



Peer Recovery Center of Excellence Group Norms

Communication Guidelines for Affinity Calls

- Center learning, practice, and forming connections. We have come together as part of a collective of people in peer specialist or supervisory roles to learn from each other and deepen our practice of peer support or supervision.
- While we are learning and unlearning things, not everything we say is going to be formulated perfectly. We can use this space to grow, and we need to acknowledge the difference between intent vs. impact. What was said may not have been what was heard. Our impact matters more than our intent.
- Speak from your own experiences by using “I” statements. No one person can speak for an entire group of people.
- Ask clarifying, open-ended questions if you aren’t sure what someone is talking about or the meaning behind their words. Avoid assumptions.
- Complete transparency around limits to privacy is maintained at all times.
- The affinity calls are not support groups and the focus of our gatherings is to learn and grow as professional peer support practitioners or supervisors. However, self-disclosure of struggles may take place in order to gain support from others in this community in similar roles. Therefore, we hold the following as values:
 - Willingness to sit with people in deep distress and explore thoughts and feelings without jumping to clinical or other interventions.
 - Recognizing, honoring, and validating that many pathways to recovery/resilience/meaningful living exist – what works for one may not work for another.
- Make space and/or take space. If you notice you are contributing a lot and are asked to make space, it is nothing against your contributions towards the group. Please be respectful if we ask you to hold your question/story/comment. If you aren’t engaging in the group as much as others, challenge yourself to engage in conversation more. Take risks! That’s okay!
- Strive to use inclusive and respectful language. The goal is to use open language that honors our differences and avoids reinforcing negative ways in which we may have been labeled. This means staying open to learning from one another how words can empower or hold us back. It also means respecting the names, pronouns, and other words people ask us to use for them.
- For tasks you would leave an in-person meeting to do, please turn off your camera for the time needed. ex: smoking, phone calls, bio breaks

Many of the above guidelines were inspired by or adapted from pieces of the Alternatives to Suicide Charter, language from the Wildflower Alliance’s Defining Principles, the Reading Anti-Racism Book Club connected to Outreach LGBT Community Center, the Witnessing Whiteness workshop, and the Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Initiative’s Guidelines for the Wisconsin Peer Specialist / Parent Peer Specialist Communities of Practice.