



Canadian Mental Health Association  
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## Campus Peer Support Weekend Intensive – Facilitator’s Guide

### Day 1

Estimated Time to Complete: 4.5 hr total time (including breaks)		
Objectives:	Materials:	Resources:
<p>By participating in this session, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain their role and responsibilities as a peer supporter</li> <li>● Build connection with peers</li> <li>● Practice effective communication strategies</li> </ul> <p>Students will also discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How to prioritize their own well-being while supporting others</li> <li>● When to connect peers with additional support and resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilitator Guide</li> <li>● PowerPoint slides</li> <li>● Participant handouts:  <i>Roles &amp; responsibilities</i>  <i>activity scenarios</i></li> </ul>	<p>In person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flipcharts/whiteboards, markers</li> <li>● Sticky notes, pens</li> <li>● Scenario print-outs</li> <li>● Fidgets, opt-out cards, quiet area</li> </ul> <p>If virtual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Webcam</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda:</b>		



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome and connecting (30 mins)</li><li>• Peer support overview (35 mins)</li><li>• Campus peer support roles &amp; responsibilities (60 mins)</li><li>• Barriers to peer support (30 mins)</li><li>• Personal strengths (40 mins)</li><li>• Conclusion and next steps (15 mins)</li></ul> <p><i>Current timing: 260 mins (includes 30 mins lunch, 2 x10 mins breaks)(max 270 mins)</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Virtual conferencing tool with:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Breakout rooms</li><li>○ Polling</li><li>○ Whiteboard</li></ul></li></ul> <p>LMS activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning plan</li><li>• Explain it to a friend</li><li>• Substance use health resources</li></ul> <p>Local resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Campus service offerings</li><li>• Local support resources</li></ul>
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Timing	Topic / References	Facilitation Notes
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<p><b>Total:</b> 30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Welcome / Presentation</b> (10 minutes)</p> <p><b>Slide:</b> Agenda slide</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Connecting &amp; belonging banner/flipchart, markers, tape</p>	<p><i>Welcome students as they arrive and then provide a quick overview of what you will cover in this session. Include (and adjust as required) the following key points:</i></p> <p><b>Land acknowledgement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare in advance your personalized land acknowledgement</li><li>• Invite students to add to your acknowledgement</li></ul> <p><b>Agenda</b></p> <p>The purpose of this program is to help you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand your role and responsibilities as a peer supporter</li><li>• Build connection with peers</li><li>• Improve your communication skills</li></ul> <p>Today we will focus specifically on what peer support is and the role you will play in our service offerings.</p> <p>We will also consider barriers that may exist for students accessing peer support and how we can each use our personal strengths to potentially address these barriers.</p> <p>We will build on our orientation session discussions and the pre-work you had to identify your personal learning goals for this program.</p> <p>There are also additional resources in the LMS to support and extend our discussion today.</p> <p>We will be sharing ideas as a group and also doing some individual reflection. We will have breaks and times to move around the room.</p> <p><i>Highlight different ways to engage/disengage – move if you need to move, use the opt out cards if you prefer not to participate in an activity/discussion, use the quiet space when you need to and the fidget objects.</i></p>
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		<p>Finally, please remember that our connection and belonging group norms apply for our conversation today (<i>refer to your group's banner from the Orientation session</i>).</p>
	<p><b>Icebreaker / Partner activity</b>            (20 mins)  <b>Visual:</b> Activity slide  <b>Resources:</b> Reasons why flipchart, markers, tape, <i>Why do you want to be a peer supporter</i> activity from Orientation</p>	<p><i>Introduce the icebreaker activity</i></p> <p>Ask students to find a partner and share why they want to be a campus peer supporter</p> <p>Connect activity with the Orientation personal reflection activity in the LMS (<i>share the activity as a handout to support discussions</i>)</p> <p>Give them 10 minutes to discuss and then do a short debrief</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss range of answers</li> <li>● Connect to peer support principles (meet people where they are at, everyone has a different reason for being here)</li> <li>● Recognize and acknowledge value of individual perspectives</li> <li>● Capture all the reasons to keep/refer to during the session</li> </ul>



