likely rapeseed, stretches across the foreground and middle ground. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some in sharp focus and others blurred. The background features a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. A semi-transparent white banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text.

What Makes Peer Supporters Distinct?

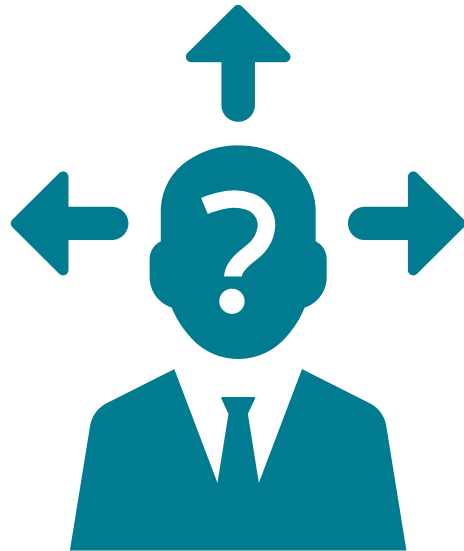
Distinctiveness

What does a Peer Supporter do that no one else can do?



- WHAT do they do that is unique?
- HOW do they do tasks in ways that are different from other roles?

Distinctiveness



What happens if tasks aren't distinct?

- Clarify responsibilities
- Reduce role confusion
- Highlights value
- Reduces distracting requests
- Facilitates role integration
- Enables teamwork

What tasks might Peers be doing?

Direct Activities

Time spent on different <u>DIRECT</u> activities	Average Hours per Day
Experiential Sharing	2.6
Relationship building	2.5
Socializing/ self-esteem building	2.4
Building community	1.3
Skill building/mentoring/goal setting	1.3
Connecting to resources	1.3
Advocacy	0.6
Group Facilitation	0.5

Indirect Activities

Time spent on different <u>INDIRECT</u> activities	Average Hours per Day
Team communication	0.7
Administration	0.7
Information gathering and verification	0.6
Group planning and development	0.4
Receiving support	0.4
Education/awareness building	0.4
Supervision/training	0.2

Distinct Areas of Peer Support Work

Domains/Tools of peer support taken from the literature:



