HEALING & POWER IN PEER SUPPORT

FACILITATOR MANUAL

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Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health

OVERVIEW OF AGENDA

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
9:00 AM	Module 1: Introduction (1 Hour 30 Minutes)	*Day 1 Review (30 Minutes)*	*Day 2 Review (30 Minutes)*
9:30 AM		Module 4: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations (1 Hour 10 Minutes)	Module 6: Power Dynamics (1 Hour)
10:00 AM			
10:30 AM	*Break (15 Minutes)*		*Break (15 Minutes)*
11:00 AM	Module 1, con't (55 Minutes)	*Break (15 Minutes)*	Module 6, con't (1 Hour 15 Minutes)
11:30 AM		Module 4, con't (1 Hour)	
12:00 PM	*Lunch (1 Hour)*		
12:30 PM		*Lunch (1 Hour)*	*Lunch (1 Hour)*
1:00 PM	Module 2: Healing Relationships (2 Hours 5 Minutes)	Module 4, con't (1 Hour 10 Minutes)	Module 6, con't (1 Hour 20 Minutes)
1:30 PM			
2:00 PM		*Break (10 Minutes)*	
2:30 PM		Module 4, con't (40 Minutes)	*Break (10 Minutes)*
	Break (10 Minutes)		Module 6, con't (1 Hour 10 Minutes)
3:00 PM	Module 3: Radical Acceptance (1 Hour 5 Minutes)	*Break (10 Minutes)*	
3:30 PM		Module 5: Holding Space (1 Hour 55 Minutes)	*Break (10 Minutes)*
4:00 PM	*Break (10 Minutes)*		Module 6, con't (40 Minutes)
4:30 PM	Module 3, con't (50 Minutes)		Module 7: Conclusion (30 Minutes)
5:00 PM			

Learning Objectives

At the end of this training, participants will be able to:
- Integrate principles of Healing-Centered Engagement in peer support practice;
- Practice radical acceptance in relation to self and others;
- Employ Healing-Centered techniques when facilitating difficult conversations in peer support groups; and
- Analyze power dynamics within interpersonal and group relationships to promote autonomy and self-determination.

Layout of Training

There are seven modules in this training:
- Module 1: Introduction
- Module 2: Healing Relationships
- Module 3: Radical Acceptance
- Module 4: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations
- Module 5: Holding Space
- Module 6: Power Dynamics
- Module 7: Conclusion

Background

In 2020, the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic led to discussions about the need to have more guidance on how to hold trauma-informed learning spaces in virtual settings. Through these discussions, Nadia Maynard created an eight-week training that offered peer supporters the ability to learn about Healing-Centered Engagement, peer support, and virtual facilitation of training spaces. Jason Howell edited the training content, and Nadia and Jason co-facilitated the training to peer supporters throughout Region 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and the tribal communities within the region). From this, the *Healing-Centered Virtual Facilitation Guidebook* was created.

Through feedback from multiple trainings, the South Southwest Mental Health Technology Transfer Center divided the original training into two different curricula:
- *Healing and Power in Peer Support*, where participants learn the basics of Healing-Centered Engagement and how to provide healing-centered peer support in one-on-one and group settings; and
- *Virtual Facilitation through a Healing-Centered Lens*, where participants take the information they learned in Healing and Power in Peer Support and apply it to the practice of facilitating peer support trainings in a virtual environment.

For more information on these curricula and the *Healing-Centered Virtual Facilitation Guidebook*, please email us at southsouthwest@mhttcnetwork.org or txinstitute4mh@austin.utexas.edu.

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Detailed Agenda

Day 1	
9:00-10:30	**Module One: Introduction (1 Hour 30 Minutes)** Activity: Settling In (15 minutes) Activity: Breathing & Grounding Invitation (5 minutes) Presentation: Technology Guidelines & Group Guidelines (20 minutes) Activity: Ice Breaker Introductions (30 minutes) Activity: Dyads on Grounding (20 minutes)
10:30-10:45	*Break (15 minutes)*
10:45-11:40	**Module One: Introduction, continued (55 Minutes)** Presentation: Introduction to Healing-Centered Engagement (30 minutes) Presentation: Healing-Centered Engagement & The Groundwater Approach (20 minutes) Conclusion (5 minutes)
11:40-12:40	*Lunch (1 hour)*
12:40-2:45	**Module Two: Healing Relationships (2 Hours 5 Minutes)** Activity: Settling In (5 minutes) Presentation: Healing Relationships with Ourselves (45 minutes) Activity: Healing Relationships with Others (35 minutes) Presentation: Empathy before Education (30 minutes) Activity: Conclusion (10 minutes)
2:45-2:55	*Break (10 minutes)*
2:55-4:00	**Module Three: Radical Acceptance (1 Hour 5 Minutes)** Presentation: Radical Self-Acceptance (20 minutes) Activity: Dyads on Radical Self-Acceptance (45 minutes)
4:00-4:10	*Break (10 minutes)*
4:10-5:00	**Module Three: Radical Acceptance, continued (50 minutes)** Presentation: Radical Acceptance of Others (40 minutes) Activity: Day 1 Closing (10 minutes)
Day 2	
9:00-9:30	Day 1 Review (30 minutes)
9:30-10:40	**Module Four: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations (1 Hour 10 Minutes)** Activity: Breathing & Grounding Exercise (10 minutes) Presentation: Meaning-Making Defined (25 minutes) Activity: Dyads on Lived Experience (35 minutes)

10:40-10:55	*Break (15 minutes)*
10:55-11:55	**Module Four: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations, continued (1 Hour)** Group Discussion: Storytelling, Meaning-Making, & Peer Support (30 minutes) Group Discussion: Intro to Difficult Conversations (30 minutes)
11:55-12:55	*Lunch (1 hour)*
12:55-2:05	**Module Four: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations, continued (1 Hour 10 Minutes)** Activity: Choose Your Own Adventure (45 minutes) Presentation: Preparing for Difficult Conversations as a Facilitator, continued (25 minutes)
2:05-2:15	*Break (10 minutes)*
2:15-2:55	**Module Four: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations, continued (40 Minutes)** Activity: Re-establishing Safety (35 minutes) Activity: Conclusion (5 minutes)
2:55-3:05	*Break (10 minutes)*
3:05-5:00	**Module Five: Holding Space (1 Hour 55 Minutes)** Activity: What is Holding Space? (20 minutes) Presentation: Holding Space for Self (15 Minutes) Activity: Reflection Exercise on Holding Space for Self (25 minutes) Activity: Holding Space for Others (45 minutes) Activity: Day 2 Closing (10 minutes)
Day 3	
9:00-9:30	Day 2 Review (30 minutes)
9:30-10:30	**Module Six: Power Dynamics (1 Hour)** Activity: Settling In (10 minutes) Activity: Exploring the Concept of Power (30 minutes) Presentation: The History of Power (20 minutes)
10:30-10:45	*Break (15 minutes)*
10:45-12:00	**Module Six: Power Dynamics, continued (1 Hour 15 Minutes)** Activity: Defining Our Relationship to Power (30 minutes) Presentation: Types of Power (45 minutes)
12:00-1:00	*Lunch (1 hour)*
1:00-2:20	**Module Six: Power Dynamics, continued (1 Hour 20 Minutes)** Activity: Embodying the Different Types of Power (30 minutes) Presentation: Power & Privilege (10 minutes) Activity: Power Flower (30 minutes)

2:20-2:30	*Break (10 minutes)*
2:30-3:40	**Module Six: Power Dynamics, continued (1 Hour 10 Minutes)** Presentation: Racism (30 minutes) Presentation: Privilege & Microaggressions (40 minutes)
3:40-3:50	*Break (10 minutes)*
3:50-4:30	**Module Six: Power Dynamics, continued (40 Minutes)** Presentation: Allyship (15 minutes) Activity: Allyship & Peer Support (20 minutes) Activity: Closing (5 minutes)
4:30-5:00	**Module Seven: Conclusion** Activity: What I Learned (20 minutes) Activity: Conclusion (10 minutes)

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Module One: Introduction

Learning Objectives

At the end of the module, participants will be able to:

- Express the purpose of the *Healing & Power in Peer Support* training;
- Identify the principles of Healing-Centered Engagement; and
- Describe the groundwater approach of understanding systemic racism.

Summary of Main Ideas

- Healing-Centered Engagement is a non-clinical, strengths-driven approach that advances a holistic view of healing.
- The principles of Healing-Centered Engagement are: culture, agency, relationships, meaning-making, and aspirations.
- Racism is like groundwater, impacting all of the systems that people navigate in their lives.

Virtual Considerations

- Slide Deck Handout – Handout (Optional)
- Group Guidelines – Google Doc or Google Slide
- Introductions – Breakout Rooms
- Dyads on Grounding – Breakout Rooms
- Healing-Centered Engagement Principles – Handout
- Healing-Centered Engagement Principles – Breakout Rooms
- The Groundwater Approach – Chatterfall
- The Groundwater Approach – Breakout Rooms

Instructions for Prior to the Start of the Training

Using chat, say hello and introduce yourself!

Your Name & Pronouns

Where are you based?

What is the last thing that you watched, read, saw, or listened to?

Open the virtual room to all participants 5 minutes before the start of the training day. Have the introduction slide pulled up and encourage people to introduce themselves in the chat as they enter.

*If facilitators have the capability, play relaxing music as you share the introductory slide. Spotify or YouTube should have playlists that offer relaxing music. **Note**: the facilitator that is sharing their screen should select "play computer audio" on the screen share window of their e-conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom). Prior to letting participants into the room, facilitators should ensure that music is at an appropriate volume.*

Activity: Settling In (15 minutes)

Allow for a buffer of approximately 5 minutes after the start of the training so that participants can enter the training room and resolve any technical issues.

After 5 minutes, **TELL:** Welcome to the Healing and Power in Peer Support training! *Facilitators should briefly introduce themselves here.*

TELL: We are so happy to take this journey together as we ground into our values, explore the principles of healing-centered peer support, and strengthen our skills and community.
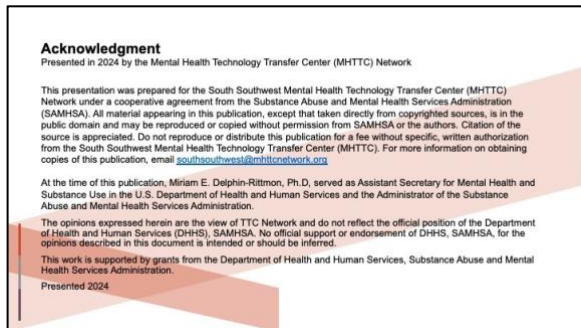
This training was developed by the South Southwest Mental Health Technology Center through their grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Originally, this training was written by Nadia Maynard and edited by Jason Howell in 2020-2021. In 2022-2023, Darcy Kues revised the training based on feedback from training participants with the input and support of Jessi Davis.
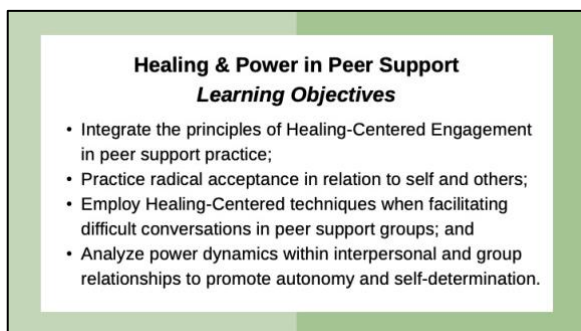
Over the next three days, we will explore concepts of the concepts of power and healing as they apply to peer support relationships.

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TELL: At the end of this training, participants will be able to:

- Integrate the principles of Healing-Centered Engagement in peer support practice;
- Practice radical acceptance in relation to self and others;
- Employ Healing-Centered techniques when facilitating difficult conversations in peer support groups; and
- Analyze power dynamics within interpersonal and group relationships to promote autonomy and self-determination.
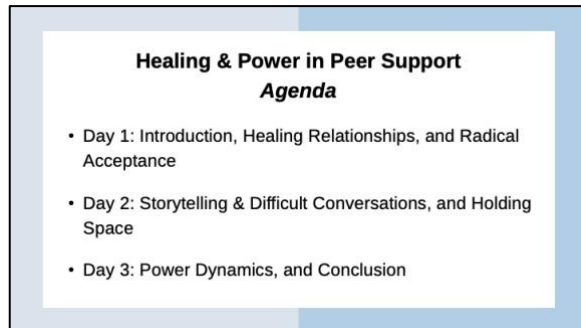
Our agenda for this three day training is:

- Day 1: Introduction and Healing Relationships
- Day 2: Healing Relationships, Radical Acceptance, and Storytelling & Difficult Conversations
- Day 3: Holding Space, Power Dynamics, and Conclusion

This training focuses on skills related to peer support direct services, either one-on-one or in group settings. After completing this training, you will be eligible to attend *Virtual Facilitation through a Healing-Centered Lens*, which is a multi-day training on how to implement the healing-centered principles when facilitating trainings.

This training is very interactive, consisting largely of activities using various virtual engagement tools. One of the principles of Healing-Centered Engagement (which we will introduce in just a few minutes) is meaning-making, or the process by which people make sense of people, things, and situations based on their previous knowledge and experiences.[1]

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[1] *Paraphrased based on this article*: Zittoun, T., Brinkmann, S. (2012). *Learning as Meaning Making*. In: Seel, N.M. (eds) Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning. Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6_1851
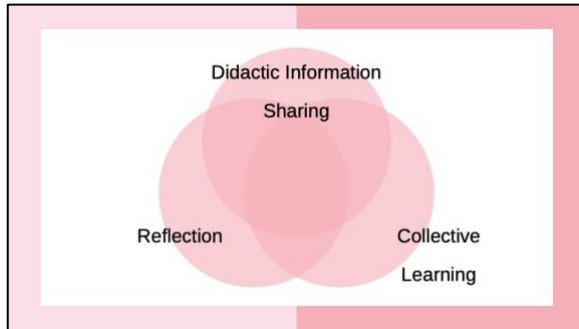
We will engage in meaning-making throughout this training in a number of different ways. First, we will use reflection prompts as a way for us to integrate our lived experience with skills and practice that support our development. This also allows us reflect more intentionally on our own experiences and prepare ourselves for the content we will cover.

In addition to reflection, we will spend time engaging in meaning-making through collective learning. Our collective learning builds on the reflection we do, by providing time to practice and discuss the concepts introduced with a group of other peer specialists. This time together allows for dynamic group work, diving deeper into the content area and modeling peer support skills.

There is no participant manual for this training. This training asks participants to be deeply present so that they have an embodied learning experience. We will provide handouts for activities, and you can download the *Healing-Centered Virtual Facilitation Guidebook* from the South Southwest Mental Health Technology Transfer Center website. *Send participants link to Healing-Centered Virtual Facilitation Guidebook. Facilitators have the option to send the handout of the slide deck to the participants.* [2]
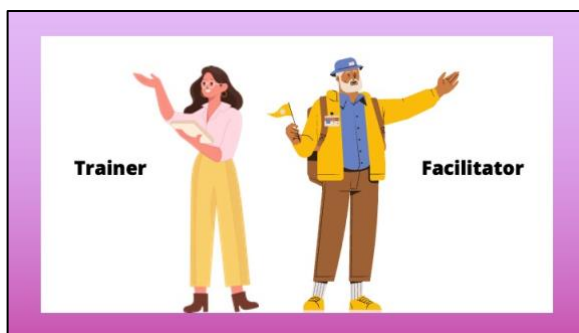
And one last note before we move on – we want to be clear about our role as facilitators. Although we will provide some didactic information (or sharing information while using a slide deck, for example), our role as facilitators is not to *train* you – this implies a one-directional experience where we have the knowledge and you do not. Instead, our role is to offer direction and guide the process that we will all move on together. In order to guide the process, we may have to make decisions on timing and participation (especially if someone starts to interfere with our safe learning environment). But much like in peer support, we acknowledge that the wisdom needed for this training exists in all of us and that we can share an experience where we all learn and grow, whether we are peer specialist-person served or facilitator-participant.

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[2] To send the handout to participants, make a copy of the handout at the following link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/19pF9PJZiJol40TsWVSGWk9rr4wjBX5AT/view?usp=sharing

TELL: Now that we've set the stage for this training, let's do a grounding activity before we dig more into content. We will start most of our modules with a grounding or breathing activity as we move through this training.

Activity: Breathing & Grounding Invitation (5 minutes)

TELL: Take time to settle in and take a few deep, comfortable, breaths. Sitting with this and with the excitement of learning in front of you, take a moment to answer this – to whom do you dedicate your learning to. Put another way, who and what brought you here today which you would like to thank. Take a moment to share or write that down. You can use the chat box to share and just take a few moments to breathe that in. If you want to keep this to yourself this is also acceptable.

Presentation: Technology & Group Guidelines (20 minutes)

TELL: Now that you have set the intention for this learning experience, we can start on our journey together. Throughout the next three days, we will deepen our skills as peer specialists by exploring and implementing trauma-responsive, strengths-based, and equitable tools and practices. This journey will be a lot like driving a car – you have to be present about what's in front of you, but you will also get to have fun and meaningful conversations with others who are in the car too. And much like a well-planned road trip, every stop along the way is intentional and will help you get to your destination (even if the road isn't always perfectly smooth). So we invite you to trust the journey and your co-pilots.

