



The  Wellness Center
— of San Joaquin County —

VOLUNTEER PEER SUPPORT WORKERS ORIENTATION and PRACTICAL TRAINING MODULES

DISCLAIMER

Innovatively curated with original and referenced material.

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ORIENTATION MATERIAL

Volunteer Program Selection Process

Thank you for your interest in the Volunteer Program. The following information is provided to help walk potential volunteers through choosing Volunteers.

The Volunteer Program will select a limited number of individuals for the orientation/training process. Here's how people are chosen:

- Must be active at The Wellness Center for at least three months; and/or have been WRAP or NAMI Peer-to-Peer Certified.
- Must have completed all sections of the Volunteer application in the Initial Inquiry Packet before the orientation date;
- Members will have reviewed the Minimum Qualifications of Potential Volunteers outlined in the Initial Inquiry Packet;
- If you are asked to wait until the next Volunteer orientation/training, your contact form will be considered in the order it was received.

As a courtesy to your fellow Members, please notify the Lead Recovery Coach if, for any reason, you will not be able to attend the orientation. A three-day notice would be expected and appreciated. This may allow another Member to participate.

We understand that sometimes unpredictable situations may require you to postpone participating in the Volunteer Program. You may request to be considered for the next orientation.

Suppose a Volunteer Coordinator needs help to reach an individual (after two attempts) on the waitlist to confirm their participation in the orientation. In that case, they will be dropped from the said list, and another Member will be invited to participate. Please notify us if there are any changes in your contact information.

You can contact The Volunteer Coordinator, Lead Recovery Coach, or Program Director if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Wellness Center Volunteer Program.

Thanks again for your interest in The Wellness Center Volunteer Program.

Volunteer Application

VOLUNTEER APPLICANT INFORMATION (Complete name is needed.)									
Last Name:				First:			M.I.:	Suffix:	
Street Address:						Apartment/Unit #:			
City:				State:			Zip Code:		
Telephone #:				Date of Birth:					
Emergency Contact— Name:			Relationship:			Telephone #:			
What times during the week are you available?									
MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
AM		AM		AM		AM		AM	
PM		PM		PM		PM		PM	
Thank you for your interest in being a Volunteer at The Wellness Center. Please answer the following questions. The information you provide will help The Wellness Center Staff determine your possible Volunteer opportunities.									
1. Please tell The Wellness Center what motivated you to apply for a Volunteer position.									
2. What types of Volunteer activities interest you?									
3. Have you ever volunteered? If so, what were your responsibilities/duties?									
4. Do you have an individual recovery plan? If so, how do/will you track your progress?									

Volunteer Application (Continued)

5.	How will being a Volunteer at The Wellness Center help in your personal recovery?
6.	Will you be available and able to attend multiple-training sessions in order to become a Volunteer?
7.	Do you have any special needs (eg – medical, allergies, etc.) that The Wellness Center needs to be made aware of in order to accommodate your daily well-being?
DISCLAIMER AND SIGNATURE	
By signing below, I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.	
Signature:	Date:

Mission Statement

Volunteers enhance the activities and services at The Wellness Center by actively supporting and using recovery skills learned at The Wellness Center and encouraging Peers to learn and use recovery skills.

Vision Statement

Volunteers aid The Wellness Center in serving Members and help provide outreach to the community. Volunteers are role models, enhancing the activities of The Wellness Center and encouraging Peers to believe that recovery is possible.

Our Staff

All staff of PRS are in recovery from one or more mental health conditions and/or are an immediate family members of someone living with a serious mental health condition.

Stockton Wellness

Michael Fields
CEO

Jonathan Vickrey
Program Director

Troia Cephas
Lead Peer Recovery Coach

Eddie Allen
Events Coordinator /
Peer Recovery Coach

Crisanne Santini
Outreach Coordinator /
Peer Recovery Coach

Jeff Birmingham
Peer Recovery Coach

Jesse Valdez
Peer Recovery Coach

Melvin Easter
Peer Recovery Coach

Brandee Davidson
Peer Recovery Coach

Diane Gomez
Peer Recovery Coach

Amber Padilla
Peer Recovery Coach

Walter Clay
Peer Recovery Coach

Manteca Wellness

Curtis Johnson
Lead Peer Recovery Coach

Karen Walker
Consumer Advisory Council Coordinator / Assistant LPRC

Charmaine Fields
Peer Recovery Coach

Jose Vasquez
Peer Recovery Coach

Lodi Wellness

Kelsey Dillard
Lead Peer Recovery Coach

James Brown
Peer Recovery Coach

Marisol Gonzalez
Peer Recovery Coach

Participants Rights

- Participants can voluntarily access activities, resources, and services at PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County.
- Participants have the right not to be discriminated against due to (mental health and/or substance abuse disorder, gender, race, or sex).
- Employees, volunteers, and other participants have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Participants have the right to expect a safe and supportive environment at PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County.
- Participants can voice concerns about any employee, volunteer, or participant.
- Participants have the right to request a review by management regarding any action or decision restricting access to that individual's participation in PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County activities, services, and programs.
- Participants have the right to expect all personal health information to be treated by employees and volunteers respectfully and confidentially, per the Health Insurance Portability And Accountability Act (a.k.a. HIPAA).
- Participants have the right to approve or deny any release of information (a.k.a. ROI) to an outside agency or service provider. Participants also have the right to approve or deny any request by a Center employee for information from any outside agency or service provider. A record of all requests or releases will be kept in a log by Center employees.
- Participants can ask about PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County activities, services, programs, and policies.
- Participants may ask a wellness recovery coach for assistance filling out the SJCBS "Grievance, Compliment or Concern" form.

Participant Responsibilities

- Participants are responsible for following computer use, behavioral, and health and safety guidelines described in the following sections.

- Participants are responsible for treating employees, volunteers, and other participants with dignity and respect.

- Participants are responsible for communicating their choices regarding how they wish to engage in activities, services, and programs at PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County.

- Participants are responsible for developing and actively participating in their wellness recovery action plan (a.k.a. WRAP) or other recovery plans for use with the activities, services, and programs at PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County.

- Participants are responsible for respectfully voicing concerns or suggestions by using the appropriate time, place, and process. 6. Participants are responsible for their belongings while participating in PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County services.

- Participants are responsible for not using or having any form of drug or illegal substances on or inside of the property of PRS/The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County.

Volunteer Name (please print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Expectations And Standards

Expectations

- Volunteers commit to at least three months of active participation as a Volunteer and a Member at The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County.
- A volunteer must actively participate in their recovery by participating in and becoming certified in some of the following:
 - Create and continually update their own Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP).
 - Attend and complete a NAMI Peer-to-Peer course.
 - Regularly attend a support group in addition to those you attend at The Wellness Center.
 - Attend mandatory Volunteer Meetings and Training.
 - Request one-on-one Peer Counseling meetings with a Recovery Coach at The Wellness Center when you need extra help.
- Volunteers agree to strive to be a positive influence and example of progressive recovery. Volunteers shall adhere to the highest ethical standards of conduct in all business activities, including integrity, honesty, courtesy, respect, and fairness.

Standards

- While on the center's premises, Volunteers will keep a healthy and drug-free work environment while on the center's premises by immediately telling a staff member if they notice something unlawful or goes against PRS - The Wellness Center's guidelines.
- No form of verbal or physical abuse will be tolerated.
- Volunteers dress appropriately while on the premises.
- Volunteers respect the property of the wellness center, coworkers, & members.
- Volunteers respect the management team's chain of command, decisions, and authority.
- Volunteers immediately report all accidents and/or incidents to their Supervisor.
- Volunteers do not discriminate because someone is different.
- Volunteers avoid all conflicts of interest that involve private financial gain with members of The Wellness Center.
- Volunteers respect the boundaries between work and personal relationships.
- A positive role model serves as an example – inspiring others to live meaningful lives. Role models show people how to live with integrity, optimism, hope,

determination, and compassion. They play an essential part in someone's recovery and positive development.

Appearance Standards and Expectations

At PRS - The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County, we expect staff, volunteers, and interns to dress appropriately in casual clothes while maintaining a semi-professional appearance. You may dress comfortably but do not wear revealing clothes such as crop tops, short skirts, or shorts.

Staff, including volunteers, should not wear clothes that could make their coworkers uncomfortable or offended. As well as revealing clothing, this extends to clothes with slogans or images that could offend subjects such as religion, sexuality, politics, age, ethnicity, disability, and gender identity. While you can wear more casual clothing items, you still need to look professional. This means avoiding torn or dirty clothing or items with offensive messages or images.

PRS - The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County expects staff to be well-groomed and well-kept, with appropriate facial hair and hairstyles and a clean appearance with washed clothes that are not visibly frayed or in bad condition.

We also expect staff to have reasonable hygiene standards. Employees, Interns, and volunteers should regularly bathe or shower, maintain good oral hygiene, and use deodorant to minimize body and breath odor. If a medical condition causes a smell, please bring this to management's attention.

Volunteer Attendance

What do you do if you can not make it to your scheduled shift as a volunteer?

One of your most important responsibilities as a Volunteer is to be punctual for work. Being on time demonstrates your professionalism and dedication to your job. We do recognize that there are times when absences or tardies are unavoidable. Please communicate with the senior staff anytime you are unavailable.

If you are going to miss work, you should call The Wellness Center. You may contact a volunteer coordinator by calling the main number of The Wellness Center 209/451-3977 and letting the Receptionist know the purpose of your call and that you would like to speak to, and/or leave a message for a Volunteer Coordinator. A voicemail message is expected if no one answers the main line. Voicemails should include your name, your “Volunteer” title, and information about your expected attendance (“I will be approximately [number of minutes] late today” or “I am unable to come in for my shift for [number of days]”).

What to do if you're planning time off from work?

If you are planning time off for a vacation or have other personal matters, notify the Volunteer Coordinator or Lead Recovery Coach as soon as possible. Early notification allows for adjusting the work assignments for The Wellness Center Volunteer Program. Late notice may cause an inconvenience for The Wellness Center Staff and the Members.

Our policy is to secure a two-week notice before taking a vacation or any planned time off. Please give written notice to the Volunteer Coordinator and/or Program Director. A holiday schedule will be provided if there are designated holidays when the Center is closed.

What are the hours of operation at The Wellness Center?

The Wellness Center is open Monday through Friday — 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
By appointment for one-on-ones: 8:30 am – 9:00 am and 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm
The Wellness Center telephone #: 209/451-3977.

Volunteer Personal Policies And Procedures

This handbook provides general information concerning policies and procedures for Peer Recovery Services (PRS) volunteering. It is important to understand that the guide only highlights the organization's policies, practices, and benefits for volunteers' education. Therefore, it cannot be construed as a legal document or employment contract.

Becoming A Volunteer Or Intern

- PRS is an equal opportunity employer. The organization's policy is to recruit and place volunteers without regard to race, color, National origin or background, ancestry, religion, gender, age, marital status, Veteran's status, physical disability, or any basis prohibited by statute. Volunteer and intern opportunities are open to all qualified applicants based on their experience, aptitude, and ability.
- Each applicant for a volunteer position must submit an approved application form or résumé. Applicants meeting the basic qualifications will be interviewed by the appropriate personnel supervision, including the Volunteer Coordinator, Lead Recovery Coach & Program Director.

Supervision

- All paid and volunteer staff is responsible to the Lead Recovery Coach & Program Director.
- Other staff may be designated by the Lead Recovery Coach & Program Director as the supervisor for a specific project or program. Volunteers working on that project or in that program shall be directly responsible to such designated supervisors for the work performed.

General Conditions

- Definitions: A volunteer is a person who works on an occasional basis without compensation; Work time may be either regularly scheduled or not regularly scheduled.
- Each regularly scheduled volunteer position will have an approved job description; volunteers working occasionally will be provided specific tasks to complete on the volunteer work day.
- Volunteers are expected to appear and dress appropriately for their position and working conditions. Because of the nature of the organization and the importance of

dealing correctly with the public, conduct, and demeanor must always be polite, friendly, competent, and helpful.

- Within the guidelines and instructions provided by supervisors, volunteers are expected to be able to work as directed and to maintain friendly and helpful relations with all other PRS Staff.
- All volunteers are expected to attend training and meetings as their supervisor requires.

Work Time

- The Volunteer Coordinator, Lead Recovery Coach & Program Director, or designee shall establish search shifts or work schedules as necessary to successfully complete program operations. Prospective volunteers shall be informed of the hours/shifts they are engaged in. The Volunteer Coordinator, Lead Recovery Coach & Program Director may change the hours, shifts, or shift assignments to operate PRS programs efficiently.
- All volunteers are expected to arrive for all scheduled work on time and be able to carry out their job duties. Punctuality and regular attendance during scheduled work. Our requirements for continuing work as a volunteer with PRS.
- All volunteers must personally notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible concerning any absence unless a verifiable emergency is a cause for failure to report as required.
- Volunteers must call in each schedule worked to advise their immediate supervisor if ill. Any volunteer absent from work for more than two (2) scheduled work times without notifying their immediate supervisor will be considered to have voluntarily quit.
- Volunteer scheduled work does not include traveling to or from a volunteer work site.
- Volunteers over five (5) hours per day are entitled to a meal break. The immediate supervisor determines the actual timing of the meal break and the length of the meal break.
- Volunteers are entitled to appropriate rest breaks determined under State and Federal law. Time for rest breaks cannot be accumulated from one day to the next, added to meal breaks, or used to arrive late or leave early.
- All volunteers must keep an accurate record of the total hours worked and the number of hours worked for which program. Falsifying or completing time cards for

other volunteers is considered a severe violation of PRS rules and will result in discipline up to and including termination.

- It is the responsibility of each volunteer to immediately notify their supervisor of any change in address, telephone number, or any other matter pertinent to the relationship with PRS.

Benefits

- PRS shall carry Worker's Compensation as required by law.
- PRS does not provide volunteers with medical, dental, vision, or other health care services.
- PRS does not reimburse volunteers for mileage accumulated during volunteer duties.
- Holidays observed by PRS are determined at the beginning of each year; immediate supervisors can provide the list of dates.

General Standards

- All volunteers are expected to do their part in keeping all facilities clean, neat, and as organized as possible. All volunteers are responsible for keeping their work area and environment clean.
- Smoking is only allowed in designated areas and as permitted by State Law.
- Offensive language is not appropriate in the workplace.
- The use of business telephones is for PRS-related business. Personal calls are a privilege that, if abused, may result in their prohibition.
- Use of personal vehicles may be necessary during normal business conduct. The following policies must be followed when using a private vehicle for work:
- All volunteers using their vehicle for business will supply PRS proof of insurance, a copy of their valid California driver's license, and a copy of their DMV record if requested.
- All accidents occurring well on PRS business must be immediately reported to the Volunteer Coordinator, Lead Recovery Coach, or Program Director.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance while performing work for PRS is illegal and shall result and immediate termination.
- Moving violations and parking tickets incurred in the course of business are the financial responsibility of the volunteer.

- Volunteers are prohibited from using their vehicles to transport clients during business.
- Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that causes no harm to PRS, its clients, and fellow volunteers. Listing every action that may harm the organization, clients, or staff is impossible. Still, the following acts will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination:
 - Theft from the agency or any client or coworker.
 - Possession, storage, buying, selling, or use of alcohol or other controlled substance is, or being under the influence of such while at a volunteer work site.
 - Sexual harassment of coworkers and our clients.
 - Possession of firearms or other weapons while on PRS premises or while on PRS business.
 - Illegal acts attempted or committed against PRS clients or staff.
 - Practicing any form of discrimination in delivering services to clients based on race, color, national origin, age, gender, or handicap.
 - Falsification of written records or reports, including time cards and logs.
 - Solicitation or acceptance of cash or other favors in exchange for services typically provided to clients.
 - Violation of client confidentiality. HIPAA
 - Insubordination or uncooperative conduct, including refusing to follow a supervisor's legitimate requests, instructions, or orders or refusing to abide by employers' rules or policies.
 - Disorderly behavior (verbal, psychological, or physical) that jeopardizes the well-being of PRS clients or coworkers.
 - Abandonment of job or failure to report for work.
 - Transporting clients.
 - Allowing unauthorized persons to access PRS premises, facilities, equipment, records, documents, or information.
 - Repeated absences or tardiness.
 - Sleeping on the job.
 - Using false or misleading information to obtain any position with PRS.
 - Borrowing cash or other items from or lending them to PRS clients.
 - Unauthorized use of PRS property or facilities for personal purposes.
 - Misuse or misappropriation of donations intended for PRS clients.
 - Failure to report client or staff injuries to the appropriate supervisor immediately.

Special Volunteer Policies

- PRS Will not tolerate sexual harassment by any staff member, whether directed toward clients or other staff. When a charge has been made, the incident will be investigated thoroughly, and appropriate action will be taken; when necessary, to protect clients, other staff, or the agency, that action may include termination. All staff should be aware that sexual harassment is any activity of a sexual or suggestive nature that causes discomfort and someone else. Whether or not there's been sexual harassment largely depends on the complaining party. All staff should be aware that they may engage in activities that they believe are innocent but offensive to others. Any incident involving a complaint of sexual harassment must be reported to the appropriate program manager and the Lead Recovery Coach or Program Director immediately.
- PRS strives to maintain a working environment that is safe for everyone. The use of drugs is an unsafe and possibly illegal practice that can lead to accidents, serious injury, inappropriate and disruptive behavior, poor work performance, and serious health problems for the user. If a volunteer is found to be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other controlled substances upon arrival at work, during work, or if I volunteer, distribute, dispense, trade, or offer for sale search items on PRS Premises, That volunteer will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. If a volunteer reports for work visibly impaired and cannot perform the required job functions, the volunteer will not be allowed to work. PRS understands that dealing with a substance abuse problem can be difficult. To that end, when a volunteer voluntarily discloses a substance abuse problem, PRS will assist the person in obtaining necessary treatment; while receiving treatment, a volunteer will be placed on an indefinite leave of absence.
- PRS understands that successful engagement of clients often requires building strong working and personal relationships between a volunteer and a client. At the same time, to prevent the appearance of a conflict of interest, protect the safety and privacy of staff, and avoid circumstances that can promote charges of harassment, all volunteers of PRS are urged not to engage and any activities that could be perceived as fraternization with any client of PRS. Fraternization in this context includes, but it's not necessarily limited to, dating, any form of sexual contact, entering into a financial or business relationship, borrowing or lending personal property, or allowing a client to reside, for any length of time, at a volunteer's

residence. Failure to adhere to the standard will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- Volunteers are to report all accidents to their supervisor immediately. A Worker's Compensation report must be filed whenever a job-related injury occurs, whether or not it results in time lost from the job. A doctor's release is required before a volunteer can return to work following an injury that causes a loss of time from the job. Any volunteer witnessing an accident must provide a full, detailed, immediate report of the incident.
- Information is not given to the media by any volunteer unless expressly authorized. If the press contacts you, the volunteer should request the name, telephone number, and organization represented. That information should be provided as soon as possible to the Program Director for appropriate action.
- Each volunteer of PRS is expected to agree to and abide by the following statement: As a volunteer of PRS, I understand that all client and staff information is confidential and should not be discussed with any person or persons outside the organization and that discussion regarding confidential information within the organization should occur in circumstances where that information remains confidential. Copying, removing, or allowing unauthorized access to agency or client documents, files, mailing lists, or any other distribution of client or agency information is not permitted. I understand that should I breach this confidentiality requirement, my position with PRS will be terminated immediately.

