

# Hospital to Home

Have you recently been admitted to hospital for mental health reasons? Are you finding it hard to successfully transition back into your community since you've been discharged from hospital? Join us every Friday 1:30-2:30PM for our Outpatient Peer Support group to set goals, discuss challenges/ accomplishments since being discharged from the hospital.



**\*This is a closed group to TDM Patients/Peers\***

## CMHA Oxford Peer Support Program

### What is Peer Support?

Peer support provides an opportunity to connect with another person (a Peer Supporter) who has lived with similar experiences and gone through their own recovery process. Having 'lived experience' of mental illness and/or addiction, using services, and reaching wellness through a journey of self-discovery and personal growth can give a person (the Peer) hope and possibility of reaching their own place of wellness and stability. Peer Supporters in designated roles receive training to ensure they have the right skills and knowledge to confidently and competently support Peers.

### A Peer Supporter can support you by

- Modelling resilience and what is possible
- Exploring coping techniques to build skills
- Promoting self-awareness, self-responsibility, self-care and support
- Instilling a belief in self through empowerment

### A Peer Supporter offers you

- Empathetic listening, encouragement, and hope
- Support with creating a vision for the future
- Help with navigating services
- Support with problem-solving to find healthy solutions, explore new ideas and start action steps
- Resources for community connections
- Support with voicing your service needs

### A Peer Supporter does *not*

- Use clinical terms
- Judge your past or current behaviour
- Tell you what you should or should not do
- Provide therapy, counselling or sponsorship
- Manage medication or provide any related advice
- Provide transportation
- Become a personal friend – this is a professional, time-limited relationship based on mutual trust, support and boundaries

### For more information

For more information on peer support at CMHA Oxford, please contact [peers@cmhaoxford.on.ca](mailto:peers@cmhaoxford.on.ca)

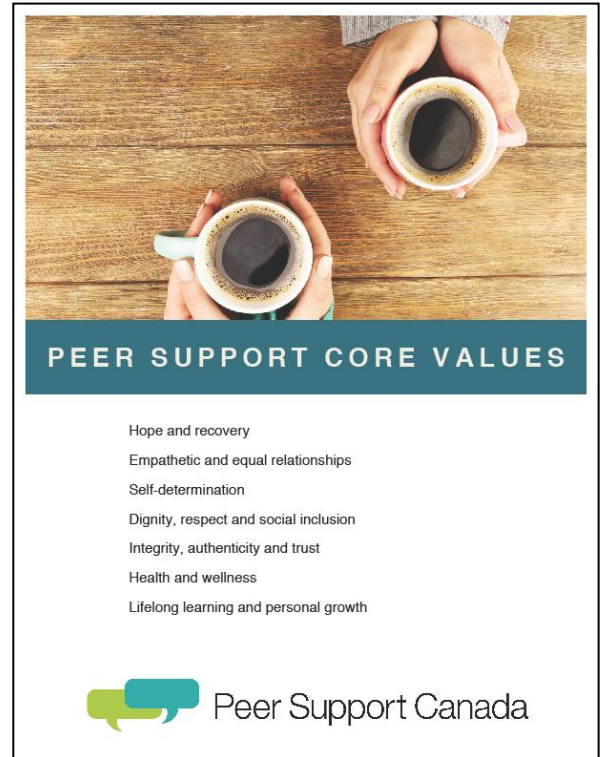
### If you are experiencing a crisis, just need someone to talk to, or need face-to-face support?

There is a reliable option to support you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:



1-866-933-2023

[www.reachout247.ca](http://www.reachout247.ca)



*"Peer support has meant so much in my own recovery. My peer really understood me; that they had 'been there' was invaluable."*

Peer Support Worker, Transitional Age Project

**THIS GROUP IS OPEN TO ANYONE LOOKING FOR A SAFE PLACE TO DISCUSS TOPICS OF RECOVERY IN A SEMI-STRUCTURED FORMAT. IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A SAFE PLACE FOR ALL WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO:**

- \* Participate as much as you feel comfortable
- \* Share the air
- \* Be mindful of the content you are sharing
- \* Be respectful of different opinions and experiences
- \* No cross-talk
- \* Listen non-judgmentally
- \* No politics or religion
- \* No obligation to stay
- \* Whats said in group stays in group
- \* Be mindful of our time in group, and how much is being shared
- \* Openness- we are experts on "us" not others, be open to change
- \* Any guidelines to add to todays group?