TELL: Now that we've taken that metaphor as far as it can go, let's start to build the container for our time together, using another metaphor. Imagine your favorite beverage – what kind of container did you think about? Was it a glass or plastic bottle, a can, or a cup from your home? Regardless, you can't enjoy a single sip of that drink without the container – the container provides a structure for you to take a satisfying sip without all of the drink flying to the floor. Just like a beverage, a strong training or group session requires us to build a container so that our conversations don't pour out into chaos.

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Facilitators should add the technology guidelines below to the chatbox prior to reviewing them.

TELL: Let's start with some basic technology guidelines.
- If possible, join from a computer (not a phone or tablet)
- It's nice to mute yourself if you're not talking, and it helps everyone out
- We'll be a little ruthless and mute you if it's too loud (sorry!)
- Make sure you have paper and a writing utensil around
- Move between Gallery/ Speaker View
- Rename yourself: Add your location and pronouns to your name
- What to do if…
    - You're in a breakout room alone: come back to the main room
    - When you're away: -- AWAY --

Next, let's set some group guidelines. Group guidelines help us build our container by communicating and staying accountable to the ways we expect everyone to act during our time together. We have a few guidelines that serve as our foundation for moving forward:
- **Reduce Distractions** – do not go through a drive-through, do not be in the car, etc. If you need to take a call or speak to someone in your office/home, turn off your camera and microphone.
- **Be Present** – To receive a certificate of completion, you must be present and engaged for the entirety of the training. If you must be away for an extended period of time, connect with facilitators.
- **Follow the MHTTC Code of Conduct** – We are dedicated to providing events where everyone, regardless of gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, neurodiversity, physical appearance, body size, ethnicity, nationality, race, age, religion and any other intersectional identities, feels welcome. We invite everyone to help us achieve a safe, respectful, inclusive and positive environment for learning, and to that end, we reserve the right to remove participants who don't follow this code or participate in a harmful way after being asked to collaborate with us on this matter. When you participate in an event hosted by us, you are contributing to the overall experience, which makes us all accountable to each other.

Invite the participants to suggest additional guidelines that are important for a shared learning space. While participants suggest guidelines, facilitators should share their screen and scribe the guidelines onto a Google Doc or Google Slide. Make sure to include the first three guidelines (listed above) onto the Group Guidelines document.

Activity: Ice Breaker Introductions (30 minutes)

TELL: Now we are going to do an activity called "impromptu networking." This simple activity will offer us an opportunity to get to know a few people in our shared training space. In this activity, you will have 5 minutes total to have a conversation with another participant on the following questions:

- What is your name and your pronouns?
- Where do you live?
- As a peer specialist, what do you want to get out of this?
- As a peer specialist, what is the gift that you bring to the party?

Now we are going to do this in three rounds – so you will have the opportunity to meet three people and talk with them about your answers to these questions. While you are in your breakout rooms, make sure you are sharing time equally between speaking and listening.

Send participants into breakout rooms in pairs for five minutes. After five minutes, bring participants back to the main room, put them into breakout rooms with new pairs, and send them into breakout rooms for five minutes. Do this for three rounds total.

After bringing participants back to the main room from their third round of impromptu networking, invite participants do brief introductions with each other in main room (name, pronouns, where you live, gift that you bring to this party).

Activity: Dyads on Grounding (20 minutes)

TELL: This training is grounded in self, recovery, and community. Being healing-centered means that we recognize that we have strengths and responsibility to ourselves (including our recovery) and to our community. So, let's take a moment to think about what it means to be grounded in self, in community, and in recovery.

We will send you to breakout rooms with one other person, where you will have 10 minutes to answer the following questions:

- What does it mean to be grounded in self?
- What does it mean to be grounded in community?
- What does it mean to be grounded in recovery?

Send participants to breakout rooms. Allow 10 minutes for discussion (and send a broadcast message to participants letting them know when they are halfway through).

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

After 10 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and facilitate a short discussion about participants' responses to each question. Facilitators have the option to use the chatbox to gather participant responses instead of an open discussion. If utilizing the chatbox, facilitators can put the first question into the chat and invite participants to submit their answers. Facilitators can use the same process for the remaining two questions.

Presentation: Introduction to Healing-Centered Engagement (30 minutes)

TELL: Now, let's take some time to define what healing-centered engagement is and why it is an important shift in our perspectives of power, healing, and peer support, so that we may all have a **shared purpose** for our time together. When we have a clear and mutually-understood purpose, then we all know what we are gathered to do. If we are also clear about why our shared purpose is important, then this purpose has meaning for us all. In other words, our shared purpose allows us to know the direction of "true north." Anyone in the group can now point out when the group seems "off course." Without this shared knowledge, groups can argue incessantly and get caught in tangents that rob them of their creativity and energy.

Researcher Shawn Ginwright, in working with youth who are incarcerated, found that young people were often reduced to the worst things that happened to them, even when practitioners tried to implement trauma-informed practices. Instead of focusing on dreaming and possibility, Dr. Ginwright saw how young people were reduced to their symptoms or their circumstances. Through these experiences, Dr. Ginwright developed the framework for Healing-Centered Engagement.

Healing-Centered Engagement is a response to traditional approaches to trauma, which are often focused on symptoms and rooted in the medical model. In these traditional approaches, practitioners work with people who have experienced trauma to build "coping skills" and help them overcome the negative impacts of the trauma they experienced.

A healing centered approach is holistic involving **culture, spirituality, civic action and collective healing**. A healing-centered approach views trauma not simply as an individual isolated experience, but rather highlights the ways in which **trauma and healing are experienced collectively**. The term healing-centered engagement expands how we think about responses to trauma and offers more **holistic approach** to fostering well-being.

- Dr. Shawn Ginwright, Medium.com -

TELL: Healing-Centered Engagement, on the other hand, is a non-clinical, strengths-driven approach that advances a holistic view of healing. Instead of asking "what's wrong with you" or "what happened to you," Healing-Centered Engagement asks "what is right with you," "who are you," and "what are your dreams?"

Healing-Centered Engagement moves the conversation on trauma forward, reframes it, and bases it in five principles: culture, agency, relationships, meaning-making, and aspirations. When we focus our work and approach on these five principles, we open up space where healing and reclamation can flourish.

Culture. Culture means supporting and learning about culture and social identities. Healing-centered engagement re-centers culture and identity as a central feature in well-being. Both the person offering support and the person receiving support are engaged in learning and discovering their respective racial and social identities. In practice, this looks like actively engaging people in conversations about their identities, sharing experiences with the person we support about harm and healing from the aspects of our identities, and integrating culturally appropriate practices.[3]

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[3] REX TV by YouthREX. (2021, February 19). *From Trauma-Informed to Healing-Centered Engagement: A #YouthWork Teach-In with Dr. Shawn Ginwright* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxTSIlWUeg8&t=3301s

Agency. Healing-centered engagement is based in agency, meaning that people are connected in to their individual and collective power to act, create, and change the root causes of trauma and harm. In this training, we will talk about healing and power – agency is a place where healing and power combine as we harness our deep internal power to take action in our lives. An example of power and healing in agency is March for Our Lives – the movement for gun control legislation that was built and is led by youth activists after they survived the deadly school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.
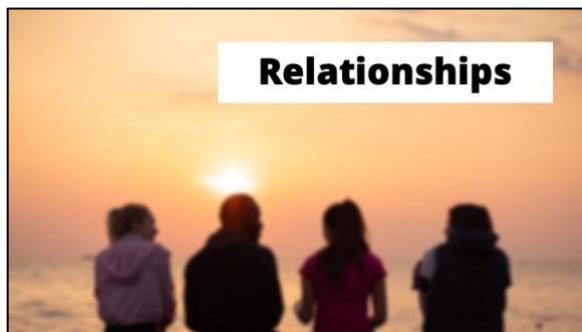
Relationships. Healing-Centered Engagement recognizes the power of relationships and our capacity to create, sustain, and grow healthy connections with others. In a later module, we will talk about the difference between transactional and transformative relationships – in Healing-Centered Engagement, we focus on cultivating transformative relationships where we can connect with people on levels deeper than our titles, prioritizing empathy, mutuality, belonging, and connection. Healing-centered engagement recognizes the power of healing on the person receiving support, those supporting the person's recovery, and the communities in which they live.

Meaning-Making. With Healing-Centered Engagement, people offering and receiving support cultivate meaning-making about themselves. Meaning-making is the profound discovery of who we are, where we are going, and what purpose we were born to serve. Healing-Centered Engagement views healing as the restoration of our identities and spirits, which is rooted in how we understand and define our world. In practice, we cultivate meaning-making by engaging in exploration and curiosity, inviting ourselves and others to name our strengths, incorporate our perspectives, and build systems of support.

Aspirations. In Healing-Centered Engagement, we create and uplift a positive vision of our future. This is done through the exploration of possibilities for our lives and the process of accomplishing goals for personal and collective well-being.[4] Like recovery and peer support, Healing-Centered Engagement is grounded in hope and the belief that all people can find healing. We recognize that the absence of violence doesn't constitute peace, the absence of symptoms doesn't constitute wellness, and the absence of disease doesn't constitute health. Healing-Centered Engagement grows beyond the medical model (where the goal is to reduce or eliminate symptoms) by harnessing imagination and dreaming about the life and society that we want to create – and our role in it.

Send participants the handout titled "Principles of Healing-Centered Engagement."[5] Send participants into groups of 3-4 for 10 minutes to answer the questions: Which healing-centered principle resonated with you? Why?

After 10 minutes, bring participants back into the main room and facilitate a short discussion about the healing-centered principles.

Presentation: Healing-Centered Engagement & The Groundwater Approach (20 minutes)

TELL: Let's dig more into the concepts of power and healing. We are going to do a short activity called a Chatterfall. I want you to think about the following question: *What does healing look like?* You can think about actions, relationships, colors, taste, smell, sounds, images, etc. Now I want you to type your answer into the chatbox **but do not press Enter**. On the count of three, I am going to ask you all to enter your responses into the chatbox at the same time. You are welcome to offer more than one answer to the question, but only *after* I say "go."

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

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[4] Ginwright, S. (2020, February). NW Children's Foundation.
[5] To send the handout to participants, make a copy of the handout at the following link: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HGe0sqGH4Z11cMY52OeBpX0hm-FOxTOvNex1eb0xTkM/edit?usp=sharing

Count down from 3, and then say "go." As people enter their responses into the chatbox, read some of the responses out loud.

TELL: Let's do that one more time, now with a different question – *what does power look like?* Again, you can think about actions, relationships, colors, taste, smell, sounds, images, etc. Type your answer into the chatbox but do not press Enter.

Count down from 3, and then say "go." As people enter their responses into the chatbox, read some of the responses out loud.

TELL: As we move through this training, we will see the ways that healing and power are inextricably linked. We can find healing in harnessing power, but power can also serve to push us down and disconnect us from our identities, communities, and purpose.

As we mentioned earlier, Healing-Centered Engagement is rooted in culture and identity, and therefore Healing-Centered Engagement is anti-racist in its approach. Let's spend a little time talking about how racism, trauma, and healing interact with each other. First, let's define what we mean when we talk about racism.
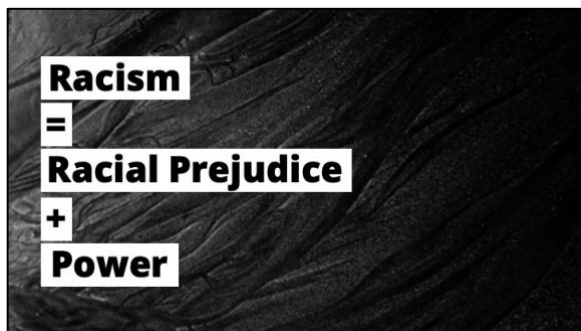
Racism can be fined as actions and beliefs rooted in racial prejudice and power.

- **Racial Prejudice**: a set of discriminatory or derogatory attitudes based on assumptions deriving from perceptions about race/skin color.

- **Power** : the "ability to influence others," in addition to having "access to resources, access to decision-makers to get what you want done, [and] the ability to define reality for yourself and others." Power is not static, either – power is **relational,** meaning that different relationships either reinforce or disrupt one another. *Send participants the following link for more reading and the source of these definitions:* *https://www.aclrc.com/racism*
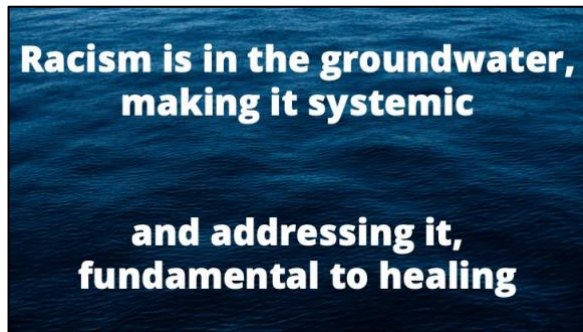
TELL: To be anti-racist in our lives and practice, we also must apply the systemic approach to understanding racism.

The importance of power to anti-racism is clear: racism is not only about *people* wielding power against someone else – it is also about how *institutions and culture* wield power against certain identities. Because racism is embedded in every fabric of our society (through policies, practices, and norms), we are all affected and impacted – although we each experience it differently.

Let's think of this another way: racism is like groundwater. The Racial Equity Institute has a PDF called "The Groundwater Approach" where they tell the following story to help people understand how racism impacts young people in America.[6] As you listen to the story, think about how this story could apply to mental health systems, substance use systems, or other systems that impact the people you support.

If you have a lake in front of your house and one fish is floating belly-up dead, it makes sense to analyze the fish. What is wrong with it? Imagine the fish is one student failing in the education system. We'd ask: Did it study hard enough? Is it getting the support it needs at home?

But if you come out to that same lake and half the fish are floating belly-up dead, what should you do? This time you've got to analyze the lake. Imagine the lake is the education system and half the students are failing. This time we'd ask: Might the system itself be causing such consistent, unacceptable outcomes for students? If so, how?

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[6] *All italicized text on the next slides is excerpted directly from:* Love, B., & Hayes-Greene, D. (2018). *The groundwater approach: Building a practical understanding of structural racism.* The Racial Equity Institute. https://drive.google.com/file/d/17bdziOBr2nFrJdABXlcd9DtN62nZ6qmq/view

*Now... picture five lakes around your house, and in each and every lake half the fish are floating belly-up dead! What is it time to do? We say it's time to analyze the **groundwater**. How did the water in all these lakes end up with the same contamination? On the surface the lakes don't appear to be connected, but it's possible—even likely—that they are.*

*In fact, over 95% of the freshwater on the planet is not above ground where we can see it; it is below the surface in the **groundwater**.*

This time we can imagine half the kids in a given region are failing in the education system, half the kids suffer from ill health, half are performing poorly in the criminal justice system, half are struggling in and out of the child welfare system, and it's often the same kids in each system!

By using a "groundwater" approach, one might begin to ask these questions: Why are educators creating the same racial inequity as doctors, police officers, and child welfare workers? How might our systems be connected?
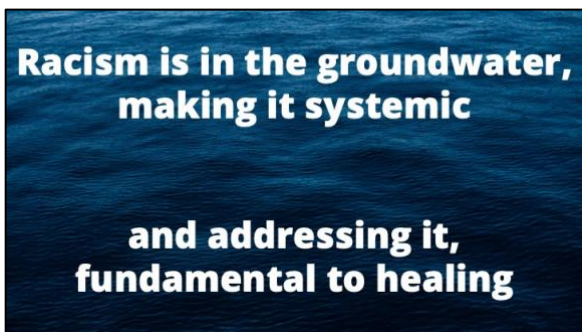
Most importantly, how do we use our position(s) in one system to impact a structural racial arrangement that might be deeper than any single system? To "fix fish" or clean up one lake at a time simply won't work—all we'd do is put "fixed" fish back into toxic water or filter a lake that is quickly re-contaminated by the toxic groundwater.

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

TELL: In the same vein, we cannot expect to address one person's mental health challenges, experiences with trauma, experiences with homelessness or job insecurity, or their substance use challenges without addressing the ways that systems *meant* to support people *actually* perpetuate racism and cause harm or re-traumatization.

As peer specialists, we are taught that hope is a key principle that we should imbue into our practice of support. We hold hope for others, even when they cannot hold hope for themselves. We use our positions within systems to advocate and enact change with the goal of building a more recovery-oriented world where people are seen as more than their challenges. We can use our grounding in hope to be stronger anti-racist professionals and advocates.

Hope is based in optimism and trust that the future can and will get better. But in order for the future to get better, a person must have agency and capacity to make a change in their life – if they do not have the ability to make meaningful change, then change cannot occur. Relatedly, there must be structural pathways for possibility – in other words, our systems and society must allow for the possibility that things can get better.

