

2026 Peer Support Training

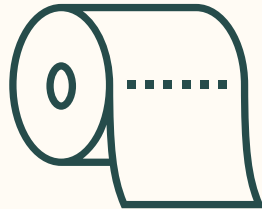
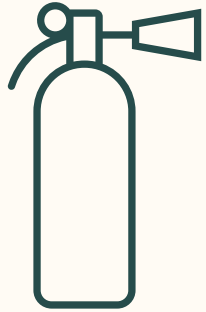
Day 1



Remember to sign in!

Sign in sheet beside the tea and coffee





Fire Safety & Toilets

Content Indicator



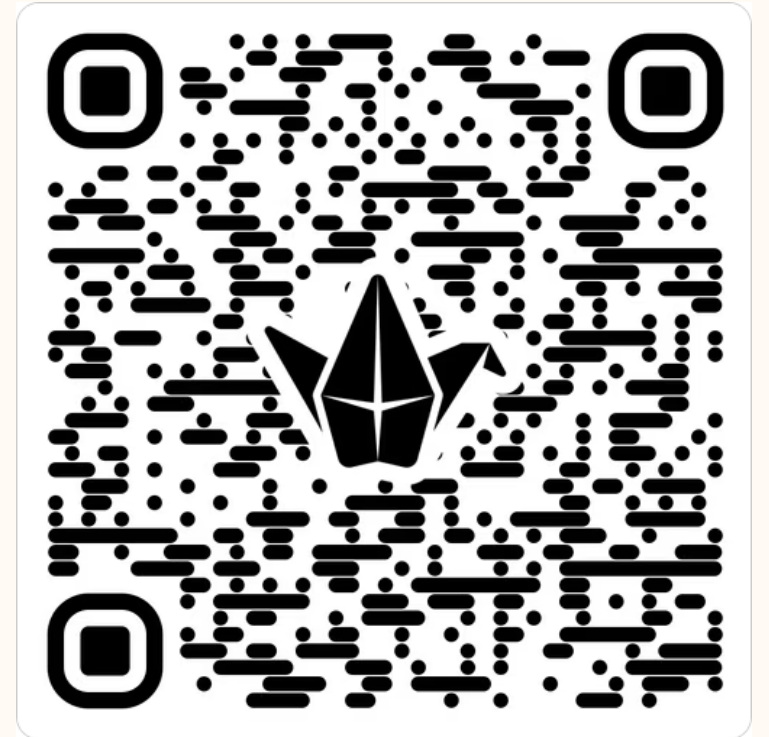
- Some topics may be heavier than others. We don't want to catch you by surprise.
- We will include the following symbol in the top right corner of the slide as an indication that some heavier topics are coming up!
- We don't seek to create triggering conversations; we just want everyone to be mindful!

The Thumbs Up Strategy



Sandbox

- Tight schedule with a lot of content.
- Burning question during training?
 - That's slightly off topic or
 - That might take some time to discuss
- Add it to the Sandbox!
- We will discuss these questions at the end of the day, or the following morning



Agenda for the Week

Day
1

- Holding the Peer Support space

Day
2

- Active Listening

Day
3

- Deep Empathy

Day
4

- Protocols
- Casework

Day
5

- Support and self care

Day 1 Agenda



- Accountable Space
- Life Skills
- What is Peer Support
- Our circle
- Core Conditions
- Assumptions and Stereotypes
- Labelling and Stigma
- Confirmation Bias
- Difference of Opinion
- Diversity and Inclusion



Accountable Space

What do you need for an accountable space?

