


Peer Specialist Series:
Maintaining "Peerness" While Working

An Open Discussion with:
Luis Lopez, Regina Shoen, Helle Thorning, and Tony Trahan

Hosted by Joseph Swinford
Moderated by Rita Cronise

March 31, 2017
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Eastern



Office of Mental Health

MAINTAINING "PEERNESS"
While Working



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MAINTAINING "PEERNESS" WHILE WORKING

Panelists

Tony Trahan,

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MAINTAINING "PEERNESS" WHILE WORKING

Host

Joseph Swinford

New York State Office of Mental Health, Office of Consumer Affairs

Moderator

Rita Cronise, M.S.

Instructional Designer, Academy of Peer Services, Virtual Community Coordinator, Rutgers University

Agenda

Format

Question / Panel Responses / Audience Responses

- 1: Peer support vs. peer support services?
- 2: What is "peerness"?
- 3: What is "peer drift"?
- 4: What can help peers to remain true to peer values?
- 5: What is individual vs. system advocacy and the peer support worker's role in advocacy?

Question 1

Format

Question / Panel Responses / Audience Responses

**What is the difference between
peer support
and
peer support services?**

Defining Peer Support

-What it is...

Basic Criteria

- Lived experience
- + desire and aptitude to support others
- + core values / beliefs associated with support

Funder Criteria (i.e. Medicaid)

- + specialized training
- + certification
- + supervision

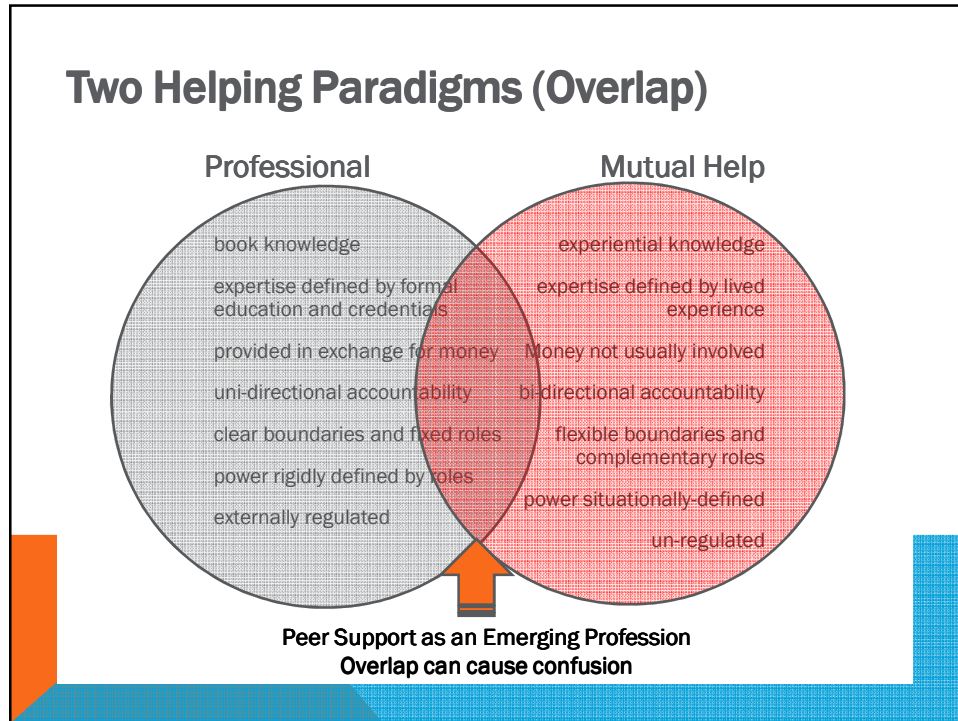


Peer Specialist as an Evolving Career Field

Because the peer specialist profession is a relatively new phenomenon in mental health services, it is often unknown or misunderstood by other mental health professionals, medical health professionals and the general public. Confusion and misunderstandings also exist in regard to the roles peer specialists can or should play in mental health services.

Recovery to Practice Situational Analysis

*Steve Harrington, Founding Director,
International National Association of Peer Supporters (iNAPS)*



Question 2

Format
Question / Panel Responses / Audience Responses

What is "peerness"?

Ethical and Practice Guidelines for the Peer Support Profession

Peer Support Is:

1. Voluntary
2. Hopeful
3. Open minded
4. Empathic
5. Respectful
6. Facilitative of change
7. Honest and direct
8. Mutual and reciprocal
9. Equally shared power
10. Strengths focused
11. Transparent
12. Person driven

And therefore in practice, peer supporters:

- Support choice
- Share hope
- Withhold judgment about others
- Listen with emotional sensitivity
- Be curious and embrace diversity
- Educate and advocate
- Address difficult issues with caring and compassion
- Encourage peers to give and receive
- Embody equality
- See what's strong not what's wrong
- Set clear expectations and use plain language
- Focus on the person, not the problems

* adapted from International Association of Peer Supporters (IAPPS) 2013 Report <http://inaops.org/national-standards>

Question 3

Format

Question / Panel Responses / Audience Responses

What is "peer drift"?

