

# PEER *Support*



## WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

Peer Support is a program focused on recovery for individuals who have experienced mental health issues. Peer Support Services does as the name suggests. A Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) acts in a role to inspire hope for change and recovery in individuals seeking services. A CPS shows the individuals that recovery is not only possible but probable. The CPS then acts in a support role to help the individual reach their goals, whether they be in a social domain, educational/intellectual domain, vocational/occupational domain, wellness domain, or health/emotional domain.

## ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL SEEKING SERVICES

Peer Support focuses on consumer choice. This means the individual chooses to be involved in peer and seek support in achieving their goals. Peer also promotes the active involvement of the individual. The individual is constantly encouraged to be involved by setting goals, planning, developing skills, and identifying strengths. This ensures that the individual can be empowered through decision-making that shapes their recovery. The final focus is that the individual must be self-determined. Since the individual is so involved, it is critical that they are engaged throughout service and are motivated to continue to reach their established goals.

## ROLE OF THE CPS

The CPS acts to support the individual in discovering and structuring their goals. The CPS also serves as an example of hope and recovery for others. A CPS does this by sharing their own recovery with mental health and showing the individual that recovery is possible, probable, and ongoing. Finally, the CPS supports the individual in reaching their goals through education, the development of natural supports, support in recovery-relevant activities, and skills training. The CPS is not a therapist. A CPS rarely suggests what the individual should do. The CPS can suggest things at the individual's request and share what worked for the CPS's recovery, but it is key not to lead the individual in a direction that the individual does not choose. The individual's empowerment and recovery journey are their own. They are the expert of themselves.