## Week One

### Recovery

Discussion: **What does recovery mean to you?**

“Recovery is an uncharted, unpredictable and personal journey.” (Sheehan, A. 2002)

“Overall, recovery can be summed up to mean: a deeply personal, unique process of changing one’s attitudes, feelings, goals, skills, and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful, and contributing life, even with limitations caused by illness.” (Nursing Inquiry Journal, 2011)

Recovery...

- is possible for every person with a mental illness
- is more than symptom management
- can happen even if a person continues to experience symptoms of their illness

Discussion: **How do you know you’re on the path to recovery? Does Recovery look the same for everyone?**

We might not simply be recovering from an illness. We might also be recovering from:

- the effects of illness
- trauma and loss
- stigma
- addictions
- a lack of enriching opportunities

Discussion: **What are some steps you can take in your recovery today? What kind of personal recovery strategies do you use?**

This week: **Think about what recovery means to you. Evaluate where you are on your recovery journey and where you would like to be.**

Source: Ontario Peer Development Initiative, 2012

**A Picture worth a thousand words**





# Personal Recovery INVENTORY



Recovery is a journey that requires ongoing attention and work. It is not always easy, nor is it a straight path. Frequent self-monitoring and honesty with yourself is required to be sure that you stay on track. (Feel free to continue your responses on the back as necessary.)

1.) What aspects of your recovery excite you?

---

---

2.) What benefits have you experienced since you started your journey?

---

---

3.) What/who helps you to stay accountable to your recovery program?

---

---

4.) How are you dealing with the effects of your illness and/or addiction on your life and the lives of those around you?

---

---

5.) How do you identify and manage your feelings (e.g., anger, boredom, frustration, excitement)?

---

---

6.) How do you identify and manage stress?

---

---

7.) What strategies help you to continue to develop and improve your . . .

a. physical health? 

---

b. emotional health? 

---

c. social skills? 

---

d. spirituality? 

---

8.) List at least 3 daily routines that create your recovery lifestyle, and describe how each is helpful to you.

---

---

---

---

---

## Week Two

### Self-Care

#### Discussion: **What is self-care?**

Self-care involves a willingness to extend the same compassion to yourself as you do to others. Self-care includes a commitment to nurturing your physical, emotional, mental and spiritual being. Self-care involves a deep knowing of your priorities as well as your limits; a willingness to take actions that demonstrate your commitment to yourself.

Self-care means...

- Being invested in your own well-being
- Striving to make your own well-being a priority in your life
- Engaging in activities and actions that care for your body, mind, heart, and spirit

#### Discussion: **Why is self-care important?**

Self-care techniques and general lifestyle changes can help manage the symptoms of many mental health problems. They may also help prevent some problems from developing or getting worse. Here are some tips for looking after yourself that you might find helpful:

#### **Nourish your social life**

Feeling connected to other people is important. It can help you to feel valued and confident about yourself, and can give you a different perspective on things. If you can, try to spend some time connecting with friends and family – even a text or phone call can make a difference.

If you don't have supportive friends and family around you and are feeling isolated, there are other ways you can make connections. For example, you could try going to community events where you might have some interests or experiences in common with other people there, or joining a group like a local book club or sports team.

#### **Try peer support**

When you experience a mental health problem it can feel like no one understands. Peer support brings together people who've had similar experiences to support each other. This can offer many benefits, such as:

- feeling accepted for who you are
- increased self-confidence
- meeting new people and using your experiences to help others
- finding out new information and places for support
- challenging stigma and discrimination.

#### **Make time for therapeutic activities**

There are various techniques and therapies you can safely practice on your own. For example:

- **Relaxation** – you may already know what helps you relax, like having a bath, listening to music or taking your dog for a walk. If you know that a certain activity helps you feel more relaxed, make sure you set aside time to do it.

- **Mindfulness** – mindfulness is a therapeutic technique that involves being more aware of the present moment. This can mean both outside, in the world around you, and inside, in your feelings and thoughts. Practicing mindfulness can help you become more aware of your own moods and reactions, but not everyone finds mindfulness helpful.
- **Getting into nature** – getting out into a green environment, such as a park or the countryside, is especially good for you. Even if you don't have a garden or aren't very mobile, caring for plants or animals indoors can still help you get some benefits from nature

### **Look after your physical health**

Taking steps to look after your physical health can help you manage your mental health too.

#### **Get enough sleep**

Rest when you can. This can help you have the energy to cope with difficult feelings and experiences.

#### **Avoid drugs and alcohol**

While you might want to use drugs or alcohol to cope with difficult feelings, in the long run they can make you feel a lot worse.

#### **Eat healthily**

What you eat, and when you eat, can make a big difference to how well you feel.