I understand and agree to abide by all of the above policies.

Volunteer's Signature

Date

San Joaquin County Harassment-Free Work Environment Policy

Purpose

San Joaquin County values each employee and strives to provide a nurturing environment where there is mutual respect and support. To foster such an environment, the County is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from harassment because of an employee's age, ancestry, color, creed, marital status, medical condition (cancer or genetic characteristics), national origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation or belief, pregnancy, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.

Definitions

San Joaquin County defines harassment as behavior that intimidates, threatens, degrades, torments, or places demands upon another, based upon one or more of the protected categories listed above, to the extent that the conduct unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal conduct, such as ethnic or racial slurs, epithets, derogatory or insulting comments, taunting, heckling, unwanted sexual advances or comments, and racial or sexual jokes;
- Physical conduct, such as impeding or blocking movement, gestures, unwelcome touching;
- Visual conduct, such as derogatory or sexually oriented posters, photographs, letters or other writings, emails, cartoons, or drawings;
- Treating in a disparate manner; or
- Retaliating for reporting harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited under federal and state law. In general sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted sexual advance, request for sexual favors, and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The actions above will be considered sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or
- Condition of an individual's employment; or
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with
- an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or
- Offensive working environment.

Reporting Harassment Complaints

An employee who believes they have been a victim of harassment is encouraged to immediately report the complaint to the appropriate supervisor, manager, Department Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Coordinator, department head, or the County EEO Office. A violation of this policy will receive prompt and appropriate action.

Complaints of harassment from employees shall be processed under **Civil Service Rule 20**. The appropriate department official shall handle complaints from non-employees. Corrective action up to and including termination shall be taken against any individual violating this policy.

Responsibility

Each employee of the County should be aware that the County is opposed to all forms of illegal harassment, including sexual harassment, and such behavior is prohibited by law and County policy.

It is an employee's right to raise the issue of harassment. Managers and supervisors shall ensure that employees in their areas of responsibility are informed of their rights to a harassment-free work environment and of the appropriate steps to take if they believe these rights have been violated. Any member of County management and supervisory personnel who receives a report involving potential harassment is responsible for recording adequate information for conducting an inquiry and making immediate contact with the appropriate Department EEO Coordinator or County EEO Office.

This policy shall be posted within the County departments and made available to employees. Information about the process for filing employment discrimination complaints under Civil Service Rule 20 can be obtained by contacting the appropriate Department EEO Coordinator, County EEO Office at (209) 468-3374, or through the EEO Web site at <http://www.sjgov.org/eoo/>.

Retaliation

It is a violation of this policy to retaliate or engage in reprisal because a person has raised a concern, filed a complaint of, or witnessed harassment. Acts of retaliation are subject to appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination. However, if the County determines that an individual intentionally provided false information regarding a complaint, disciplinary action up to and including termination may be taken against the person who gave the false information

Training

The County of San Joaquin has implemented mandatory training for all employees on organizational policies and procedures prohibiting discrimination, including sexual harassment and cultural diversity training.

Standards Of Conduct For Contractors and Volunteers of San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services

Integrity And Compliance

San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services (SJCBS) is committed to compliance, by letter and spirit, with all federal, State, and local laws and regulations and rules and guidelines that apply to SJCBS operations and services. SJCBS Volunteers shall adhere to the highest ethical standards of Conduct in all business activities, including integrity, honesty, courtesy, respect, and fairness. All Volunteers are responsible for helping to create and maintain a culture that promotes the highest standards of ethics and compliance with an SJCBS.

SJCBS Volunteers, contractors, or Volunteers of contractors shall not engage in any activities that violate laws, regulations, or rules. SJCBS Volunteers, contractors, and Volunteers of contractors are expected to promptly report any activities that may violate any SJCBS Policies, Standards of Conduct, or any federal, State, or local law, regulation, rule, or guideline. Any violations or alleged violations may be reported anonymously (see Section VI "CONFIDENTIAL DISCLOSURE" regarding mandatory reporting methods).

SJCBS Volunteers, contractors, or Volunteers of contractors are responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to SJCBS policies and attending mandatory Compliance training.

Volunteers should consult with their supervisors if there is a question about these standards or any County policy or procedure. Supervisors, in turn, may contact their Program Director or senior Administration staff if further clarification is required. Staff may also contact any member of the Compliance Steering Committee with any concerns regarding violations of the above-listed standards.

SJCBS Volunteers, contractors, or Volunteers of contractors shall ensure that any billing submitted to a payor source accurately reflects services provided and adequately documented. Failure to do so may constitute fraud and result in disciplinary action and/or criminal charges.

SICBHS Volunteers and contractors can only authorize the expenditure of funds on behalf of SICBHS or the County if approved in advance by SJCBS Administration.

Professionalism

All professional staff must maintain and update their professional licenses and/or /or certifications and submit a copy of the professional license and/or certificate at the time of renewal to their respective department manager. The individual Professional staff member is responsible for completing new professional requirements for maintaining their separate licenses and/or certifications. SJCBS employs professionals with proper credentials and ensures that all care team members have experience and expertise in the area(s) in which they provide services. All Volunteers are expected to participate in ongoing education programs to update and improve their skills, conform to the codes of ethics and standards of their respective professions - and exercise sound judgment in performing duties as designated by Administration.

The general public, clients, and Volunteers are always to be treated with the utmost courtesy and personal regard. Volunteers are expected to be positive examples for clients. SJCBS strives to assist the community, clients, and staff so that no harm is caused. No Volunteer is expected to tolerate personal abuse, offensive language, or intimidation. Any such instance should be reported immediately to a supervisor or SJCBS Administration. SJCBS staff are expected to provide services without regard to age, ancestry, color, creed, marital status, medical condition, national origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation or belief, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.

All Volunteers are expected to adhere to the highest legal and professional standards of confidentiality. Records may only be removed from SJCBS grounds or programs with

permission and may only be transported by authorized persons. Volunteers who receive a subpoena to appear in court or send client records to an attorney must advise the supervisor. The supervisor or director shall instruct the Volunteer on how to proceed.

When there is probable cause to suspect that a Volunteer (While performing their duties or sanctioned program activities) Is under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or other substances, the Volunteer may be required to submit to urine or blood testing. County guidelines are delineated in the County Employment Policies.

Any form of client abuse (meaning physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, intimidation, cruel punishment, fiduciary abuse, or other treatment with resulting physical harm or pain or mental suffering, or the deprivation by a caregiver of goods or services which are necessary to avoid bodily injury or mental anguish) by an SJCBS Volunteer, is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as well as criminal charges.

Any SJCBS mental health practitioner who has knowledge of or reasonably suspects that any form of client abuse has been inflicted upon a minor, older adult, or dependent adult client shall report immediately or as soon as possible by telephone the known or suspected abuse to the County child or adult protective services agency, the police, or the ombudsperson if the client is in a long-term care facility. The reporter shall prepare and send a written report within two days of the telephone report.

Confidentiality

All Volunteers must sign an Oath of Confidentiality, attend mandatory Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training, and be familiar with agency confidentiality policies. All client information is strictly CONFIDENTIAL and is protected by state and federal laws. Client information can only be shared outside the delivery system with prior client authorization. Access to client information is restricted to only those staff members with a job-related responsibility. Breach of confidentiality may subject Volunteers to disciplinary action, criminal charges, and civil penalties.

Workplace Conduct

SJCBS recognizes that its greatest asset and strength is its workforce. SJCBS is committed to providing an equal opportunity work environment where clients and colleagues are treated with respect, dignity, and courtesy. Volunteers and clients have a right to an environment free from harassment or intimidation. County departments are public service agencies, and Volunteers' Conduct and language on the job shall be appropriate to a professional work setting. Speech, gestures, or written material of a

sexual nature that is offensive to staff is prohibited. All staff shall be aware of the sexual harassment policy and possible disciplinary action that may result from violating this policy.

Work Environment

Each Volunteer is responsible for keeping work areas neat, clean, and as presentable as clean as possible at all times. At the close of work, all equipment should be turned off if appropriate, drawers closed or locked, file cabinets locked, windows closed, and lights switched off.

Official Business

Use of the telephone or email for personal communication should be appropriate and necessary and kept to a strict minimum. County equipment shall not be used for personal business.

Appearance

Personal appearance directly affects the impression clients and the general public have of the County. Volunteers must dress appropriately for the job and conform to SJCBS Appearance Standards. Appropriateness may be discussed with a supervisor if the Volunteer needs clarification.

Accidents

Report all accidents promptly to the Program Director and provide all pertinent information. If a contract agency Volunteer is injured, the Volunteer should immediately notify their employer and follow the employer's procedure for completing and submitting workers' compensation forms. The contracting agency Volunteer should also inform the SJCBS Manager/Supervisor.

County Vehicles

County vehicles are to be used for County business only. Use of County vehicles for personal errands is prohibited. Volunteers who drive County cars must have a valid driver's license and attend a mandatory safe driving class. The Volunteer's responsible for maintaining a current driver's license and submitting a copy of the renewal to the Administration.

Parking

Volunteers are to park in the designated parking areas and display assigned parking permits (if applicable). Parking in loading zones, visitor spaces, or areas designated for special purposes may subject Volunteers to disciplinary action. In addition to disciplinary action, legal citations shall be issued for parking in RED ZONES or designated HANDICAPPED ZONES.

Removing Property

Client records or information, documents, supplies, assets, or capital items are not to be removed from the facility without prior approval of the SJCBS Administration. Taking these items without permission constitutes theft and may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal charges.

Attendance

If the Volunteer requests an adjusted work schedule, one of the following reasons must be given unless the supervisor makes an exception:

- Temporary childcare problem.
- Staff attending school. The coursework must be working toward an advanced degree. The degree and coursework would be pertinent to the Volunteer's position, and the knowledge and skills obtained would benefit the organization.
- Providing pre-approved direct service during irregular work hours, e.i. an evening group.

Absence from the job, including tardiness to work, returning late from lunch or break, and unauthorized early departure, may be subject to hours adjustment.

Illness will be reported to the supervisor or designated staff at the earliest possible opportunity.

Time off, whether vacation, compensatory time, medical appointments, or other reasons, is to be requested on the appropriate form and approved before the leave. Requests for leave must be submitted in advance to allow for proper approval and coverage. The supervisor has the authority to grant or deny leave requests. Vacation or other leave should be used at times mutually agreeable to the Volunteer and the department.

Volunteer Client Relationships

SJCBHS Volunteers should be aware of their influential position concerning clients, and they shall avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons. SJCBHS Volunteers, therefore, should avoid dual relationships with clients that are reasonably likely to impair professional judgment or lead to exploitation. SJCBHS Volunteers who are registered interns with or licensed by the Board of Behavioral Sciences, Board of Psychology, Board of Registered Nursing, Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians, Board of Pharmacy, the Medical Board, or any other applicable licensing and/or certification board, shall follow all of the rules and regulations per the California Business and Professions Codes or other state laws or regulations that oversee these disciplines.

- Volunteers should only become involved with clients as specified under program policies and procedures. All client contacts are limited to program premises only and/or sanctioned program activities.
- Developing social, financial, and/or personal relationships between a client and an SJCBHS Volunteer is prohibited during treatment and for at least two (2) years from the last service date. Failure to comply with this standard may result in disciplinary and/or legal action.
- Any SJCBHS Volunteer (or any family member or Volunteer of an SJCBHS Volunteer), whether that Volunteer is employed by SJCBHS or the Public Conservator's Office, may not have any personal financial interest or personal gain of any kind in any of the decisions or transactions that are made on behalf of any client or conservatee; they shall not hold an adverse interest to any client or conservatee.
- Any SJCBHS Volunteer or Volunteer of the Public Conservator's Office, whether personally or through an associate, may not be involved in any transaction or expenditure for any client or conservatee or the estate of any client or conservatee in which the Volunteer, family member of a Volunteer, or Volunteer of the Volunteer, or their financial interests, may realize a benefit or be impaired as a result of the outcome of the transaction or procedure. Any Volunteer engaging in such an act shall be subject to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from employment, and shall be personally responsible if the court requires financial restitution.

- If any Volunteer knows of any interest as defined above, they must immediately report this information to their supervisor, the Public Conservator, or SJCBS Administration.
- Sexual activity between an SJCBS Volunteer and a client is prohibited by law and may constitute a crime for which the Volunteer may be prosecuted. Activity of this nature shall result in disciplinary action by SJCBS and/or a report to) appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- When a Volunteer has a preexisting personal relationship with a client and is expected to provide direct services to that client, consultation with a supervisor is required. A Volunteer shall not be in a treatment relationship with the client under such circumstances.
- Volunteers may not sponsor SJCBS clients in twelve-step or other self-help groups.
- Accepting gifts from contractors, care providers, or others is strictly prohibited, except as below:
 - When gifts are offered, they must be firmly refused and the county's policy explained; subsequently, the Volunteer's supervisor must be apprised of the incident: Volunteers may participate in potluck events with care providers, contract agencies, and other mental health providers as long as the Volunteer contributes their fair share to the event. When visiting care homes, staff may accept only beverages and/or food as part of the standard social protocol; however, it must be consumed on the premises.
- Exceptions may only be authorized by a Senior Manager under the following circumstances:
 - If the industry standard is such, food or small item of minimal monetary value is considered appropriate and given by agencies, contractors, community-based organizations, pharmaceuticals, etc. Some examples include health fairs, employment fairs, pharmaceutical displays, organized presentations, meetings, or office appointments.
 - If the standard for the agency providing the food or gift and the like is such that the same is offered to all their staff at the same time (e.g., coffee, snacks, holiday dinner) or all their partner agencies, and the like, and it is of small monetary value.
- Volunteers shall not accept gifts directly from clients or the guardians of minors unless all of the following seven conditions apply:

- The giving of the gift is considered therapeutic to the client;
- There is no inappropriate clinical dynamic surrounding the gift;
- There would be a poor clinical outcome if the gift were refused;
- The cost of the gift is small,
- The staff person receiving the gift does not individually benefit and shares the gift with others;
- The client is informed of the no-gift policy;
- The explicit approval of the staff member's supervisor has been obtained.

Conflict Of Interest

County Volunteers must avoid all conflicts of interest involving their public employment. A conflict of interest, by technical definition, is the misuse of general jobs for direct or indirect private financial gain. However, in a broader sense, a conflict of interest encompasses any interest potentially adverse to the welfare of one's public employer, including any activity where one's loyalties may be called into question (San Joaquin County Administrative Manual, Section 1101.1).

County Volunteers should only provide services to the County as independent contractors if it meets an express exception cited in San Joaquin County Administrative Manual, Section 1103.

County Volunteers, as members of the public, may use the facilities and services of County departments that are made available to the general public, provided that such facilities or services are to be made available to County Volunteers on the same conditions and terms as the services or facilities are made available to the general public. County Volunteers are entitled to no preferences (San Joaquin County Administrative Manual, Section 1103).

County Volunteers shall not be financially interested in any contract made by them. Nor shall County Volunteers be purchasers at any sale or vendors at any purchase they make in their official capacity (California Government Code, Section 1090).

County Volunteers shall not engage in any employment, activity, or enterprise for compensation that is inconsistent, incompatible, in conflict with, or inimical to their

duties as Volunteers or with the duties, functions, or responsibilities of the agency by which they are employed (California Government Code, Section 1126).

SJCBHS may limit a Volunteer's employment in other jobs, activities, or enterprises if it interferes with the performance of the Volunteer's County job or if there is a conflict of interest as specified in California Government Code 1126. (San Joaquin County Work Rules, Section 9). Therefore, SJCBHS Volunteers are required to disclose any possible conflict of interest with their supervisor or manager.

SJCBHS staff who engage in behavioral health-related private practice or business are not to use employment at SJCBHS as a means of adding clients and/or financial gain to these personal endeavors:

- SJCBHS staff are not to recommend or refer clients to themselves in these private ventures. When a client specifically requests to be served by an SJCBHS staff's private practice or business, the Volunteer and client shall carefully follow the SJCBHS policy "Behavioral Health Related Private Practice/Business - Conflict of Interest".
- SJCBHS staff are not to recommend or refer clients to other Volunteers' behavioral health-related private practice or business. Exemptions may be made on a case-by-case basis upon prior written approval by the Volunteer's senior manager and a senior administrator from Behavioral Health Services Administration.

Confidential Disclosure

Volunteers must adhere to the highest ethical standards at all times. A Volunteer who believes that an inappropriate or unethical practice is occurring, or has happened in an SJCBHS facility or program, must report the activity immediately!

An effort has been made to ensure that Volunteers have a variety of avenues available through which to raise their concerns about compliance. Notification may be made to the Volunteer's immediate supervisor, any manager, the SJCBHS Compliance Officer, or the Director of SJCBHS. The Volunteer may also confidentially call the 24-hour toll-free Compliance Hotline at 1-866-WARN-SJC. Calls to the Compliance Hotline may be anonymous at the caller's discretion. All issues raised shall be promptly investigated.