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<p><b>Total:</b> 35 mins</p>	<p><b>Peer support experiences/ Small group activity</b> (25 mins) <b>Visual:</b> Scenarios Slide <b>Resource:</b> N/A</p>	<p><i>Divide students into small groups and have them discuss situations they may have experienced</i></p> <p>To dig into what peer support is, let's start with your own experiences!</p> <p>In your groups let's play "never have I ever"! Discuss the situations on the slide and whether you have experienced them and what helped you (or would help you) in those situations.</p> <p><b>Scenario 1:</b> You have a lot going on at school and in your personal life and you haven't been getting much sleep. You miss your first class every morning this week.</p> <p><b>Scenario 2:</b> You think you might have ADHD and have been trying out caffeine pills to see if it helps you study.</p> <p><b>Scenario 3:</b> You sometimes get overwhelmed and feel like you want to quit school.</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> Based on your discussions, what themes emerged as things that help or are important when someone is having a difficult time? <i>(Prompt for things others can do: listen, support, validate/non-judgement and what things we can do for ourselves: personal coping strategies, seeking out resources, support)</i></p> <p>What would be important to remember if you were supporting someone in one of these situations? <i>(Prompt for things like self-determination, sharing lived experiences where appropriate etc.)</i></p>



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**Peer support overview /  
Presentation**

(10 mins)

**Visual:** Peer support slide

**Resources:** N/A

*Ask the group how they would define peer support based on what they know already. Share the explanations below. Remind students of the core values of peer support while comparing to other campus services.*

Peer support is specific and differs from friendship and peer mentoring. Peer support provides **non-clinical** emotional and social support based on empathy, the belief in self-determination and the sharing of lived experiences to inspire hope and wellness.

What this means in practice is that we do **not** provide advice, we engage in conversations where there is mutual exchange and we actively work to eliminate power imbalances in an effort to create connection and belonging.

It can help to think about the differences between informal and formal peer support:  
**Informal** peer support is more like talking with your friends: helpful and often our first line of defense! It occurs naturally in reciprocal relationships, for example when classmates share how they are stressed about an upcoming exam and how they are each preparing/studying.

**Formal** peer support is where we connect with others who are intentionally selected because of their lived/living experiences and their demonstrated wellness and ability to be a source of support for those who are struggling. With formal peer support, individuals are trained and supervised while they support others (like all of you!).

Finally, peer support is different from **mentoring**, because mentoring involves an intentional power dynamic between the supporter and the individual seeking support, whereas in peer support every effort is made to minimize that power imbalance. In a mentorship relationship, one individual is deemed “more expert” over the other and there is an intentional use of that expertise to help someone reach a goal (usually this goal is defined by the program/service intention, rather than being defined by the individual seeking support).

In our Orientation session we talked about the core values of peer support.



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		<p>How do you see the core values showing up in the distinctions I just provided?</p> <p><i>Connect to values and discuss how ethics and confidentiality also connect to the role of peer supporters as per your job description and institution policies.</i></p>
<b>Total:</b> 10 mins	<b>Break</b>	





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<p><b>Total:</b> 60 mins</p>	<p><b>Roles &amp; responsibilities/ Group discussion</b></p> <p>40 mins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 10 mins x 3 scenarios</li> <li>● 10 min debrief</li> </ul> <p><b>Visual:</b> Activity slide</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Scenario handout, Flipchart main differences</p>	<p><i>Welcome students back and explain you will now look more specifically at what it means to be a peer supporter (building on the discussions from before the break)</i></p> <p>Let's look at some more detailed situations you may face when supporting peers. For each scenario, please discuss what a <b>friend</b> might do, what a <b>counselor</b> might do and what role a <b>peer supporter</b> could take in the situation.</p> <p><i>Discuss specific roles/responsibilities for each and emphasize the core values and ethical/confidentiality boundaries as appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>See <b>Scenario discussion points</b> at end of document for potential responses to highlight for each scenario</i></p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> As we've seen, there is an overlap between the range of support people can access. There are a number of services that students can access here, so let's look now at what is available and how we work within the range of services and supports available.</p>



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	<p><b>Campus peer support program/ Presentation</b>            (20 mins)</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Campus peer support program slide  <b>Resources:</b> Program resources/ spaces</p>	<p><i>Review the specific service offerings and activities campus peer supporters will be involved in and connect to your discussion so far</i></p> <p>Here are the specific programs we run and the types of activities you will help with as a peer supporter:  <i>Highlight your key programs here and make distinctions between other peer programs (peer mentors etc.) and how they differ from your services (what gap does your peer support program fill?)</i></p> <p><i>Emphasize that all peer support is valuable regardless of where it falls (academic, mentoring, campus life etc.) and that service navigation will be common across all roles.</i>  <i>Highlight spaces/resources if applicable</i></p>