#### **Keep physically active**

Regular exercise doesn't have to be very strenuous or sporty to be effective – to start with you could try gentle exercise like going for a short walk, yoga or swimming. The important thing is to pick something you enjoy doing, so you're more likely to stick with it.

### **Make time for personal care**

When you're experiencing a mental health problem, it's easy for personal care to not feel like a priority.

But small everyday things, such as taking a shower and getting fully dressed, can make a big difference to how you feel.

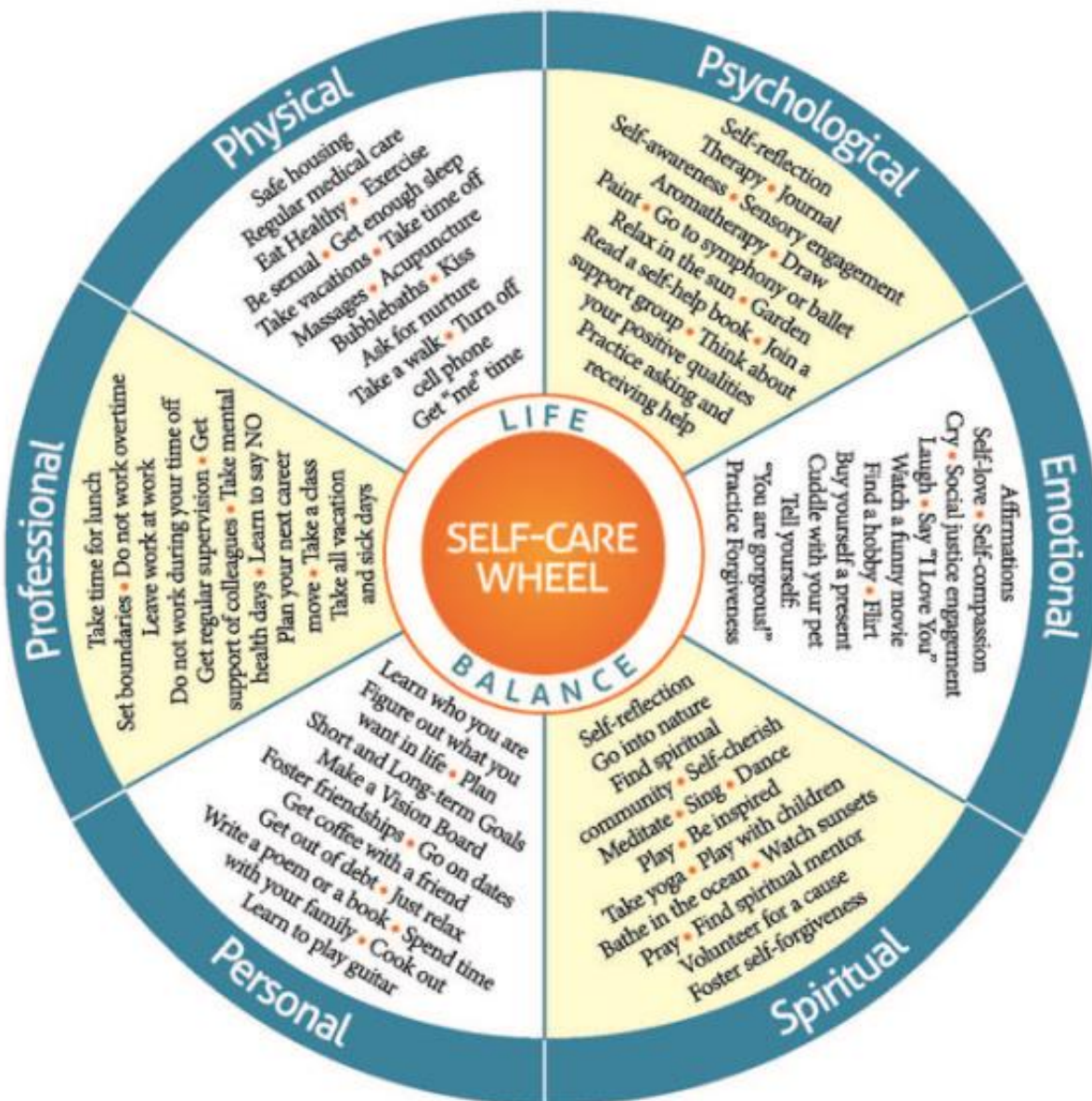
Source: Mind for better Health

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/mental-health-problems-introduction/self-care/#.W8izM-mWzIU>

Discussion: **In what ways do you engage in self-care? What areas do your self-care meet?**

This week: **Engage in a self-care activity. (I.e. make a self-care list, fill out maintenance sheet, practice self-care.)**

# SELF-CARE WHEEL



This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).

Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide.

[www.OlgaPhoenix.com](http://www.OlgaPhoenix.com)



## Week Three

### Self-Awareness

Discussion: **What is self-awareness?**

Self-awareness is a deep understanding of who you are – including your history, experiences, values, preferences, and limits. Self-awareness involves tuning into yourself, becoming acquainted with yourself, understanding yourself, forgiving yourself and loving yourself for who you are and who you want to be.

Self-awareness means...

- Engaging in the process of self-discovery
- Willingly relating the things you learn in life, to yourself, and to your experiences
- Enabling you to be more fully present and intentional in your relationships

Complete the sentences:

- **Something I have learned about myself in relation to my life is that I ...**
- **Something I have learned about myself in relation to my mental health journey is that I ...**

### Self-Responsibility

Discussion: **What is self-responsibility?**

Self-responsibility is being accountable for one's self or taking charge of one's self. Self-responsibility includes self-discipline and self-management. Self-responsibility means...

- Being accountable for yourself
- Taking ownership of your actions, roles and contributions within relationships
- Taking ownership of your personal growth and development
- Actively seeking clarification, guidance and support, as needed

Discussion:

- **In what ways have you taken responsibility of your life?**
- **In what ways have you taken responsibility for your mental health?**

### Self-Discipline

Self-discipline is the ability you have to control and motivate yourself, stay on track and do what is right for yourself and your journey.

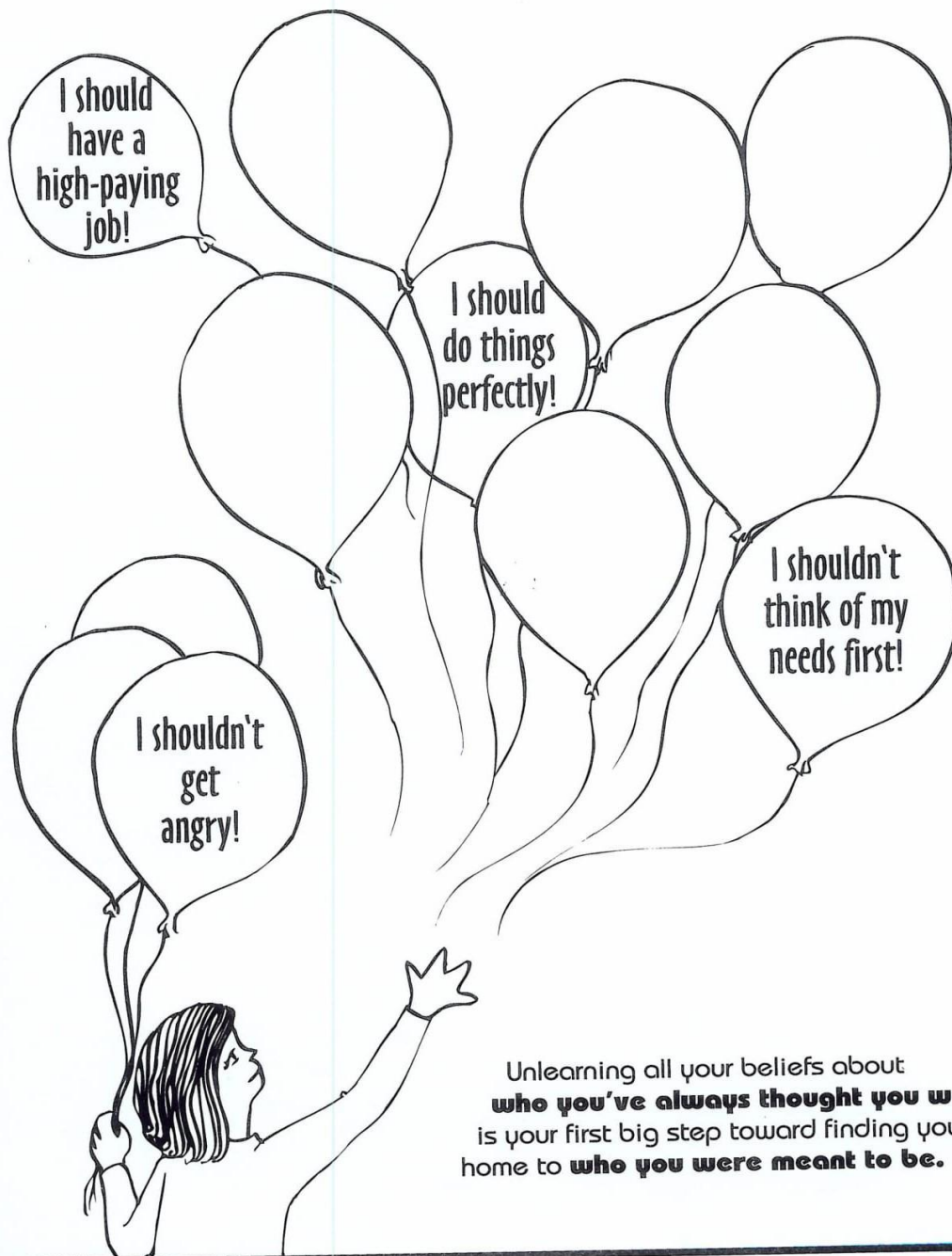
Discussion: **Can you reach your recovery goals without self-discipline? Why or why not? How do you stay motivated?**