Certification

I certify that I have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the Standards of Conduct. I certify that I understand that violating these standards or rules may result in disciplinary action, including termination and/or other legal action.

I certify my intention to comply with the Standards of Conduct. I understand that when necessary, I may seek advice from the appropriate supervisor, Volunteer Coordinator, Lead Recovery Coach, and/or Program Director concerning appropriate actions that I may need to take to comply with the Standards of Conduct.

Volunteer Name (please print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date

Contract Agency's Executive Director Signature

Date

Behavioral Health Director Signature

Date

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is a peer?

A peer is a person that has lived experience with one or more mental health conditions, including Substance Use Disorder, and is in recovery. A peer recovery coach is someone with lived experience and specialized training who offers resources and support to others with mental health challenges. A peer recovery coach promotes hope and resiliency and advocates for their peers.

Who is Peer Recovery Services, and what services do they offer?

Peer Recovery Services (PRS) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that operates The Wellness Center of SJC and Manteca Wellness Center. PRS is a peer-run agency, meaning individuals with lived experience run it. These services help and support individuals with a mental health diagnosis and/or who self-identify as having lived-experience mental health challenges. Our Wellness Centers provide mutual help, shared knowledge, emotional support, and social interaction between those with lived experience. We do this through the recovery model, which focuses on educating ourselves and creating personal recovery toolboxes. PRS promotes personal growth possibilities. We also assist our members in advocating for themselves within the public mental health system and their lives.

Why do we do "peer" work?

Peer-Support focuses on recovery from mental health conditions. Many peers are 'dually-diagnosed,' meaning they have a substance use disorder and one or more mental health conditions. AA is focused on sobriety from alcohol use -which we support! Unlike AA and NA utilizing other models, recovery support at PRS includes the 8 Dimensions of Wellness Model. We offer tools like the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) [Mary Anne Copeland version], a comprehensive and personalized recovery plan. We offer groups and classes that focus on individuals' strengths as they pursue their goals and stability in their recovery. We support our members so that they have the tools to work on and overcome mental health challenges, including substance use.

What are the hours of operation for The Wellness Center and Manteca Wellness Center?

The Wellness Center of SJC (in Stockton) is open

Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM– 3:00 PM, with one-on-one appointments available from 3:00- 4:00 PM.

Manteca Wellness Center is open

Monday - Thursday, 10:30 AM- 2:30 PM.

One-on-one meetings are available from 10:00- 10:30 AM and 2:30 - 3:00 PM.

Where are the Centers located?

The Wellness Center of SJC is located across from University Park (the old State Hospital grounds) in Stockton, California. We are at 1109 N California Street on the NW corner of California and Magnolia St. in the brown 2-story building. Parking is available and is free.

Manteca Wellness Center is located in Manteca at 609 W Center Street. Parking is available on the street.

How do I receive services?

Walk on in! You will be greeted by friendly staff, volunteers, and members. No appointments are necessary. The Wellness Center is a free peer-run program with everything voluntary (your own will), and no referral is needed for services. Walk-ins are welcome; call us at (209) 451-3977 to get information regarding services, or call Manteca Wellness Center at (209) 707-3767 for their list of services. San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services funds TWC through the Mental Health Services Act. There are no barriers to receiving services. With or without a diagnosis, anyone who wants to improve their mental health (isn't that everyone on the planet!?) is welcome. Members are encouraged to develop a personal recovery plan, and Peer Recovery Coaches are here to assist.

When are the Zoom classes?

PRS offers Zoom peer support groups and classes Monday - Friday at 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, and 1:00 PM. We also have a guided meditation time at 2:00 PM daily. Refer to The Wellness Center tab for groups and classes on our website!

Can I get a bus pass, and how do I get it?

Bus passes are available on an as-needed basis. Please speak with a Peer Recovery Coach to explore transportation options, and when needed, we are happy to assist with one or more bus passes! To receive a pass, members should actively work on their recovery and participate in services at The Wellness Center or Manteca Wellness Center.

How do I become a volunteer?

Do you want to help and make a difference? Ask one of the coaches! A training program includes a 25-hour course provided by The Wellness Center. To qualify as a volunteer: 1) You must have "lived experience." 2) Be a member for at least three months and want to give back some of what you have received. 3) Interested in making a positive change in the battle against stigma. 4) complete the training program.

Do we serve food?

Not at this time. However, we offer 'food bars' for those participating in groups and in-person classes. And according to Michael (our director), we serve the BEST coffee in the county, state, and world! At no cost. It is good old-fashioned 'tastes great' coffee!

What is a summary of services offered?

Peer Support	Connections to Community Resources
Peer Groups and Classes	Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)
Serenity Room	Transportation Support
Peer Advocacy & Self Advocacy	Mobile Farmers Market and Emergency
Computer Lab	Food Bank
Self-Help Library	Phone & FAX

San Joaquin County Department Of Health Care Services
Confidentiality Statement

Absolute patient confidentiality is required by State and Federal law and departmental policy.

During your Volunteer work related to the Department of Health Care Services, you may have access to confidential information concerning an individual's condition, diagnosis, or treatment.

Disclosing or discussing such confidential information with persons other than those who need to know the information violates ethical and legal principles. It may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, demotion, suspension, or reduced hours.

You are responsible for assuring that you do not violate an individual's right to privacy by inadvertently discussing his/her condition with those who do not have an authorized need for the information.

Unnecessarily reading patients' charts is prohibited.

I understand and agree that in performing my duties as an employee of the Department of Health Care Services, I will maintain patient/medical information confidentiality. I understand that violating the Department's Confidentiality policy may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, demotion, suspension, or reduced hours.

Volunteer Name (please print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Manager Signature

Date

San Joaquin County Department Of Behavioral Health Care Services
Child Abuse Reporting

Section 11166 of the Penal code requires any child care custodian, medical practitioner, non-medical practitioner, or employee of a child protective agency who has knowledge of or observes a child in their employment whom they know or reasonably suspect has been the victim of child abuse to report the known or suspected instance of child abuse or a child protective agency immediately or as soon as practically possible by telephone and to prepare and send a written report thereof within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident.

"Child care custodian" includes teachers, administrative officers, supervisors of child welfare and attendance, or certified pupil personnel employees of any public or private school; administrators of a public or private day camp; licensed daycare workers; administrators of community care facilities licensed to care for children; headstart teachers; licensing workers or licensing evaluators; public assistance workers; employees of a childcare institution including, but not limited to, foster parents, group home personnel, personnel of residential care facilities, and social workers of probation officers.

"Medical practitioner" includes physicians and surgeons, psychiatrists, psychologists, dentists, residents, interns, podiatrists, chiropractors, licensed nurses, dental hygienists, or any other person authorized under Division 2 (commencing with Section 500) of the Business and Professions Code.

"Non-medical practitioner" includes state or county public health employees who treat minors for venereal disease or any other condition; coroners; paramedics; marriage, family, or child counselors; and religious practitioners who diagnose, examine, or treat children.

I acknowledge that I am aware of the provisions of Section 11166 and will comply with its requirements.

Volunteer Name (please print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Manager Signature

Date

San Joaquin County Department Of Health Care Services
Dependent Adult Abuse Reporting

Section 15630 of the Welfare and Institutions Code requires any care custodian, health practitioner, or employee of an adult protective services agency or a local law enforcement agency who has knowledge of or observes a dependent adult in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, which they know has been the victim of physical abuse, or who has injuries under circumstances which are consistent with abuse, where the dependent adult's statements indicate, or in the case of a person with developmental disabilities, where their statement or other corroborating evidence indicates that abuse has occurred, to report the known or suspected instance of physical abuse to an adult protective services agency or local law enforcement agency immediately, or as soon as practically possible, by telephone and to prepare and send a written report thereof within 63 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident.

"Care custodian" includes health facilities, clinics, home health agencies, educational institutions, sheltered workshops, camps, respite care facilities, residential care institutions, including foster homes and group homes, community care facilities, adult day care facilities, including adult day health care facilities, regional centers for persons with developmental disabilities, licensing workers or evaluators, public assistance workers, adult protective guardians or conservators, skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities, local law enforcement agencies, and any other persons who provide goods or services necessary to avoid physical harm or mental suffering and who perform such duties.

"Health practitioner" means a physician and surgeon, psychiatrist, psychologist, dentist, resident, intern, podiatrist, chiropractor, licensed nurse, dental hygienist, marriage, family, and child counselor, or any other person who is currently licensed under Division 2 (commencing with Section 500) of the Business and Professions Code, any emergency medical technician I or I, paramedic, a person certified pursuant to Division 2.5 (commencing with Section 1797) of the Health and Safety Code, or a psychological assistant registered pursuant to Section 2193 of the Business and Professions Code, a marriage, family and child counselor trainee, as defined in subdivision © of Section 2980.03 of the Business and Professions Code, or an unlicensed marriage, family and child counselor intern registered under Section

4980.44 of the Business and Professions Code, a state or public health employee who treats a dependent adult for any condition, a coroner, or a religious practitioner who diagnoses, examines or treats dependent adults.

I certify that I have read and understand this statement and will comply with my obligations under the dependent adult abuse reporting law.

Volunteer Name (please print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Manager's Signature

Date

Hipaa Confidentiality Agreement Volunteer / Intern Confidentiality Agreement

Confidential information includes protected health information (PHI) as defined by the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Protected Health Information (“PHI”) under HIPAA is defined as information that is received from, or created or received on behalf of Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center or its affiliated health care organizations and is information about an individual which relates to past, present or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual; the provision of health care to an individual; or the past, present or future payment for the provision of health care to an individual.

PHI includes medical records and financial or billing information relating to a member’s past, present, or future mental or physical condition; or past, present or future provision of healthcare; or past, present, or future payment for the provision of healthcare and contains any of the following identifiers that may be used to identify the patient or student in relation to PHI.

- Names
- Geographic subdivisions smaller than a state
- Telephone/fax numbers
- E-mail addresses
- Social Security Numbers
- Medical Record Numbers
- Health plan beneficiary numbers
- Account numbers
- All elements of dates related to an individual, including birth date, admission date, discharge date, date of death; and all ages over 89
- Certificate/license numbers
- Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers including license numbers
- Device identifiers/ serial numbers
- Web Universal Resource Locators (URLs), Internet Protocol (IP address number)
- Biometric identifier (voice, fingerprints)
- Full-face photo image
- Any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code

I understand that Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated healthcare organizations have a legal and ethical responsibility to maintain and protect the privacy and confidentiality of protected health information (PHI) and to safeguard the privacy of members and volunteers and Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated health care organizations' information.

As a condition of my affiliation as a volunteer, intern, and/or precepting faculty member with Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated healthcare organizations, I understand that I must sign and comply with this Agreement.

I agree that my obligation under this Agreement regarding PHI and Confidential Information will continue after the termination of my affiliation with Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center.

I understand that violation of this Agreement may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of my affiliation with Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and/or suspension, restriction, or loss of privileges in accordance with Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center's Policies and Procedures, as well as **potential personal civil and criminal legal penalties.**

I understand that any PHI or Confidential Information I access or view at Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated healthcare organizations does not belong to me.

I am aware that Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated healthcare organizations reserves and intend to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access, and act upon inappropriate use of computer systems at any time, with or without user notice, and that such access by Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated health care organizations may occur during or after working hours.

The intent of this Agreement is to ensure that volunteers and interns and staff comply with HIPAA Regulations at Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated healthcare organizations' Privacy Policies and Procedures.

I will use and disclose PHI and/or Confidential Information only if such use or disclosure complies with the Policies and Procedures and is required to perform my responsibilities as a volunteer, intern, or staff in the care and treatment of patients or provision of services to members.

Since the use of PHI and Confidential Information may include access, I will not access or view any PHI or Confidential Information other than what is required to perform my responsibilities as a volunteer, intern, or staff in the care and treatment of members. If I have any questions, I will immediately ask my precepting faculty or the CEO of Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center and its affiliated organizations for clarification.

I will not discuss any information pertaining to members' PHI where unauthorized individuals may hear such information (for example), in common rooms, in other wellness centers, or outside of the Wellness Center properties. I understand that discussing any PHI or Confidential Information in public areas is unacceptable, even if specifics such as members' names are not used.

I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, copies, disclosures, inquiries, or PHI or Confidential Information modifications.

I have read the above Agreement and agree to comply with all its terms as a condition of my continuing affiliation with Peer Recovery Services - The Wellness Center.

Volunteer Name (please print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Manager's Signature

Date

State Of California - Health And Human Services Agency

California Department Of Social Services

**Statement Acknowledging The Requirement To Report Suspected Abuse Of
Dependent Adults And Elders**

NOTE: RETAIN IN EMPLOYEE/ VOLUNTEER FILE California law REQUIRES certain persons to report known or suspected abuse of dependent adults or elders. As an employee or volunteer at a licensed facility, you are one of those persons - a "mandated reporter."

Persons Who Are Required To Report Abuse

Mandated reporters include care custodians and any person who has assumed full or intermittent responsibility for care or custody of an elderly or dependent adult, whether or not paid for that responsibility (Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 15630(a)). Care custodian means an administrator or an employee of most public or private facilities or agencies or persons providing care or services for elders or dependent adults, including members of the support staff and maintenance staff (WIC Section 15610.17).

Persons Who Are The Subject Of The Report

Elder means any person in this state who is 65 or older (WIC Section 15610.27).

Dependent Adult means any person residing in this state, between the ages of 18 and 64, who has physical or mental limitations that restrict his or her ability to carry out normal activities or to protect his or her rights, including, but not limited to, persons who have physical or developmental disabilities or whose physical or mental abilities have diminished because of age and those admitted as inpatients in 24-hour health facilities (WIC Section 15610.23).

Reporting Responsibilities And Time Frames

Any mandated reporter who in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, has observed or has knowledge of an incident that reasonably appears to be abuse or neglect or is told by an elderly or dependent adult that he or she has experienced behavior constituting in abuse or neglect, or reasonably suspects that abuse or neglect occurred, shall complete form SOC 341, "Report of Suspected Dependent Adult/Elder Abuse" for each report of known or suspected an instance of abuse (physical abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, abduction, neglect (self-neglect), isolation, and abandonment) involving an elderly or dependent adult.

Reporting shall be completed as follows:

- If the abuse occurred in a Long-Term Care (LTC) facility (as defined in WIC Section 15610.47) and resulted in serious bodily injury (as defined in WIC Section 15610.67), a report by telephone to the local law enforcement agency immediately and no later than two (2) hours after observing, obtaining knowledge of, or suspecting physical abuse. Send the written report to the local law enforcement agency, the local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP), and the appropriate licensing agency (for long-term health care facilities, the California Department of Public Health; for community care facilities, California Department of Social Services) within two (2) hours of observing, obtaining knowledge of, or suspecting physical abuse.
- If the abuse occurred in an LTC facility and was physical abuse but did not result in serious bodily injury, a report by telephone to the local law enforcement agency within 24 hours of observing, obtaining knowledge of, or suspecting physical abuse. Send the written report to the local law enforcement agency, the local LTCOP, and the appropriate licensing agency (for long-term health care facilities, the California Department of Public Health; for community care facilities, the California Department of Social Services) within 24 hours of observing, obtaining knowledge of, or suspecting physical abuse.
- If the abuse occurred in an LTC facility, was physical abuse, did not result in serious bodily injury, and was perpetrated by a resident with a physician's diagnosis of dementia, a report by telephone to the local law enforcement agency or the local LTCOP, immediately or as soon as practicably possible. Follow by sending the written report to the LTCOP or the local law enforcement agency within 24 hours of observing, obtaining knowledge of, or suspecting physical abuse.

- If the abuse occurred in an LTC facility and was abuse other than physical abuse, a report by telephone to the LTCOP or the law enforcement agency immediately or as soon as practicably possible. Follow by sending the written report to the local law enforcement agency or the LTCOP within two working days.
- If the abuse occurred in a state mental hospital or a state developmental center, mandated reporters shall report by telephone or through a confidential internet reporting tool (established in WIC Section 15658) immediately or as soon as practicably possible and submit the report within two (2) working days of making the telephone report to the responsible agency as identified below:
- If the abuse occurred in a State Mental Hospital, report it to the local law enforcement agency or the California Department of State Hospitals.
- If the abuse occurred in a State Developmental Center, report it to the local law enforcement agency or the California Department of Developmental Services.
- For all other abuse, mandated reporters shall report by telephone or through a confidential internet reporting tool to the adult protective services agency or the local law enforcement agency immediately or as soon as practicably possible. If reported by telephone, a written or Internet report shall be sent to adult protective services or law enforcement within two working days.

Penalty For Failure To Report Abuse

Failure to report the abuse of an elderly or dependent adult is a MISDEMEANOR CRIME, punishable by jail time, fine, or both (WIC Section 15630(h)). The reporting duties are individual, and no supervisor or administrator shall impede or inhibit the reporting duties. No person making the report shall be subject to any sanction for making the report (WIC Section 15630(f)).

Confidentiality Of Reporter And Of Abuse Reports

The identity of all persons who report under WIC Chapter 11 shall be confidential and disclosed among APS agencies, local law enforcement agencies, LTCOPs, California State Attorney General Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse licensing agencies or their counsel, Department of Consumer Affairs Investigators (who investigate elder and dependent adult abuse), the county District Attorney, the Probate Court, and the Public Guardian. Confidentiality may be waived by the reporter or by court order. Any violation of confidentiality is a misdemeanor punishable by jail time, fine, or both (WIC Section 15633(a)).