Systemic racism is the enemy of hope because it undermines trust and agency, and it creates structural pathways that prevent things from getting better for many people. As healing-centered professionals, we have a responsibility to hold hope that things can be better while acknowledging that racism undermines many principles that we hold close to us as peer specialists. In doing this, we can respond to the ways that racism shows up in training spaces and at our organizations, making people feel safer and encouraging meaningful change.

Let's take a little time to reflect on the groundwater approach and how we – as healing-centered peer supporters – can be more intentional about acknowledging and responding to racism. We will go to breakout rooms and we would like you to share your thoughts on the questions: "*What resonated with you about the groundwater approach? How do you think that this applies to peer support?*" You will have about 10 minutes to discuss with your group.

Script for activity slide continues on the next page.

Send people into breakout rooms of 3-4 participants for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and facilitate a brief discussion. Put the link to the Groundwater Approach document into the chatbox in case participants would like to learn more on their own time:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/17bdziOBr2nFrJdABXlcd9DtN62nZ6qmq/view

Conclusion (5 minutes)

TELL: As we learned in this module, healing and power show up in many different ways in our lives. As we move through this training, we will explore many different aspects of Healing-Centered Engagement to deepen our relationship to healing and power – and to connect the concepts of healing and power to peer support practice.

ASK: Before we move on, what questions do you have?

Module Two: Healing Relationships

Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Articulate their own understanding of healing in relation to self;
- Describe how trauma can impact healing and ability to cultivate healing relationships; and
- Employ the skills of empathy when supporting others in a healing relationship.

Summary of Main Ideas

- Healing is "the process of bringing together aspects of one's self, body-mind-spirit, at deeper levels of inner knowing, leading towards integration and balance with each aspect having equal importance and value."[7]
- Trauma can impact people's relationships to themselves and others because it can impact feelings of trust and safety.
- Peer supporters can be more healing-centered by focusing on empathy instead of trying to educate the people they support.

Virtual Considerations

- What Does Healing Look Like? – Breakout Rooms
- Healing Relationships with Others – Breakout Rooms
- Conclusion – Mentimeter

Facilitator Note: Mentimeter
For this module, you will need to create a ***Mentimeter*** (mentimeter.com). Free accounts allow up to 2 question slides and up to 2 quiz slides. To set up Mentimeter for this module, create an account and select "New Presentation." Name the presentation "Healing Relationships."
Select "Slide type" on the right and select "open-ended" from the drop down menu. In the section titled "Your Question," write "Healing in relationship looks like…" Click "Interactivity" on the right-hand toolbar and make sure that "allow responses," "multiple responses per person," and "show responses live" are all turned on. Make sure that "vote on responses" is NOT selected.
When ready to present, click the "Present" button from the top-right of the page. Participants will then use their phones or computers to go to the website: menti.com. They will enter the code listed on the top of their screen to vote.

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[7] Dossey BM, Keegan L, Guzzetta CE, eds. *Holistic Nursing: A Handbook for Practice.* 4th ed. Sudbury, Mass: Jones & Bartlett Publishers; 2005.

Activity: Settling In (5 minutes)

TELL: In this module, we will delve deeper into our exploration of power and healing by engaging with the concept of healing relationships.

Invite participants to share their answer to the following question in the chatbox: What does a healing relationship look like to you?

Do a very brief breathing/grounding exercise.

Presentation: Healing Relationships with Ourselves (45 minutes)

TELL: Healing can mean many things to many people. At its core, healing is the process of restoring health, wellbeing, soundness and spiritual wholeness. To take a bit further, healing is *"the process of bringing together aspects of one's self, body-mind-spirit, at deeper levels of inner knowing, leading towards integration and balance with each aspect having equal importance and value."*[8] Healing is a journey and for many of us it includes making meaning and establishing a balanced integration of our lived experience.

Invite participants to reflect for 3 minutes on the following questions:
- Think about healing. What does it mean to you?
- What does healing look like, feel like, taste like, sound like?
- What are the practices you engage in everyday to create and sustain a sense of healing?

After 3 minutes, invite 1-2 participants to share their reflections to the questions.

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[8] Dossey BM, Keegan L, Guzzetta CE, eds. *Holistic Nursing: A Handbook for Practice.* 4th ed. Sudbury, Mass: Jones & Bartlett Publishers; 2005.

TELL: Healing asks us to reconnect to the deepest part of ourselves, to acknowledge and listen empathically to our pain, as well as our joy. In other words, healing is an inside job. Healing calls for us to honor our struggles, not dismiss them. One of the most profound struggles that can reside in us is the struggle to create a loving and healing relationship with ourselves. This can happen for various reasons, such as societal norms, traumatic experience, and/or lack of support or models for having a loving and healing relationship with self. Bringing attention, intention, self-compassion and commitment to a loving and healing relationship with yourself can be transformational.

For people who are parts of groups that experience systemic inequities, having a healing relationship with yourself can be hard work. Systemic racism can create barriers to having a loving and healing relationship with yourself because it can pathologize, criminalize, blame and gaslight people. The same can be said for systemic sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, ableism and xenophobia. These systemic forms of oppression often implicitly or explicitly promote messages which diminish the features of people in these communities, with many experiencing the intersection of multiple identities. Limited access to healing resources adds yet another layer, so, loving and healing is not only a radical act of resistance – it is resilience *embodied*.
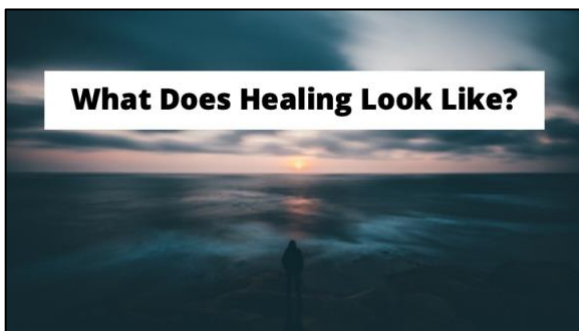
Taking all of this into account, what does it look like to bring attention, intention, self-compassion and commitment to ourselves? It goes beyond bubble baths and pedicures (although those can be nice!). It is mindfully engaging in kinder, more compassionate self-talk, having positive thoughts and feelings about yourself – not based on what you do or how you produce, but about *who you are as a person*. Bringing attention to your relationship with yourself and mindfully engaging in your wellness and growth are parts of having a healing relationship with yourself.

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TELL: Being able to have a healing relationship with yourself can be something that will enable you to be more fully present in your practice as a peer supporter.

Invite participants to reflect for 5 minutes on the following questions:
- How much attention and intention do you place on the relationship you have with yourself?
- What do you do to sustain and feed your relationship with yourself?
- What impact does having a healing relationship with yourself have on your peer support practice and the way you can hold space with others?
- How do you maintain a healing relationship with yourself when facilitating a peer support group?

After 5 minutes, send participants into breakout rooms with one other person to share their reflections for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, facilitate a discussion about participants' reflections to the questions. If time is limited, invite 1-2 participants to share their responses.

Activity: Healing Relationships with Others (35 minutes)

Relationships & Trauma
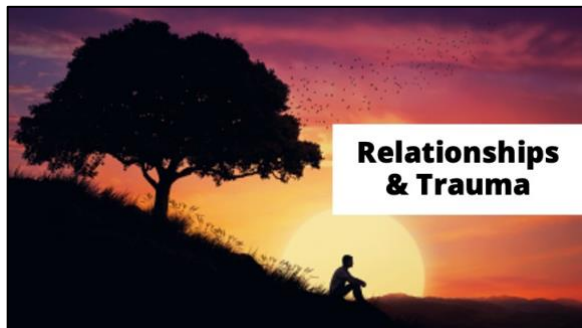
TELL: Relationships can be healing and relationships can be harmful. Having a universal expectation around trauma, or holding space for diverse life experiences inside a relationship or group, means enhancing our own understanding about the impact trauma can have on relationships.

Trauma can affect our relationship to ourselves – when we have experienced trauma (especially interpersonal trauma), we can question our ability to trust ourselves, and we can see ourselves as bad, not good enough, or undeserving. Trauma can also affect our relationships with others because we may have difficulty trusting people, we may question the reliability of others, or we may have an overwhelming feeling that the world is an unsafe place. Intentional or not, these are the ways that we make meaning out of traumatic experiences and apply it to other parts of our lives.

Remember that relationship is one of the principles of Healing-Centered Engagement – without a holistic framework for providing support, we may forget to that *healing happens in relationship*. Just as we make meaning in ways that can hurt us, healing relationships offer us a chance to make meaning of our lives in ways that prioritize our humanity, hope for the future, and trust in others.

Invite participants to reflect for 5 minutes on the following questions:

- Think of a relationship that has been healing in your life. What does that relationship feel and look like?
- What are the characteristics (or skills that you observe) which make it a healing relationship?
- Have you experienced a healing relationship in peer support? If so, what did it look like? What are some characteristics that you noticed which enabled this to grow and flourish?

After 5 minutes, send participants to breakout rooms with one other person to discuss their reflections on the following questions: Have you experienced a healing relationship in peer support? If so, what did it look like? What are some characteristics that you noticed which enabled this to transpire?

After 10 minutes, facilitate a brief discussion about participants' conversations and reflections to the questions.

Presentation: Empathy before Education (30 minutes)

TELL: Healing relationships operate from a position of trust, where clear communication and shared power are consistently cultivated, where compassionate accountability and boundaries are respected, and where people's needs and humanity are honored. In order to sustain these practices, we must prioritize empathy as a core skill.
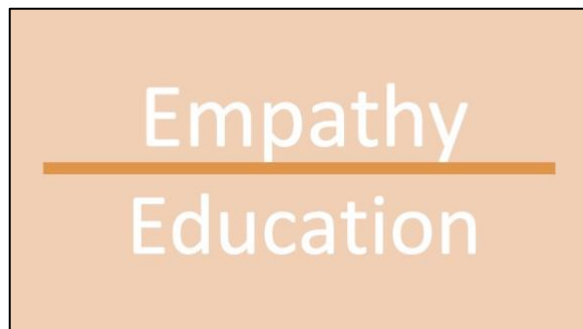
TELL: Empathy is a powerful tool for human connection. Empathy does not require a person to have the same experience – rather, it is the ability and intentional choice to connect without seeking to fix or feel sorry for the person. In Healing-Centered Engagement, we focus on empathy *over* education.

ASK: What does it mean to focus on empathy over education to you?
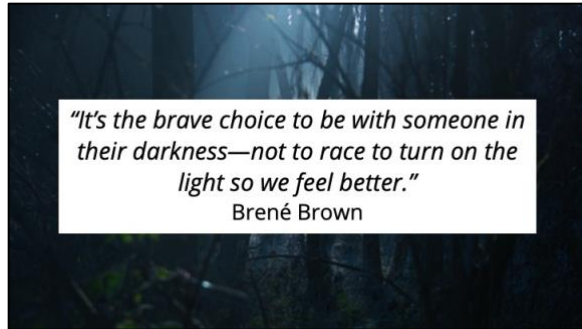
Read quote on slide: "It's the brave choice to be with someone in their darkness—not to race to turn on the light so we feel better." – Brené Brown

TELL: In general, our society struggles with the idea of allowing people to "be in their darkness" – we want people to be happy all of the time, we want people to get over their grief quickly, and we steer away from talking about subjects that we cannot easily wrap up in a bow. But empathy invites us to resist the reflex to "turn on the light." With empathy, we connect with others on a deeper level so that we can understand what they want us to know and we can respond accordingly. For many people, the best response is to hold space for everything they are feeling without trying to push them to "feel better."
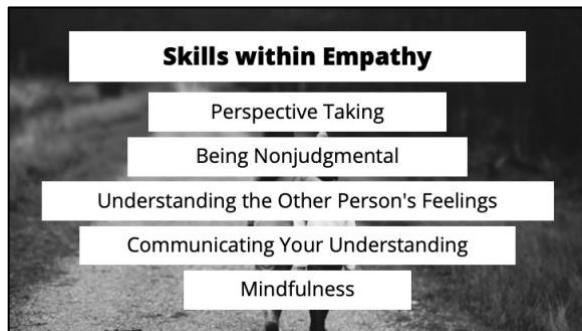
TELL: Broken down into actionable skills, empathy requires the following:

- **Perspective taking** involves taking another person's perspective, while setting aside one's own feelings and reactions. Asking yourself: Am I assuming positive intent? Am I being strengths-based?

- **Being nonjudgmental** involves taking a moment to step back and listen without judgment, choosing to sit with instead of respond to. Asking yourself: What are the things that I need to learn or better understand?

- **Understanding the other person's feelings** involves internally acknowledging that each person's experiences are their own while trying to connect to what the person is feeling. Asking yourself: What more do I need to learn and understand about how other people are reacting to or perceiving the situation?

- **Communicating your understanding** involves reflecting back what you hear, and being committed to a process and building of trust, instead of the short-term goal of fixing. Asking yourself: What more do I need to learn about how I communicate to others that I hear them, even though I'm experiencing my own emotions?

- **Mindfulness** involves becoming more focused in the present moment, such that we can pay attention to ourselves and others more readily. Think about compassion being a practice that helps build empathy and mindfulness being the key that unlocks both empathy and compassion.

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ASK: How are these empathy skills similar to peer support values? Are there ways in which they are different?

Invite participants to reflect for 5 minutes on the following questions:
- Take a moment to reflect on a time when someone expressed empathy towards you. What was your response – physically and emotionally?
- What are some characteristics that stood out to you about the way the person expressed empathy?
- What are some ways that you can build empathy in your peer support practice?

After 5 minutes, facilitate a discussion about participants' reflections to the last question ("what are some ways that you can build empathy in your peer support practice?"

Activity: Conclusion (10 minutes)

TELL: Peer supporters are no strangers to the concept of mutuality – we find connection through shared lived experience and coming to a relationship on equal footing. Brain science around mutuality suggests that we are wired to connect, that the brain grows in connection, and that disconnection causes pain. [9] In addition, research on supportive relationships, such as those that happen between peer supporters, indicate that not only are our nervous systems responsive to one another, these relationships based on mutuality are essential to our wellbeing. Mutuality in relationship can support the areas of the brain that ask "am I safe?" and "am I cared for?" When the answers to those questions are "yes," our brains can relax, move out of "fight or flight," and engage in exploration and new learning.

To close this module, let's do a concluding activity. *Share Mentimeter Slide with the open-ended question "Healing in relationship looks like…" Instruct participants on how to access the Mentimeter page. Invite participants to finish the sentence by submitting what they think healing in relationship looks like. It can be one word or one sentence. Their responses can be about feelings, actions, sounds, visuals, etc. They are welcome to submit more than one answer.*

As participants submit their responses, make a note out loud of the responses and any connections that you see.

After concluding the activity, ask participants if they have any questions before moving to the next module.

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[9] Tierney, M. (n.d.). *Mutuality in the therapeutic relationship: A meeting of hearts*. Irish Association of Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy. Retrieved January 18, 2024 from https://iahip.org/page-1075510.

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Module Three: Radical Acceptance

Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Differentiate between myths and truths associated with the concept of "acceptance;"
- Describe radical self-acceptance and its benefits; and
- Discuss community building through radical acceptance of others.

Summary of Main Ideas

- Radical self-acceptance is the practice of being brave enough to see ourselves and accept ourselves exactly as we are.
- Self-blame, comparison, and other internalized messages that people who have experienced trauma receive can make it challenging to practice radical self-acceptance.
- Radical acceptance of others requires us to change how we respond to people, instead of trying to change the person's actions or feelings.

Virtual Considerations

- Dyads on Radical Self-Acceptance – Breakout Rooms

Presentation: Radical Self-Acceptance (20 minutes)

TELL: In this module, we are going to explore the concept of radical acceptance, trust, and strengthening mutuality. Let's start by looking at radical self-acceptance.

TELL: Building a stronger relationship to ourselves and others is a process. One practice that can support healing is radical self-acceptance. Radical self-acceptance is the practice of being brave enough to see ourselves and accept ourselves exactly as we are.

We may not always like or find certain aspects of ourselves ideal, but we can choose to accept that even those aspects are part of the reality of *being who we are*.

The word "acceptance" can be a word fraught – our own judgements, meaning-making, and frameworks impact how we understand and approach the idea of acceptance. Let's examine some of the prevailing myths around acceptance:
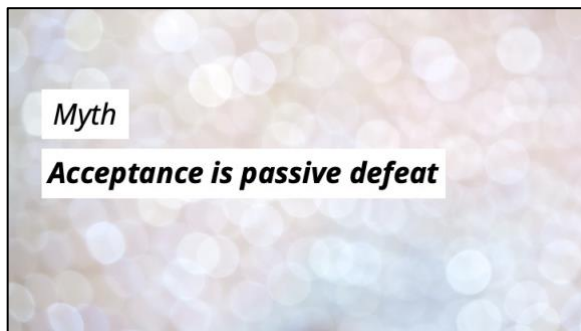
Myth: Acceptance is passive defeat, giving up.

Reality: Acceptance is an active choice. It is the agency we use and a practice that we can cultivate to accept and not resist.

Myth: Acceptance implies support, liking something, or even choosing something for myself.