Authentic (Mutual) Peer Support

Peer Support Is / Does	Peer Support Is NOT / Does NOT
A person in recovery	A professional
Share lived experience	Give professional advice
A role model	An expert or authority figure
See the person as a whole person in the context of the person's roles, family and community	See the person as a case or diagnosis
Motivate through hope and inspiration	Motivate through fear of negative consequences
Support many pathways to recovery	Prescribe one specific pathway
Advocate with and for the person	Represent program perspective
Teach the person how to do tasks	Do tasks for the person
Teach the person how to acquire resources; including money	Give resources, basic necessities, and money to the person
Use language based on common experiences	Use clinical language

SOURCE: Equipping Behavioral Health Systems & Authorities to Promote Peer Specialists/Peer Recovery Coaching Services. (2012). Expert Panel Meeting Report. BRSS-TACS.

Question 4

Format

Question / Panel Responses / Audience Responses

What can help peers remain true to their “peerness?”

Defining Authentic Peer Support

- What it is not...

- Not clinical
- Not a “junior” position
- Not a “token” position
- Not hierarchical, forced, mandated, or coerced
- Not driven by funding, policy, or program structure
- Not a low cost substitute for conventional treatment (Davidson)
- Not well-researched (Cochrane Collaboration report)

Defining Peer Support

- What it is not...

Not just a “service”

If support is “the service...”

...then peers are just one of many (family, friends, neighbors, community, etc..) who can provide “the service” of support – each from a unique yet valuable perspective.

Question 5

Format

Question / Panel Responses / Audience Responses

**What is individual vs. system
advocacy and what is the peer
worker's role?**

Peer Workforce as Disruptive Innovators

*We are the evidence that recovery is real
and our very presence scrambles decades of academic
theories about the course of mental disorders.*

*We are the evidence that it is possible to live our lives,
not just our diagnoses.*

*Just by showing up at work
we raise the bar on service outcomes.*

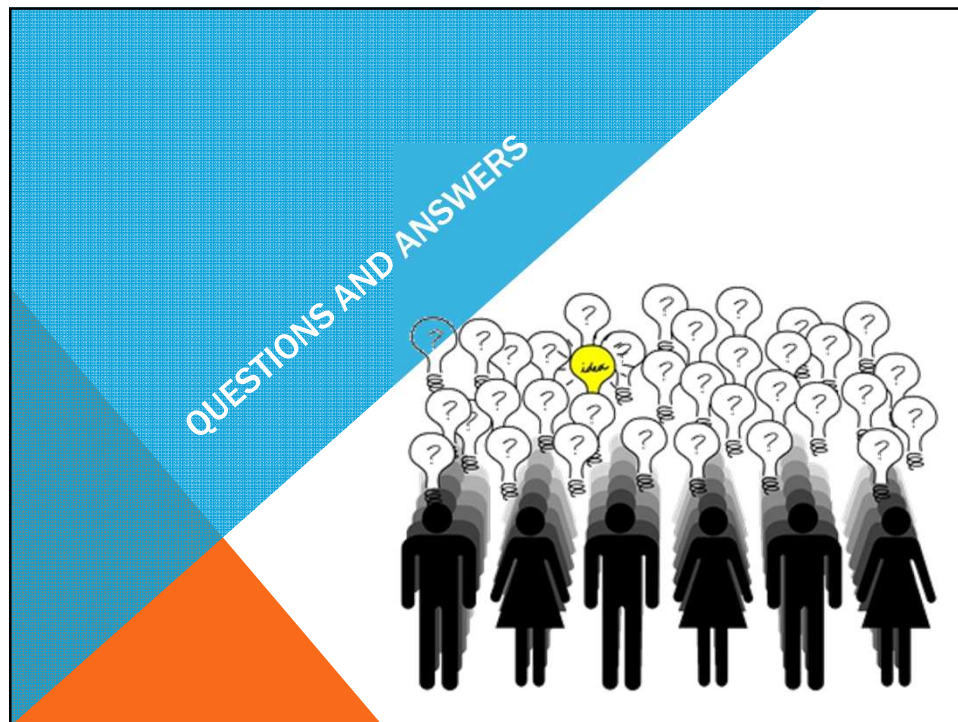
*Mere maintenance in the community
or a life in handicaptivity
is not a good outcome
and represents systemic failure, not success.*

Recovery is the [common] goal.

Pat Deegan

2012 Alternatives Conference Keynote





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