# Letting Go of other's expectations

LETTING GO OF THE NEED TO LIVE YOUR LIFE ACCORDING TO OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS

is a skill that will result in personal freedoms.

Ask yourself...Do I follow my "shoulds" or my inner voice?



Unlearning all your beliefs about **who you've always thought you were** is your first big step toward finding your way home to **who you were meant to be.**

## Week 4

### Self-Esteem

#### **Low Self-Esteem and How It Impacts Our Lives**

Low self-esteem means having a negative overall opinion of yourself, judging or evaluating yourself negatively, and placing a negative value on yourself as a person.

Someone with low self-esteem may criticize themselves put themselves down, doubt themselves or blame themselves when things go wrong and will often dismiss any positive qualities and achievements.

Low self-esteem can negatively affect a person's performance at work, at school and in everyday life. It can cause someone to avoid challenges for fear of failure or being negatively judged. They may push themselves to over-achieve, in order to make up for what they see as lack of skill or ability. Someone with low self-esteem may neglect themselves, not care about their appearance; they may drink excessively or abuse drugs.

Low self-esteem negatively impacts relationships as well. It can cause you to settle for less than you deserve, constantly question the actions or motives of your partner or regularly ask for reassurance from your partner. It can also cause someone to stay in an abusive relationship because they feel they don't deserve any better.

**GROUP DISCUSSION:** *How has low self-esteem affected your life?*

#### **Negative Self-Talk**

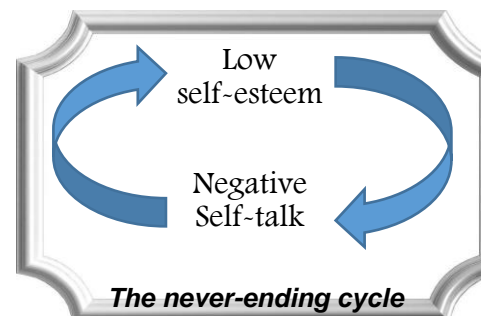
Negative self-talk is an inner dialogue that can be self-defeating. It is generally unrealistic and based on expectations or past experiences, rather than truth. Negative self-talk tends to feed our low self-esteem and vice versa, creating an endless cycle.

The good news is that this cycle can be broken.

You can test, challenge and change this negative self-talk.

With practice you can learn to notice your own negative self-talk as it is happening, and consciously choose to think about the situation in a more realistic and helpful way.

**GROUP DISCUSSION:** *What do you think are some of the more common negative self-talk statements?*



#### **Challenging Negative Self-Talk**

Once you start challenging your negative self-talk, you'll probably be surprised by how inaccurate your thinking is. There are four main types of questions to ask yourself in order to challenge your negative self-talk.

### **1. Reality Testing**

- What is my evidence for and against my negative self-talk?
- Are my thoughts factual, or are they just my interpretations?
- Am I jumping to negative conclusions?

### **2. Alternative Explanations**

- Are there any other ways I could look at this situation?
- If I were being positive, how would I perceive this situation?

### **3. Putting It in Perspective**

- Is this situation as bad as I am making it out to be?
- What is the worst thing that could happen? How likely is it to happen?
- What is the best thing that could happen?
- What is most likely to happen?
- Will this matter in a year?

### **4. Use Goal-Directed Thinking**

- Is thinking this way helping me to achieve my goals?
- Is there something I can learn from this situation, to help me do better next time?