Reality: You certainly do not have to endorse or want the thing you are accepting.
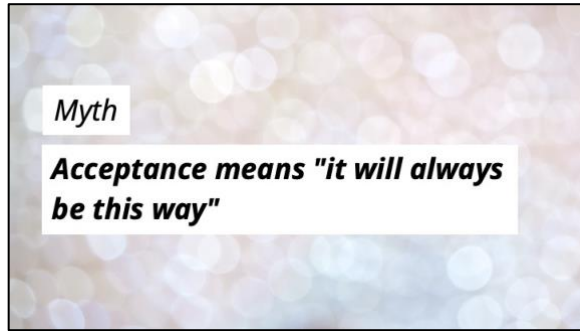
Myth: Acceptance of something means that it will always be that way.

Reality: Our acceptance of something does not place a stamp of "forever," on it. Take for example, experiencing sadness. Accepting sadness as it resides in us one moment does not mean that we cannot also make space for other feelings that come in soon thereafter.
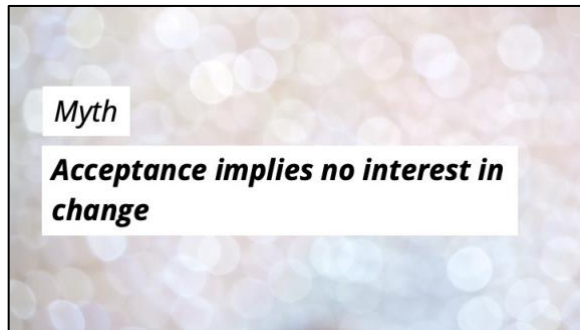
Myth: Acceptance implies that I have no interest in working to change something.

Reality: We can work to changing something that we accept as a reality. For example, we can accept the role we are currently in and work towards changing that role.
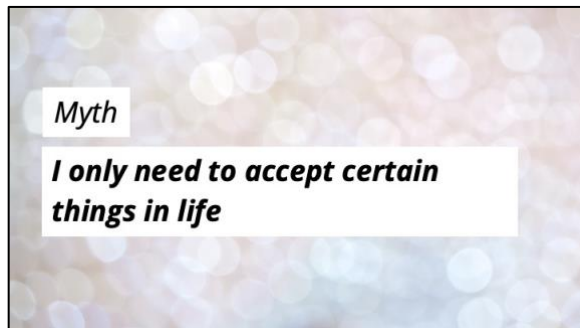
Myth: I only need to accept certain things in life, not all.

Reality: Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we can practice acceptance with any person, anything or any situation – including our feelings, our thoughts, and any other area of life.

TELL: Radical self-acceptance is a useful approach in our meaning-making and inner dialogue (the things that we tell ourselves). It is seeing all of who we are and accepting all of who we are. It is letting go of the resistance. It is an active choice to expend your energy in different ways.

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TELL: Instead of using energy wishing things were different (or complaining, judging, or shaming yourselves), radical acceptance offers us the ability to accept the ways that things are and move towards a better understanding or towards actions that create change.[10]

Much of what we have been exposed to throughout our lives is based on comparisons – "this person is more successful than me, more beautiful than me, more charismatic than me." Comparisons have us always striving for a non-existent ideal version of ourselves (think of professional milestones, grades, jobs, money). Striving for a non-exist ideal then creates or feeds the notion of that we will never be good enough.

For a trauma survivor, this can be further complicated by messages of self-blame or other similarly harmful messages. When we practice radical self-acceptance, it doesn't change what *happened*, but it can change how we view *ourselves*. It can bring feelings of peace and self-compassion because we are no longer working against our own thoughts. Radical acceptance brings us from a place of judgment to a place of curiosity. Radical self-acceptance allows us to differentiate between what we can and cannot control, while providing the space to let go of the things we cannot control. It also helps us identify what we *can* influence, which enables us to step into our own power and agency.

Invite participants to reflect for 5 minutes on the following questions:
- Going to a place of comfortable discomfort, think back to a time when you experienced an inner message of resistance. It could be anything. It could be complaining about a supervisor, family member, or job. It could be judging yourself for not being x, y, or z. It could be shaming yourself about your past. It could be using the word "should" against yourself. We have all experienced resistance. Take a moment to name it and to describe what it looked like.
- Looking back on that time, imagine what it would have felt like to soften into acceptance. What would that feel like in your body? What would that look like?

After 5 minutes, facilitate a brief discussion about participants' reflections to the questions.

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[10] Watson, A. (2019, September 29). Radical acceptance: How to deal with teaching frustrations you cannot change. Truth for Teachers. https://thecornerstoneforteachers.com/truth-for-teachers-podcast/radical-self-acceptance/

Activity: Dyads on Radical Self-Acceptance (45 minutes)

TELL: Now let's take some time to practice radical self-acceptance with each other. We are going to put you in breakout rooms with one other person, and you each are going to practice radical self-acceptance for 10 minutes. Specifically, we would like you to explore acceptance different parts of yourself:

- Pick a positive characteristic about yourself and explore what it's like to accept this.
- Next, pick a neutral characteristic such as the fact that you're breathing, and accept it.
- Then pick something you think is mildly negative about yourself and explore accepting it.

As the speaker practices radical acceptance, they should communicate to the listener what comes up and how it feel to accept each part of themselves. While the speaker is sharing, the listener should hold space, validate the speaker, and ask questions to help the speaker deepen their exploration around radical acceptance.

Put the prompts above in the chatbox. Then, send participants into breakout rooms with one other person for 20 minutes. Send a broadcast message at the 10-minute mark letting participants know that they should switch roles.

After 20 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and facilitate a discussion using the questions below:

- What did you notice about when you were practicing radical self-acceptance? What feelings came up?
- How did it feel to practice radical self-acceptance in front of someone? Was it easier or harder than practicing alone?
- In your words, what are the benefits of radical acceptance?
- How can this support your work as a peer supporter? (*highlight this question*)

TELL: If you are interested, there are other exercises for practicing radical self-acceptance in the Healing-Centered Virtual Facilitation Guidebook. Radical self-acceptance is not only beneficial for how we view *ourselves;* it can also pave the way for how we view or choose to accept others for where they are in their journey. Let's look at how to practice radical acceptance of others.

Presentation: Radical Acceptance of Others (40 minutes)

ASK: What are the words that come up when you think of peer supporters in community? Share your thoughts aloud or via the chatbox.

ASK: What does it feel like to be "held in" and "part of" the peer community? Share your thoughts aloud or via the chatbox.

TELL: The concepts covered in this module speak to the core practices and principles of peer support, central to the work peer supporters do daily. As we just discussed, practicing radical self-acceptance enables us to connect with our own humanity and helps us build connection with others. As peer supporters, we can deepen our practice by adopting a radical acceptance of others.

It is safe to say that peer supporters will provide support to people whose actions or attitudes may not align with their own. When building an authentic connection with people we support, our own thoughts and feelings about what they *should* be doing can interfere. In situations where we catch ourselves feeling frustrated or ready to drift outside of the peer support role (veering into wanting to offer advice or direction, for example), radical acceptance asks *us* to change our thoughts.
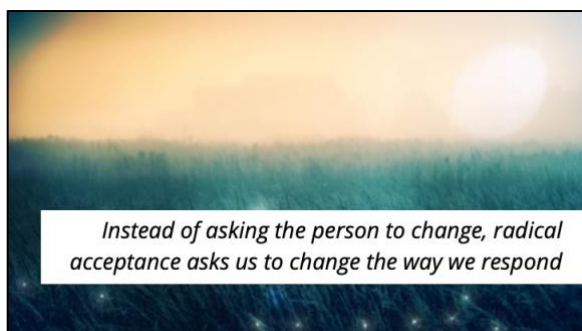
Instead of asking the person to change, radical acceptance asks us to change the way we respond

Instead of asking the other person to change, radical acceptance asks *us* to change the way we respond. If there are behaviors that violate the safety or trust of the relationship or group, we can practice holding boundaries and accountability *alongside* radical acceptance.

But even in these situations, we are not looking to "fix" or change the person or even what happened. Instead, we accept what happened and model a process from which the other people in the space can move forward.

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Invite participants to reflect for 5 minutes on the following questions:

- Think of a situation you experienced in your peer support practice in which you mindfully used radical acceptance. If you cannot think of one, think of a situation in which there was resistance. What did that look like?
- How did using radical acceptance impact the outcome of the experience (for you or someone else)? If you haven't practiced radical acceptance before, how do you think radical acceptance could impact the outcome of the experience where there was resistance?
- What attitudes and behaviors do you experience when providing peer support (one-on-one or in groups) that make it difficult to practice radical acceptance? What are some words you can tell yourself to help you in such situations?

After 5 minutes, facilitate a discussion about participants' reflections to the questions.

Activity: Day 1 Closing (10 minutes)

TELL: Let's do a final activity on radical acceptance as we end our day together. In the chatbox, please share a statement you can tell yourself as a way to ground yourself in radical acceptance. This can be a statement you use when practicing radical acceptance with yourself or with others. It can be a statement you use during this training, when you are supporting others as a peer supporter, or when you are navigating relationships in your personal life. *Facilitator should offer an example like, "I am able to accept the present moment exactly as it is."[11]*

Invite participants to share their own statements for radical acceptance in the chatbox and read aloud each statement as they are shared. Thank participants for their contributions and then continue to the next module.

ASK: Before we conclude for the day, does anyone have questions about radical acceptance?

After concluding the activity, briefly cover the agenda for tomorrow and remind people about the start time for tomorrow's session.
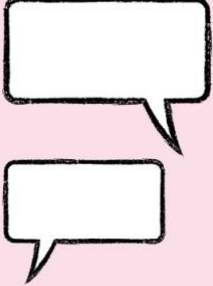
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[11] *For more examples of statements of radical acceptance, see the section titled "Coping Statements for Radical Acceptance" in the following article*: Cuncic, A. (2022, November 3). *How to embrace radical acceptance.* Very Well Mind. https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-radical-acceptance-5120614

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Day 1 Review (30 minutes)

Open the virtual room to all participants 5 minutes before the start of the training day. Share your screen with the introduction slide pulled up and encourage people to greet the room and answer the following question in the chat as they enter: What is your favorite book, story, movie, series and/or character in a book, story, series or movie?

If facilitators have the capability, play relaxing music as you share the introductory slide. Spotify or YouTube should have playlists that offer relaxing music. The facilitator that is sharing their screen should select "play computer audio" on the screen share window of their e-conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom). Prior to letting participants into the room, facilitators should ensure that music is at an appropriate volume.

Allow about 3-5 minutes for participants to settle back in. Greet the participants and remind them to get water and take care of themselves throughout the module. Facilitators may choose to return to the group guidelines created on Day 1 and remind participants about the group guidelines.

To start the day, invite participants to use the Annotation function to mark how they feel as they arrive today.

Place the Annotate instructions in the chatbox: To use annotation, look at the top of your screen. There should be a green bar that says "Viewing __'s screen". Next to that is a little drop down menu labeled 'View Options'. In that menu is an 'Annotation' option. Select that and a new menu will appear on your screen that lets you draw, add text, etc.

After the annotation check-in, **TELL:** To review today, we are going to return to the Healing-Centered Engagement Principles that we introduced yesterday. We are going to send you into five breakout rooms total, where you will discuss one of the five principles.

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

TELL: Please discuss what you have learned about that principle so far - this could be something specific we discussed yesterday, a connection you make between the content we discussed yesterday and your group's principle, or the ways that your principle impact peer support practice. As a reminder, the principles of Healing-Centered Engagement are:

- Culture
- Agency
- Relationships
- Meaning-making
- Aspirations

Send participants the handout Principles of Healing-Centered Engagement. [12] *Assign each group a principle, and then send participants into breakout rooms for 5 minutes to discuss their principle. After five minutes, bring participants back into the main room and invite each group to share their reflections. Facilitate a brief discussion about each principle, focusing on reviewing any content from yesterday and integrating the principles with peer support practice.*

Before moving on from the review, ask whether participants have any questions about yesterday's content.

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[12] To send the handout to participants, make a copy of the handout at the following link:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HGe0sqGH4Z11cMY52OeBpX0hm-FOxTOvNex1eb0xTkM/edit?usp=sharing

Module Four: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations

Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:
- Discuss how storytelling has shaped our worldview and meaning making;
- Integrate considerations for facilitating difficult conversations into preparation for peer support groups; and
- Utilize three strategies for re-establishing safety in a peer support group when safety has been compromised.

Summary of Main Ideas
- "Meaning-making" is a journey to understanding or making sense of life events, relationships, and the self.
- Intentionally facilitating difficult conversations can be both fruitful and challenging, and facilitators should consider the purpose of the conversation, the facilitator's ability and comfort with facilitating difficult conversations, and how to respond when safety is compromised.
- Facilitators can attempt to re-establish safety in a peer support group when safety has been compromised by focusing on pausing, grounding, and resetting.

Virtual Considerations
- Breathing & Grounding Exercise – Video
- Dyads on Lived Experience – Breakout Rooms
- Choose Your Own Adventure – Google Workspace
- Choose Your Own Adventure – Breakout Rooms
- Re-establishing Safety – Google Workspace
- Re-establishing Safety – Breakout Rooms

Activity: Breathing & Grounding Exercise (10 minutes)

This script can be modified to suit your own voice, pace and tone. The following breathing exercise script can be used to help regulate, restore and reconnect as we initiate a virtual learning space. The video linked below can be used as a focal point for participants. If utilizing the video, facilitators should share their screen and play the video (muted).

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

Video for Focal Point: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ANLBX2EgmM[13]

- Find your seat. Start by finding a comfortable quiet place to sit in a dignified posture, which is relaxed but upright, tranquil, and alert. Close your eyes fully or partially. Take a few deep breaths to allow your body to relax.

- Shift attention to sensations in the body. Bring your awareness to your body by noticing your posture. Feel the world of sensation occurring within your body at this very moment.

- Notice your breathing. Now place your hand on your heart and begin to feel your breathing: the out-breath and the in-breath. If it's easier, just focus on one, and rest, waiting for the next breath. Do this for another minute, and if along the way you'd like to let your hand slowly fall to your lap, feel free to do so.

- When you get distracted, come back to the breath. When you notice your mind has wandered, as it always does, gently come back to your breath as a touchpoint again.

- As you continue mindfulness of breathing, notice what emotions begin to surface. Shift your attention from your breath and ask yourself: What am I feeling? What emotions am I feeling, right here right now? If you sat down for this exercise without any strong emotions, perhaps you're feeling contentment. Or perhaps you're curious, or maybe there's another emotion inside such as longing or yearning, or perhaps sadness or joy, worry, perhaps a sense of urgency. Maybe loneliness. Or maybe you're bursting with pride or feeling lost or envy. Maybe you're having a lot of feelings.

- Label the most prominent emotion or emotions. Try to identify the strongest feeling that you're having and give it a name quietly in the midst of your feelings and kind of using your body as an antenna, perhaps only picking up faint signals. Faint signals that first let yourself be aware what emotions are percolating in your body. And when you have an emotion and you have a name for it, have a label for it, then repeat that name three times in a kind, and gentle voice. For example, worry, worry, worry, joy, joy, joy. Return to your breath, feel your breath. And now go back and forth between your breath and your emotions in a relaxed way.

- Continue to shift between the breath and the emotion you are holding. So when you feel the emotion, label it and then return to your breath. If you feel overwhelmed by the emotion or it's very disturbing, then just stay with your breath until you feel better.

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

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[13] Nature Soundscapes. (2020, January 18). *8 HOURS of Fascinating Sunset over the Tropical Beach with Calming Waves Sounds (4K UHD)* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ANLBX2EgmM

Show yourself loving-kindness. Breathe, feel each breath, and keep your hand over your heart, feeling the warmth of your hand, and the loving-kindness, the good will that's within you and has even inspired you to undertake this exercise. The wish to be happy and free from suffering. Feeling that innate good will and breathe through your heart. And when the emotion arises or sweeps away your attention just label it and then return to your breath. Open your eyes. Slowly open your eyes if they have been closed.

Presentation: Meaning-Making Defined (25 minutes)

TELL: In this module, we will explore lived experience, storytelling, and the concept of meaning-making. Stories are a way to build trust and mutuality in healing-centered practice – and as peer supporters, storytelling is a core skill. Stories can change with time, perspective, understanding, and context.

They are a multi-layered narrative that we tell about ourselves – a narrative that we can edit, revise, and interpret in various ways depending on where we are and how we show up. Connected to values like honesty, authenticity and mutuality, storytelling can be a powerful way to create a shared space and plant the seeds of hope. In each iteration of storytelling and the space in between, we are adding new meaning. To set the stage, let's take a moment to reflect on the evolution of our own stories.

Invite participants to spend five minutes reflecting on the following questions:
- Think back to the first time you shared your story. Hearing it in your words, in your voice, how does it sit with you today?
- How has your story changed over time?
- How does connection, relationship, and hope show up in your story today?