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<p><b>Total:</b> 30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Barriers/ Group discussion</b> (30 mins)</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Activity slide</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Barriers flipchart</p>	<p><i>Discuss as a group what barriers could exist for students based on your services/location</i></p> <p>Ask students to reflect individually on the services, location and way that peer support is provided on campus. What barriers might exist for them? <i>Capture barriers on a flipchart</i></p> <p>Discuss stigmas related to accessing services. Prompt students to consider stigmas related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Mental health services</b> (what assumptions, stereotypes or stigmas have you confronted when dealing with your own mental health and accessing services?)</li><li>● <b>Campus services</b> (what assumptions, stereotypes or stigmas have you confronted when accessing campus services?)</li><li>● <b>Harm reduction</b> (what assumptions, stereotypes or stigmas have you confronted when dealing with your own substance use health and accessing services?)</li></ul> <p>Share some statistics from your campus and around substance use health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Almost 1 in 4 students across post-secondary institutions have substance use issues. (Laudet et al., 2016). And, as we said because of stigma, many will not receive the support they need.</li><li>● Close to 50% of Canadians in recovery reported that stigma/discrimination prevented them from reaching out for help for their struggles with substance use (CCSA, 2017).</li></ul> <p>We have additional resources specifically around substance use in the LMS as this is an area where many students may need support, so please make sure you have a look!</p> <p>Whose voice are we missing from our discussion? We know there are systemic barriers that exist for marginalized groups, who may not feel comfortable accessing services. How could we seek out different points of view? <i>Brainstorm ways to work to address them and add to flipchart (ask student groups not represented, google topics to learn more about inclusion, different communities etc.)</i></p>
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Timing	Topic / References	Facilitation Notes
<b>Total:</b> 30 minutes	<b>Break - Lunch</b>	
<b>Total:</b> 40 minutes	<b>Strengths / Group activity</b> (20 minutes)  <b>Visual:</b> Activity slide  <b>Resources:</b> Strengths flipchart	<p><i>Welcome students back and share the agenda for the remaining time.</i></p> <p>Let's shift now to what each of us bring to the role of peer support</p> <p>Based on our discussions so far, what do you think are the top characteristics of an effective peer supporter? In your groups, come up with your top ten characteristics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask groups to swap lists and have them circle the top five ideas on the other group's list</li> <li>• Swap once more and have the original group pick their top three from the five that the other group selected</li> <li>• Discuss what the top three are for each group</li> </ul> <p><i>Capture top strengths on a flipchart</i></p>



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	<p><b>Strengths/ Individual reflection &amp; discussion</b>            (5 minutes)  <b>Visual:</b> Strengths slide</p>	<p><i>Ask students to reflect individually on their strengths/experiences that will help them.</i></p> <p>Take a minute to think about how you demonstrate those top strengths.            How do we recognize it in others?</p> <p><i>Go through the top three characteristics and discuss what it looks like.            Example: Being a good listener means focusing on the other person and reducing distractions so you can give them your attention etc.</i></p>
	<p><b>Developing strengths/ Group discussion</b>            (15 mins)  <b>Visual:</b> Developing strengths slide  <b>Resource:</b> Gaps flipchart</p>	<p><i>Shift discussion to compare the top strengths with the individual strengths identified and what else students feel they need to help them in their role as a peer supporter</i></p> <p>What areas do you feel we need to develop as a group?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review skills/topics covered in the curriculum and discuss what additional topics the group would like to consider</li> <li>• Capture topics for future discussions/sessions</li> </ul> <p><b>Debrief</b>  <i>Highlight resources/self-directed activities available to learners on the LMS</i></p>



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<b>Total:</b> 15 minutes	<b>Summary / Presentation</b> (5 mins) <b>Visual:</b> Summary slide <b>Resource:</b> Completed flipcharts	<p><i>Summarize the key points from the discussion and highlight additional resources available</i></p> <p>Let's walk the walls! (<i>Review the flipcharts</i>)            Today we focused on setting the context for your role as a campus peer supporter. In tomorrow's session we will take a deeper dive into some skills that can help you in your role as a peer supporter – specifically around listening and asking great questions.</p>
	<b>Check out / Partner activity</b> (10 mins) <b>Visual:</b> N/A <b>Resource:</b> Journal	<p><i>End the session with a check-out activity:</i>            Find a partner and share an idea/question you'd like to explore further</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b>            Please capture those ideas/questions in your journal. You can also post them in the LMS so we can all help you find ideas, information.</p> <p><i>Thank everyone for their participation – share something you appreciated about the group and how they kept to the connection and belonging norms.</i></p> <p><i>Remind them of start time for day 2.</i></p>