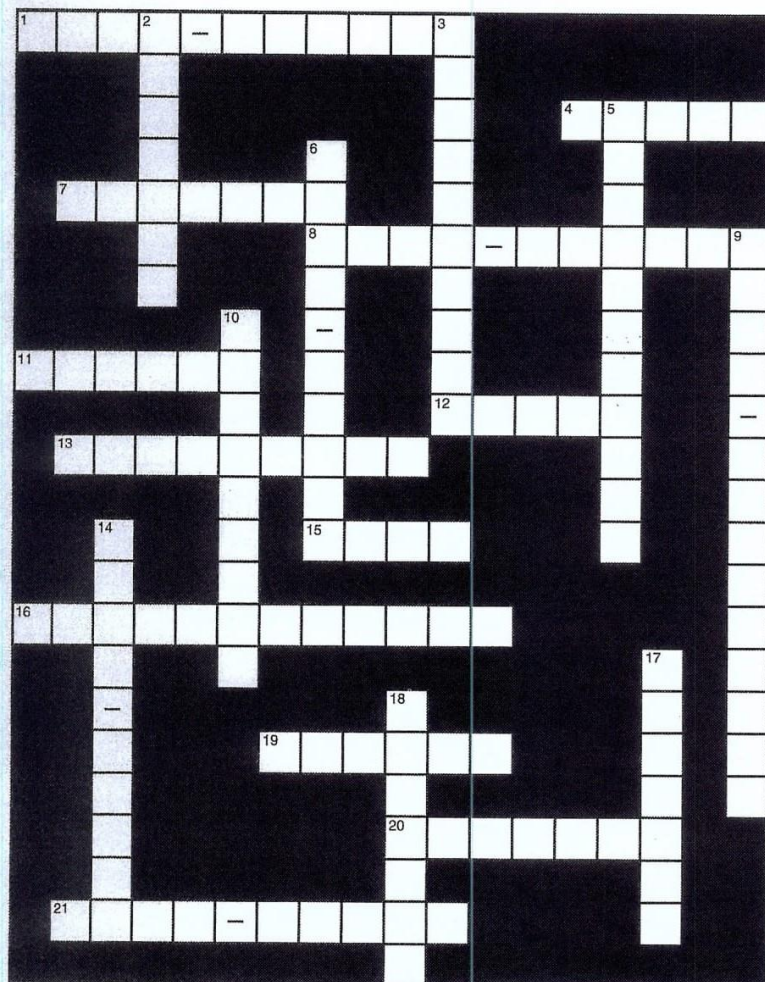
**GROUP DISCUSSION:** *What are some examples of negative self-talk and how we can challenge them?*



# SELF ESTEEM

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Are you puzzled  
... by the importance of self-esteem?  
... by it's meaning?  
... by the way it enters into everyday conversations?  
Try this puzzle... every answer relates to self-esteem.  
Have fun while learning these self-esteem terms!



### ACROSS

1. confidence and satisfaction in oneself
4. to regard highly; esteem
7. a time for nurturance through activities that are completed without rush or haste
8. strategies, techniques, and tools to manage or balance day-to-day situations or challenges
11. personal development
12. distinguishing quality or characteristic
13. a learned communication style that is honest and direct
15. an aim, an objective, or an intention
16. freedom from influence, control or determination of another or others
19. a behavior that allows one to deal with or attempt to overcome problems, challenges, stressors, and difficult situations
20. to take care of and be good to oneself
21. one's value as a person, as perceived by oneself

### DOWN

2. ability to give up resentment or desire to punish, or stop being angry
3. a balance of adequate coping skills, time-effectiveness, and self-control
5. a positive, powerful self-statement concerning the ways in which one desires to think, feel, and/or believe
6. the state of being healthy emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually
9. awareness of oneself as an individual, and as a worthwhile person
10. moral strength; integrity
14. one's conception of one's own physical self
17. to feel or show honor or esteem
18. pride and self-respect

AFFIRMATION  
ASSERTIVE  
BODY IMAGE  
CHARACTER  
COPING  
DIGNITY  
FORGIVE

GOAL  
GROWTH  
INDEPENDENCE  
LEISURE  
LIFE-SKILLS  
MANAGEMENT  
NURTURE

RESPECT  
SELF-CONFIDENT  
SELF-ESTEEM  
SELF-WORTH  
TRAIT  
VALUE  
WELL-BEING

## Week 5

### Resilience

Discussion: **What is resilience? In what ways can you build resilience?**

*Resilience is being able to cope well with problems, stress, and other difficult situations*

**What can you do to build resilience?**

- Make connections
- Accept that change is a part of living
- Set goals, and move towards them
- Make decisive actions
- Look for opportunities for self-discovery
- Nurture a positive view of yourself
- Keep things in perspective
- Maintain a hopeful outlook
- Self-care

**You can start to build resilience by asking yourself:**

- What can I do to get back on track?
- I can't control everything, so what is in my control?
- Can I change something I'm doing to make things better?
- What can I learn from this?
- Who can help?
- How can I move forward?