- Log in to padlet.com/TCDS2S/accountable or use the QR code.
- Anonymously post what you would need for this to be an accountable space



SPACE GUIDELINES: A COMPARISON

Safe Space Guidelines 	Brave Space Guidelines 	Accountable Space Guidelines 
<p>Impossible for organizations to anticipate participants' evolving triggers.</p>	<p>An unbalanced onus of bravery of marginalized communities to maintain bravery while sharing lived experiences to ensure allies can grow and learn from it.</p>	<p>Places an equal amount of onus for all to behave equitably and inclusively to foster a deeper understanding of diverse lived experiences in REAL-TIME.</p>
<p>Impossible to guarantee complete safety since we cannot control people's behaviours or actions to embed DE&I principles in their actions during and after the conversation.</p>	<p>Negates the daily bravery marginalized communities need to display to navigate workplaces and society. Also, it does not lighten marginalized communities' "burden of bravery."</p>	<p>Creates a REAL-TIME opportunity for EVERYONE in the discussion to challenge the conditions that are oppressing marginalized communities by demonstrating accountable and equitable behaviours and actions.</p>
<p>It does not allow allies and non-marginalized people to show allyship in action by following a set of guidelines to support accountable conversations that foster inclusion and equity.</p>	<p>It does not allow allies and non-marginalized people to show allyship in action by following a set of guidelines to support accountable conversations that foster inclusion and equity.</p>	<p>Intent and impact are rooted within accountability to promote actions, thoughts, and behaviours that are equitable and inclusive of marginalized communities.</p>

Icebreaker



Getting to Know You

- In pairs
- Find out each other's:
 - Name
 - Pronoun
 - Role
 - Something you might not know by looking
 - One life goal
 - One personal peeve
- Reconvene as a group and introduce partner to group

Life Skills

Sense of constructive activity in your community

Communication skills

Organisation and time management

Interpersonal skills

Concrete examples for CVS and references

Skills to bring to your personal life

Personal development



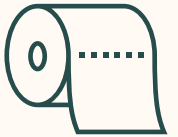
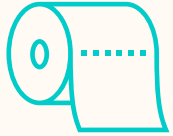
Let's Reflect

What do you hope you will be able to say at the end of Peer Support training?

- Jot on the paper
- Seal in the envelope

Break

- Time for bathroom break, water-bottle filling, leg-stretching etc!
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What is Peer Support?



