Using Trauma Informed Approaches within Peer Support to Create Safe Environments: Reducing and Eliminating Seclusion and Restraint

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If you have come here to help me, then you are wasting your time... But if you are here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.

-Lila Watson
Goals and Comfort Agreement

- Goals for this session:
- To introduce the Peer Engagement Guide
- To discuss the role of peers and communities in healing trauma
Peer Engagement Guide

Purpose

To help make trauma-informed peer support available to women who have experienced trauma and violence.
Contents

Section I. Fundamentals
• Introduction to Trauma and Trauma-Informed Practices
• Am I a Survivor? Applying These Concepts to Self and Others
• Peer Support Fundamentals
• Gender Politics, Criminalization of Women, and Trauma
• Cultural Considerations

Section II. Moving Into Action
• Trauma and Peer Support Relationships
• Self-Awareness and Self-Care
• Organizational Context: Working in Systems
• Trauma-Informed Storytelling and Other Healing Practices
• Self-inflicted Violence and Trauma-Informed Peer Support
• Trauma-Informed Peer Support Across the Lifespan
• Religion, Spirituality, and Trauma
• Reclaiming Power Through Social Action
Introduction to Trauma

• Why does trauma matter?
• Trauma occurs when an external threat overwhelms a person’s coping resources.
• There are many sources of trauma.
• Sometimes people are unaware that their challenges are related to earlier trauma.
• ACE study
Understanding Trauma

- Trauma affects the developing brain and body.
- Trauma can affect a person’s life over a period of time.
- People differ in their ability to give voice to those experiences.
- Can lead to profound disconnection from others.
Role of peers in healing trauma?

What is the role of peer support:

- On an individual level?
- On the systems level?

One goal of our conversation is to eliminate use seclusion and restraint...and to promote voluntary alternatives.

- How can peers participate in this action?
Role of Peers, con’t

What can happen within our peer community to

• Address power imbalances?

• Understand what culture has to do with it?

• Address our assumptions about what we share and how we think of healing?

• How can we prevent these barriers from getting in the way of our relationships?
Barriers to talking about trauma...

What barriers have you encountered in to bring trauma into conversation?

• Individual barriers?
• System barriers?
• Social barriers?
The Power of Our Stories

• “There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.” - Maya Angelou
• “All sorrows can be borne if you put them into a story or tell a story about them.” - Isak Dinesen
• “The shortest distance between two people is a story.” - Terence Garguilo
Story and our movement

• The importance of transmitting our movement from one generation to the next...
• In what ways might story, our trauma narratives and insights, be important in healing?
• In creating new awareness and insight?
• In creating social change?
Reflections

May you move all of your mountains and disturb the peace by adding to it. Carol Horos
Stay in touch!

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