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## Day 2

Estimated Time to Complete: 4.5 hr total time (including breaks)		
Objectives:	Materials:	Resources:
<p>By participating in this session, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain their role and responsibilities as a peer supporter</li> <li>● Build connection with peers</li> <li>● Practice effective interpersonal communication strategies</li> </ul> <p>Students will also discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How to prioritize their own well-being while supporting others</li> <li>● When to connect peers with additional support and resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilitator Guide</li> <li>● PowerPoint slides</li> <li>● Participant handouts:  <i>Creating connection activity scenarios;</i>  <i>Sharing experiences handout</i></li> </ul>	<p>In person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flipcharts/whiteboards, markers</li> <li>● Blank paper, coloured pens / markers</li> <li>● Sticky notes, pens</li> <li>● Scenario print-outs</li> <li>● Fidgets, opt-out cards, quiet area</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda:</b>		



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome and connecting (25 mins)</li><li>• Connection &amp; belonging (95 mins)</li><li>• Effective communications (50 mins)</li><li>• Situations beyond peer support (35 mins)</li><li>• Conclusion and next steps (10 mins)</li></ul> <p><i>Current timing: 265 mins (includes 30 mins lunch, 2 x10 min breaks)</i></p>		<p>If virtual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Webcam</li><li>• Virtual conferencing tool with:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Breakout rooms</li><li>○ Polling</li><li>○ Whiteboard</li></ul></li></ul> <p>LMS activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore your compass</li><li>• Wellbeing wheel</li><li>• What's your story</li><li>• Tour a resource</li></ul> <p>Local resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional supports</li></ul>
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<p><b>Total:</b> 25 minutes</p>	<p><b>Welcome / Presentation</b> (10 minutes)</p> <p><b>Slide:</b> Agenda slide</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Connecting &amp; belonging banner/flipchart, markers, tape</p>	<p><i>Welcome students as they arrive and then provide a quick overview of what you will cover in this session. Include (and adjust as required) the following key points:</i></p> <p><b>Land acknowledgement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare in advance your personalized land acknowledgement</li> <li>• Invite students to add to your acknowledgement</li> </ul> <p><b>Agenda</b>            Today we continue our exploration of peer support to help you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build connection with peers</li> <li>• Practice effective communication strategies</li> </ul> <p>We will also discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to prioritize our own well-being while supporting others</li> <li>• How to connect with additional support and resources</li> </ul> <p>Today we will look at some specific situations and practice how to handle them as a peer supporter, including practicing and building up our listening skills and questioning techniques.</p> <p>We will be sharing ideas as a group and also doing some individual reflection. We will have breaks and times to move around the room.</p> <p><i>Highlight different ways to engage/disengage – move if you need to move, use the opt out cards if you prefer not to participate in an activity/discussion, use the quiet space when you need to and the fidget objects.</i></p> <p>Finally, please remember that our connection and belonging group norms apply for our conversation today (<i>refer to your group’s banner from the Orientation session</i>).</p>



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	<p><b>Checking in / Individual activity</b>            (15 mins)</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Activity slide</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Paper, pens/markers of a variety of colours (enough for everyone)</p>	<p><i>Provide students with paper and pens/markers and tell them you will start with an art activity to reflect on how everyone is doing today.</i></p> <p>Let's start today with a visual check-in today. This will be individual – you won't have to share your artwork!</p> <p>Draw what you're feeling right now. It can be an image or just colours and scribbles on the page and don't worry - this is for you alone!</p> <p>What colour and pen strokes or shapes best represent what you are feeling?</p> <p>What else are you feeling?</p> <p>What else do you need to add to the page right now?</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b></p> <p>We often have more than one feeling. Reflecting on what is going on and bringing our awareness to the sensations and how that feeling looks and feels like for us is an important part of self-awareness and one of our themes for today.</p> <p>As peer supporters, we need to recognize what is coming up for us in different situations and be able to recognize the value and <b>purpose</b> of our range of emotions. Rather than trying to discount our emotions, we can try to get curious and understand what's behind the specific emotion. For example, consider feelings of stress. What purpose might those feelings serve? (Stress can help you prioritize, focus on what is really important etc.) Getting comfortable naming our emotions and trying to understand what's behind them is a good skill to have as a peer supporter! The better we understand what's going on for us, the better we'll be at supporting others.</p>