One-to-one, group work, discussion, tutoring

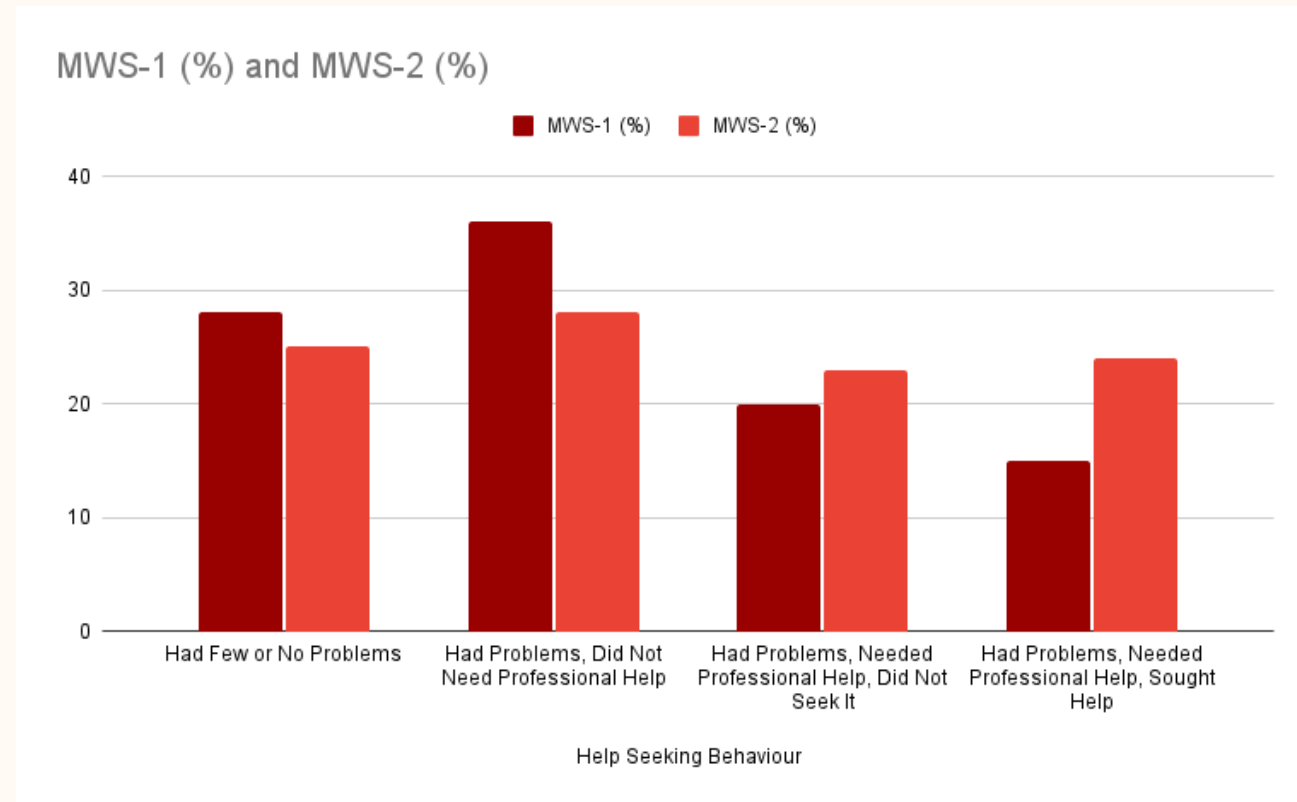


Sharing related values, experiences, or lifestyles



Interpersonal helping behaviours

Help-Seeking Patterns in Young Adults: My World Survey 2012 vs 2019

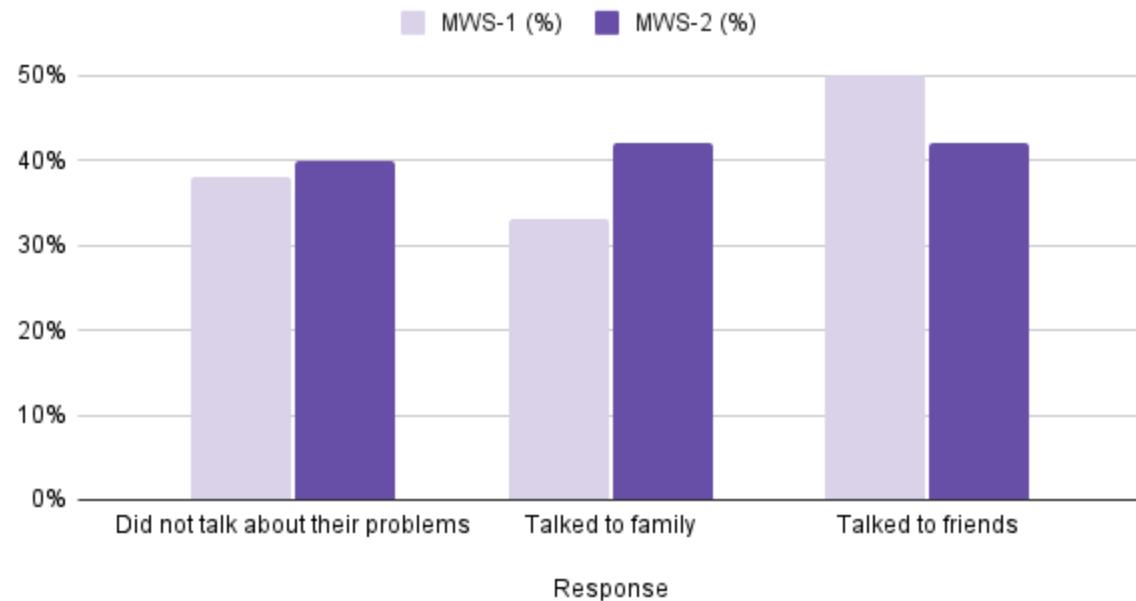


Less than 1% of respondents identified as non-binary/other/prefer not to say.