Definitions Of Abuse

Physical abuse means any of the following: (a) Assault, as defined in Section 240 of the Penal Code; (b) Battery, as defined in Section 242 of the Penal Code; (c) Assault with a deadly weapon or force likely to produce great bodily injury, as defined in Section 245 of the Penal Code; (d) Unreasonable physical constraint, or prolonged or continual deprivation of food or water; (e) Sexual assault, that means any of the following: (1) Sexual battery, as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code; (2) Rape, as defined in Section 261 of the Penal Code; (3) Rape in concert, as described in Section 264.1 of the Penal Code; (4) Spousal rape, as defined in Section 262 of the Penal Code; (5) Incest, as defined in Section 285 of the Penal Code; (6) Sodomy, as defined in Section 286 of the Penal Code; (7) Oral copulation, as defined in Section 288a of the Penal Code; (8) Sexual penetration, as defined in Section 289 of the Penal Code; or (9) Lewd or lascivious acts as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 288 of the Penal Code; or (f) Use of a physical or chemical restraint or psychotropic medication under any of the following conditions: (1) For punishment; (2) For a period beyond that for which the medication was ordered pursuant to the instructions of a physician and surgeon licensed in the State of California, who is providing medical care to the elder or dependent adult at the time the instructions are given; or (3) For any purpose not authorized by the physician and surgeon (WIC Section 15610.63).

Serious bodily injury means an injury involving extreme physical pain, substantial risk of death, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or of mental faculty, or requiring medical intervention, including, but not limited to,

hospitalization, surgery, or physical rehabilitation (WIC Section 15610.67).

Neglect (a) means either of the following: (1) The negligent failure of any person having the care or custody of an elder or a dependent adult to exercise that degree of care that a reasonable person in a like position would exercise; or (2) The negligent failure of an elder or dependent adult to exercise that degree of self-care that a reasonable person in a like position would exercise. (b) Neglect includes, but is not limited to, all of the following: (1) Failure to assist in personal hygiene or in the provision of food, clothing, or shelter; (2) Failure to provide medical care for physical and mental health needs. No person shall be deemed neglected or abused for the sole reason that he or she voluntarily relies on treatment by spiritual means through prayer alone in lieu of medical treatment; (3) Failure to protect from health and safety hazards; (4) Failure to prevent malnutrition or dehydration; or (5) Failure of an elder or dependent adult to satisfy the needs specified in paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, for himself or herself as a result of poor cognitive functioning, mental limitation, substance abuse, or chronic poor health (WIC Section 15610.57).

Financial abuse of an elder or dependent adult occurs when a person or entity does any of the following: (1) Takes, secretes, appropriates, obtains, or retains real or personal property of an elder or dependent adult for wrongful use or with intent to defraud, or both; (2) Assists in taking, secreting, appropriating, obtaining, or retaining real or personal property of an elder or dependent adult for wrongful use or with intent to defraud, or both; or (3) Takes, secretes, appropriates, obtains, or retains, or assists in taking, secreting, appropriating, obtaining, or retaining, real or personal property of an elder or dependent adult by undue influence, as defined in Section 15610.70 (WIC Section 15610.30(a)).

Abandonment means the desertion or willful forsaking of an elder or a dependent adult by anyone having care or custody of that person under circumstances in which a reasonable person would continue to provide care and custody (WIC Section 15610.05).

Isolation means any of the following: (1) Acts intentionally committed to prevent, and that do serve to prevent, an elder or dependent adult from receiving his or her mail or telephone calls; (2) Telling a caller or prospective visitor that an elderly or dependent adult is not present, or does not wish to talk with the caller, or does not wish to meet with the visitor where the statement is false, is contrary to the express wishes of the elder or the dependent adult, whether he or she is competent or not, and is made for the purpose of preventing the elder or dependent adult from having contact with family, friends, or concerned persons; (3) False imprisonment, as defined in Section 236 of the Penal Code; or (4) Physical restraint of an elder or dependent adult, to prevent the elder or dependent adult from meeting with visitors (WIC Section 15610.43).

Abduction means the removal from this state and the restraint from returning to this state, or the restraint from returning to this state, of any elderly or dependent adult who cannot consent to the removal from this state and the restraint from returning to this state, or the restraint from returning to this state, as well as the removal from this state or the restraint from returning to this state, of any conservatee without the consent of the conservator or the court (WIC Section 15610.06).

AS AN EMPLOYEE OR VOLUNTEER OF THIS FACILITY, YOU MUST COMPLY WITH THE DEPENDENT ADULT AND ELDER ABUSE REQUIREMENTS, AS STATED ABOVE. IF YOU DO NOT COMPLY, YOU MAY BE SUBJECT TO A CRIMINAL PENALTY. IF YOU ARE A LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN, YOU MUST COMPLY WITH FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS, WHICH PROHIBIT YOU FROM DISCLOSING THE IDENTITIES OF LONG-TERM RESIDENTS AND COMPLAINANTS TO ANYONE UNLESS CONSENT TO DISCLOSE IS PROVIDED BY THE RESIDENT OR COMPLAINANT OR DISCLOSURE IS REQUIRED BY COURT ORDER (Title 42 United States Code Section 3058g(d)(2); WIC Section 9725).

I have read and understand my responsibility to report known or suspected abuse of dependent adults or elders. I will comply with the reporting requirements.

Volunteer Name (please print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Manager's Signature

Date

PRACTICAL TRAINING MODULES

Coaching/Volunteering - The Most Important Skills You Need And Can Gain

Welcome to our coaching and volunteering program! We believe that compassion and kindness are the most important skills you can possess when working with our members. We trust and accept all members as being honest and deserving of our respect, even if we have doubts. When correcting anyone, we always strive to be respectful and considerate of the consequences. Our interactions with others are a crucial part of our job here, so we always ask ourselves if we are the right person to correct someone or if it should be a coach or supervisor.

It's important to be mentally and emotionally ready to correct someone in a compassionate and kind manner. Everyone is on their own wellness journey, and some may need more tenderness and sensitivity than others. We always strive to be consistent when talking about the rules and treat everyone with patience, compassion, respect, and dignity.

We encourage you to be thoughtful and kind when talking to everyone, especially when correcting someone. Remember that everyone deserves appreciation, even if they don't see it themselves. If you're unsure whether you should do or say something, ask yourself if you're the right person to do it or if it should be a coach, the LCR, or a supervisor.

We don't have to be strict about the rules, but we do need to inform each other about them to serve as a tool for recovery. For example, we might remind someone to take their belongings with them to class or suggest waiting in the common room until it's time for a group. Our wellness center is a safe place where people come to learn new tools and skills, and not to feel ashamed or defensive.

We understand that the first few steps of recovery can be challenging, and it takes a lot of courage for some to enter our building. As a peer, it's our purpose to welcome those who are looking for the kind of help we can offer. We're excited to have you on board and look forward to working with you!

Examples of Volunteer Tasks

Shadowing the Recovery Coaches is the first step to transitioning into a Volunteer position at the Wellness Center.

Job shadowing involves following and observing a peer who has knowledge and experience with the skills and tasks that you will learn through the process of being a volunteer.

By job shadowing, a volunteer will learn new aspects of the job such as team organization and certain behaviors and competencies.

Volunteers are exposed to the variety of services offered at The Wellness Center. Volunteers become familiar with day-to-day work environments, job characteristics, and responsibilities.

These responsibilities can be divided into five categories:
Activities, Clerical, Facilitating, Outreach, and Peer Mentoring.

On the following pages, there is an example list of tasks that may be asked of you to be trained to do. Please note that this list is just an example, and additional tasks related to your role may be asked of you. Remember, in all tasks; we ask that you try to always be gentle, welcoming, and positive (and be open to direction from senior staff on ways to be more inviting while remaining professional).

Activities:

- Assist with physical activity events, cooking demonstrations, and other wellness activities.
- Assist with classes about exercising, eating well, managing stress, or similar topics.
- Facilitate physical activity and wellness events and challenges.
- Register Members for the Mobile Farmers Market.
- Serve coffee to Members.
- Join the morning walk with members and do indoor exercises on bad-weather days.
- Help Coach(es) sanitize common room seats, tables, and surfaces.

Clerical:

- Design posters, announcements, and other PR materials and distribute/post them.
- Gather health and wellness resources like written material, videos, and display materials.
- Prepare health and wellness newsletters.
- Assist employees with completing surveys/questionnaires.
- Prepare and distribute handouts.
- Maintain cleanliness of accessible areas
- Direct individuals to correct staff/supports when needed.

Facilitating:

- Understand and follow group guidelines, participate when called upon.
- Contribute ideas and information to group discussion.
- Respect the guideline of passing when necessary.
- Suggest mental health and recovery related discussion topics.

Outreach:

- Help plan and run wellness events by setting up, registering participants, and assisting during the event.
- Recruit and orient new volunteers.
- Make reminder phone calls to other volunteers assigned to projects for the next day.

Social Skills Checklist—Self-Report

Instructions:

1. Read through the traits of highly likable people.
2. Put a checkmark next to the traits that you would like to work on.
3. Circle any traits that are true of you.
4. Reflect on the checked traits & consider how you can work on developing them.
5. Keep the worksheet as a reminder of the traits you want to cultivate in yourself.

Social Skill	Example
Accept apologies	"Thanks for apologizing, I appreciate it and we can move forward now."
Apologize	"Sorry for my mistake. I'll make it right."
Ask for help when needed	"Can you help me brainstorm some coping strategies for a client in crisis?"
Be assertive	"I understand your concerns, but we need to prioritize the client's needs first."
Be aware of body language cues	When someone is sharing their struggles, maintain eye contact and nod to show understanding.
Be creative	Sharing stories of resilience, empowering one another to overcome life's challenges.
Be flexible	"Adjusting our program to fit your needs and preferences, we're here to help."
Be patient and positive	When someone comes to you feeling overwhelmed, listen patiently and offer positive affirmations to help them feel supported.
Be sensitive to others' needs	Listening to a peer's concerns and offering comfort and resources based on their individual needs.
Be socially perceptive	Notice others' emotions and respond accordingly. Show empathy, offer support, and listen actively.
Check for understanding	Listening to a person's concerns without judgment to understand their perspective.
Express appreciation	"Thank you for being a listening ear and helping me through tough times."
Face people when communicating	During a one-on-one conversation, sit facing the person to show active listening and support.
Finish projects	Encouraging members to finish projects, celebrating their accomplishments, and providing resources for success.

Follow through on commitments	Helping a member create a plan and checking in to ensure they follow through with it.
Give compliments	"You are an incredible listener, thank you for creating a safe space for us."
Have close friends	Sharing stories of building strong friendships and offering tips for making new connections.
Have self-esteem	Encouraging a peer to speak up for themselves and set boundaries in their relationships.
Identify and reflect feelings of others	"I understand how you feel, and I'm here for you."
Identify and reflect others' feelings	Listening to a friend's struggles and validating their emotions during a tough time.
Identifying sadness in a friend's tone and offering comfort.	"I'm here for you. Want to talk about it?"
Initiate invitations	Inviting members to a group outing for a day of self-care and relaxation.
Introduce others and yourself	"Hi, I'm Jane. Let's welcome our new member, Mike, to our supportive community."
Join conversations respectfully	Listen to others, Ask questions, Respect other people's opinions, Avoid interrupting
Maintain clean and appropriate appearance	Stay neat and tidy.
Maintain open posture and relaxed appearance	Sitting with a new member, arms and legs uncrossed, and facing towards the person. with a relaxed appearance to make them feel welcome and at ease.
Manage anger and conflict effectively	Helping a member resolve a disagreement with a roommate or family member.
Nurture yourself	Take a relaxing bath, read a book, or go for a walk in nature.
Offer help to others	Offering to help a new member navigate the resources available at the Peer Support center.
Participate in support groups	Sitting in on a support group and actively engaging in discussion with fellow members.
Recognize and communicate emotions	"I see you're feeling down, want to talk about it?"
Reflect content and feelings in conversations	A friend shares their struggles with you. Reflect their emotions and offer encouragement.
Refrain from aggression	When a peer is expressing frustration, stay calm and offer a non-aggressive response.
Respect others' boundaries	Respecting a peer's request to not discuss a certain topic during a support session.

Take turns in conversations	"Let's make sure everyone has a chance to share their thoughts and experiences during our group session."
Tolerate differences	Two people with different political views are having a respectful conversation and listening to each other's perspectives.
Treat others with respect	A peer listens non-judgmentally as their friend shares their struggles and offers words of encouragement.
Understand mood and give-and-take in relationships	A peer notices their friend is upset and offers to listen and help them feel better.
Use appropriate greetings and ending comments	Make sure to greet everyone who walks in with a smile and ask how their day is going.
Use open questions to keep conversations going.	Designed to gather information, opinions, or insights from the person being asked. "What," "How," or "Why,"
Use polite language and minimal encouragers	"Thank you for sharing. That sounds tough. How can I support you?"

Tips for Greeting a Guest or Member

Greeting Guidelines:

A volunteer at The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County might greet a guest or member in the following ways:

- Greet the guest with a smile and warm welcome.
- Introduce oneself and ask for the guest's name.
- Inquire about the guest's well-being and offer assistance.
- Offer a tour or help in finding what they need.
- Provide information about programs and services.
- Express appreciation for their visit and thank them for choosing The Wellness Center.

An example greeting might be: "Good morning! Welcome to The Wellness Center! My name is [volunteer's name]. May I ask for your name? How are you doing today? Is there anything I can help you with or any information you are looking for?"

COVID Protocols:

As a volunteer at The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County, you can politely ask guests to follow COVID protocols while maintaining a safe distance. Explain the importance of the protocols and address any questions or concerns they may have. Request guests to cooperate with the protocols, such as taking their temperature and informing the receptionist of their name and temperature. Reassure them that the protocols are in place for everyone's safety and well-being. Finally, express gratitude for their cooperation in keeping the community healthy and safe.

For example, you can say, "Hello! Thank you for coming to The Wellness Center today. As part of our COVID protocols, we need you to take your temperature near the receptionist's desk and let her know your name and temperature. This is important to ensure everyone's safety and well-being. Do you have any questions or concerns about the protocols? Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our community healthy & safe."

Meet Them Where They Are, Not Where You Want Them to Be

As a peer support center volunteer, it's important to remember the phrase "Meet them where they are" applies to everyone in society. It's easy to judge others when in a position of authority, but we should assess, not judge. This applies to teachers evaluating students' work, parents evaluating their child's behavior, and even when talking to friends with different professions. Before trying to teach someone something new, assess their knowledge and meet them where they are. This approach builds stronger relationships and creates a more supportive environment.

The Difference Between Assessment and Judgment

As a peer support center volunteer, it's important to distinguish between assessment and judgment. Assessment involves collecting data to improve performance, while judgment is forming opinions without considering all the necessary information. Assessing someone means determining their needs objectively, while judgment assumes they should be at a certain level. To help someone, understand their values, needs, and trauma responses and meet them where they are. Listen to them, bridge the gap between your expectations and their perspective, and offer support when they ask. Assessment is helpful, but approach it with empathy. Meeting people where they are builds trust and helps them achieve their goals.

How to meet people where they are:

1. Listen

It's important to meet people where they are and offer unconditional support. Pay attention to their body language and words, which can reveal their need. If someone is bragging or boasting, it could be a sign of insecurity and a need for reassurance. Understanding their behavior can help you connect with them and provide support. When conversing, resist the urge to interrupt and instead focus on listening to understand the present moment.

2. Approach each person and situation without bias or judgment.

We may consider ourselves open-minded, but our brains have preconceived notions of how life should be. These beliefs were formed when we were young and may prevent us from truly understanding someone different. This is what is meant by "racial bias." Even if we are compassionate and loving, we may have biases that prevent us from seeing beyond someone's race or ethnicity. We must let go of our cultural judgments to connect with others and meet them where they are.

3. Avoid using language that may come across as judgmental towards others.

Forgiving others is important to build connections. We tend to judge others, but we should be aware of it and avoid it. If someone says something that goes against our beliefs, we might feel defensive and angry, but we should recognize these changes and stop ourselves from being judgmental. It's okay to discuss the issue, but we should respond instead of reacting and try to understand the other person's perspective. Forgiveness is crucial in creating a supportive environment and fostering connections.

4. Repeat things back to the other person.

Using the technique of repeating back what someone has said shows active listening and ensures understanding. Many professions like personal development gurus, teachers, and psychologists use this tool. When someone says something that needs clarification, using their own words can help build trust and rapport. For example, if someone is upset and says, "You don't listen to me or what I need!", repeating back their statement and asking for an example can show that you are listening and willing to understand their perspective. This may be difficult, but it can ultimately help the person feel heard and validated.

5. Ask open-ended questions.

Listening is one way to meet someone where they are. In the example above, you may have repeated back your significant other's words, "You feel that I don't listen to you" and asked, "Can you give me an example?" That is an open-ended question.

As a volunteer, it's important to listen to someone and meet them where they are. When someone expresses that they feel unheard, repeating their words back and asking open-ended questions can help bridge the gap between expectations and feelings. However, sometimes people may be hesitant to share their thoughts and feelings. By asking open-ended questions, you can show that you genuinely care and are willing to listen.

6. Accept the other person's feelings and let them know it's okay to feel that way.

Feeling sad, angry, frustrated, or any other "negative" emotion is okay. Emotions are meant to be felt, and it's not your responsibility to always be happy. Remember to feel your emotions, but don't unpack and live in them.

In Buddhism, love and understanding have the same meaning. Sharing your knowledge with others can validate them and give them hope. When we work through uncomfortable emotions, we can be present for happier feelings.

Meeting someone where they are can be difficult but necessary. It involves accepting them for who they are and where they are in their life. This applies to working with students, social work cases, or serving citizens. Sometimes, people need someone to guide them to a better place. To do this effectively, you should listen, avoid judgmental language, be aware of your preconceived ideas, repeat what they say, ask open-ended questions, and accept their feelings. It's an important skill for everyone to learn, as it involves bridging the gap between your expectations and the other person's reality.

This article has been deeply adapted from an original webarticle referenced here:

Elizabeth, D. (2023, January 3). Meet them where they are-what it means in 2023. Wild Simple Joy.

<https://wildsimplejoy.com/meet-them-where-they-are/>

VIDEO: Brene Brown on Empathy

What is the best way to ease someone's pain and suffering? In this beautifully animated RSA Short, Dr Brené Brown reminds us that we can only create a genuine empathic connection if we are brave enough to really get in touch with our own fragilities.

Graphic: How to support someone by being Mentally Healthy



How to support someone be **MENTALLY HEALTHY**

LISTEN
Listen to what your friend is telling you. Take time to engage in the conversation.

COMMUNICATION
Don't be afraid to communicate. Limit the amount of questions that you ask and don't just talk about their mental health.