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<p><b>Total:</b> 35 mins</p>	<p><b>Connection &amp; belonging/ Video &amp; discussion</b> (10 mins) <b>Visual:</b> Connection slide <b>Resources:</b> internet connection, speakers, screen</p>	<p><i>Introduce the first topic of the day and show the Brene Brown video on empathy</i></p> <p>Let's watch a short video to begin our conversation today.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ewgu369Jw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ewgu369Jw</a> (2:53 mins)</p> <p>What comes up for you about the video? How does this relate to the values of peer support?</p> <p>What does this video tell us about connection and belonging?</p> <p>If someone shows empathy to you – as described in the video – what does that feel like?</p>



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	<p><b>Creating connection / Group discussion</b> (25 mins) <b>Visual:</b> N/A <b>Resources:</b> Connection flipchart, Sharing experiences handout</p>	<p><i>Move to a group discussion on creating connection, especially from a place of inclusion</i> Beyond demonstrating empathy, what else can we do as peer supporters to create connection and belonging? What are some specific things we can do to “see, hear and value” the peers we support?</p> <p>Prompt for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Validating their experience (helping to name feelings, acknowledging the journey etc.)</li><li>• Honouring their experience (people know what they need, we can’t know what it is like in their shoes etc.)</li><li>• Supporting them where they are at (reinforce self-determination, harm reduction principles)</li></ul> <p>What about when we are trying to connect with peers who have different lived experience from us? What are some things to keep in mind?</p> <p>Prompt for tips on centering race:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acknowledging where we are starting from</li><li>• Being open about perspectives that are guiding our thoughts/feelings</li><li>• Doing the work to educate ourselves first (not asking them to speak on behalf of an entire group/community)</li><li>• Owning our language (watching for micro-aggressions, learning and eliminating stereotypes)</li></ul> <p>What about when we want to share our own experiences? How can we share our own lived experiences in a way that builds connections?</p> <p>Prompt for things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask permission first</li></ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share strategies/tools/resources that have worked for us (without assuming they will automatically work for the other person)</li><li>• Focus on positive examples/stories that inspire hope</li><li>• Gut check first – will it help the other person? Am I just wanting to tell my story?</li></ul> <p><i>Distribute the Sharing experiences handout as a guide for the next activity</i></p>



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<p><b>Total:</b> 60 mins</p>	<p><b>Creating connection / Scenario practice</b></p> <p>45 mins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 15 mins x 3 scenarios (for discussion and debrief)</li></ul> <p><b>Visual:</b> Activity slide</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Scenario handouts</p>	<p><i>Introduce the next activity – a chance to discuss and practice how to handle different peer support situations</i></p> <p>In your groups, please review the first scenario and how you would respond as a peer supporter. Think about our discussion so far today around connection and belonging and what would be important to keep in mind in each situation.</p> <p><b>Scenario 1:</b> A counselor asks you to meet one-on-one with a student. When you meet the student, they are clearly uncomfortable and they tell you that they actually don't want peer support.</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> <i>Discuss potential responses and how best to respond/support student in a way that builds connection (see <b>Scenario discussion points</b> at end of document)</i></p> <p>For the next scenario, let's all discuss it together.</p> <p><b>Scenario 2:</b> You are speaking with a student who shares they have a "bad relationship with alcohol". They've decided to try to stop drinking for a little while. Later in the conversation, they mention that they're going to run some errands with a friend who needs to grab groceries and stock up at the liquor store for the weekend. The student also mentions that they're going to a party on the weekend.</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> <i>Discuss how to connect with the student and how to manage sharing experiences/self-determination and using non-judgmental language.</i></p> <p>For our final scenario, let's review it individually first and then we'll share responses.</p> <p><i>Give students a few minutes to review/reflect and then ask them to find a partner and share their responses</i></p> <p><b>Scenario 3:</b> A student comes in for a peer support appointment and they slowly start to share they are worried that their partner may be cheating on them. As they open up, it becomes clear to you that their partner is definitely cheating on them. You have been cheated on before and</p>
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		<p>went through hell trying to work through it with your partner. In the end, nothing worked until you finally broke up with them for good.</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> <i>Discuss how to support the student when you might feel emotional or find it hard to separate your experience from theirs.</i></p>
	<p><b>Values review / Group discussion</b>            (15 mins)</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Peer support values handout (from Day 1)</p>	<p><i>Sum up the scenarios practice by reinforcing the main values of peer support</i></p> <p>As we've seen already, there are some core values at play in a peer support conversation.</p> <p>By showing up and connecting with another person, we are hoping to create an authentic connection that demonstrates the value of trust, dignity and social inclusion.</p> <p>By sharing our lived experiences when appropriate, we foster hope and demonstrate the value of mutuality. By listening and validating experiences, we let the other person know that it's okay to acknowledge what they are feeling and reinforce the value of self-determination.</p> <p><i>Discuss other themes that have come out of your scenario discussion</i></p> <p>And to be able to demonstrate all of these values, we need to be able to communicate effectively in the moment! So, we will look at effective communication skills after the break</p>
<p><b>Total:</b> 10 mins</p>	<p><b>Break</b></p>	