Lived Experience



Approach

Collaboration

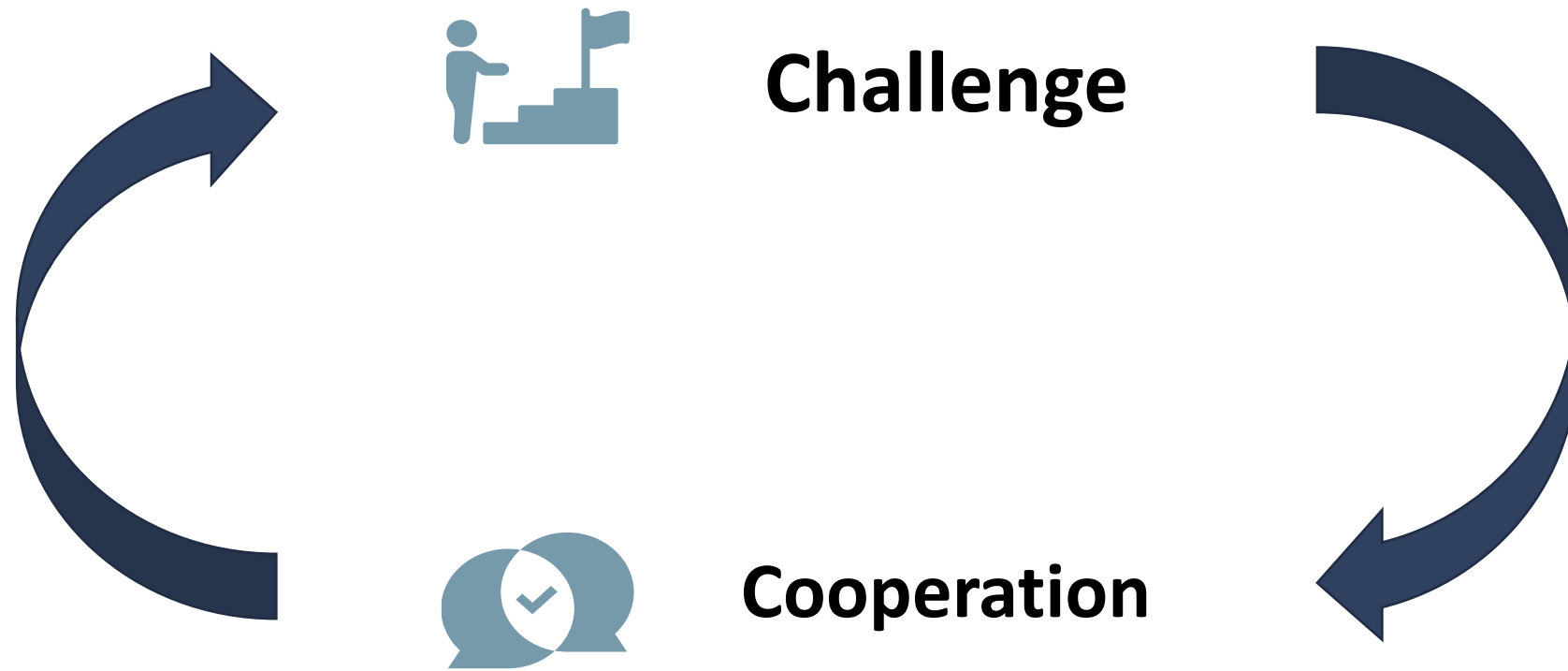


Presence

Role-Modeling



Distinct Areas of Peer Support Work





DISCUSSION 2: How would you describe your role?

- What are key words you would use to describe what you do?
- What do you see as the *essence* of what makes your role unique and helpful for the people you work with?
- How would you define your role? What specific tasks do you do that are most important to that definition?



Describing the Role

Job Sample



Position Description

The Peer Recovery Specialist will serve as a member of the Substance Use Recovery Team. The role will work within a wraparound support program, as well as a peer resource program. The program is intended to support individuals in their recover from substance use. The position is designed for those who have completed the 72-hour training to become Peer Recovery Specialists.



Position Requirements

Minimum qualifications include:

- Written and oral communication skills
- Organizational planning and decision-making skills
- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Computer knowledge/skills, such as word processing, e-mail, and data entry

Preferred qualifications include:

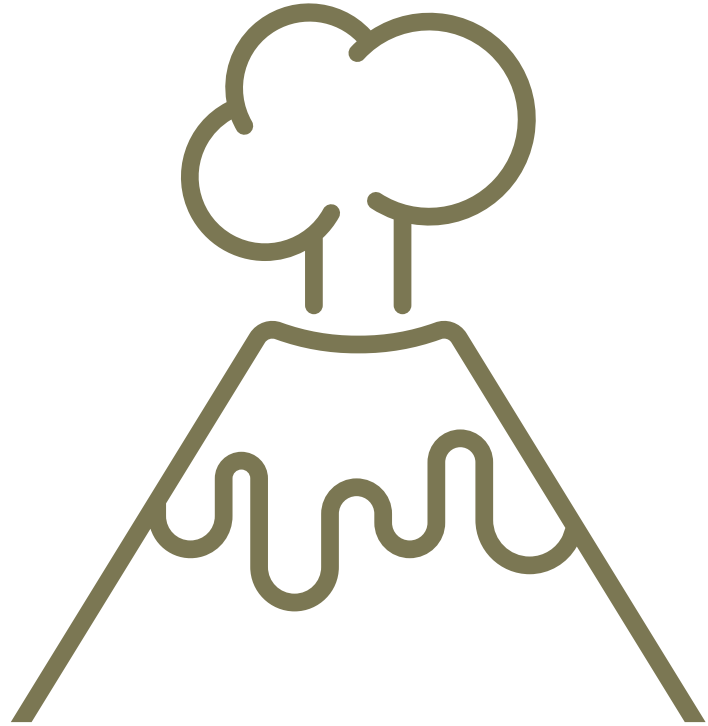
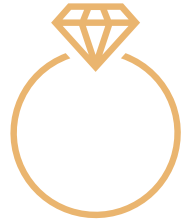
- Certification as a Peer Recovery Specialist
- Ability to teach wellness skills

Describing the Role

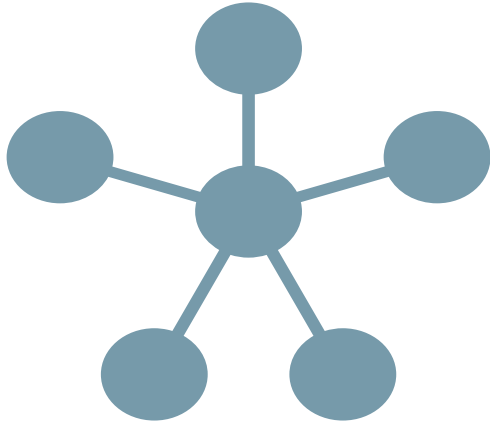


Job Description should explain:

- **WHAT** you are expected to do
- **HOW** you are expected to do it
- **WHY** you do it and do it in that way



Why Is a Job Description Important



Job descriptions **are necessary to support:**

- Shared expectations
- Strategic alignment
- Organizational support
- Distinctiveness



DISCUSSION 3: Communicating with the team

- How would you describe the Peer supporter role to a new co-worker?
- Consider how you could describe the following to a new co-worker or other professional you work alongside:
 - **What** are you expected to do?
 - **How** are you expected to do it?
 - **Why** you do it and in that way?

Wrap Up: Resources

The handout you will get has all the information you need to use the framework we discussed today to continue this process throughout your career!



[Here](#) is the handout



Thanks!

Any Questions?

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