**How does being resilient tie in with quality of life?**



**Have you ever felt dissatisfied or like you've hit a "bump in the road" with any of the above topics?**

Being resilient is finding the resources, coping skills, and strategies to recover from the "toughness" that we may face over the course of our lives. It may seem overwhelming to have to work on all of the above topics to maintain a quality of life that is satisfactory to us. But if we take baby steps, and remain resilient when we face challenges along the way, this will increase having a sense that we are valuable to ourselves and others, having a sense of who we are, why we're here and where we belong.

**What brings you joy?**

Think of one thing that brings you joy (don't over think it!) take the time to reflect on what brings you joy, and be grateful for having the opportunity to experience what it is that brings you joy.

Examples:

Bright colors, Hot air balloons, Sound of a babies laugh, Sprinkles, Fireflies, Bubbles, Ice cream cones

## Week 6

### Quality of Life

Discussion: **What does quality of life mean to you?**

*“Somewhere to live, something to do, and someone to love”*

Quality of life is based on both personal and environmental factors. It often includes relationships with family and friends, work, neighborhood, housing, community, health, education, and spirituality.

Having a good quality of life means having a sense that we are valuable to ourselves and others, having a sense of who we are, why we're here and where we belong.

Discussion: **Rate your quality of life on a scale of 1-10. Why did you pick that number? What would you like your number to be? What is a realistic number? What small thing can you do work towards that realistic number?**

Key components of quality of life include:

- an understanding of your mental health
- a positive sense of self
- purpose and meaning
- inclusion and belonging
- a feeling of control over your own life (personal empowerment)

Discussion: **Have you found purpose and meaning in your life? Where? Where do you feel a sense of inclusion and belonging?**

This week: **Do something that provides meaning for your life,  
OR connect with someone that gives you a sense of belonging.**

Source: Your Recovery Journey, Schizophrenia Society of Canada



## Week 7

### Stigma, Discrimination and Self-Stigma

**Stigma** is a negative stereotype and **discrimination** is the behavior that results from this negative stereotype.

People who have identities that society values negatively are said to be **stigmatized**. Stigma is a reality for people with a mental illness, as they report that how others judge them is one of their greatest barriers to a complete and satisfying life.

Stigma influences self-esteem and self-confidence, and can present a barrier to recovery. Due to the stigma associated with the illness, many people have found that they lose their self-esteem and have difficulty making friends. Sometimes, the stigma attached to mental health conditions is so persistent that people who suspect they might have a mental health condition are unwilling to seek help for fear of what others may think.

#### Media Influence on Public Attitudes

Often, negative stereotypes surrounding mental illness involve perceptions that people with illness are dangerous. This perception is fueled by media stories that paint violent perpetrators as “mentally ill”. News stories sensationalize individuals with mental illness as dangerous, violent and unpredictable; while there are fewer media depictions that feature stories of recovery or positive news surrounding similar individuals.

Discussion: **Do you know of any instances where the media has sensationalized or stigmatized mental health issues?**

#### Other Examples of Mental Illness Stigma & Discrimination

- Workplaces honoring time off for physical illness, but not for mental health concerns
- Viewing someone with a mental health concern as “attention-seeking” when they present with suicidal thoughts
- Friends turning their back on someone because they’re “too depressing to be around”
- A teacher or professor denying accommodations to write exams and tests in a separate room than the rest of the students
- When someone knows about your mental illness, and just because you disagree with them about something, they accuse you of being “off your meds”

Discussion: **What are some of the stereotypes you’ve heard about people with mental illness?**

#### Self-Stigma: Effects of Internalized Stigma of Mental Disorders

Public stigma frequently results in self-stigma as “the product of internalization of shame, blame, hopelessness, guilt and fear of discrimination associated with mental illness”.

Self-stigma occurs when people with mental illness accept the public stigma and incorporate it into their self-concept.

Discussion: **Do you hold self-stigma, where your own mental wellness is concerned? What beliefs about yourself do you struggle the most with?**

### What You Can Do to Stop Stigma and Discrimination

Use the **STOP** criteria  
attitudes and actions  
stigma of mental  
It's easy, just ask  
hear:



to recognize  
that support the  
health conditions.  
yourself what you

If you see something in the media which does not pass the **STOP** criteria, speak up! Call or write to the writer or publisher of the newspaper, magazine or book; the radio, TV or movie producer; or the advertiser who used words which add to the misunderstanding of mental illness. Help them realize how their words affect people with mental health conditions.