STAY IN TOUCH
Remain in contact. Stay in touch with your friend or family member. An email or text can go a long way

SUPPORT
Support and encourage your friend or family member. Be compassionate

AVOID CRITICISM
Don't criticise or be harsh. Take time to understand what it is your friend is going through

BE PATIENT
Understand that people will go through ups and downs

INFORMATION
If you know someone experiencing a mental health problem why not spend some time researching where to find help for them (E.g. Mind, Rethink)

BE CARING
Show them that you are there for them and that you care about them

ENCOURAGE
Gently encourage them to seek help from mental health professionals

I'M PROUD OF YOU
Tell them that you are proud of them for talking about their problem

Video - Active Listening

In this video, you'll learn strategies for active listening during a conversation with another person..

Article - Stigma, Prejudice and Discrimination Against People with Mental Illness

More than [half of people with mental illness](#) don't receive help for their disorders. Often, people avoid or delay seeking treatment due to concerns about being treated differently or fears of losing their jobs and livelihood. That's because stigma, prejudice and discrimination against people with mental illness is still very much a problem.

Stigma, prejudice and discrimination against people with mental illness can be subtle or it can be obvious—but no matter the magnitude, it can lead to harm. People with mental illness are marginalized and discriminated against in various ways, but understanding what that looks like and how to address and eradicate it can help.

The Facts on Stigma, Prejudice and Discrimination

Stigma often comes from lack of understanding or fear. Inaccurate or misleading media representations of mental illness contribute to both those factors. A review of [studies on stigma](#) shows that while the public may accept the medical or genetic nature of a mental health disorder and the need for treatment, many people still have a negative view of those with mental illness.

Researchers identify different types of stigma: (See chart below.)

- Public stigma involves the negative or discriminatory attitudes that others have about mental illness.
- Self-stigma refers to the negative attitudes, including internalized shame, that people with mental illness have about their own condition.
- Institutional stigma, is more systemic, involving policies of government and private organizations that intentionally or unintentionally limit opportunities for people with mental illness. Examples include lower funding for mental illness research or fewer mental health services relative to other health care.

Stigma not only directly affects individuals with mental illness but also the loved ones who support them, often including their family members.

Stigma around mental illness especially an issue in some diverse racial and ethnic communities and it can be a major barrier to people from those cultures accessing mental health services. For example, in some Asian cultures, seeking professional help for mental illness may be counter to cultural values of strong family, emotional restraint and avoiding shame. Among some groups, including the African American community's, distrust of the mental healthcare system can also be a barrier to seeking help. (See more on [mental health in Diverse Populations.](#))

Types of Stigma

	Public	Self	Institutional
Stereotypes & Prejudices	People with mental illness are dangerous, incompetent, to blame for their disorder, unpredictable	I am dangerous, incompetent, to blame	Stereotypes are embodied in laws and other institutions
Discrimination	Therefore, employers may not hire them, landlords may not rent to them, the health care system may offer a lower standard of care	These thoughts lead to lowered self-esteem and self-efficacy: "Why try? Someone like me is not worthy of good health."	Intended and unintended loss of opportunity

Source: Adapted from Corrigan, et al.

Media representations of people with mental illness can influence perceptions and stigma, and they have often been negative, inaccurate or violent representations. A study published in April 2020 looked at a recent example, the popular film *Joker* (2019), which portrays the lead character as a person with mental illness who becomes extremely violent. The study found that viewing the film "was associated with higher levels of prejudice toward those with mental illness." Additionally, the authors suggest, "*Joker* may exacerbate self-stigma for those with a mental illness, leading to delays in help seeking."

The stigma of mental illness is universal. A [2016 study on stigma](#) concluded "there is no country, society or culture where people with mental illness have the same societal value as people without mental illness."

Harmful Effects of Stigma and Discrimination

Stigma and discrimination can contribute to worsening symptoms and reduced likelihood of getting treatment. A recent extensive [review of research](#) found that self-stigma leads to negative effects on recovery among people diagnosed with severe mental illnesses.

Effects can include:

- reduced hope
- lower self-esteem
- increased psychiatric symptoms
- difficulties with social relationships
- reduced likelihood of staying with treatment
- more difficulties at work

A [2017 study](#) involving more than 200 individuals with mental illness over a period of two years found that greater self-stigma was associated with poorer recovery from mental illness after one and two years.

An editorial in the *Lancet* notes that the impacts of stigma are pervasive, affecting political enthusiasm, charitable fundraising and availability, support for local services and underfunding of research for mental health relative to other health conditions.

Some of the other harmful effects of stigma can include:

- Reluctance to seek help or treatment and less likely to stay with treatment
- Social isolation

- Lack of understanding by family, friends, coworkers, or others
- Fewer opportunities for work, school or social activities or trouble finding housing
- Bullying, physical violence or harassment
- Health insurance that doesn't adequately cover your mental illness treatment
- The belief that you'll never succeed at certain challenges or that you can't improve your situation

Source: Adapted from Mayo Clinic

Stigma in the Workplace

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), commonly available through employers, help employees deal with a variety of concerns such as work-life stressors, issues affecting mental and emotional well-being, family issues, financial concerns, relationship problems, or legal concerns. However, the services often go unused—only about 3-5% of employees use available EAP services, according to the Center for Workplace Mental Health.

A [2019 national poll](#) from the American Psychiatric Association (APA) found that mental health stigma is still a major challenge in the workplace. About half of workers were concerned about discussing mental health issues at their jobs. More than one in three were concerned about retaliation or being fired if they sought mental health care.

Only about only about one in five workers were completely comfortable talking about mental health issues. The poll found a generational divide: millennials were almost twice as likely as baby boomers to be comfortable (62% vs. 32%) discussing their mental health.

On a more positive note, about half of workers were at least somewhat comfortable talking about mental health and most workers said they would help guide a troubled co-worker to mental health resources. However, even among those willing to help, about one in four workers said they would not know where to turn for mental health help.

Addressing Stigma

Research shows that knowing or having contact with someone with mental illness is one of the best ways to reduce stigma. Individuals speaking out and sharing their stories can have a positive impact. When we know someone with mental illness, it becomes less scary and more real and relatable.

A 2016 review of research on addressing stigma concluded that efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination can work at the personal and population levels. The strongest evidence was for anti-stigma efforts involving contact with individuals with lived experience with mental illness and efforts with a long-term commitment.

About 3 in 4 young teens seeking information online about depression said they were looking for personal anecdotes from people who had suffered in the past.

Many celebrities, such as Demi Lovato, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Michael Phelps, Taraji P. Henson and Lady Gaga have publicly shared their stories of mental health challenges and brought the discussion much more into the general media and everyday conversation. Young people are looking for information and for these personal stories online.

A 2020 national survey of 14- to 22-year-olds found that 90 percent of teens and young adults experiencing symptoms of depression are researching mental health issues online and most are accessing other people's health stories through blogs, podcasts, and videos. About three in four young teens seeking information online about depression said they were looking for personal anecdotes from people who had suffered in the past.

Social marketing campaigns can also be effective. For example, a research study looked at the effectiveness of an anti-stigma social marketing campaign in California and found that the campaign increased service use by helping people better understand symptoms

of distress and increasing awareness that help is available. The researchers estimated that if all adults with probable mental illness were exposed to the California mental health campaign, 47% would receive mental health treatment. If the same adults were not exposed to the campaign, 36% would receive treatment.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) offers some suggestions about what we can do as individuals to help reduce the stigma of mental illness:

- Talk openly about mental health, such as sharing on social media.
- Educate yourself and others – respond to misperceptions or negative comments by sharing facts and experiences.
- Be conscious of language – remind people that words matter.
- Encourage equality between physical and mental illness – draw comparisons to how they would treat someone with cancer or diabetes.
- Show compassion for those with mental illness.
- Be honest about treatment – normalize mental health treatment, just like other health care treatment.
- Let the media know when they are using stigmatizing language presenting stories of mental illness in a stigmatizing way.
- Choose empowerment over shame - "I fight stigma by choosing to live an empowered life. to me, that means owning my life and my story and refusing to allow others to dictate how I view myself or how I feel about myself." – Val Fletcher, responding on Facebook to the question, How do you fight stigma?

While stigma and discrimination are still prevalent in the workplace, employers are increasingly addressing stigma against mental illness. The APA Foundation's Center for Workplace Mental Health emphasizes the importance of both robust health care services and specific efforts to break the silence that surrounds the topic of mental illness.

The Center for Workplace Mental Health suggests organizations strive to "create a culture in which mention of depression, anxiety, post-trauma, and other common illnesses become as mentionable as diabetes, hypertension, and migraines."

Employers who are leading efforts to address stigma offer some suggestions:

- Tailor programs/approaches to your company culture and existing strengths.
- Mention your commitment to leading a behaviorally healthy workplace every time




you mention the company's commitment to its overall culture of health, attracting and retaining the best talent, and valuing its employees, etc.





- Train leaders to identify emotional distress and make referrals and to responding promptly and constructively to behavioral performance issues.
- Be welcoming of the need for accommodations. Train managers to respond appropriately

Source: [Working Well Toolkit](#)

Organizations and Campaigns

Across the country numerous organizations and campaigns focus on addressing the issue of mental health stigma and discrimination. A few examples are highlighted below:

	<p><i>Bring Change to Mind is a nonprofit organization focused on encouraging dialogue about mental health and raising awareness, understanding, and empathy. Actress and activist Glenn Close co-founded Bring Change to Mind in 2010 after her sister and nephew were diagnosed with mental illnesses. It offers resources and tools to learn more and take action to reduce stigma.</i></p>
	<p><i>Stamp Out Stigma is an initiative spearheaded by the Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness and substance use disorders. The campaign encourages people to start the conversation and to talk openly about mental illness and substance use.</i></p>
	<p><i>"Make It OK" is a campaign to reduce the stigma of mental illnesses. The campaign offers personal stories, tips on what to say when talking about mental health, and resources to help fight stigma in the community. (See some tips on what to say and what not to say below.)</i></p>
	<p><i>This is My Brave is a storytelling theatre show where individuals from the community share their stories of living a successful life despite mental illness. Since 2014, This Is My Brave has produced nearly 800 storytellers sharing true, personal stories on overcoming depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, PTSD and other illnesses. In spring 2020, the organizers developed BraveTV to bring stories of hope online during the COVID-19 pandemic.</i></p>

	<p>One recent effort is the Mental Health Coalition, spearheaded by Kenneth Cole in partnership with handful of partners. Partner organizations and celebrities include Active Minds, NAMI, The JED Foundation, Anxiety and Depression Association of America, Kendall Jenner, Kesha, and others. The focus of the coalition is fighting stigma through the sharing of stories with the tag line "How are you really?"</p>
	<p>RSafe Space Radio combines compelling storytelling with practical expert guidance to give you the tools you need to start finding your own courage. The Profiles in Mental Health Courage series explores the experience of living with mental illness—such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and borderline personality disorder.</p>
	<p>NAMI's StigmaFree campaign is working to end stigma and create hope for those affected by mental illness: "Through powerful words and actions, we can shift the social and systemic barriers for those living with mental health conditions." As part of the campaign, people can take a stigma quiz at CureStigma.org and learn more about becoming stigma free.</p>
	<p>Healthy Minds with Dr. Jeffrey Borenstein aims to remove the stigma of mental illness and demonstrate that with help, there is hope. The series focuses on common psychiatric conditions through inspiring personal stories, as well as, experts sharing cutting edge information, including new approaches and next-generation therapies in diagnostics, treatment and research. Series is produced by the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation.</p>

How So We Stop Stigma? Conversation

Try these simple tips for talking.

Do Say

- "Thanks for opening up to me."
- "Is there anything I can do to help?"
- "I'm sorry to hear that. It must be tough."
- "I'm here for you when you need me."
- "I can't imagine what you're going through."
- "People do get better."
- "Oh man, that sucks."
- "Can I drive you to an appointment?"
- "How are you feeling today?"
- "I love you."

Don't Say

- "It could be worse."
- "Just deal with it."
- "Snap out of it."
- "Everyone feels that way sometimes."
- "You may have brought this on yourself."
- "We've all been there."
- "You've got to pull yourself together."
- "Maybe try thinking happier thoughts."

Source: MakeltOK.org

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Physician Review

Jeffrey Borenstein, M.D. August 2020

Graphic - [The Ultimate Checksheet for Critical Thinking](#)



The Ultimate Cheatsheet for Critical Thinking

Want to exercise critical thinking skills? Ask these questions whenever you discover or discuss new information. These are broad and versatile questions that have limitless applications!



Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... benefits from this? ... is this harmful to? ... makes decisions about this? ... is most directly affected? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... have you also heard discuss this? ... would be the best person to consult? ... will be the key people in this? ... deserves recognition for this?
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... are the strengths/weaknesses? ... is another perspective? ... is another alternative? ... would be a counter-argument? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is the best/worst case scenario? ... is most/least important? ... can we do to make a positive change? ... is getting in the way of our action?
Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... would we see this in the real world? ... are there similar concepts/situations? ... is there the most need for this? ... in the world would this be a problem? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... can we get more information? ... do we go for help with this? ... will this idea take us? ... are the areas for improvement?
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is this acceptable/unacceptable? ... would this benefit our society? ... would this cause a problem? ... is the best time to take action? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... will we know we've succeeded? ... has this played a part in our history? ... can we expect this to change? ... should we ask for help with this?
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is this a problem/challenge? ... is it relevant to me/others? ... is this the best/worst scenario? ... are people influenced by this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... should people know about this? ... has it been this way for so long? ... have we allowed this to happen? ... is there a need for this today?
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is this similar to _____? ... does this disrupt things? ... do we know the truth about this? ... will we approach this safely? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... does this benefit us/others? ... does this harm us/others? ... do we see this in the future? ... can we change this for our good?

Tips for Helping a Member use the Feelings Wheel

A feelings wheel can be a helpful tool in recognizing obstacles that might be in the way of recovery by allowing individuals to identify and label their emotions accurately. Individuals with mental health challenges may struggle to articulate or understand their emotions, making it challenging to identify the underlying issues hindering their recovery. By using a feelings wheel, individuals can break down complex emotions into specific categories, which can help them identify the root cause of their emotional distress and work towards resolving it.

Here's an example of how a feelings wheel can help recognize obstacles in the way of recovery:

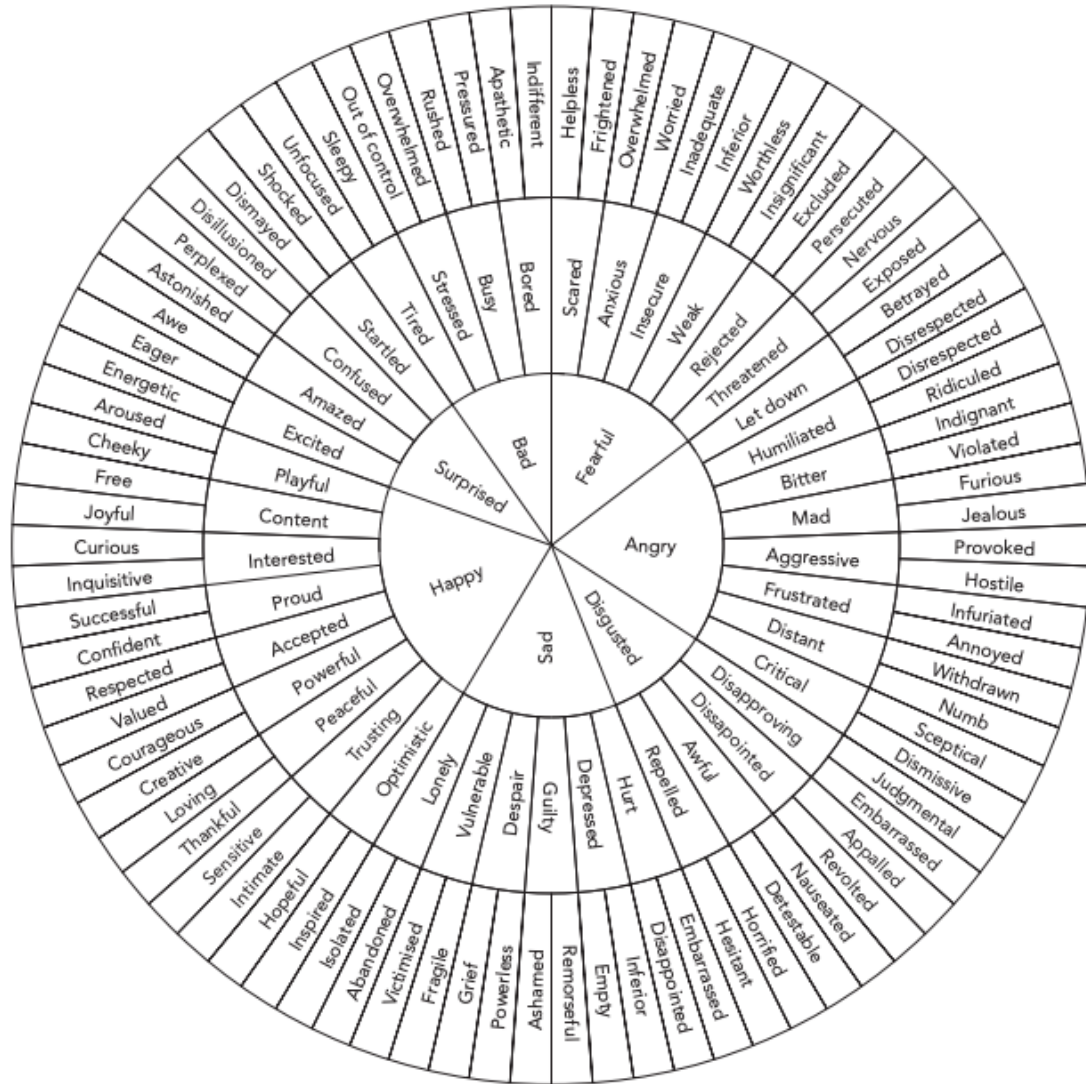
Let's say that someone is struggling with depression and is finding it challenging to identify the root cause of their emotional distress. By using a feelings wheel, they may be able to identify that they are feeling sad but also recognize that they are experiencing other emotions such as shame, guilt, or loneliness. By breaking down their emotions into specific categories, they may recognize that they feel guilty about something that happened in their past or feels lonely due to a lack of social support. Once they have identified the specific emotion, they can work on addressing the underlying issue causing the emotional distress, such as seeking therapy or contacting a support group.