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<p><b>Total:</b> 50 mins</p>	<p><b>Listening lab/ Partner activity</b> (20 mins)</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Listening slide  <b>Resources:</b> N/A</p>	<p><i>Introduce the listening activity</i>          How many of you have had times when you felt like the person you were having a conversation with wasn't listening to you? How did that feel?          If our job as a peer supporter is to connect with our peers and make them feel seen, heard and valued, we need to make sure we are good at listening!</p> <p>What are some key principles of active listening? <i>Highlight physical tips, verbal tips and connection tips from slide</i>  <i>Add examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try not to distract the other person with <i>too</i> much eye contact or fidgeting</li> <li>• Encourage them to keep going with verbal cues like "uh huh"</li> <li>• Paraphrase ideas or repeat back their words (it sounds like you are saying...)</li> <li>• Acknowledge emotions (you seem very passionate about this topic, I'm noticing some emotion coming up)</li> <li>• Ask good questions (What's behind that? Tell me more...)</li> </ul> <p><i>Ask partners to practice by having short conversations where the listener has to use a specific active listening technique.</i></p> <p><b>Sounds like round (3 mins)</b>          Tell the listener to summarize their partner's words periodically by using the sentence "it sounds like..." at various points in a conversation. Remind the listener that they are only allowed to respond with "it sounds like" during the three-minute conversation!</p> <p><i>Have partners switch and run again for three minutes.</i></p> <p><b>I'm noticing round (2 mins)</b></p>
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		<p>This time, listeners will only be allowed to acknowledge the emotions of their partner during the conversation by saying "I'm noticing". <i>Have partners switch and run again for two minutes.</i></p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> Ask for reactions/what worked well, how did it feel. What can they keep practicing?</p>



**Questioning techniques/  
Group brainstorm**  
(20 mins)

**Visual:** Questions slide

**Resources:** N/A

*Move into questioning techniques*

Knowing how to ask a good question can help you focus more on the other person. Of course, it starts with listening and then it's really about knowing how to phrase what comes up for you.

*Recap the difference between open/closed questions and when to use them:*

- Open – use for expanding ideas, allowing the other person to go where they need to go, coming up with options
- Closed – use when confirming information/decisions, asking for input/agreement

*Discuss the different question starters and when to use them (reinforce these as examples only):*

**What questions:** *(Use most often! Use instead of why questions)*

What's going on? What's important about that? And what else?

What would you like to do? What's your next step?

What would help you? What support would you like?

**How questions:** *(Use to dig in deeper)*

How would you like to feel? How would that help? How would you like me to help you?

How have you dealt with this in the past?

**Why questions:** *(Avoid! Change to a 'what' question OR use with caution!)*

Why do you think that? (What makes you think that?) Why is that important to you?

**Other questions:**

Would you like me to share my experience? When else have you experienced this? Can you think of a time when you were able to manage this successfully? Tell me more about that...

**Tip:** Always ask permission before sharing a personal story/experience.



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Timing	Topic / References	Facilitation Notes
	<p><b>Debrief / Group discussion</b>            (10 mins)  <b>Visual:</b> N/A  <b>Resources:</b> Everyday conversations flipchart</p>	<p><i>Debrief the activities with a discussion on things you can practice every day</i></p> <p>Many of the techniques and tips we've been discussing are things we can do in everyday conversations to develop habits around listening with all of our senses or to ask good open-ended questions</p> <p>What are some habits you'd like to develop around everyday communications?</p> <p><i>Flipchart ideas (ask a question first, pause before speaking, use what questions more often, pay attention to emotions/body language etc.)</i></p>
<p><b>Total:</b> 30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Break - Lunch</b></p>	