After five minutes, facilitate a brief discussion about participants' reflections.
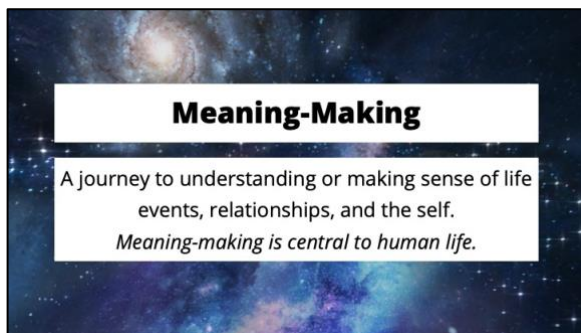
TELL: As our evolution in storytelling has taught us, each time we reframe a narrative, we open ourselves to the possibility of living more purposefully, more authentically, more grounded in our values and who we are. It is inevitable that we continually reflect on past events and try to assign meaning to them.

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

TELL: In this space of reflection, we are *making meaning* of what happened, which is a journey to understanding or making sense of life events, relationships, and the self. It becomes less about the life events, and more about the meaning we assign them. It is our construct and interpretation of those events and that narrative that we create which, in turn, shapes us. This is done in small and big ways throughout our lives. Making meaning is central to human life.

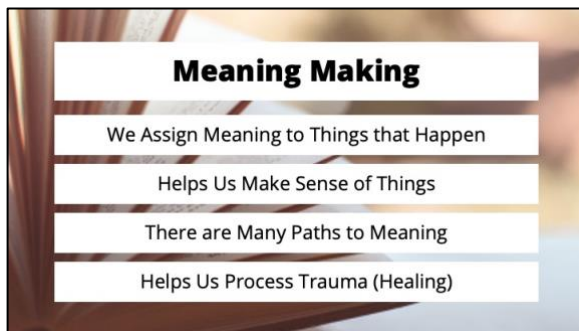When we are grounded in our values and use mindful self-awareness, the stories we tell can positively reinforce the small everyday ways that we make meaning of our lives. When our stories don't evolve over time and the story overpower our everyday experience, it can limit the way we move through and understand our lives. For example, statements like, "I can't do X, because I'm not that sort of person" or "I'm too X for that," are limiting narratives that can show up in everyday life – however, these statements are likely rooted in larger, deeper stories that we have created.

Meaning Making

We Assign Meaning to Things that Happen

Helps Us Make Sense of Things

There are Many Paths to Meaning

Helps Us Process Trauma (Healing)

TELL: When we assign meaning to the things that happen to us, we are able to make better sense of those things. We are able to contextualize them in our lives (either as belonging in our lives or not). And, there are many paths to making meaning – we can make meaning through art, religion, science, literature, etc.

ASK: In the chatbox, can you add some ways that you have experienced meaning making?

TELL: And for survivors of trauma, meaning making can help us process trauma – which can lead to healing. We may make meaning from experiencing trauma and how others treat us, which can lead us to creating stories that include shame, guilt, and fear (think about those limiting statements we just considered). When we use meaning making for healing, we start to learn that the story we first told ourselves was not the truth – we start to make meaning of our strengths, our courage, and a future rooted in hope.
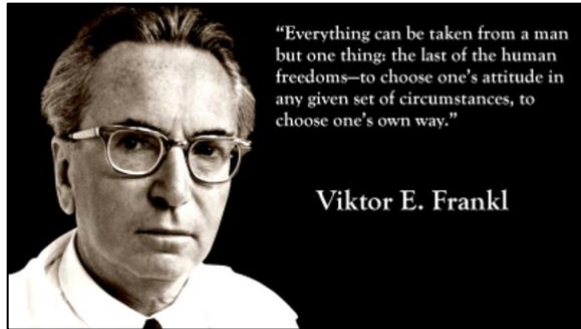
TELL: This is Viktor Frankl.[14] Frankl was a Holocaust survivor, philosopher, and psychologist. He wrote *Man's Search for Meaning* to make sense of the tragedies and atrocities he survived as a prisoner in Nazi concentration camps.

Read the quote on the slide: "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." -Viktor Frankl, 'Man's Search for Meaning'.

TELL: Viktor Frankl shows us the power of meaning making in deeply harrowing experiences that centers our humanity and connection to something greater than ourselves. Let's take a moment to consider our own experience of meaning making as it relates to our lived experience.

Activity: Dyads on Lived Experience (35 minutes)

Invite participants to reflect for about five minutes on the following questions (after which, they will share their reflections with a partner):

- What are ways that you have assigned meaning to your lived experience?
- How has that changed over time?

*After five minutes, tell participants that they will be sent into a breakout room with a partner, where they will share their reflections **for five minutes uninterrupted** with a partner. The listener should not interject. After five minutes, they will switch roles so that both people share their reflections.*

Send participants into breakout rooms with one other person for 11 minutes total. Send a broadcast message at the seven-minute mark letting participants know that they should switch roles. After 11 minutes, bring participants back into the main room and facilitate a discussion to unpack and process their experience of meaning making and how it relates to their lived experience.

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[14] Austrian Cultural Forum. (n.d.). *ACFNY Supported | The Viktor Frankl Project: Search for Meaning*. Retrieved January 18, 2024 from https://acfny.org/event/acfny-supported-the-viktor-frankl-project-search-for-meaning/.

Group Discussion: Storytelling, Meaning-Making, & Peer Support (30 minutes)

Facilitate a discussion with the participants on the following questions, offering space for participants to integrate what they have learned so far with their practice of peer support. Do not rush the group discussion. Before moving on to discussion for the next question, summarize what was discussed and offer any additional insight you have as a facilitator.

- How can peer supporters share their stories with others in a Healing-Centered way?
- What are some traps to avoid when sharing your story as a peer supporter in a one-on-one session? In a group?
- How can peer supporters encourage and cultivate the people they support to engage in meaning-making on their own experiences?

Group Discussion: Intro to Difficult Conversations (30 minutes)
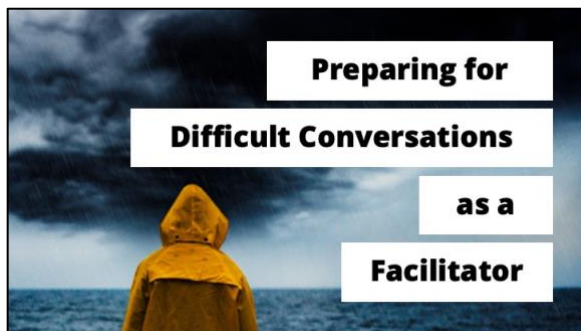
ASK: How would you define a difficult conversation? What does a difficult conversation look like to you? *Facilitate a brief discussion about both of these questions.*

TELL: By virtue of being human, people in peer support groups often bring up difficult issues and may even clash in their responses to content. This can be related to storytelling or other content that is shared in the group space. Difficult conversations can be important spaces for meaning-making, where our assumptions are challenged and we have the opportunity to expand and deepen our worldview.

It's normal to feel discomfort in these instances when difficult conversations take place; however, the more you practice facilitating difficult conversations, the more you'll be able to manage the discomfort. Depending on the content, the conversations may not necessarily get easier, but your ability to press toward more meaningful dialogue will expand and create more trust for all involved. It is therefore important to stay courageously and vulnerably engaged because the journey can certainly be worth the effort. In this section we will explore preparing, pausing, grounding, and resetting.

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

Invite participants to spend 3-4 minutes on their own reflecting on the following questions:

- Going to a place of comfortable self-inquiry, think of a time when you observed or experienced a difficult conversation in a peer support group in which safety or trust was compromised. What did that look like? What did it feel like?
- Now think of a time when you observed or experienced a difficult conversation take place in a peer support group in which safety and trust was maintained and/or restored. What did that look like? What did it feel like?

Facilitate a discussion based on participants' reflections.

Activity: Choose Your Own Adventure (45 minutes)

TELL: Let's do an activity to pull together everything we've learned in this module so far. In this activity, you will answer four scenarios with a group. This is a Choose Your Own Adventure because you get to decide how you would respond to each Chapter. Each decision you make should build on the last decision you made – for example, your decision in Chapter 1 may affect how you decide to act in Chapter 2.

Divide participants into 3-4 groups. Send participants the link to the Google Workspace titled "Module 4 Choose Your Own Adventure."[15]

Send participants into breakout rooms and give them 15 minutes to complete the activity. After 15 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and facilitate a discussion about each chapter and the participants' responses.

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[15] Before this activity, follow this link to make a copy of the Google Slides:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1CLuNrKZnL5968ZQhYwLh4aiEpNrZ7odudOdKqaWmNqY/edit?usp=sharing

To make a copy, go to "File" in the top toolbar and click "Make a Copy." On the copy, click the "Share" button and make sure that "anyone with the link" can edit the document. Then, click "copy link" and send the copied link to the participants in the chatbox.

Presentation: Preparing for Difficult Conversations as a Facilitator, continued (25 minutes)

TELL: While some difficult conversations come up spontaneously as a result of differing experiences or translations of events, content and stories that take place in a group space, others will come up in a planned and supported manner, connected to the topic or conversation at hand.

Intentionally facilitating difficult conversations can be extremely fruitful and extremely challenging. For this reason, it is helpful to think about the how, what, when and why carefully. The following are a list of considerations in preparation for holding space in which a planned difficult conversation is taking place:

- Consider the importance of the conversation (the why).
    - *Do you have the time and intentionality to dedicate to this topic in a way that does not compromise its value?*
- Assess your own comfort and ability to authentically hold space for the discussion.
    - *Would it be helpful to bring in support?*
    - *What other resources might you need?*
- Sit in comfort with the discomfort.
    - *Do you have the emotional reserves to hold this space in partnership with the community?*
    - *Are you willing and able to be uncomfortable?*
- Vulnerability and authenticity are the anecdote to defensiveness. Difficult conversations can elicit defensiveness.
    - *How are you willing and able to show up?*
    - *Can you model vulnerability and authenticity?*
- Be aware of any issues that may challenge the trust and safety.
    - *How are you willing to show up to emotionally charged conversations?*

ASK: How can you set up an environment for a peer support group that is centered on safety and trust?

Invite participants to reflect on the following questions for 3-4 minutes:
- What are some difficult conversations (in peer support or outside of peer support) that you take part in regularly? What does that look like?
- What are some strategies you can use (or questions you can ask) to prepare yourself for these difficult conversations?

After 3-4 minutes, facilitate a brief discussion on participants' reflections and questions they may have.

Activity: Re-establishing Safety (35 minutes)

TELL: If a situation arises where safety has been compromised in a space where you are facilitating, there are three main areas where we can look at how to re-establish safety in the group spaces:

- **Pausing**. As much as we can plan and mindfully hold space, there will be times when difficult conversations come up spontaneously. In those moments, it is important to pause.
- **Grounding**. A facilitator can use pausing as a means to support grounding. Difficult conversations often elicit strong emotions. Grounding allows us to focus on the present and reality of the current moment. Grounding is the opposite of activation. It makes space for us to be present, even in a difficult conversation.
- **Resetting**. After a difficult conversation, there can be a charge in the air, with people experiencing unsettled thoughts and feelings. Being able to name the charge in the air without seeking to fix it is part of what can help reset the space. Resetting does not mean erasing the difficult conversation or situation that came before. Instead, it means making the space for these ambiguities and continuing to show up for each other in a more grounded way.

TELL: Let's look at specific strategies that we can use within each of these areas. We are going to send you into breakout rooms with three other participants to review the strategies listed on this Google Workspace. Move through each slide and have a conversation about which strategies you can use, how you would envision using them, and how it would look to implement them.

Put the link to the Google Workspace titled "Module 4 – Re-establishing Safety" in the chatbox. [16] *Send participants the questions below in the chatbox. Divide participants into groups of four and send them into breakout rooms. Give participants 15 minutes to move through each slide and have a conversation.*

- What are some pausing strategies you can use and how would you envision using them? How would it look to implement them?
- What are some grounding strategies you can use and how would you envision using them? How would it look to implement them?
- What are some resetting strategies you can use and how would you envision using them? How would it look to implement them?

After 15 minutes, bring participants back into the main room and facilitate a discussion about their conversations and responses to each of the questions listed above.

Activity: Conclusion (5 minutes)

TELL: Meaning-making is a natural and important part of our lifelong journeys. We make meaning in times of stability and in times of upheaval. Remember that difficult conversations, even though they can feel like upheaval or storms, can be incredibly fruitful in the process of meaning-making. We just have to stay present to hold the container for people as they navigate new information and experiences that may challenge their worldview.

To conclude this module, please finish this sentence for yourself in the chatbox: "I stay grounded and weather the storms by…"

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[16] Before this activity, follow this link to make a copy of the Google Slides: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1QtaBBKVY8x8Ci4rTRfxT36ARYiyErqGRpisLBTUqWag/edit?usp=sharing

To make a copy, go to "File" in the top toolbar and click "Make a Copy." On the copy, click the "Share" button and make sure that "anyone with the link" can edit the document. Then, click "copy link" and send the copied link to the participants in the chatbox.

Module Five: Holding Space

Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Define the concept of "holding space;"
- Name three tools that people can use to hold space for themselves; and
- Describe how peer supporters hold space for others one-on-one and in groups.

Summary of Main Ideas

- "Holding space" is the act of walking "alongside another person in whatever journey they're on without judging them, making them feel inadequate, trying to fix them, or trying to impact the outcome."[17]
- Holding space for self can take many forms, including embracing imperfection, setting boundaries, and developing supportive rituals.
- Holding space for others requires us to give others permission to trust their inner wisdom, keep our own ego in check, and create a container for complex emotions (to name a few).

Virtual Considerations

- Breathing & Grounding Activity – Video
- Holding Space for Self – Padlet
- Holding Space for Others – Handout
- Holding Space for Others – Breakout Room

Facilitator Note: Padlet
You will need to create a ***Padlet*** (padlet.com). Free accounts allow up to 3 Padlets.   To set up a Padlet for this module, create an account and select "Make a padlet." Name the Padlet "Holding Space for Self."[18] The format should be "wall," and make sure that "Group posts by section" is selected. Then, title the first section "What do you do well to hold space for yourself?" Title the second section "What can you implement or focus on to better hold space for yourself?"   To get a shareable link, click the arrow pointing to the right on the right-hand toolbar and click "copy link to clipboard." Participants can add to the Padlet by clicking the "+" underneath each section.

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[17] Plett, H. (2015, March 11). *What it means to "hold space" for people, plus eight tips on how to do it well*. Heather Plett. https://heatherplett.com/2015/03/hold-space/

[18] An example of this Padlet can be viewed at: https://mhttccore.padlet.org/txinstitute4mh/holding-space-for-self-nc3x4y75bhkkctlj

Activity: What is Holding Space? (20 minutes)

TELL: In this module, we will talk about the concept of holding space and how it applies to healing and power in peer support. **ASK:** What is the first thing you think about, when you think about holding space?

TELL: There are many different definitions of holding space. Take a moment to listen closely as we recite some of them. Grab a pen and paper to write down the words that stick with you. We will return to them later in the module.

- Holding space means to be with someone without judgment. To donate your ears and heart without wanting anything back. To practice empathy and compassion. To accept someone's truth, no matter what they are. To allow and accept. Embrace with two hands instead of pointing with one finger. To come in neutral. Open. For them. Not you. Holding space means to put your needs and opinions aside and allow someone to just be.

- It means that we are willing to walk alongside another person in whatever journey they're on without judging them, making them feel inadequate, trying to fix them, or trying to impact the outcome. When we hold space for other people, we open our hearts, offer unconditional support, and let go of judgement and control.

- At one time or another, someone in our lives will need a space held that is loving, nonjudgmental, and empathetic. When that time comes, the relationship you already have will provide a foundation for building this so-called "container" in which you hold space for the other person. If you accept the challenge, your desire to be of service to the other person will be the first building block for holding that sacred space.

- When you hold space for someone, you bring your entire presence to them. You walk along with them without judgment, sharing their journey to an unknown destination. Yet you're completely willing to end up wherever they need to go. You give your heart, let go of control, and offer unconditional support. And when you do, both of you heal, grow, and transform

ASK: What were some of the words or phrases that stuck out to you? *After facilitating a discussion,* **TELL:** Remember to hold on to the words you wrote down – we will return to them later in the module.
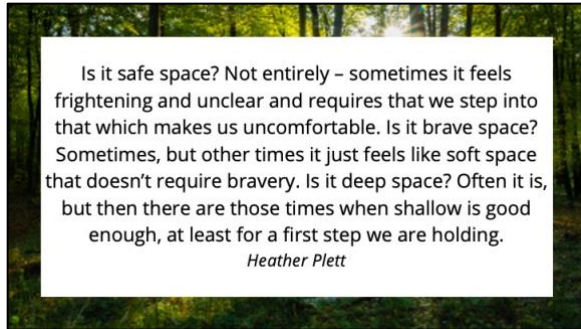
TELL: "Holding space" is a term that has gained popularity, and it in that popularity it may also be losing the nuance of what it means. In her work on holding space, Heather Plett asks the question about what kind of space we are holding.[19] *Read text from slide.* **ASK:** What does this mean to you?