By using a feelings wheel, individuals can better understand their emotions and identify the obstacles preventing them from achieving their recovery goals. It can also provide a starting point for communication with healthcare providers, therapists, or peers in a support group, helping to foster a better understanding of the individual's emotional state and allowing them to receive the appropriate care and support to overcome obstacles to recovery.

Graphic - The Feelings Wheel



The Feelings Wheel



Originally created by Dr. Gloria Wilcox

Game: "Emotion Exploration"

To play "Emotion Exploration," you'll need the following tools: a feelings wheel, slips of paper with emotions listed, and a board game.

The game's goal is to help players improve their ability to describe and listen to emotions, as well as understand the reasons behind them. The gameplay follows the standard rules of a board game of your choice, but with an emotional twist.

On each turn, after the player has a round on the gameboard, that player then draws a slip of paper that displays an emotion. They then provide a subcategory of that emotion and turn to the player on their right. They describe an example of how someone might talk about that emotion and even provide a reason for feeling that way.

The player on the right listens actively and shows support. They acknowledge that they have actively listened and offer suggestions for healthy ways to manage emotions.

The game continues until all players reach the end of the board. By playing "Emotion Exploration," players can develop empathy, foster a sense of community, and learn effective strategies for managing their emotions in a healthy manner.

Emotion	Description
Love	An intense feeling of deep affection and care towards someone or something
Happiness	A feeling of joy, contentment, and satisfaction
Fear	An unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or a threat
Sadness	A feeling of unhappiness and sorrow, often caused by loss or disappointment
Anger	A strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility towards someone or something
Disgust	A feeling of revulsion or extreme dislike towards something or someone
Surprise	An unexpected or sudden feeling caused by something new or unexpected
Anxiety	A feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe
Guilt	A feeling of remorse or regret for doing something wrong
Shame	A feeling of embarrassment or disgrace caused by a sense of wrongdoing or inadequacy
Excitement	A feeling of enthusiasm or eagerness, often caused by anticipation of something
Envy	A feeling of discontent or resentment towards someone else's possessions, qualities, or achievements
Hope	A feeling of optimism or expectation that something good will happen
Gratitude	A feeling of thankfulness or appreciation towards someone or something

Empathy	A feeling of understanding and compassion towards someone else's emotions or situation
Jealousy	A feeling of envy or resentment towards someone else's relationships or possessions
Loneliness	A feeling of isolation or being alone, often causing sadness or discomfort
Boredom	A feeling of weariness or monotony, often caused by lack of interest or stimulation
Nostalgia	A feeling of longing or affection for past experiences or memories
Contentment	A feeling of satisfaction or happiness with what one has or where one is in life
Pride	A feeling of satisfaction or accomplishment for one's achievements or qualities
Curiosity	A feeling of interest or desire to learn about something new or unknown
Disappointment	A feeling of sadness or frustration caused by unmet expectations or hopes
Regret	A feeling of sorrow or disappointment for something one has done or failed to do
Grumpiness	A feeling of irritability or ill-temper, often caused by being in a bad mood
Irritation	A feeling of annoyance or frustration, often caused by something small or trivial
Suspicion	A feeling of doubt or mistrust towards someone or something
Insecurity	A feeling of uncertainty or self-doubt, often caused by a lack of confidence or anxiety
Doubt	A feeling of uncertainty or indecision towards something

Frustration	A feeling of disappointment or annoyance caused by obstacles or setbacks
Anticipation	A feeling of excitement or nervousness towards something expected or desired
Discomfort	A feeling of physical or emotional unease or pain
Panic	A sudden and overwhelming feeling of fear or anxiety
Awe	A feeling of admiration, wonder, or reverence towards something
Empowerment	A feeling of strength or confidence gained from accomplishing something or overcoming an obstacle
Relief	A feeling of comfort or ease after experiencing discomfort or distress
Resentment	A feeling of anger or bitterness towards someone or something, often caused by a perceived injustice
Contempt	A feeling of scorn or disdain towards someone or something
Melancholy	A feeling of sadness or depression, often with a sense of introspection or reflection
Compassion	A feeling of sympathy or concern for the suffering of others

Main Emotion	Subcategories	Example Explanation	Peer Support Specialist's Role
Anger	Frustration, annoyance, resentment	Feeling angry because of a traffic jam that made the player late for an important meeting	Encourage the player to express their anger in a healthy way, such as through physical activity or talking to a trusted friend. Help the player identify any underlying issues that may be contributing to their anger and suggest coping strategies such as deep breathing, mindfulness, or cognitive restructuring to help manage their emotions.
Fear	Anxiety, terror, apprehension	Feeling nervous about a job interview the player has scheduled for the next day	Provide the player with information and support to help them prepare for the interview, such as tips for managing anxiety, practicing interview questions, and dressing appropriately. Offer reassurance and encouragement to boost the player's confidence and self-esteem. Help the player identify any cognitive distortions that may be fueling their fear and suggest techniques for challenging negative thoughts.
Sadness	Grief, loneliness, despair	Feeling sad because of the recent death of a loved one	Validate the player's emotions and provide a safe and nonjudgmental space for them to express their feelings. Encourage the player to engage in self-care activities such as exercise, meditation, or spending time with loved ones. Provide information and resources for grief support groups or counseling services. Help the player identify any unhelpful thought patterns or behaviors that may be prolonging their sadness and suggest strategies for addressing them.
Joy	Happiness, excitement, contentment	Feeling happy because the player just got accepted into their dream college	Celebrate the player's success and encourage them to savor their positive emotions. Help the player identify ways to maintain their happiness, such as through gratitude practices, positive affirmations, or engaging in hobbies they enjoy. Help the player identify any potential obstacles to their happiness and suggest strategies for overcoming them.
Disgust	Contempt, revulsion, repugnance	Feeling disgusted by the sight or smell of a particular food	Validate the player's emotions and provide a nonjudgmental space for them to express their feelings. Help the player identify any underlying reasons for their disgust, such as past negative experiences with the food, and suggest ways to address them, such as gradually exposing themselves to the food in small doses. Offer alternative food choices that the player may find more appealing.
Surprise	Astonishment, shock, amazement	Feeling surprised by a sudden promotion at work	Celebrate the player's success and help them process their emotions surrounding the event. Help the player identify any concerns or challenges that may arise from the promotion and suggest strategies for addressing them, such as seeking guidance from a mentor or setting realistic goals. Encourage the player to maintain a growth mindset and embrace new opportunities that may arise.
Trust	Respect, admiration, confidence	Feeling trusting of a new friend the player has made	Validate the player's feelings and encourage them to maintain open communication with their friend. Help the player identify any potential risks or concerns they may have in the relationship and suggest ways to address them, such as setting boundaries or having honest

			conversations about expectations. Encourage the player to maintain a positive attitude and trust their instincts when it comes to their relationships.
Anticipation	Excitement, eagerness, curiosity	Feeling excited about a vacation the player has planned	Share in the player's excitement and help them prepare for their trip by offering practical advice, such as packing tips or recommendations for activities to do. Help the player manage any anxiety or stress related to the trip by suggesting relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or visualization

HOW TO USE "I-STATEMENTS"

CHANGING YOUR WORDS WILL CHANGE YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Heavily adapted [from original article](#)

"You can sometimes exhibit untidiness. It would be helpful if I didn't have to clean up after you."

"You frequently prioritize work. Sometimes it feels like work takes precedence over your relationships."

"You occasionally display a carefree attitude towards money. It seems like you believe money is abundant."

These types of arguments about housework, priorities, and finances are quite common among peers. That's precisely why using "I-statements" is crucial. During a disagreement, your choice of words can make a significant difference in either resolving the issues or exacerbating them. By altering your language, you can positively impact your life, particularly in the context of relationships.

Even with the best intentions, the words you use during an argument can escalate it into a full-blown fight and hurt the other person. One common mistake people make in relationships is using "you-statements" instead of framing their sentences as "I-feel statements."

What is a 'you-statement'?" you might wonder.

A "you-statement," such as the examples given above, begins with the pronoun "you" and implies that the listener is responsible for something. It lacks ownership of emotions and instead blames, accuses, and assumes. Such statements are more likely to make your peer feel defensive and resentful, making it less likely for them to seek resolution.

On the other hand, an "I-statement" places personal accountability. It acknowledges that even if your peer is not behaving or speaking in the way you prefer, you are not blaming them for your feelings. By using "I-statements," you take responsibility for your part in the disagreement and foster a more compassionate and less hostile mode of communication. Vocal tone, including inflection, volume, and pitch, is an essential aspect of

communication that we often overlook. "I-feel statements" help prevent miscommunication when one person uses an accusatory tone.

The psychology behind "you-statements" and "I-statements" has been extensively studied. It has been found that "I-statements" reduce hostility and defensiveness, while "you-statements" can provoke anger. Nowadays, it is widely accepted that using "I-statements" in relationships and work leads to better communication. But why?

When you use "you-statements," your peer may feel like they are being punished. When people feel attacked, they naturally become defensive—it's ingrained in our DNA. By pointing out their perceived wrongdoings or expressing how upset, sad, or angry they make you feel, you either want them to feel as bad as you do or you want them to change. Neither of these approaches contributes to a healthy relationship. Instead of inviting a productive response, you invite anger.

On the other hand, an "I-statement" demonstrates personal accountability. It indicates that even though your peer's actions or words are not what you prefer, you do not blame them for your emotions. By using "I-statements," you take responsibility for your role in the disagreement and exhibit openness to deep listening and resolution.

To form an "I-statement," it is important to express how you genuinely feel. That's why they are often referred to as "I-feel statements." A true "I-statement" includes specific emotions, such as feeling joyful, anxious, lonely, resentful, angry, calm, embarrassed, fearful, and so on. Avoid using words that may sound like emotions but imply your peer's actions, such as feeling ignored, annoyed, angry, mistreated, manipulated, controlled, cheated, abandoned, and so on. It is also a common misconception that simply adding "I feel" in front of a "you-statement" makes it an "I-statement." For instance, saying, "I feel like you are taking me for granted" is still a disguised "you-statement" that implies blame without expressing a genuine emotion.

Here are some examples of "I-statements" that you can use with your peers:

- "I felt lonely when we didn't have dinner together all week."
- "I get anxious when I'm not informed about any delays."
- "I felt embarrassed when you spent so much time talking to that person at the party."

- "I feel confused and hurt when your belongings are left on the floor because I thought I had communicated how important it is to put them away."
- "I feel resentful when you go out without me, especially when we haven't spent much time together lately."

Using "I-statements" in your interactions with peers works best when you feel overwhelmed by emotions and have an urge to lash out. When you start using them, it is helpful to explain to your peer what you are trying to accomplish and acknowledge that you may not get it perfect the first time. Aim to be as gentle as possible and remember that the tone of your voice matters just as much, if not more, than the words you use. Refer to the provided examples and try to identify your emotions and their underlying causes. If you have triggers from the past that contribute to your reactions, be open about it.

The use of "I-statements" is not exclusive to therapy, but it was in therapy settings where the term originated. In person-centered therapy, therapists often ask clients, "How does that make you feel?" This therapeutic approach was pioneered by Carl Rogers in the 1940s, and his student Thomas Gordon coined the term "I-statement."

In individual therapy, "I-feel statements" can help you uncover your true emotions, which are often buried or ignored, and take responsibility for them. By doing so, you will realize that you can control your consistent emotions and consciously reshape your daily experience of life. While you cannot control how others act, you can manage your own emotions.

In peer interactions, utilizing "I-statements" is a valuable tool to foster better communication and understanding. By embracing this habit, you and your peers can experience positive changes and strengthen your connections.

What is WRAP?

WRAP stands for Wellness Recovery Action Plan™

WRAP is a self-management and recovery system developed by a group of people who had mental health difficulties and who were struggling to incorporate wellness tools and strategies into their lives. WRAP is designed to:

- *f* Decrease and prevent intrusive or troubling feelings and behaviors
- *f* Increase personal empowerment
- *f* Improve the quality of life
- *f* Assist people in achieving their own life goals and dreams.

WRAP is a structured system to monitor uncomfortable and distressing symptoms that can help you reduce, modify or eliminate those symptoms by using planned responses. This includes plans for how you want others to respond when symptoms have made it impossible for you to continue to make decisions, take care of yourself or keep yourself safe.

WRAP is a self-designed plan for staying well and for helping you to feel better when you are not feeling well to increase personal responsibility and improving your quality of life.

The first part of WRAP is developing a personal Wellness Toolbox. This is a list of resources you can use to develop your WRAP. It includes things like contacting friends and supporters, peer counseling, focusing exercises, relaxation and stress reduction exercises, journaling, creative, fun and affirming activity, exercise, diet, light, and getting a good night's sleep.

Section 1 of WRAP is the Daily Maintenance Plan. It includes three parts: 1.) a description of yourself when you are well, 2.) those Wellness Tools you know you must use every day to maintain your wellness, and 3.) a list of things you might need on any day.

Section 2 is identifying those events or Triggers that, if they happened, might make you feel worse--like an argument with a friend or getting a big bill. Then, using Wellness Tools, you develop an action plan you can use to get through this difficult time.

Section 3 is identifying Early Warning Signs, those subtle signs that let you know you are beginning to feel worse, like being unable to sleep or feelings of nervousness. Then, again, using your Wellness Toolbox, developing an action plan for responding to these signs you feel better quickly and prevent a possible difficult time.

Section 4 is When Things are Breaking Down. In this section, you list those signs that let you know you are feeling much worse, like you are feeling very sad all the time or are hearing voices. And again, using your Wellness Toolbox, develop a powerful action plan that you that will help you feel better as quickly as possible and prevent an even more difficult time.

Section 5 is a Crisis Plan or Advance Directive. In the crisis plan, you identify those signs that let others know they need to take over responsibility for your care and decision making, who you want to take over for you and support you through this time, health care information, a plan for staying at home through this time, things others can do that would help and things they might choose to do that would not be helpful. This kind of proactive advanced planning keeps you in control even when it seems like things are out of control.

Section 6 is the Post Crisis Plan. You may want to think about this part of the plan in advance and even write some things to do in that time. However, you may want to write most of it as you are beginning to recover from the crisis—when you have a clearer picture of what you need to do for yourself to get well.

Review your plans every day, noting how you feel and doing what you need to do to help yourself get better or to keep yourself well. .As you become familiar with your plan, you will find that the review process takes less time and that you will know how to respond without even referring to the book. People who are using these plans regularly and updating them as necessary are finding that they have fewer difficult times, and that when they do have a hard time it is not as bad as it used to be and it doesn't last as long.

The WRAP approach empowers you to take control of your own health and wellness. Since its development, the system has been shared with thousands of people through the books—Wellness Recovery Action Plan and Winning Against Relapse, the Winning Against Relapse audio tape, the Creating Wellness video series, numerous support groups, workshops and seminars, and through the www.mentalhealthrecovery.com web

site.

People who are using WRAP say:

“It helps me feel prepared.”

“I feel better more often and I’m able to improve the overall quality of my life.”

The person who experiences symptoms is the one who develops their personal WRAP. The person may choose to have supporters and health care professionals help them create their WRAP.

The WRAP system was developed by people who have been dealing with a variety of psychiatric symptoms for many years and who are working hard to feel better and get on with their lives. Mary Ellen Copeland has shared it with people with other illnesses and they too believe that it can be easily adapted for use with other conditions.

"Recovery & WRAP have changed my life."

"I've gone from being totally disabled to being able to live a full and rich life. I am so grateful."

"Everything has improved at our organization. People are recovering and moving forward with their lives. Our work is so much more fulfilling."

“Finally, something I can do to help myself.”

“I used to spend months, even years, in the hospital. Now I have a bad afternoon or a bad day.

And it's all because I use WRAP.”

“WRAP for me is about personal responsibility. I can just let my "symptoms" take over my life. Or I can take personal responsibility, use my WRAP, and do what I need to do to take care of myself and feel better.”

“In the years that I have been using WRAP, everything has changed in my life. I used to spend all my time just sitting around, watching TV and smoking. Now I hardly ever watch TV, I've given up smoking, I've gone back to school and I have a real job. And I have a wonderful partner. I never thought life could be this good.”

“This has changed my life completely. I used to think of myself as this "mentally ill" person. Now I am a person who knows how to take care of myself and help myself in difficult time. If I am feeling badly or having a hard time, I take action. And there are so many simple, safe things I can do.”

“When I was feeling badly I used to call the doctor or call the hotline. Now I check my list of Wellness Tools and do something I really enjoy. Usually its call a friend to go for a walk, go to a movie, watch a video or just talk.”

“The word crisis has a different meaning for me now. I used to think it was a crisis when I felt really anxious and upset. I thought I needed to go into the hospital or get my medications increased. Now a crisis is when everything is so bad I need others to take over for me. And I don't have them anymore, because now I know how to take care of myself.”

Understanding triggers and coping with them

Triggers are intense or unexpected emotional responses to specific stimuli. They can be person, place, thing, or situation-based and are unique to each individual. Triggers are connected to past traumatic experiences and can cause symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Symptoms of being triggered include feeling scared, panicked, anxious, unsafe, elevated heartbeat, sweating, difficulty breathing, feeling a lack of control over emotions, urge to escape or avoid, rumination or negative thoughts, mood changes, anxiety or panic attacks, physical tension, and flashbacks.

To recognize when you're triggered, pay attention to sudden or unrelated feelings of anxiety or overwhelm, persistent thoughts about a particular issue, excessive venting or rehashing of a situation, and outsized emotional reactions. Trigger warnings are statements that warn of sensitive material and can be helpful for people with anxiety, PTSD, or sensitivity to certain content.

Coping with triggers involves memorizing your reaction to them, taking a break to process emotions, understanding your feelings without judgment, seeking professional help if needed, and practicing self-care. Working with a therapist or coach can help refine coping strategies, and taking care of basic needs is crucial in managing triggers.