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Timing	Topic / References	Facilitation Notes
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<p><b>Total:</b> 35 minutes</p>	<p><b>Situations beyond peer support / Presentation &amp; reflection</b> (20 mins) <b>Visual:</b> Beyond peer support slide, Additional support slide <b>Resources:</b> N/A</p>	<p><i>Welcome students back and share the agenda for the remaining time. <b>WARN ABOUT DISCUSSION – COULD BE TRIGGERING</b></i></p> <p>Just as we listen for emotions in others, we also need to understand what can lead to more serious situations. Before we end today, let's take some time to discuss the differences between stress, distress and crisis and what we need to watch for within ourselves as well as for the peers we are supporting. And of course, we can't always know what someone is experiencing on the inside, so this is a great reminder to keep checking in with your peers and ask what's coming up for them/where they are at.</p> <p><i>Go through each and discuss what it feels like, invite students to make notes/reflect on how it sounds and feels for them.</i></p> <p><b>Stress:</b> What is stress? What causes stress for you? How does it feel? Stress is our body's reaction to a certain situation or event that we feel may be a threat to us. It may cause our heartbeat to quicken or our stomach to feel upset. We may also think differently about situations or not take time to slow down when we are stressed. Stress is a normal part of academic life.</p> <p><b>Distress:</b> How would you define distress? What kinds of situations are distressing for you? How does that feel compared to stress? Distress is typically defined as stressful situations that are hard to cope with or when our normal coping strategies are not enough. Distressful situations may occur suddenly from life events or situations and impact our routines (it can be hard to sleep, study, be with friends etc.).</p> <p><b>Pause here (do not ask students to reflect on questions for the next section)</b></p> <p><b>Crisis:</b> When distress becomes severe, there is a feeling of not being in control or being able to cope with situations or feelings. There may be thoughts of suicide or self-harm as an escape from the feelings. At this point, support can help.</p>
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		<p>If you or the peers we support use language or share thoughts that sound like they have no hope or that they may hurt themselves or others, we first need to validate and commend our peers for being vulnerable and sharing this with us. Then we can discuss how to work together around seeking additional support immediately.</p> <p>Here are some other things to watch out for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unable to complete daily tasks like getting dressed, brushing teeth, bathing, etc.</li> <li>● Withdrawing from typical social situations</li> <li>● Showing impulsive or reckless behaviour, being aggressive</li> <li>● Having dramatic shifts in mood, sleeping or eating patterns</li> </ul> <p>What else might be a sign of someone in crisis?</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b>            Remember that what might look and feel like crisis to you is personal.</p> <p>We've talked about some specific warning signs, but we can't actually know for sure that someone is in crisis from the outside. Which is why it is so important to check in and directly ask how someone is doing and what support they might need right now. As a peer supporter, our role is to always validate what they are feeling, thank them for sharing with us and then support them as they want!</p>



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	<p><b>Local support/Presentation</b>            (15 mins)</p> <p><b>Visual:</b> Additional support slide</p>	<p>Let's talk about the services we have locally to help in crisis situations:  <b><i>Where to get additional support – discuss campus resources and community resources</i></b></p> <p><i>Discuss key principles of self-care:</i>            It is also important to take care of ourselves when we are in peer support situations. If you feel any of the feelings or responses that we've been discussing, please speak with me or reach out to any of these resources.</p> <p>And please remember – you deserve to be treated with respect in any of the interactions you have as part of your role as a peer supporter.  <b><i>Highlight policies/processes for addressing harassment/anti-violence in the workplace</i></b></p>





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Timing	Topic / References	Facilitation Notes
<p><b>Total:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Summary / Presentation</b> (5 mins) <b>Visual:</b> Summary slide <b>Resources:</b> flipcharts from the session</p>	<p><i>Summarize the key points from the discussion and highlight additional resources available</i></p> <p>Let's walk the walls! (<i>Review the flipcharts</i>)</p> <p>Today we focused on practicing some skills related to your role as a campus peer supporter.</p> <p>As with many things, this is a process, a journey that you are embarking on! Your skills and comfort will grow with each new experience as a peer supporter and this group will be here with you – to support you along the way!</p> <p><i>Highlight additional resources on the LMS, ways the group will continue to work together and specific points where you will connect with each individual.</i></p> <p><i>Explain next steps for on-the-job activities and the required components of the program (learning partner recordings and reflection discussion with supervisor).</i></p>
	<p><b>Check out / Partner activity</b> (5 mins) <b>Visual:</b> N/A</p>	<p><i>End the session with a quick check-out activity:</i> Find a partner and share an idea/question you'd like to explore further</p> <p><b>Debrief:</b> Please capture those ideas/questions in your journal. You can also post them in the LMS so we can all help you find ideas, information.</p> <p><i>Thank everyone for their participation – share something you appreciated about the group and how they kept to the connection and belonging norms</i></p>