Is it safe space? Not entirely – sometimes it feels frightening and unclear and requires that we step into that which makes us uncomfortable. Is it brave space? Sometimes, but other times it just feels like soft space that doesn't require bravery. Is it deep space? Often it is, but then there are those times when shallow is good enough, at least for a first step we are holding. – Heather Plett

Presentation: Holding Space for Self (15 Minutes)
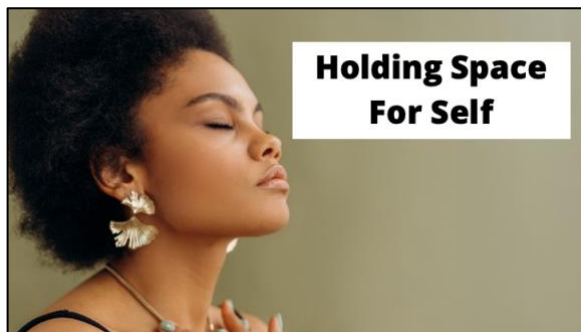
TELL: Before diving into holding space for others, let's talk about what holding space for yourself is and how to practice it with intention. For caregivers and people in supportive roles (like peer specialists), holding space for others might feel comfortable or even natural. However, many of us feel discomfort or resistance to the idea of holding space for ourselves. And yet, holding space for self can feel like a gift that you give to yourself because it is a place of compassion and nonjudgment, where you can feel at peace with yourself. It is a sacred space where you can listen deeply to yourself, hear yourself clearly and feed your needs with compassion.

Definitions of holding space for yourself may vary, looking and feeling different for each person to honor their own experience of what that might be. Let's spend a few minutes reflecting on what our own definitions of holding space for self are.

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

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[19] Plett, H. (2016, August 22). *Holding liminal space.* Heather Plett. https://heatherplett.com/2016/08/holding-liminal-space/

TELL: And if you're having trouble thinking of a definition, think instead about how it feels when you are holding space for yourself with compassion and nonjudgment. We will give you a couple of minutes to reflect on this yourself, and we encourage you to write as you reflect.

After 2-3 minutes, bring participants' focus back to the virtual space and ask if anyone would like to share their reflections or definitions.

TELL: Azriel ReShel offers nine practices for holding space for yourself.[20] They are outlined below and further expanded upon in their article, <u>How to Hold Space for Yourself</u>: https://uplift.love/how-to-hold-space-for-yourself/

Embracing Your Imperfection

When we embrace our imperfections, we hold space for all of who we are. We do not shame ourselves and, in fact, allow ourselves to explore how our "imperfections" may actually be an asset or something that makes us unique.

Learn how to say no

We can also hold space for ourselves by saying "no" to things that do not align with our needs and "yes" to things that do. We can reframe saying "no" to others as saying "yes" to ourselves. For example, when we tell our boss that we cannot take on another project, we are telling ourselves "you deserve to work in a way that does not take too much from you." Plus, as Azriel ReShel writes, "When you say 'no' to others, you strengthen your self-esteem, you show yourself that you are important and valuable. And you give others permission to do the same".

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[20] Reshel, A. (n.d.). *How to hold space for yourself.* Uplift. Retrieved January 18, 2024 from <u>https://uplift.love/how-to-hold-space-for-yourself/</u>

TELL: Sometimes we feel like saying "no" or communicating our own boundaries can hurt our relationship with others, but in reality, holding our own boundaries supports respectful and compassionate relationships. When we develop and communicate our boundaries, we are holding space for ourselves by letting others know that our needs matter and we deserve to have those needs respected.
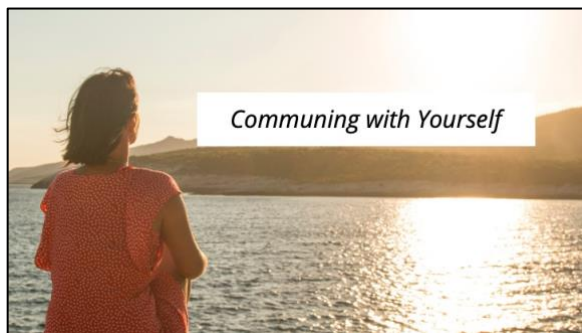
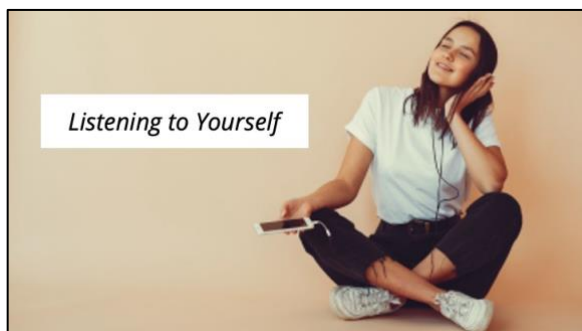The next way we can hold space for ourselves is through communing with ourselves. In other words, we hold space for ourselves when we make time to connect with our minds and our bodies. This can look like meditation, checking in with our bodies, art, journaling, spending time in nature, etc.

We can also hold space by listening to ourselves – this type of listening requires us to slow down and ask ourselves how we are and what we need. as Azriel ReShel writes, "Taking time to be still, alone, to simply be, supports you in getting to know yourself and your dreams, and gives you space to correct your course if you have lost your way."

Importantly, we must practice gratitude, humor, and acceptance when we listen to ourselves – negative self-talk and criticism reinforce shame and blame, which distance us from our intuition and inner wisdom.

This may seem counterintuitive – how are we holding space for *ourselves* by reaching out to *others*? But knowing what we need and giving ourselves permission to ask for help reinforce two things: (1) we can trust our intuition, and (2) we deserve support.
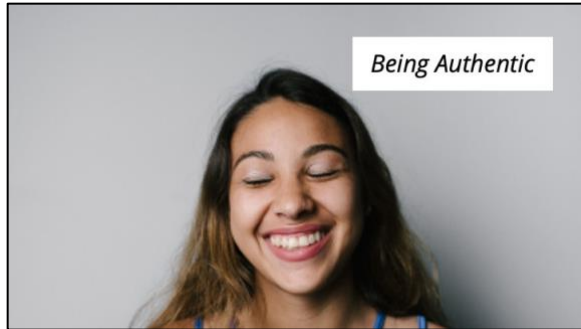
TELL: In order to truly hold space for ourselves, we need to embrace all of who we are. When we are authentic about who we are, we tell ourselves that we are worthy of being seen.

A good caregiver "holds space for a child to explore, be creative, test boundaries, let their imagination run wild, experience different personalities, ideas and roles." We should act like a caregiver to our inner child, allowing ourselves to play, create, try new things, and even fail. When we accept our mistakes or failures without judgment, we offer ourselves an opportunity to grow and learn.

Finally, we can hold space for ourselves by doing something every day that allows us to slow down and connect in to ourselves. We should treat ourselves like we treat our friends or family – with love and investment. Supportive rituals do not have to be long or complicated – they can be as simple as slowly eating a meal, going on a walk, or stretching.

Activity: Reflection Exercise on Holding Space for Self (25 minutes)

Send participants the link to the "Holding Space for Self" Padlet. Invite them to reflect on the two questions below and add their responses to the Padlet:
- What do you do well to hold space for yourself?
- What can you implement or focus on to better hold space for yourself?

They should add one post for every answer they have to the questions in the Padlet. Participants can add to the Padlet by clicking the "+" underneath each section. Facilitate a conversation on the contributions to the Padlet, highlighting similarities in the posts and/or connections to the module content.

Activity: Holding Space for Others (45 minutes)

TELL: Now let's move to holding space for others. "Holding space" for others is the act of walking "alongside another person in whatever journey they're on without judging them, making them feel inadequate, trying to fix them, or trying to impact the outcome."[21] This is a core skill of peer support, although it can still feel challenging (especially when we feel deeply connected to what the person is going through). We are going to send you a handout that contains excerpts from an article on holding space that we want you to read through in breakout rooms.

Send participants the handout titled Holding Space for Others.[22] *Invite participants to read the handout aloud with each other in breakout rooms. After reading the handout, participants should have a conversation about how the information in the handout is similar or different to the principles and practice of peer support. Before sending participants to breakout rooms, give them a content warning that the handout includes a story about the author navigating the death of her mother. Send participants into breakout rooms for 15 minutes.*

After 15 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and facilitate a discussion on participants' reflections and the concept of holding space for others. Make sure to integrate the core concepts on holding space from the article:

1. Give people permission to trust their own intuition and wisdom.
2. Give people only as much information as they can handle.
3. Don't take their power away.
4. Keep your own ego out of it.
5. Make them feel safe enough to fail.
6. Give guidance and help with humility and thoughtfulness. (***Note***: *For this concept, highlight that peer supporters do not offer guidance or help unless the person requests it.*)
7. Create a container for complex emotions, fear, trauma, etc.
8. Allow them to make different decisions and to have different experiences than you would.

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[21] Plett, H. (2015, March 11). *What it means to "hold space" for people, plus eight tips on how to do it well*. Heather Plett. https://heatherplett.com/2015/03/hold-space/

[22] To send the handout to participants, make a copy of the handout at the following link: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zdxUwRU9AfEnqkRh6F_DWu4tSmhpG4k6nbpnhxO8pWw/edit?usp=sharing

After facilitating a debrief discussion, **ASK:** How does holding space look different when you are facilitating a peer support group? How do you see other group members holding space for each other?

Activity: Day 2 Closing (10 minutes)

TELL: Holding space deeply and with purpose is a skill that requires lifelong learning. We can practice holding space for ourselves, our loved ones, our coworkers, and the people we support. Holding space can happen in small moments and long conversations – sometimes we hold space for someone simply by holding a moment of silence for them to feel whatever they need to feel. To learn more about holding space, you can visit the Center for Holding Space and read the article by Heather Plett titled "Sometimes holding space feels like doing nothing."[23] *Put the link to the article in the chatbox:* https://heatherplett.com/2015/09/sometimes-holding-space-feels-like-doing-nothing/

We invite you to continue holding space for yourself and others throughout the remainder of our time together. Take a moment to reflect to yourself what you will do to hold space for yourself this evening.
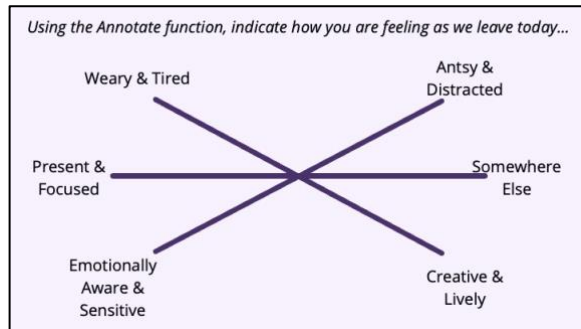
To end the day, invite participants to use the Annotation function to mark how they feel as they leave today.

Place the Annotate instructions in the chatbox: To use annotation, look at the top of your screen. There should be a green bar that says "Viewing __'s screen". Next to that is a little drop down menu labeled 'View Options'. In that menu is an 'Annotation' option. Select that and a new menu will appear on your screen that lets you draw, add text, etc.

After concluding the activity, briefly cover the agenda for tomorrow and remind people about the start time for tomorrow's session.

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[23] Plett, H. (2015, September 2). *Sometimes holding space feels like nothing.* Heather Plett. https://heatherplett.com/2015/09/sometimes-holding-space-feels-like-doing-nothing/
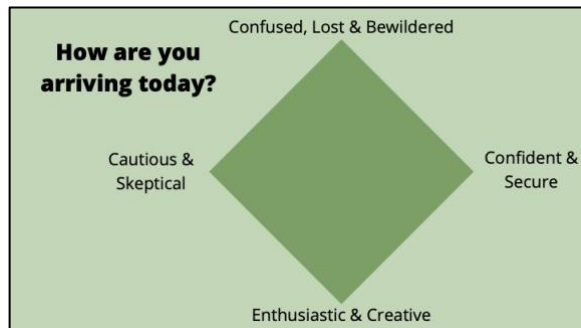
Day 2 Review (30 minutes)

Open the virtual room to all participants 5 minutes before the start of the training day. Share your screen with the introduction slide pulled up and encourage people to greet the room and answer the following question in the chat as they enter: What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

If facilitators have the capability, play relaxing music as you share the introductory slide. Spotify or YouTube should have playlists that offer relaxing music. The facilitator that is sharing their screen should select "play computer audio" on the screen share window of their e-conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom). Prior to letting participants into the room, facilitators should ensure that music is at an appropriate volume.

Allow about 3-5 minutes for participants to settle back in. Greet the participants and remind them to get water and take care of themselves throughout the module. Facilitators may choose to return to the group guidelines created on Day 1 and remind participants about the group guidelines.

To start the day, invite participants to use the Annotation function to mark how they feel as they arrive today.

Place the Annotate instructions in the chatbox: To use annotation, look at the top of your screen. There should be a green bar that says "Viewing ___'s screen". Next to that is a little drop down menu labeled 'View Options'. In that menu is an 'Annotation' option. Select that and a new menu will appear on your screen that lets you draw, add text, etc.

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

After the annotation check-in, **TELL:** To review today, we are going to return to the Healing-Centered Engagement Principles that we introduced yesterday. We are going to send you into five breakout rooms total, where you will discuss one of the five principles. Please discuss what you have learned about that principle so far - this could be something specific we discussed yesterday, a connection you make between the content we discussed yesterday and your group's principle, or the ways that your principle impact peer support practice. As a reminder, the principles of Healing-Centered Engagement are:

- Culture
- Agency
- Relationships
- Meaning-making
- Aspirations

Send participants the handout Principles of Healing-Centered Engagement. [24] *Assign each group a principle, and then send participants into breakout rooms for 5 minutes to discuss their principle. After five minutes, bring participants back into the main room and invite each group to share their reflections. Facilitate a brief discussion about each principle, focusing on reviewing any content from yesterday and integrating the principles with peer support practice.*

Before moving on from the review, ask whether participants have any questions about yesterday's content.

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[24] To send the handout to participants, make a copy of the handout at the following link:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HGe0sqGH4Z11cMY52OeBpX0hm-FOxTOvNex1eb0xTkM/edit?usp=sharing

Module Six: Power Dynamics

Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Describe different ways that power has been harnessed in American history;
- Identify the four types of power;
- Define the concepts of privilege, racism, microaggressions, and allyship; and
- Employ strategies for effective allyship with marginalized communities.

Summary of Main Ideas

- Power can be used positively (to uplift everyone's power and collective liberation) or negatively (to subjugate others and take some people's power away).
- The four types of power are: (1) power over, (2) power within, (3) power to, and (4) power with.
- "Racism" is racial prejudice plus power.
- An "ally" is someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege and access to institutional power (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and works in solidarity with minoritized and marginalized groups.

Virtual Considerations

- Exploring the Concept of Power – Mentimeter
- Exploring the Concept of Power – Breakout Rooms
- Defining Our Relationship to Power – Breakout Rooms
- Types of Power – Chatterfall
- Embodying the Different Types of Power – Google Workspace
- Embodying the Different Types of Power – Breakout Rooms
- Power Flower – Handout
- Racism – Video
- Privilege & Microaggressions – Video
- Privilege & Microaggressions – Breakout Rooms
- Allyship & Peer Support – Breakout Rooms
- Conclusion – Mentimeter

Facilitator Note: Mentimeter

For this module, you will need to create a ***Mentimeter*** (mentimeter.com). Free accounts allow up to 2 question slides and up to 2 quiz slides.
 	
To set up Mentimeter for this module, create an account and select "New Presentation." Name the presentation "Module 3."
 	
Word Cloud 1.
   • Select "Slide type" on the right and select "word cloud" from the drop down menu. In the section titled "Your Question," write "What words do you associate with power?" Choose "4" for the "Entries per Participant."
 	
Word Cloud 2.
   • Select "New Slide" from the top of the page. Select "Slide type" on the right and select "word cloud" from the drop down menu. In the section titled "Your Question," write "What are some words that will stick to your bones about power that you will leave with today?" Choose "4" for the "Entries per Participant."
 	
When ready to present, click the "Present" button from the top-right of the page. Participants will then use their phones or computers to go to the website: menti.com. They will enter the code listed on the top of their screen to vote.

Activity: Settling In (10 minutes)

Allow about 3-5 minutes for participants to settle back in. Remind them to get water and take care of themselves throughout the module. Once participants are settled in, **TELL:** In this module, we will talk about the concept of power. Before we begin, let's do a grounding activity together.

Breathing & Grounding Script
This script can be modified to suit your own voice, pace and tone. The following breathing exercise script can be used to help regulate, restore and reconnect as we initiate a virtual learning space. The video linked below can be used as a focal point for participants. If utilizing the video, facilitators should share their screen and play the video (muted).

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

Video for Focal Point: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrDUTpeGW0A&t=787s[25]

Take a moment to turn off your camera. The invitation for this moment is to disconnect from all of the things pulling your attention in other directions. Just being aware, of whatever comes up, we practice non-reactive awareness, letting go of our expectations, control, knowing, and truly relax with what is. Like this we create a kind, gentle, warm, holding space for the current of your present experience. We observe the movements of the mind and finally we rest in awareness.

This exercise is focused on creating an expansive breath. It is an exercise called the Three-Part Breath. It will deepen your connection to your body and help you bring conscious awareness to the present moment, enabling you to hold space for yourself. If, at any point, you feel lightheaded or dizzy during this practice, return to your natural breath. Find a comfortable seated position or lay down on your back.