It's important to remember that triggers are rooted in past trauma, and while coaching can help with emotional regulation, trauma should be addressed by a licensed therapist. Emotional regulation skills can assist in recognizing and managing triggers effectively.

How to Calm yourself down: 20 ways

Adapted from original article: By Allaya Cooks-Campbell
<https://www.betterup.com/blog/how-to-calm-yourself-down>

Managing stress is an essential skill in life, even though it's not always enjoyable. The good news is that we can develop resilience by calming ourselves down during stressful moments. Here are 20 effective strategies to help you calm down in stressful situations:

Understand that feeling anxious is normal: Emotions like anxiety, uneasiness, and anger are natural reactions to the world around us. Recognize that these feelings are a normal part of life.

Identify external stressors: External factors beyond our control can turn a regular situation into a stressful one. Recognize sources of stress, such as work, relationships, parenting, and unmet expectations.

Recognize the impact of stress on sensitivity: Highly sensitive individuals (HSPs), introverts, and those easily triggered by external stimuli may experience stress more frequently. They need regular downtime to recharge and manage their sensitivity effectively.

Prioritize self-care: Neglecting self-care can quickly deplete your energy. Make sure to give yourself sufficient time for rest and rejuvenation.

Cultivate wellness habits: Establishing wellness habits like relaxation techniques and progressive muscle relaxation can enhance your ability to handle stress.

Address underlying mental health issues: Mental health conditions like depression and anxiety can make it challenging to stay calm in stressful situations. Seek professional help to manage and address these underlying issues.

Avoid pushing away negative thoughts: Attempting to ignore or suppress negative thoughts usually leads to their persistence. Instead, develop healthy coping mechanisms to address and process them.

Recognize positive stress: Stress is not always negative; it can also arise from

achievements or exciting new challenges. Learn to channel stress effectively and transform it into positive motivation.

Now let's explore how to calm yourself down in specific stressful scenarios:

When feeling angry:

Find a safe outlet: Vent your feelings in a safe space by sharing them with a trusted person or writing them down in a journal.

Validate your feelings: Acknowledge and validate your anger, even if others don't agree. Write down your feelings, expressing why you feel angry and what you need.

Empathize with others: Try to understand the situation from the other person's perspective, even if you don't agree with them. This exercise can help you depersonalize the conflict.

Practice meditation: Meditating allows you to detach from angry triggers and observe your thoughts without attachment. It can help you identify the underlying emotions causing your anger.

When feeling depressed:

Engage in physical activity: Exercise boosts mood by releasing endorphins. Take a walk, join a fitness class, or dance to elevate your spirits.

Attend to basic needs: When feeling down, it's easy to neglect self-care. Start by taking a shower and having a small meal to increase your sense of accomplishment.

Seek laughter: Find sources of humor, such as TV shows or comedy specials, that can make you laugh and uplift your mood.

Reach out for support: If you have a diagnosed mood disorder, contact your therapist or counselor to help you manage your emotional health.

When experiencing work-related stress:

Take breaks: Step away from your workspace and change your surroundings. A short

walk or running errands can provide emotional and physical distance to process your work-related stress.

Engage in non-work activities: During meetings or other times when you can't leave, find alternative activities like coloring, drawing, or stress relief techniques to distract and relax yourself.

Create a soothing workspace: Optimize your work environment by decluttering, keeping inspiring items, and adding calming elements like essential oils or plants.

When facing an anxiety attack:

Recognize the panic attack: Identifying the symptoms as a panic attack enables you to regain control and manage.

Defining, Expressing and Honoring our Boundaries

A personal boundary is a psychological and emotional limit people set to protect themselves from being mistreated, manipulated, or violated by others. It is a line that separates a person's feelings, needs, and values from others.

Each individual is responsible for setting and maintaining boundaries. They are responsible for communicating their boundaries to others and enforcing them when necessary, which can be challenging.

Many people only know their limits once they encounter them since our limits are often shaped by our experiences and may change over time. For example, people may think they can handle a high-stress job but only realize their limits when they become burned out or experience a mental health crisis.

Sometimes, people may push themselves beyond their limits because they feel pressure to perform or meet certain expectations. This can lead to physical or emotional exhaustion and feelings of frustration, resentment, or burnout.

Encountering our limits can be a painful or uncomfortable experience. Still, it can also be an opportunity for growth and self-awareness. By recognizing our limitations, we can prioritize self-care and make changes that align with our values and goals.

It's important to note that our limits are not set in stone and can change over time. By regularly checking in with ourselves and listening to our bodies and emotions, we can become more attuned to our limits and adjust our behaviors and expectations accordingly.

Ultimately, understanding our limits and learning to respect them is an important aspect of self-care and can help us lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Many people may need to be aware of their limits or struggle with enforcing them due to fear of conflict or a desire to please others.

Personal boundaries can take many forms, such as physical, emotional, or intellectual. Examples of personal boundaries include saying "no" when you are asked to do something that goes against your values, setting limits on the amount of time you spend with someone, or establishing physical boundaries by not allowing someone to touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable.

Setting and maintaining personal boundaries is essential to self-care and building healthy relationships. By being clear about our limits and respecting the boundaries of others, we can create a safe and supportive environment for ourselves and those around us.

Emotional Dumping

Also known as trauma-dumping, it refers to a situation where a person shares their intense emotional experiences, often traumatic or distressing, with someone else without their consent or willingness to listen. Emotional dumping can overwhelm the listener and cause them to feel drained, stressed, or triggered.

When someone is trauma-dumping, it is essential to prioritize your well-being and set boundaries to protect yourself. Here are some ways to respect your boundaries in this situation:

1. **Recognize your limitations:** It's important to acknowledge when you've reached your limit and need to take a break. Everyone has a different threshold for how much they can handle, so be honest about what you're comfortable with.
2. **Communicate your boundaries:** Let the person know you are willing to listen but have limits. Be clear about what you are and are not ready to discuss, and set a time limit for the conversation if necessary.
3. **Redirect the conversation:** If the conversation becomes overwhelming, try redirecting the conversation to a more neutral topic. You can also gently remind the person that you are not a trained therapist and that they may benefit from professional support.
4. **Take a break:** If the conversation becomes too much, take a break. Excuse yourself from the conversation, take a walk, or engage in a self-care activity that helps you relax and re-center.
5. **Seek support:** If the conversation has triggered your trauma or emotions, it's essential to seek help for yourself; this could be through talking to a trusted friend or family member, seeing a therapist, or practicing self-care.

Remember, setting boundaries is not selfish or rude. It is an important part of self-care and maintaining healthy relationships. By respecting your boundaries, you can better support others while caring for yourself.

Tips to positively influence a negative conversation

When a discussion turns negative, it can be helpful to change the subject respectfully.

Here are some suggestions for changing the subject:

1. Acknowledge the current topic: Start by acknowledging the current topic of discussion and the emotions involved. This helps validate the feelings of those involved while also preparing them for the subject change.
2. Transition to a related topic: Change to a related issue that is more positive or neutral. This helps maintain the flow of the conversation while shifting the focus to a more constructive or uplifting topic.
3. Ask a question: Ask a question related to a different topic but still relevant to the group or the current situation. This can shift the focus of the conversation and encourage everyone to participate.
4. Use humor: Humor can be an excellent tool for diffusing tension and shifting the focus of the conversation. If appropriate, use a lighthearted joke or comment to change the subject.
5. Be direct: If the conversation is particularly harmful or hurtful, it may be necessary to be more direct. Politely but firmly state that the current topic is not productive and suggest a different direction for the conversation.

Changing the subject may only sometimes be appropriate or effective. Ending the conversation or taking a break may be necessary if it becomes too harmful. Being respectful, considerate, and assertive helps steer the conversation more positively.

Welcome to the Peer Volunteer Scavenger Hunt

Your Names:

Instructions:

This scavenger hunt is designed to help you get to know your fellow volunteers and the facility better. Work with a partner or a small team (**don't work alone**) to complete the tasks on this worksheet. Write your answers in the spaces provided and work with your team or partner to fill out all of the answers on a single worksheet. The first team to complete all the tasks and return their completed worksheets to the volunteer coordinator wins a prize!

Tasks:

This is silly, but it will **definitely** break the ice: Find the staff member with the most interesting shoes and ask to take a picture of their shoes with yours, and write down their name: _____

Find the name of the next support group and write down the name of that group along with the time that you wrote this:

Find any artwork downstairs and write down where it is and what it means to you:

Find a book in the facility's library upstairs that is probably about mental wellness and write down the title:

Find a quote or inspirational message posted somewhere in the facility and write it down:

Find a flier/brochure in the facility that represents a wellness/recovery tool that is interesting to you and write down what it is:

Find a person that you've been asked to contact about taking a break from volunteering for a while (like if you're ill or have something more important to do the day you agreed to volunteer), and write down their name or nickname(s):

If the TV is on downstairs, write down what you think the topic of the video is:

Who is working downstairs right now? Write down their name and how you think they are being helpful.

(This may take a while to notice, and that's ok, sometimes what they are doing is simply being present and waiting to be helpful).

Downstairs, find a schedule of upcoming classes and list two classes scheduled for later this week that might be good for a new member to join:

Ask a peer when one on one appointments can be scheduled and write it down:

Name three services listed on the pegboard:

Congratulations, you have completed the Peer Support Scavenger Hunt! Don't forget to return your completed worksheet to the coordinator to be eligible for the prize!

TWC BINGO CARD Coordinator Instructions

This game is like a fun quiz, have small gifts available for all who participated.

The Coordinator will draw one random number. The Coordinator will announce the number to the players clearly, ensuring that all players can hear and understand the call.

Mark your cards: Players will have 45 seconds to see if that number is on their BINGO card AND briefly write down an answer. The answer doesn't have to be right, a good guess will do because we will review all of the questions and answers at the end of the game.

Complete a line: The game continues until one player completes a line on their bingo card. A line can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. Once players have a line, they should immediately call out "Bingo!" to signal they won.

Verify the win: The Coordinator will verify the win by checking that the numbers called match the ones marked on the winning card. If there are no mistakes and the player has a valid line. Then the Coordinator will read the questions for that letter/number combo, and the player will read their answers. Then they will be declared the winner.

TIP: The questions and answers are on the back of this page. You may use the back side of your BINGO card to help you write your answers.

Instructor: Use this grid to record the numbers you call:

Random number list 1-41

1, 28, 15, 41, 10, 32, 22, 6, 24, 19, 34, 4, 11, 26, 39, 8, 33, 17, 20, 7, 23, 12, 36, 13, 5, 40, 18, 27, 9, 35, 3, 14, 25, 38, 16, 21, 2, 37, 29, 30, 31

Bingo Questions and example Answers

1	Give an example of a critical thinking questions starting with the word: when	When is it appropriate to share personal stories in a peer support group, and how do you decide what to share? How can you respect others' privacy and confidentiality when sharing personal stories in a peer support group? How can members respond in a supportive and empathetic way when hearing challenging or traumatic stories in a peer support group? How can you balance honesty and vulnerability while avoiding oversharing or triggering others in a peer support group? When reflecting on personal stories shared in a peer support group, how can members identify common themes that inform their own healing and growth?
2	Give an example of a critical thinking questions starting with the word: How	How do peer support groups offer understanding and acceptance to those with similar challenges? How can peer support groups aid in developing coping skills and managing mental health or addiction concerns? How do peer support groups tackle the stigma and isolation often faced by individuals with such concerns? How can peer support groups create community and foster belonging for those feeling marginalized or excluded? How effective are peer support groups as complements to traditional therapy, and what are their potential challenges?
3	Give an example of a critical thinking questions starting with the word: what	What is the problem or issue we are trying to solve? What evidence or information do we have to support our claims? What are some alternative solutions or perspectives we should consider? What are the potential consequences or impacts of each option? What action or decision should we take based on our analysis and evaluation?
4	Give an example of a critical thinking questions starting with the word: who	"Who is involved in this situation? Who benefits from this decision or action? Who might be impacted by this decision or action? Who has the authority to make a decision in this situation? Who can help solve this problem or provide more information?"
5	Give an example of a critical thinking questions starting with the word: why	Why do people hold different beliefs and perspectives on the same issue? Why is critical thinking important in solving complex problems? Why is it important to consider multiple viewpoints when making decisions? Why do people often rely on stereotypes and assumptions instead of seeking out accurate information?
6	How can a reassuring smile help someone who is stressed?	A reassuring smile can help someone feel more at ease and connected. It can also signal to them that they are not alone and that you are there to support them.
7	How can calming oneself down help build mental fitness?	Calming oneself down can help build mental fitness by increasing resilience and improving coping skills. It can also help reduce the impact of stress on one's mental and physical health over time.

8	How can journaling help when feeling overwhelmed?	Journaling can help free up mental space and allow you to prioritize, delegate, and schedule tasks on your to-do list.
9	How can labeling thoughts help during an anxiety attack?	Labeling thoughts in detail can pull an individual out of the emotional center of the brain and into the prefrontal cortex, which can make it easier to reframe emotions and manage the symptoms of an anxiety attack.
10	How can reaching out for help improve emotional health?	Contacting a therapist can teach you how to manage emotional health, improve communication with colleagues, boost productivity, and increase job satisfaction.
11	How can reducing stimuli help when feeling overwhelmed?	Reducing stimuli can help you regain control of your emotions by creating a more calming environment. Dimming lights, turning off your phone, and taking deep breaths are helpful strategies.
12	How can someone positively influence a negative conversation?	To positively influence a negative conversation, one can acknowledge the current topic, transition to a related topic, ask a question, use humor, or be direct. However, ending the conversation or taking a break may be necessary if it becomes too harmful.
13	How can someone recognize their personal limits?	Many people only know their limits once they encounter them since our limits are often shaped by our experiences and may change over time. Regularly checking in with ourselves, listening to our bodies and emotions, and reflecting on our experiences can help us become more attuned to our limits.
14	How can stigma affect individuals with mental health conditions?	Stigma can cause individuals with mental health conditions to feel ashamed or isolated, and may prevent them from seeking help or treatment.
15	How can taking a break from an overwhelming environment help?	Taking a break from an overwhelming environment can allow you to recenter and prepare to re-enter it.
16	How can taking a walk or changing location help someone who is feeling stressed?	Changing scenery can provide a break from the current environment and give a person a chance to re-center and de-stress. It can also help them gain perspective on the situation.

17	How can using "I-statements" in therapy help?	Using "I-statements" in therapy can help clients take responsibility for their thoughts and feelings and prevent them from blaming others. By expressing their emotions in a non-threatening way, clients can communicate their needs and work toward resolving conflicts with their partner. Therapists can help clients practice using "I-statements" and provide feedback to improve their communication skills.
18	How can you apply critical thinking in your daily life?	You can apply critical thinking in your daily life by questioning assumptions, considering multiple perspectives, evaluating evidence, making logical and informed decisions, and communicating effectively with others.
19	How can you feel better when feeling depressed?	Exercise, do something small for yourself, and find ways to make yourself laugh, such as by watching a comedy show or special.
20	How do "I-statements" reduce hostility and defensiveness?	"I-statements" reduce hostility and defensiveness by showing personal accountability and openness for deep listening and resolution. They state that even though the partner is not acting or speaking in the way the speaker would prefer, the speaker is not blaming them for how they feel. By taking responsibility for their part in the disagreement, speakers can communicate in a less hostile, more compassionate way.
21	How do "you-statements" affect communication in a relationship?	Studies have shown that "you-statements" can provoke anger and reduce the likelihood of productive responses from a partner. When people feel attacked, they naturally become defensive. By pointing out what the partner has done wrong or how they have made the speaker feel upset, sad, or angry, the speaker is either trying to make them feel as bad as they feel or trying to make them change. This is not a part of creating a healthy relationship.
22	What are 5 steps to recognize when you're feeling triggered and keep the feeling from taking over?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the trigger: Pay attention to the physical and emotional signs that accompany the trigger. When you notice them, take a moment to identify what caused them. 2. Take a break: Step away from the situation or the environment that triggered you, if possible. This will give you time to calm down and gain some perspective. 3. Use grounding techniques: Focus on your breath or use other techniques such as progressive muscle relaxation or visualization to bring your attention back to the present moment. 4. Challenge your thoughts: Question the negative thoughts or beliefs that may be fueling your reaction. Are they really accurate or helpful? 5. Seek support: Talk to a trusted friend, family member, or mental health professional if you're having difficulty managing your triggers. They can help you develop coping strategies and work through any underlying issues that may be contributing to your reactions.

23	What are some common forms of discrimination that individuals with mental health conditions may face?	Discrimination can take many forms, such as being denied employment, housing, or insurance coverage due to a mental health condition.
24	What are some examples of personal boundaries?	Personal boundaries can take many forms, such as physical, emotional, or intellectual. Examples of personal boundaries include saying "no" when you are asked to do something that goes against your values, setting limits on the amount of time you spend with someone, or establishing physical boundaries by not allowing someone to touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable.
25	What are some physical techniques to calm down during a work-related trigger or upset during a meeting?	Physical techniques include going off-camera, coloring, drawing, or squeezing a stress relief ball during virtual meetings, and massaging the palm of your hands or flexing your toes one by one during in-person meetings.
26	What are signs that you need to get to a safe place to calm down?	Feeling emotionally drained, overwhelmed, or like you're about to have a panic attack; having trouble focusing or feeling tense or shaky.
27	What are some strategies for creating a soothing workspace to reduce work-related anxiety?	Strategies include decluttering the workspace, keeping only what inspires you, adding a supportive mantra, an essential oil diffuser, or a small plant to the workspace, and moving close to a window if possible.
28	What are some ways that individuals and communities can help reduce stigma and discrimination towards mental health conditions?	Education and awareness-raising campaigns, advocating for policy changes, and promoting acceptance and understanding of mental health conditions can all help to reduce stigma and discrimination. Additionally, individuals can speak out against discriminatory behavior and show support for individuals with mental health conditions.
29	What are some ways to calm yourself down when feeling angry?	Vent in a safe place, validate your feelings, try to see the situation from the other person's point of view, and practice meditation.