Help-Seeking Patterns in Young Adults: My World Survey 2012 vs 2019

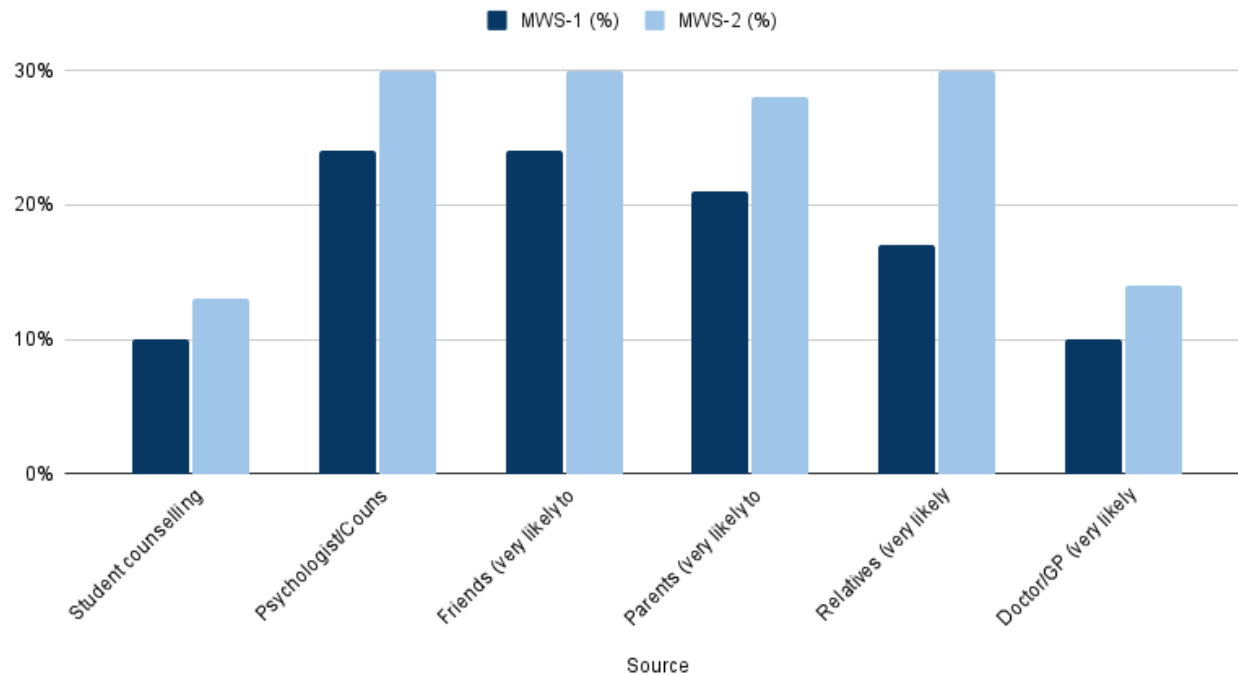
Of those who were reported
to have problems...

MWS-1 (%) and MWS-2 (%)