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## Day 1 Scenario discussion points

### Role and responsibilities activity scenarios

#### Scenario 1:

*Lex has been working a part-time job at the print shop on campus, completing a double major degree, while also supporting a younger sibling with their schoolwork and trying to keep their spot on the varsity hockey team.*

*Lex is feeling increasingly overwhelmed and they're not sure how they're going to be able to manage moving forward. They don't want to drop anything or disappoint anyone, but they have started to experience a sense of doom and occasional panic attacks, which confuses them more than anything.*

**Friends** might validate, commiserate or tell Lex it's okay to drop something

**Counselors** might treat the panic attacks and assess for depression

**Peer supporters** might ask what Lex wants support with, they may also share personal experiences to offer coping strategies where appropriate

#### Scenario 2:

*Jyoti is 19 and has just started at a school away from home. So far, Jyoti is enjoying their program and classes, but they are finding it hard to make friends. It seems like everyone else has already made their own groups of friends. Jyoti is spending a lot of time in their room and on social media, seeing all their friends back home having an amazing time at the local school. Jyoti is feeling intense feelings of sadness, regret, loneliness and shame around not finding a group of new friends.*

**Friends** might empathize, remind Jyoti of their existing friendships, arrange a visit/tell them to come home for a weekend

**Counselors** might assess for depression, suggest treatment options

**Peer supporters** might ask Jyoti what support they need, share personal experiences of finding groups/friends on campus where appropriate and validate the difficulty of the experience



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### Scenario 3:

*Bo was diagnosed with depression and anxiety when they were 16. They've been coping fine with medication until now. They are starting to feel some of their symptoms coming back, feeling low and unmotivated, drinking more and feeling like they can't focus on anything.*

*Bo's getting worried because they've experienced this before and it was a horrible experience that they don't want to face again.*

**Friends** might empathize, tell Bo to focus on the positive

**Counselors** might suggest other medical options, re-assess treatment plans for Bo

**Peer supporters** might ask what support Bo needs right now, share personal experiences with treatment options where appropriate, help Bo access other support services on campus

## Day 2 Scenario discussion points

### Creating connection activity scenarios

#### Scenario 1:

*A counselor asks you to meet one-on-one with a student. When you meet the student, they are clearly uncomfortable and they tell you that they actually don't want peer support.*

#### Debrief points:

Discuss potential responses and how to build trust and connection with the student (not everyone wants peer support!) and to meet them where they are at. Empathize with the student, ask if they want to have a conversation about anything today before you end the meeting. Ask students to think of times when they felt pushed into something and how that worked out! Reinforce key value of self-determination in peer support.

Discuss how to report back to the counselor what happened:

Share the facts with your supervisor first. Ask supervisor whether it's possible to share feedback with the counselor around self-determination in peer support.



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Recognize that you have your perspective based on your experiences, and others have their perspectives based on their training, perceptions, etc. - and recognize that in the end everyone is working to ensure the individual struggling receives support. Be open to the possibility that the outcome may not be exactly how you want it.

**Scenario 2:**

*You are speaking with a student who shares that they have a “bad relationship with alcohol”. They’ve decided to try to stop drinking for a little while. Later in the conversation, they mention that they’re going to run some errands with a friend who needs to grab groceries and stock up at the liquor store for the weekend. The student also mentions that they’re going to a party on the weekend.*

**Debrief points:**

Discuss the importance of starting by asking the student what support they want and respecting self-determination. Peer supporters may be tempted to create connection by sharing lived/living experience, so it is important to remember the tips around sharing experiences (will it help the peer? Will it inspire hope? Will sharing seem as though I’m competing?). Reinforce principles of harm reduction and avoiding stigma/language that could sound like judgment.

**Scenario 3:**

*A student comes in for a peer support appointment and they slowly start to share they are worried because they think their partner may be cheating on them. As they open up, it becomes clear to you that their partner is definitely cheating on them. You have been cheated on before and you went through hell. In the end, nothing worked until you finally broke up with your ex for good.*

**Debrief points:**

Discuss when it is helpful to share personal experiences. In this case, sharing a negative lived experience may not be appropriate as it could still be a raw experience to draw upon for the peer supporter and it may not inspire hope or provide a helpful way forward for the peer. Instead, the peer supporter could help the student reflect on their feelings and what they want to do about their concerns and validate how difficult these situations can be.