30	What are ways to help calm other people down when they're upset?	You can listen to them, ask questions about their experience, and encourage them to get out of their head by doing something physical.
31	What are some ways to recognize when you might be triggered?	Notice physical sensations like increased heart rate, sweating, or tensed muscles. Identify changes in mood, such as sudden anger, anxiety, or depression. Pay attention to negative or self-critical thoughts that come up. Recognize when you start to feel defensive, reactive, or on edge. Take note of any patterns or situations that consistently bring up intense emotions.
32	What are some ways to reduce sensory input in an overwhelming environment?	Dimming lights, turning off the radio, or shutting off the air conditioner are some ways to reduce sensory input in an overwhelming environment.
33	What is a personal boundary and why is it important?	A personal boundary is a psychological and emotional limit people set to protect themselves from being mistreated, manipulated, or violated by others. It is important because it helps individuals maintain their emotional and mental well-being and build healthy relationships with others.
34	What is a trigger?	A "trigger" is something that sets off an emotional or mental response, often related to past experiences or trauma.
35	What is emotional dumping, and how can someone set boundaries when it happens?	Emotional dumping is when a person shares their intense emotional experiences, often traumatic or distressing, with someone else without their consent or willingness to listen. To set boundaries in this situation, one can recognize their limitations, communicate their boundaries, redirect the conversation, take a break, and seek support if necessary.
36	What is stigma?	Stigma refers to negative attitudes and beliefs that people may have towards individuals with mental health conditions.
37	What is the difference between a "you-statement" and an "I-statement"?	An "I-statement" shows personal accountability and expresses how the speaker feels inside. It uses specific emotions, such as "I feel..." to take responsibility for the speaker's part in the disagreement and to display openness for deep listening and resolution. A "you-statement," on the other hand, begins with the pronoun "you" and implies that the listener is responsible for something. It blames, accuses, and assumes the receiver, and it is more likely to make the partner feel defensive and resentful.
38	What should you do if you experience frequent feelings of anxiety or panic attacks?	Develop an anxiety relief game plan, notice what's happening, and label your thoughts to help manage the symptoms.

39	Why is it better to tackle stressors earlier rather than later?	Tackling stressors earlier can help prevent them from becoming more overwhelming and harder to manage. It can also help build mental fitness and increase confidence in one's ability to handle difficult situations.
40	Why is it helpful to ask for help when feeling overwhelmed?	Getting help can make the rest of your to-do list look more manageable and can help you feel like you're not alone.
41	Why is it important to address stigma and discrimination towards individuals with mental health conditions?	Addressing stigma and discrimination can help individuals with mental health conditions feel supported and encouraged to seek help and treatment. It can also help to break down barriers that prevent individuals from accessing the care they need.

Volunteer Instructions

Instructions:

The Coordinator will draw one random number. The Coordinator will announce the number to the players clearly, ensuring that all players can hear and understand the call.

Mark your cards: Players will have 45 seconds to see if that number is on their BINGO card AND briefly write down an answer. The answer doesn't have to be right, a good guess will do because we will review all of the questions and answers at the end of the game.

Complete a line: The game continues until one player completes a line on their bingo card. A line can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. Once players have a line, they should immediately call out "Bingo!" to signal they won.

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TIP: The questions and answers are on the back of this page. You may use the back side of your BINGO card to help you write your answers.

Bingo Card 1

1	16	32	24	41
8	10	19	28	3
33	12	22	36	15
27	20	5	34	11
18	25	7	30	14

Bingo Card 2

1	16	32	10	24
41	8	22	28	4
13	35	19	2	30
26	11	33	17	7
23	38	5	14	36

Bingo Card 3

1	16	28	10	33
22	40	7	25	13
11	24	19	32	5
18	3	26	8	20
4	15	34	12	27

Bingo Card 4

1	16	28	10	33
22	7	25	11	30
39	13	24	15	32
19	5	27	3	8
18	20	4	34	12

Bingo Card 5

1	16	28	10	11
22	33	6	25	38
14	7	19	3	34
17	29	8	27	13
4	32	26	12	5

Bingo Card 6

1	16	32	8	24
10	37	28	3	22
13	34	19	5	26
11	35	20	7	30
15	33	18	4	27

Volunteer Training Program Feedback Form

We would appreciate your feedback about the volunteer training program thus far. This assessment form will help us understand your experience and improve our program. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

How would you rate the overall quality of the training program so far?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

How would you rate the effectiveness of the training sessions in preparing you for your volunteer role?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

How organized and structured is the volunteer training program?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

How engaging and interactive are the training sessions?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

How would you rate the relevance of the training content to your volunteer role?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

Are there any topics or skills that you would like to see covered in future training sessions?

How well do the trainers/facilitators communicate and explain concepts?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

How would you rate the pace of the training sessions?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

How knowledgeable and approachable are the trainers/facilitators?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

Do you feel comfortable asking questions or expressing concerns during the training sessions? *(Yes/No)*

How would you rate the level of support provided by the program coordinators?

(scale of 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

Do you have any suggestions for improving the volunteer training program?

Additional Comments:

Thank you for your feedback! Your input is valuable to us and will help us improve the volunteer training program. You may place the form upside down in the middle of the conference room table when completed.

SELF-Care Examples

If you're busy (and who isn't?), slowing down to care for yourself may seem like a waste of time. But self-care practices can have a powerful impact on your mental, physical, and emotional health.

What exactly are self-care practices?

Self-care is often misunderstood. It is cast as a “nice to have,” somehow a “woman thing,” or a luxury, like a spa treatment. But self-care practices are any actions you take to improve your mental, physical, or emotional well-being. Everybody needs them to function at their best.

Simply put, self-care practices are intentional steps to take care of yourself. Self-care practices put deposits into your wellness “bank account.” Consistent deposits give you more internal resources to draw upon during stressful times.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines self-care as “the ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider.”

Self-care looks different for everyone. Some people thrive on social connections, while others need lots of alone time. Some people love a vigorous workout, while others prefer a slow, mindful yoga class. Some find cleaning therapeutic, and others find it draining.

Your self-care practices, then, will look different than everyone else's. So how do you figure out what works for you? You can start by asking yourself these questions:

- What's the first thing I want to do when I feel overwhelmed?
- When do I feel my best?
- What makes me smile?
- What do I daydream about doing?
- What do I want to do that I never get to do?
- How do I want to feel?

The importance of self-care for your mental health and well-being

Self-care is critical to your mental health. When we feel stressed, the body's alarm bells — the sympathetic nervous system — go off. They tell the brain you'll need more energy to fight or flee.

Unfortunately, it becomes difficult to relax when constantly triggered by low-level chronic stress.

Stress puts people at higher risk of developing depression, anxiety, heart disease, and other health issues. That's because when under stress, our bodies divert important resources to deal with the threat. That means we are less available for other processes, like healing and sleep.

Fortunately, when we practice self-care, we activate the parasympathetic nervous system. This allows us to relax and counteract the effects of long-term stress.

Besides moderating the stress response, self-care practices can reduce inflammation. Self-care is linked to better health, helps develop mental fitness, and makes instances of physical and mental illness easier to cope with.

How can you practice self-care every day?

Despite “self-care” being the most-searched term of 2020, taking care of yourself isn’t a trend or something you can dabble in. For the biggest impact, you should make self-care a daily practice.

The National Wellness Institute identifies six primary dimensions of wellness. They are mental, physical, emotional, occupational, social, and spiritual. Ideally, you can do something to promote wellness in these areas daily.

Of course, there are times when you may need to focus on one area over the others. For example, if you’re under the weather, it makes sense to focus on your physical wellness and skip a coffee date with a friend (social).

If you’re short on time, tackling several different wellness areas all at once may seem daunting. The trick to creating a self-care practice you’ll stick with is self-awareness and creating a routine that works for you.

How to start a self-care routine

Many people have started — and stopped — one-self care practice or another. But we all also have things that we wouldn’t dream of missing. Grab your planner and follow the following steps:

Look at your schedule. What activities are you already doing that are fun, energizing, or health-focused? Highlight any massages, physical therapy, sports, doctor’s appointments, or trips to the gym.

Revisit your answers to the earlier questions and look at the six dimensions of wellness. What do you wish you had time for? How do you want to feel? Which areas of your life receive the most attention? The least?

Begin to look for areas where you can schedule your self-care. While scheduling rest doesn't sound particularly relaxing, it's one of the best ways to ensure it happens. Look for areas where you can "revitalize" something you're already doing. For example, if you walk your dog daily, try leaving your phone at home for a mini-digital detox.

You don't need huge, uninterrupted blocks of "me-time" in your schedule to cultivate self-care. Don't let being "busy" stop you from making time for yourself!

Here's **a list of over 50 self-care ideas** that take anywhere from a whole day to just one minute to practice:

50+ self-care practices for your mind, body, and soul that fit into any schedule

One minute or less:

- Take your vitamins. This is easily overlooked, but over time can make a big difference in how you feel. Vitamins can reduce fatigue and support your immune system.
- Drink a glass of water. The effects of dehydration can look like fatigue or anxiety. A glass of water might be all you need to perk you back up.
- Practice mindful breathing. Meditation doesn't have to take a huge amount of time. Try watching your breath for a whole minute (about seven deep breaths). Note how you feel before and after.
- Clear a spot. We often think more clearly when our spaces are more orderly. Declutter your nightstand, desk, kitchen counter, or your sofa.
- Create a mantra for yourself. If you set an intention earlier for how you want to feel, try turning it into a mantra or affirmation. It could be as simple as "I'm doing my best" or "I am at peace."
- Get — or give — a hug. Physical affection reduces our stress levels and makes us feel more connected.
- Give up on something you feel like you ought to do. The things we "should" do are mental clutter. Sometimes it feels good to complete them, but let it go if they're someone else's idea of what you should do.
- Accept an offer of help. Turning down help can become an automatic reaction, even if we crave support. The next time someone offers their assistance, even in something small, surprise yourself by saying yes.

Five to 10 minutes:

- Write it down. Journaling can be very therapeutic. Take a few minutes to record how you feel, anything you're worried about, or even your dreams. It doesn't have to be perfect. Set a timer and clear your mind.
- Give yourself an extra five minutes between meetings. Take the time to decompress, take notes, or prepare for your next meeting. Your brain will thank you.
- Water your plants. Caring for plants keeps us in the present and in touch with nature. Research shows that plants boost productivity, creativity, and mindfulness and reduce stress.
- Simplify your choices. Decide on one meal that you want to streamline. Pick a yummy, nutritious option and eat it every day. For example, replace breakfast with a nutrient-dense smoothie or prep a week of healthy lunches.
- Remind yourself of a special memory. Flip through a digital vacation album, or print and frame a photo that makes you smile.
- Outsource something. Call or book a service appointment online for help with a task you dread, like cleaning or lawn care. Use the newfound time as you, please.
- Enjoy being still. Sit or lie down for five minutes (try not to fall asleep). You can do a simple body awareness scan, close your eyes, and practice deep breathing.
- Treat yourself. Go shopping! Buy something you've always wanted online, order your favorite lunch, or book a spa day. You could even make an out-of-the-way stop to pick up that thing you love.
- Fix or replace something. Is there something that's not working well? Rid your mind of the annoyance by fixing it or replacing it. It will make you smile every time you use it with ease.
- Pay yourself first. Taking good care of your finances is self-love. Set up a savings or investment account and put a small amount into it before paying any other obligations.
- Do a mini digital detox. Try going tech-free for five minutes once a day. Meditate, stand and stretch, or color.
- Make a list of things that make you happy. They can be big (like a vacation), abstract (like a color), or small (like a particular brand of chocolate). Keep the list handy and add to it. It will inspire you to notice and appreciate the things you love.
- Make a gratitude list. Consciously practicing gratitude overpowers negative emotions and keeps depression at bay.
- Call a friend. Yes — no one uses the phone anymore. That's why it's extra special to hear a loved one's voice on the line. Choose someone you haven't chatted with and ask, "How are you doing?"

15 to 20 minutes:

- Take a walk. The fresh air and movement will help rejuvenate and refocus you.
- Play with your kids. They'll love it, and you'll relive the nostalgia of what you did when you were little as you bond with your kids.
- Play with your pets. Pets love unconditionally (well, except cats). Give them some one-on-one attention and belly scratches.
- Take a shower. A few things in life don't seem better after a quick shower. Rinse the day off, or enjoy the hot water while you use all the fancy products you normally skip.
- Take a power nap. Fatigue can affect your focus, mood, and productivity. Pair a cup of coffee with a short nap to recharge.
- Read a book for fun. Whether it's a fiction book or an interesting topic, reading is a great way to destress while engaging your mind.
- Curate your social media. Unfollow or mute negative people. Depending on the app, you can block certain terms and topics or delete some platforms altogether.
- Cross something off your list. Take a few minutes to handle a lingering task. You'll feel better and more productive and get a boost of momentum from your accomplishment.
- Plan a vacation. Daydream about where you want to go. Even if it's not in your means, have fun picking out the accommodations, activities, and even your wardrobe. The anticipation of a trip is proven to be the best part of the experience.
- Move your body. You don't need to attend a ninety-minute yoga class to reap the benefits. Roll out your mat for simple poses (don't forget savasana) or just stretch and breathe.
- Take a small step towards doing something you want to do. Even if you can't complete it in 15 minutes, research the first step, enroll in a class, or begin reading a book on the topic.

One to two hours:

- Go to therapy. Working with a professional is an excellent way to support your mental health and reduce burnout. You deserve (at least) one hour a week to focus on yourself.
- Try a new health or wellness trend that you've never tried before. Make an appointment for acupuncture, a chiropractor, cryotherapy, float sessions, or a touchless spa.

- Go to bed earlier. Have an extra hour to yourself? Get some rest. A 2019 study showed that one extra hour of sleep improved cognitive performance, fatigue, mood, and focus.
- Become an expert on yourself. Try setting up an at-home taste test of all your favorite snacks and take notes on why you love them.
- Uplevel your appearance. Spend some time getting a professional manicure, haircut, shave, or shopping for new clothes.
- Go to a fitness class. Most exercise classes are between 45 and 90 minutes. You can spin, stretch, box, play a sport, or lift weights. You'll leave feeling exhausted (in all the good ways) and accomplished.
- Turn off your phone one hour before bed. Setting yourself up for a good night's sleep starts early. The blue light on your phone (and all the drama on social media) can prevent you from getting enough sleep. Disconnect at a certain time every night and do something relaxing.
- Meet with a nutritionist. Feeling sluggish, unfocused, or achy? Your diet may be to blame. Find out which foods and veggies are the best for you. Spend an hour optimizing your diet for what's important to you and how you want to feel.
- Plan time to do nothing. Give yourself the gift of a few minutes or even a whole hour back in your day. Look at your planner and see if you can do this on a regular basis.
- Watch something funny. Whether a favorite sitcom or a comedy special, watching something that makes you laugh is a great way to release stress.
- Clean up! An hour is enough to make a significant difference in almost any space. Set a timer and put on some fun music or a tv show you want to catch up on.

Half a day:

- Do something touristy in your city. Visit someplace that you never get to go. Take photos and stop to read all the signs. You'll remember why you love living where you live.
- Pick up something you used to love again. Is there something that used to light you up or relax you? Even if you're rusty, spend an hour getting back into it.
- Visit somewhere scenic. Go to a park or scenic overlook and enjoy being in nature. Take a friend with you and plan a picnic.
- Have an at-home spa day. Give yourself a massage, facial, and pedicure. Soak in a bubble bath or take a long shower. Complete the experience with the fluffiest robe you can find.
- Play a sport. Join a local tournament or meet with friends to play casually. If schedules don't match up, take your kids or partner out for a game of dodgeball.

All day:

- Work from a new location. Enjoy a change of scenery. Pack lunch and your laptop and work from a cafe, diner, hotel room, or even the beach (WiFi permitting).
- Take a mental health day. Feeling drained? Don't wait for vacation or the flu before you take a day to yourself.
- Do some inner work. Your brain works harder when you're not focusing. Inner work makes you a better leader and improves your ability to learn and produce when you're back at your desk.
- Give back. Take a day to support a cause that's close to your heart. Volunteer or organize a fundraising effort.

Investments for the long term (and today)

Regular self-care has short-term and long-term benefits. Today, you'll feel better, have more energy, optimism, and be a better person in your relationships. In the long run, valuing and caring for yourself consistently will give you the endurance and resilience needed for lifelong learning, adapting, and persevering. Try these self-care tips to start. It's more important to learn how to take care of yourself than the specific practices you choose.

Tips for Greeting a Guest or Member

Greeting Guidelines:

A volunteer at The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County might greet a guest or member in the following ways:

1. Welcome them with a smile and a warm greeting, such as "Good morning!" or "Welcome to The Wellness Center!"
2. Introduce themselves by name, and ask the guest or member for their name.
3. Ask the guest or member how they are doing and if they need any assistance or support.
4. Offer to give them a tour of the facility or help them find what they are looking for.
5. Provide information about the different programs and services at The Wellness Center, and ask if the guest or member is interested in learning more.
6. Express appreciation for their visit and thank them for choosing The Wellness Center as a resource for their wellness and recovery.

An example greeting might be: "Good morning! Welcome to The Wellness Center! My name is [volunteer's name]. May I ask for your name? How are you doing today? Is there anything I can help you with or any information you seek?"

COVID Protocols:

A volunteer at The Wellness Center of San Joaquin County might ask a guest to follow COVID protocols in the following way:

Approach the guest in a friendly and respectful manner while maintaining a safe physical distance.

Explain the importance of following the COVID protocols and each person's role in keeping the community safe and healthy.

Ask the guest if they have any questions or concerns about the protocols, and address any concerns they may have.

Request the guest to cooperate with the COVID protocols, such as taking their temperature and letting the receptionist know their name and temperature.

Reassure the guest that the protocols are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in the facility.

Thank the guest for their cooperation and support in keeping the community healthy and safe.

An example of a volunteer asking guests to follow COVID protocols is: "Hello, thank you for coming to The Wellness Center today. As part of our COVID protocols, we need our guests to take their temperature when coming in each day; this is important to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in the facility. Please take your temperature near the receptionist's desk and tell her your name and temperature. Do you have any questions or concerns about the protocols? Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our community healthy and safe."