Start with yourself. Be thoughtful about your own choice of words. Use accurate and sensitive words when talking about people with mental health conditions.

# Stamp Out the Stigma

of Mental Illness by Eliminating Labels!



The newspapers, television, movies, advertisements, etc., use labels which perpetuate the stigma (negative attitudes) of mental illness. Many of us are guilty of using those same words in our conversations with our co-workers, friends, relatives, etc.

Which of these words or phrases do you use when describing someone whose behavior is different?

___ SCHIZO	___ CRAZY	___ NUTS
___ OUT OF IT	___ WACKO	___ SICKO
___ SCREWBALL	___ BONKERS	___ BATTY
___ LOST ONE'S MIND	___ OFF THEIR ROCKER	___ MENTAL CASE
___	___	___
___	___	___
___	___	___
___	___	___

Can you think of some other words or phrases that could replace these labels?

1. <u>upset</u>	2. <u>different</u>	3. <u>creative</u>
4. _____	5. _____	6. _____
7. _____	8. _____	9. _____

**Stigma comes from ignorance and fear!**

**People often have a hard time grasping anything they can't understand or predict.  
Let's ALL help to create awareness and sensitivity toward mental illness by  
avoiding these stigmatizing words and phrases.**

## Week 8

### Sources of Support

Discussion: **Who/what are supports?**

#### **Social Support**

Social support refers to the various types of support (i.e., assistance/help) that people receive from others and is generally classified into two (sometimes three) major categories: **emotional**, **instrumental** (and sometimes **informational**) support.

- **Emotional support** refers to the things that people do that make us feel loved and cared for. It's the support that bolsters our sense of self-worth (e.g., talking over a problem, providing encouragement/positive feedback); such support frequently takes the form of non-tangible types of assistance.
- **Instrumental support** refers to the various types of tangible (hands-on) help that others may provide (e.g., help with childcare/housekeeping, provision of transportation or money).
- **Informational support** represents a third type of social support, which refers to the help that others may offer through the provision of informational resources.

<http://www.macses.ucsf.edu/research/psychosocial/socsupp.php>

**Who, or what are your sources of emotional support, and how have they helped you?**

**What are examples of hands-on support that you need now, so improve your recovery?**

**What types of information would be most helpful to you at this point in your life?**

---

#### **Spiritual Support**

##### **Definition**

Spiritual well-being can be defined in different ways but many would agree that it is closely associated with a state of inner peace and harmony. Spiritual care is any support that contributes to spiritual well-being. One way we feel spiritual support comes from being part of a group of people who care for one another (Island Health, 2013).

There is no one definition, but in general, **spirituality**:

- Is something everyone can experience
- Helps us to find **meaning** and **purpose** in the things we value
- Can bring hope and healing in times of suffering, and loss, and encourages us to seek the best relationship within ourselves, others and beyond

(Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2017).

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinformation/therapies/spiritualityandmentalhealth.aspx>

##### **Discussion**

- Coping with physical or mental illness is one of the greatest challenges in life. Being spiritually healthy helps people meet that challenge (Island Health, 2013)
- There is evidence that people who belong to a faith community, or who hold religious or spiritual beliefs, have better mental health. So, the relevance of spirituality is now being recognized in courses for mental health care students and practitioners (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2017).



## **Strengthening Spiritual Health**

- Another way we can feel spiritually supported is to practice **meditation**. Meditation is any activity of mind and body (i.e. mindfulness, and gentle yoga) that a person can do on his or her own for the purpose of attaining inner peace and harmony
- People who have a religious faith can feel spiritually supported by praying.
- Spiritual resources include community resources, meditation resources and prayer resources.

Island Health (2013)

[http://www.viha.ca/spiritual\\_care/spiritual-resources.htm](http://www.viha.ca/spiritual_care/spiritual-resources.htm)

**What can you do this week to assist with finding inner peace and harmony?**

**Can you think of a healthy activity that brings balance into your life?**

# RELATIONSHIPS AND YOU

List three personal traits you like in others:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

List three personal traits you dislike in others:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Name three positive qualities you bring or could bring to a relationship:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Name three personal accomplishments or achievements you'd enjoy sharing with someone:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

List any self-defeating behaviors you see in yourself:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Name persons you like from different backgrounds other than your own:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

How do you nurture love and friendship?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_