- **Notice your natural breath.** Bring your awareness to your breath without changing its natural flow. If it is shallow, notice shallow. If you feel tightness in your body when you inhale, notice that. Notice if your inhales are equal in length to your exhales, or not. Notice if it is easy to focus on your breath, or not.
- **Approach your breath with curiosity.** Pay attention to the sensation of your breath, as well as the places where it feels stuck or tight, open and easy. Take the attitude of the witness, neither judging your breath nor expecting it to be a certain way. Right now you don't need to do anything special with your breath. Just feel and notice your breath as though it were the first time you ever paid attention to it.
- **Exaggerate your breath in your belly.** Get curious about what resides in and tightens the belly. Imagine that you can soften your stomach muscles. If it helps, bring a hand to your belly and invite it to release into your warm palm.
- **Swell your belly up like a balloon as you exaggerate and lengthen your inhales.** For now, let your breath stay in the lower 1/3 of your torso. This does not have to be forced. Expand your breath as much or as little as feels right in this moment.
- **Expand your breath to your midsection.** Fill your belly with breath and then continue to fill up your midsection with breath. Think of breathing to your diaphragm and lower ribs. Imagine filling the lower 2/3 of your body with breath. When you exhale, let your breath leave your midsection first, and then your belly.

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

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[25] SlowTV Relax&Background. (2016, December 3). *[10 Hours] Burning Candle - Video Only [1080HD] SlowTV* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrDUTpeGW0A&t=787s

- **Expand your breath to your chest.** Now you are inhaling in three parts. First belly, then midsection, then chest. Your breath will leave your body first from your chest, then your midsection, and finally your belly. Your breath is like a wave, moving in and out of your body in a steady rhythm.
- **Let your exhale fall out of your mouth.** Inhale in three parts, then allow your exhale to just spill out of your body. A sigh or sound might happen, and this will invite more release.
- **Return to a natural breath.** Let your breath be easy and effortless. Stay aware of your breath without modifying it for several minutes. When you are ready to end this practice, gently open your eyes and notice a few more breaths before returning to your regular activities.

Activity: Exploring the Concept of Power (30 minutes)

Put the following question into the chatbox at the beginning of the module: Where/when did you feel the most power today?

TELL: In this module, we are going to learn about power: what power looks like, how power dynamics can create systems of inequality, and how power shows up in peer support spaces. But first, we need to take a step back to build a shared understand of what power *is* and how we take in messages around power.

A common if unspoken assumption about power, is that unequal power relations are part of the natural order of things, and are, therefore, inevitable and unchangeable. That is not true. Power is dynamic and relational, not absolute, and it is exercised in various areas of life. Understanding your own relationship to power can help navigate it in peer support space and help ground you to your values.

In addition, our own upbringing may have reinforced messages. Family systems can, and often do, impact the way we view power in a positive or negative way.

Share your screen and present Slide 1 of the Mentimeter, which is the word cloud where participants will enter responses to the question: What words do you associate with power?. *Make sure that participants are able to access and complete Slide 1 of the Mentimeter. Do not advance to the other questions (Slide 1 only). Make note of the answers coming in, especially if there are words that become larger.*

Script for this activity continues on the next page.

Stop sharing the Mentimeter and **TELL:** Now we'd like you to sit and reflect on the following questions about your own relationship to power. After you reflect, we will put you in breakout rooms to share your reflections.

- What are the messages you have received about power?
- How has this influenced your own comfort with power (both your own or that of others)?

After about 5 minutes, send participants into breakout rooms with two other people. Give participants about 10 minutes in their breakout rooms. After 10 minutes, bring participants back to the room and invite them to share their reflections (make sure to tell participants that they should only share other people's reflections if they received consent to do so). Facilitate a brief discussion.

Presentation: The History of Power (20 minutes)

TELL: As you can see, our own complex histories and the perpetuation of myths around power, can make it a difficult topic to talk about, much less name. **ASK:** What are some of the *myths* that we have about power?

There are prevailing myths in our society around power. You may have heard them – power corrupts, power is unchangeable and power is negative or harmful. We have all heard or felt these myths and might have a negative association with power. However, power can also be a *good* thing. As we move through the next few slides, consider how power is showing up.

1968 Olympics - It's an iconic image: Two athletes raise their fists on the Olympic podium. The photograph, taken after the 200 meter race at the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City, turned African-American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos from track-and-field stars into the center of a roiling controversy over their raised-fist salute, a symbol of Black power and the human rights movement at large.

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

TELL: But look in the photo and you'll see another man as well: silver medalist Peter Norman, a white Australian runner. Norman didn't raise his fist that day, but he stood with Smith and Carlos. Though his show of solidarity ended up destroying Norman's career, the three athletes' actions that day would be just one in a line of protests on the athletic stage

On a hot summer night in 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a bar located in New York City's Greenwich Village that served as a haven for the city's gay, lesbian and transgender community.

At the time, same-gender sexual acts remained illegal in every state except Illinois, and bars and restaurants could get shut down for having gay employees or serving gay patrons. Most gay bars and clubs in New York at the time (including the Stonewall) were operated by the Mafia, who paid corruptible police officers to look the other way and blackmailed wealthy gay patrons by threatening to "out" them.

Police raids on gay bars were common, but on that particular night, members of the city's LGBTQ community decided to fight back—sparking an uprising that would launch a new era of resistance and revolution. Two of the people who fought back at Stonewall were Marsha P. Johnson (left) and Sylvia Rivera (right), two trans women who continued to be activists for LGBTQ liberation in New York City.


Angela Davis, who had championed the cause of black prisoners and was friends with George Jackson, was indicted in the crime but went into hiding. One of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's most wanted criminals, she was apprehended only two months later. Her trial began in March 1972 and drew international attention because of the weakness of the prosecution's case and obvious political nature of the proceedings. In June 1972, she was acquitted of all charges.

TELL: In 1978, a book by Judi Chamberlin called "Peer Movement On Our Own: Patient-Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System" was published. 1978. In her book, Chamberlin shares about the inhumane treatment she faced as a patient in mental health hospitals and proposes that "patient-led" alternatives to the mental health system are more humane and powerful.
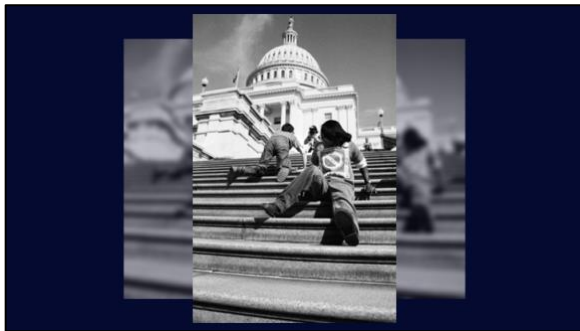
The Americans with Disabilities act was signed on July 26, 1990. However, the history of the ADA did not begin at the signing ceremony at the White House. It did not even begin in 1988 when the first ADA was introduced in Congress.

The ADA story began a long time ago in cities and towns throughout the United States when people with disabilities began to challenge societal barriers that excluded them from their communities, and when parents of children with disabilities began to fight against the exclusion and segregation of their children. It began with the establishment of local groups to advocate for the rights of people with disabilities. It began with the establishment of the independent living movement which challenged the notion that people with disabilities needed to be institutionalized, and which fought for and provided services for people with disabilities to live in the community.

"On March 12, hundreds of demonstrators on the National Mall abandoned their wheelchairs and crutches and began crawling up the marble steps to the west Capitol entrance. The Capitol Crawl, as the event came to be known, underscored the injustices of inaccessibility that the A.D.A.'s "reasonable accommodations" clause was intended to fix."[26]

ASK: What kinds of power did you see reflected in these slides? *Look for answers that underscore that not all power corrupts. Some power is revolutionary.*

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[26] Carmel, J. (2020, July 22). *'Nothing About Us Without Us': 16 Moments in the Fight for Disability Rights*. New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/22/us/ada-disabilities-act-history.html

Activity: Defining Our Relationship to Power (30 minutes)

TELL: You reflected on the messages you've received about power, but now we want you to think more about your *own* relationship to power. Spend a few minutes reflecting on the following questions:

- What is your relationship to/with power (at home, at work, in the various areas of your life)?
- What does that power look/feel like?
- How does power play a role in your identities (gender, race, sexual orientation economic status, immigration status/country of origin, language)?

After about 5 minutes, send participants into breakout rooms with two new people to reflect on the question: What is your relationship to/with power (at home, at work, in the various areas of your life)?

Give participants about 10 minutes in their breakout rooms. After 10 minutes, bring participants back to the room and invite them to share their reflections (make sure to tell participants that they should only share other people's reflections if they received consent to do so). Facilitate a brief discussion.

Presentation: Types of Power (45 minutes)

TELL: Power is everywhere, yet often unspoken and uncomfortable for many. Having power means having a degree of control. Exerting that control, a person is able to make choices and has the ability to influence their environment and others.

Understanding our own relationship to power enables us to shift it to a place of growth. Naming our complex relationship to power, or to anything else, can enable us to have a different relationship to it, to develop a different story around it, and to experience it from a place of reflection. Naming it gives you control in how you tell the story. It is an invaluable step in healing.

Language has the capacity to transform our cells, rearrange our learned patterns of behavior and redirect our thinking. I believe in naming what's right in front of us because that is often what is most invisible.
Eve Ensler

Author and playwright, Eve Ensler, writes "Language has the capacity to transform our cells, rearrange our learned patterns of behavior and redirect our thinking. I believe in naming what's right in front of us because that is often what is most invisible."

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

TELL: Sometimes, naming things (in a peer support group, for example) can support healing, equity and inclusion. Whether you are naming power imbalances, or a collective experience which is highly charged, naming something can shift power. In the spirit of naming power, let's define different forms of power together.

ASK: When you hear the words "power over," what are the visuals that come to your mind?

TELL: Power over is what people often envision when they are talking about power. It is oppressive power in which there is a win-lose kind of relationship. It is using power as a tool of colonizing, in other words, taking it from someone else, and then, using it to dominate and prevent others from gaining it. In some services or systems, this is the traditional model where the professional holds knowledge and domain over the person receiving services (think of teachers in classrooms, or doctors in medical services). While there might be some rationing of power, it is just enough to keep others' dependent. If you close your eyes to envision this example, who is in the position of power? What does that look like? What does that sound like?

Identifying and naming our own power can enable the power we have within ourselves. According to Just Associates, "power within has to do with a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge; it includes an ability to recognize individual differences while respecting others. Power within is the capacity to imagine and have **hope**; it affirms the common human search for dignity and fulfillment." Hope and dignity are key principles of healing-centered engagement. When we feel power within, we can manage our emotions, we believe that we matter and that we can affect outcomes. Like empowerment, it has the capacity to provide a sense of efficacy. Instead of reacting, someone who has power within can act because we have an internal locus-of-control.

ASK: What does it look and feel like when you feel "power within"? How do peer supporters use the concept of "power within" in their work? *Look for answers that focus on peer supporters being skilled at exploring and deepening their sense of power within (as well as supporting others in cultivated their own power within).*

TELL: Power to, or what some refer to as empowerment, is the potential of every person to shape his or her life and world.

ASK: What does "power to" look like in one-on-one peer support?

TELL: Just Associates points out that when "power to" is based on mutual support, it opens up the possibilities of joint action, or "power with." **ASK:** What does this look like in peer support groups?

TELL: "Power with" is a key concept in healing-centered peer support because it is what peer supporters work to cultivate in the peer relationship. "Power with" has to do with finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength. It is based on mutual support, solidarity and collaboration.

"Power with" multiplies individual talents and knowledge and connects power to hope and resiliency. It is a humble approach that chooses connection and empathy, sees power as something to be shared that does not lessen one's own abilities or resources, but rather contributes to self and whole group.

Let's do a quick Chatterfall – without pressing "Enter," finish this sentence in the chatbot: "Power with" reminds me of… *After a few moments, invite participants to submit their answers all at once into the chatbox. Note the different answers, and specifically look for the answer "peer support."*

TELL: "Power with" relies on many of the same principles as peer support: strengths-based, mutuality, respect, empathy, and relationships.

ASK: When have you felt the most "power with"? *Encourage participants to share aloud or share in chatbox.*

Activity: Embodying the Different Types of Power (30 minutes)

Assign participants into four groups: power over, power to, power with, and power within. Send them to breakout rooms for 10 minutes to answer the following questions for their type of power:

- What physical sensations come up when you think of this type of power? \
- What emotions come up?
- How does this power want to look in peer support? (In other words, how does this power show up in peer support?)
- What is it that this power demands/needs in peer support? (In other words, what can you do to strengthen this power in your peer support practice?)

*Send them a link to the Google Workspace titled "*Module 6 - Types of Power: S-E-N-W Model."[27] *After 10 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and then facilitate a short discussion on each group's responses.*
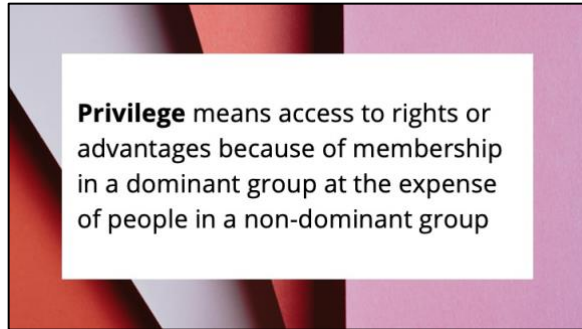
Presentation: Power & Privilege (10 minutes)

TELL: In addition to thinking about power dynamics in peer support relationships, it is important to consider the role of intersecting identities in relation to power. These are not two separate things, but integrated ways of examining power systemically. It is true that by the virtue of being either Black or Indigenous or a Person of Color, one will have a different access to and experience with power.

For the remainder of this module, we will talk about concepts of privilege, oppression, and discrimination because we cannot talk about power or healing-centered peer support without talking about how power shows up in these ways. We want to note that this module is not a comprehensive anti-racism training; instead, we highly recommend that folks go through an anti-racism training to deepen their knowledge.

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[27] Before this activity, follow this link to make a copy of the Google Slides: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1MR12QcOCbXH0vFbk7U100OglVMklrs5YYl7reh-VT7o/edit?usp=sharing

To make a copy, go to "File" in the top toolbar and click "Make a Copy." On the copy, click the "Share" button and make sure that "anyone with the link" can edit the document. Then, click "copy link" and send the copied link to the participants in the chatbox.

Privilege means access to rights or advantages because of membership in a dominant group at the expense of people in a non-dominant group

TELL: It is not a surprise that the discussions on power often bring up privilege. Privilege affords people power in the form of advantages, favors, and benefits to members of dominant groups at the expense of members of non-dominant groups.
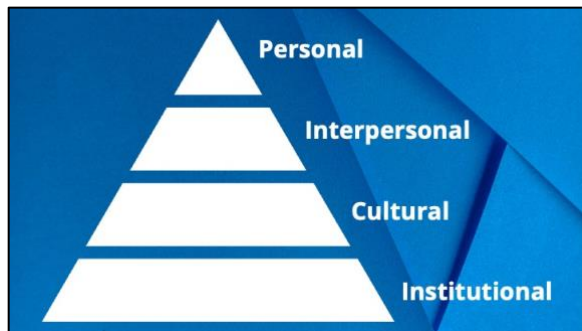
Privilege operates on multiple levels - personal, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels.

Dominant	Non-Dominant (Marginalized)
White People	People of Color
Men	Women & Non-Binary People
Straight/Cisgender	LGBTQ People
Middle-Aged People	Youth or Elderly People
Upper Class	Poor or Middle Class
Able-Bodied	Disabled

In the United States, privilege is granted to people who have membership in one or more of these social identity groups:

- White people;
- Cisgender Men & People Assigned Male & Birth;
- Straight & Cisgender People;
- Middle-Aged People;
- People in the Upper Class; and
- Able-Bodied People, just to name a few.

Privilege is characteristically invisible to people who have it. People in dominant groups often believe that they have earned the power and the privileges that they enjoy or that everyone could have access to these privileges if only they worked to earn them. In fact, privileges and the power that comes with them, are unearned and they are granted to people in the dominant groups whether they want those privileges or not, and regardless of their stated intent. For more reading on this, you can see the Appendix in the Healing-Centered Virtual Facilitation Guidebook.

Activity: Power Flower (30 minutes)

Send participants the handout Power Flower. [28]

TELL: The Power Flower looks at who we are in relation to those who have power in society. We use the outer circle of petals to describe the social identity which is ascribed more power and privilege. Take a moment to review the Power Flower. Fill in your own identities. You can use colors or just mark where you are with a pen or pencil. *Give participants about five minutes to complete the worksheet.*

After five minutes, **TELL:** Take a moment to reflect on the following questions:
- Which characteristics cannot be changed?
- What does this say about your own power or potential for power?
- How many of your individual characteristics are different from the identity with the most power and privilege?
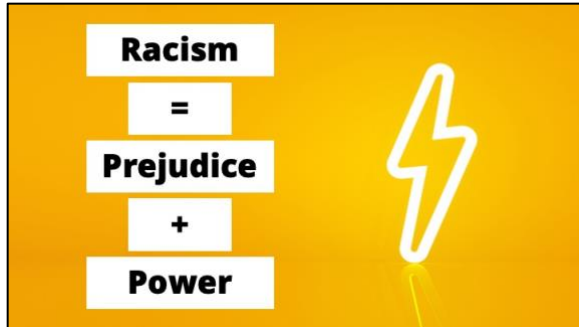- What does this exercise tell us about identity and power more broadly?

Facilitators should put the questions in the chatbox. Give participants about 5 minutes to reflect on the questions provided. After five minutes, bring participants back and facilitate a brief discussion.

Presentation: Racism (30 minutes)

Important Notes about This Section
- Slow down - sit with silence and discomfort   - Move beyond knowledge and into a space of power while acknowledging the challenges (feeling overwhelmed, feeling guilt, shame, not knowing where to start, etc.)   - Knowledge of power differentials is not enough, this is where stepping into our own power and privilege can be more helpful, more powerful   - When communicating need sounds difficult to absorb or is painful or shame-bound we need to explore, name, and acknowledge   - Discussions on race require or ask a lot of vulnerability of people and this has often stopped people short   - Center people's humanity

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[28] To send the handout to participants, make a copy of the handout at the following link:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eo0JnwGuQZIjH0XyJFA2rtOUo11Wuy38vj6AN2Jn5z0/edit?usp=sharing

TELL: Now that we've talked about our identities more broadly, let's look at how power and identity interact, specifically around race. In short, racism is racial prejudice plus power.

- By Racial Prejudice we mean: a set of discriminatory or derogatory attitudes based on assumptions deriving from perceptions about race/skin color.

- By Power we mean: the authority granted through social structures and policies — possibly supported by force or the threat of force—and access to means of communications and resources, to reinforce racial prejudice, regardless of the falsity of the underlying prejudiced assumption. Basically, all power is relational, and the different relationships either reinforce or disrupt

PLAY VIDEO: *The Science of Racism | Creators for Change* [AsapSCIENCE]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBWImda1Zig (6:16 minutes)

After video concludes, facilitate a brief discussion about participants' thoughts – what resonated with them and what questions it brought up. Acknowledge that facilitators may not be able to answer every question or that answers to certain questions will come later in the module.
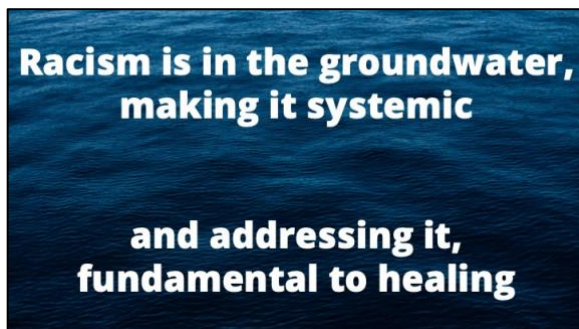
The importance of power to anti-racism is clear: racism cannot be understood without understanding that power is not only an individual relationship but a cultural one and that power relationships are shifting constantly. This suggests that racism is embedded in systems and policies, thus we are all affected and impacted – although we each experience it differently. And while individual acts of racism are very dehumanizing and can be dangerous, systemic acts of racism are also dehumanizing, dangerous/fatal and they are incredibly pervasive.

ASK: How does all of this connect back to the video we just watched?
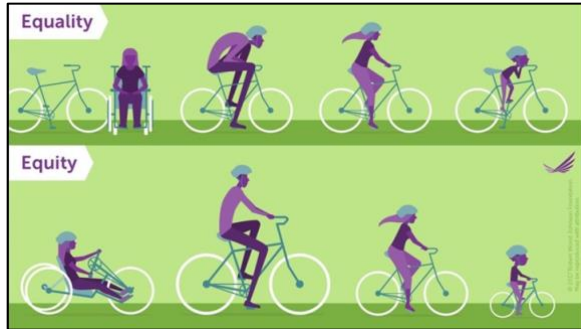
TELL: In conversations about racism and oppression, we may hear terms like "equality" and "equity." On this slide, we can see how equality and equity look different. Equality is about dividing resources equally – everyone is treated exactly the same.

Although equality sounds like the ideal (think of the "golden rule"), dividing resources equally may not actually be fair because it doesn't account for differences in need and ability.

Equity, on the other hand, is the practice of treating people fairly and ensuring everyone has what they need – accounting for differences among people based their needs and ability. Differences in need can come from many different things, including the ways that systems or laws treat people differently.

ASK: How do you think the concept of equality versus equity applies to racism? *Look for answers that identify how historical racism has created systems that are unequal, so treating people the same within unequal systems will still result in inequality.*

Presentation: Privilege & Microaggressions (40 minutes)

TELL: In the best circumstances we bring our whole identities into a space and feel safe in doing so. Unfortunately, that is often not the reality. History, personal experience, and structural inequities have shaped someone's experience and comfort in peer support groups or one-on-one relationships.

For persons who color in the inner flower petals (persons who belong to minoritized/ or systemically marginalized social groups), their previous and current experience of access to power and privilege in mental health services, substance use services, or other services/systems may influence their engagement, their feelings of connectedness and power to exercise voice and choice in peer support.

One of the more common ways that power dynamics can play out in the peer support (especially in groups) in relation to minoritized/marginalized social groups are when participants experience microaggressions.

A microaggression is the brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups. Microaggressions are one outgrowth of implicit bias and systemic racism.

Think about microaggressions another way: microaggressions are like mosquito bites. If you only get bit every now and then, it's no big deal – it might sting and be itchy for a while, but you let it go pretty quickly. But what if you got stung every day, often multiple times per day? Then mosquito bites would start to be a pretty big problem. And eventually, you are going to get bit and feel pretty angry at mosquitoes. Let's watch a video that shows examples of microaggressions from popular movies.

PLAY VIDEO: *What is the definition of microaggression?* [Quartz]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjzWENcW6NQ (4:29 minutes)

ASK: What resonated with you from the video? How do you think that microaggressions can show up in peer support? *Facilitate a discussion, using the three different types of microaggressions ("microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations").*

After facilitating a discussion on the questions above, invite participants to spend about five minutes reflecting on their own about the following question, letting participants know that they will share their responses with other participants in breakout rooms:
- Given your understanding of microaggressions, what can you do as a facilitator when a microaggression happens in a peer support group?
- What skills do you think are necessary to navigate power dynamics in a peer support group?
- What are ways that you can support voice and choice that honors the diverse experiences people have with power?

Script for this activity continues on the next slide.

After five minutes, send participants into breakout rooms of 3-4 people total to share their reflections. Give participants about 10 minutes in their breakout rooms. After 10 minutes, bring participants back and facilitate a brief discussion about their conversations and responses to the reflection questions.

TELL: For further understanding on microaggressions, there is information in the Healing-Centered Virtual Facilitation Guidebook.

Presentation: Allyship (15 minutes)
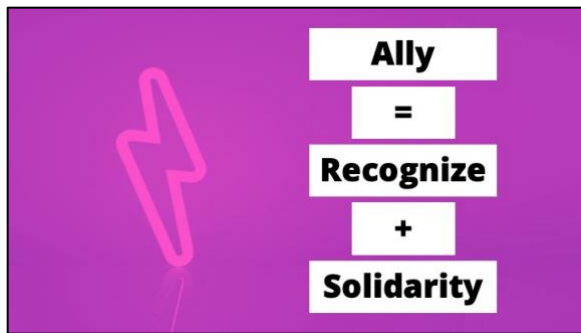
TELL: We just talked about privilege – now let's move to talking about allyship. An ally is someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege and access to institutional power (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and works in solidarity with minoritized and marginalized groups.

Allies commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in marginalizing groups who are in the inner flower petals and intentionally invests in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of anti-racism, equity and inclusion. So, for the places where we hold privilege, we can act as allies to people who experience marginalization.

Being an ally doesn't necessarily mean you will ever fully understand what it feels like to be systemically marginalized; but it does mean that you are willing to show up for the struggle every day and engage in the humble curiosity and compassionate accountability necessary to support marginalized communities. Anyone has the potential to be an ally. It is best not to focus on self-identifying as an ally, but instead focus on the undoing of systemic oppression by listening and taking cues from marginalized communities.

Because an ally might have more privilege and access to institutional power, they are powerful voices alongside marginalized ones. Performing allyship is a pitfall that can occur with persons who are well intentioned, here are some cues that can help reduce and remind that it is not about the performance of allyship.
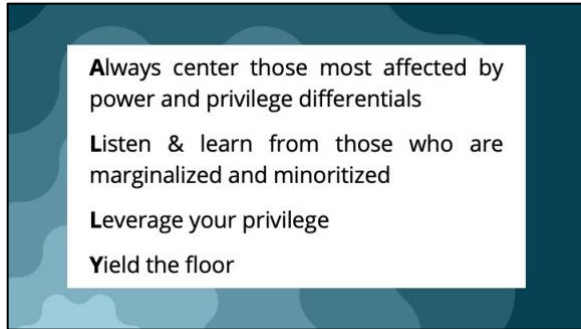
TELL: A - Always center those most affected by power and privilege differentials

L - Listen & learn from those who are marginalized and minoritized

L - Leverage your privilege

Y - Yield the floor

This following excerpt is from the Guide to Allyship, on opensource manual on how to be an ally.


Imagine this, your privilege, the access to institutional power you have and gatekeeping roles you hold, is a heavy boot that keeps you from noticing when you're stepping on someone's feet or they're stepping on yours. At the same time, people in marginalized groups have sandals to cover their feet. If someone one says, "ouch! You're stepping on my toes," how do you react?

Because we can think more clearly about stepping on someone's literal toes than we usually do when it comes to exerting power over a group, by marginalizing, silencing, committing microaggressions even inadvertently, we will review some common problematic responses:
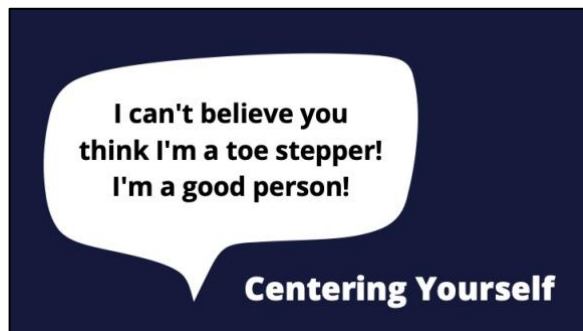
Centering yourself: "I can't believe you think I'm a toe-stepper! I'm a good person!"
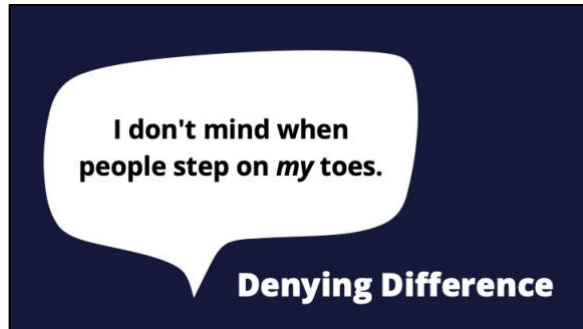
TELL: Denial that others' experiences are different from your own: "I don't mind when people step on my toes."
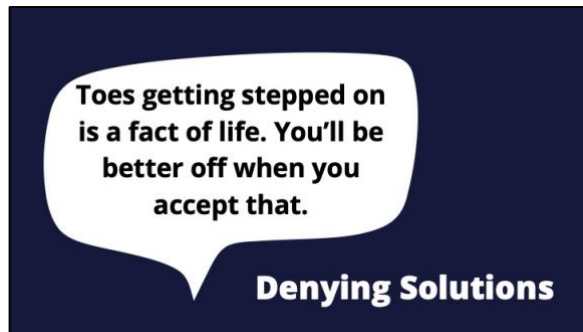

Derailing: "Some people don't even have toes, why aren't we talking about them instead?"

Refusal to center the impacted: "All toes matter!"

Tone policing: "I'd move my foot if you'd ask me more nicely."

TELL: Denial that the problem is fixable: "Toes getting stepped on is a fact of life. You'll be better off when you accept that."

Victim blaming: "You shouldn't have been walking around people with boots!"

Withdrawing: "I thought you wanted my help, but I guess not. I'll just go home."

ASK: Using the boots and sandals metaphor, what kinds of strategies can allies use to support people who experience oppression?

TELL: In reality, most of us naturally know the right way to react when we step on someone's toes, and we can use that to help us learn how to react when we commit microaggressions, silence or marginalize a person.

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

TELL: Some of the ways that you might respond are:

- Center the impacted: "Are you okay?"
- Listen to their response and learn.
- Apologize for the impact, even though you didn't intend it: "I'm sorry!"
- Stop the instance: move your foot
- Stop the pattern: be careful where you step in the future.
- When it comes to power over, we want to actually change the "footwear" to get rid of privilege and power differentials (sneakers for all!).
- **Reacting in a fair and helpful way is not about learning arbitrary rules or being a doormat.** Be open to hearing another person's experience of how they may have experienced. Think instead of ways to reframe the situation so that you don't feel defensive. Being able to let go of your ego is an incredibly important skill to develop.

Try starting with "Thanks for letting me know" to put yourself in a better frame of mind. If after you say that, you need to take some time to think about the situation, that's fine, too. Just remember that this isn't about changing the other person's frame of mind. They're allowed to be upset about systemic inequities and how they playout in daily life

Activity: Allyship & Peer Support (20 minutes)

Send participants into breakout rooms of 3-4 people for 10 minutes to answer the following questions:

- How do these considerations related to racism, privilege, and allyship apply to peer support?
- How might these considerations look different in one-on-one peer support versus a peer support group?
- What should peer supporters do to uplift the strategies of allyship when facilitating a peer support group?

After 10 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and facilitate a discussion about the questions above.

Activity: Closing (5 minutes)

To conclude this module, share your screen and present Slide 2 of the Mentimeter, which is the word cloud where participants will enter responses to the question: What are some words that will stick to your bones about power that you will leave with today? *Make sure that participants are able to access and complete Slide 2 of the Mentimeter ONLY. Make note of the answers coming in, especially if there are words that become larger.*

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Module Seven: Conclusion

Learning Objectives
At the end of this module, participants will be able to:
- Identify the knowledge and skills that they learned in this training.

Summary of Main Ideas
- The information learned in this training is just the beginning of lifelong learning related to healing and power in peer support.

Virtual Considerations
- What I Learned – Breakout Rooms
- Conclusion – Annotation

Activity: What I Learned (20 minutes)

Send participants into breakout rooms with one other person to answer the following questions:
- What will stick with you from this training?
- How will you apply what you learned in this training?

After 5 minutes, bring participants back to the main room and invite participants to share their responses in the chatbox for each question.

Activity: Conclusion (10 minutes)
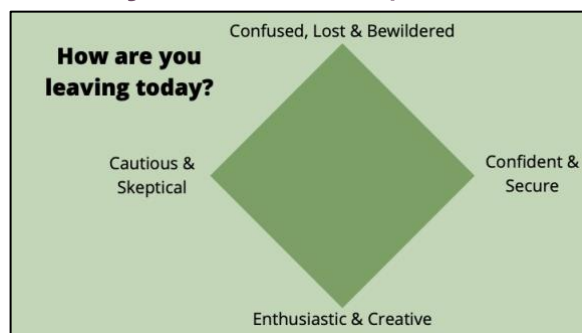
To end the day, invite participants to use the Annotation function to mark how they feel as they leave today.

Place the Annotate instructions in the chatbox: To use annotation, look at the top of your screen. There should be a green bar that says "Viewing __'s screen". Next to that is a little drop down menu labeled 'View Options'. In that menu is an 'Annotation' option. Select that and a new menu will appear on your screen that lets you draw, add text, etc.

Script for this slide continues on the next page.

After the annotation check-in, **TELL:** Based on where you identified on the slide, spend just a few seconds thinking about how you can support yourself once we conclude the training. For example, if you are feeling creative and lively, maybe you can spend a few minutes writing down your thoughts or engaging in some art. If you are feeling antsy and distracted, maybe you can take a few breaths while stretching. Your activity can take a few seconds or a few hours – so long as it is something healing you can do for yourself tonight. *After about 30 seconds, return the focus to the main group.*

Offer participants any final information about evaluations, certificates, lingering questions, etc.

To conclude the training, read the following poem to the group:
- Healing-Centered is the lens I show up with, it moves me from a trauma narrative to a healing narrative. It is both self-determined and community supported. It is the both and that expresses duality, complexity and nuance.
- While the trauma-informed perspective leaves us with a medical model which is more focused on the individual, healing-centered argues for the layered, continuous and harm-reducing based in community.
- Healing is based in the knowledge and connection to the mindbody. Healing is fostered in a deep relationship to self and others.
- Understanding that access to healing is not equitable, healing often does not look the same for people. Healing is seeing people as whole, not deficit. Healing is transformative, experience-centered, trusting body not only relying only in what is written in books or performative-centered spaces.
- Healing is complicated and compassionate, requiring rest and work - asking us to be uncomfortable and accountable. Healing is embracing joy, body wisdom and vulnerability as resistance and embodied hope.
- Being healing centered provides emotional infrastructure, acknowledging that having emotional tools without having emotional infrastructure is emotional chaos…

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