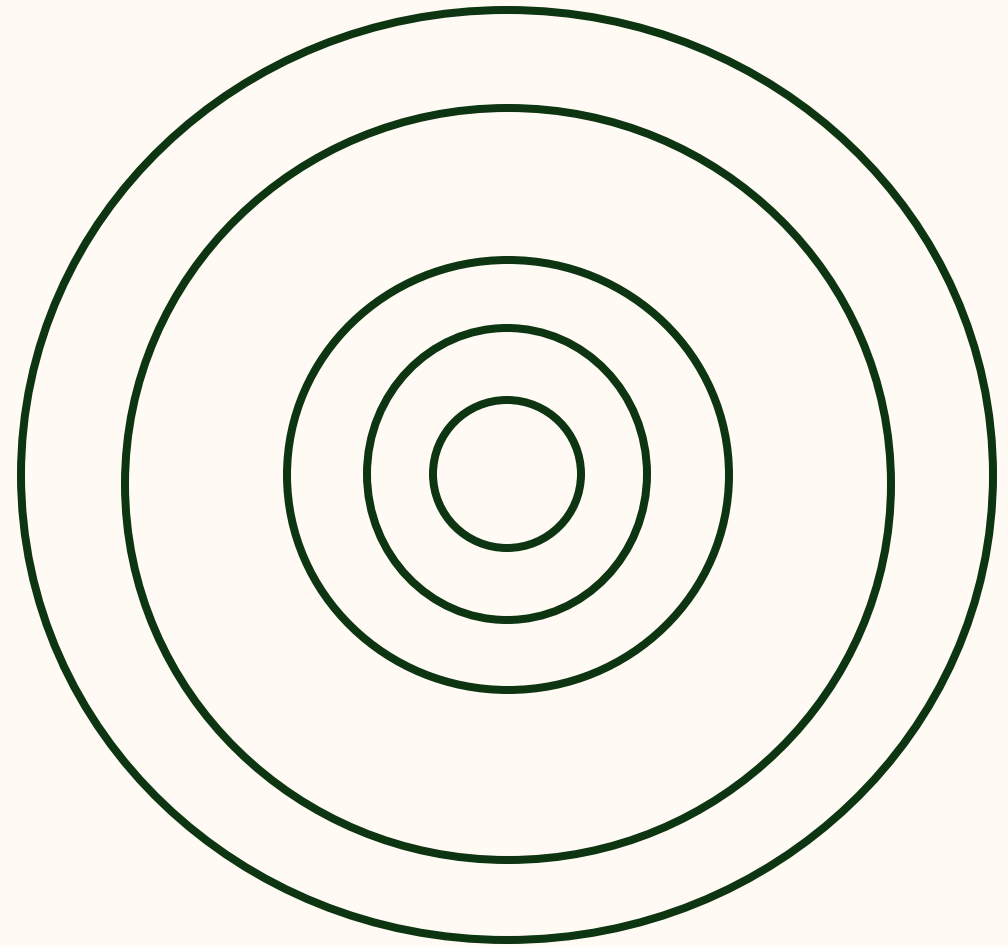
Help-Seeking Patterns in Young Adults: My World Survey 2012 vs 2019

MWS-1 (%) and MWS-2 (%)



MWS-2 also reports that **33%** of young adults were found to **seek help online** in 2019!

**Who is in
your
Circle?**





The 3 Core Conditions

Acceptance:

Unconditional Positive Regard

- Accepting someone for who they are and what they are
- Respecting individual beliefs
- Valuing the person and their views
- Being non-judgemental
- Not glossing over difference

Genuineness:

Authenticity

- Willing to be your full self
- Accepting of your own strengths and weaknesses
- Truthful, whilst still upholding the non-judgemental space
- Acknowledging your own vulnerabilities
- Sincere
- Open and clear

Empathy:

- Trying to understand what is really going on for a person
- Asking relevant questions
- Finding authentic connection
- Staying person-centred
- Refraining from assumptions/judgements
- Empathy for yourself as well

Value Thermometers

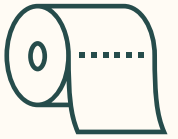
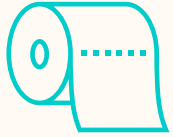
Vevox Session

- Join the session with the QR or link at top of screen
- Respond to each stereotype based on your gut reaction



Lunch

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Hello from...
Trish Murphy

All in a word...



Labelling



1. We label human difference



2. We stereotype the differences



3. We separate those labelled from "us"



4. We create hierarchies

Phelan, Jo C., Bruce G. Link, and John F. Dovidio. 2008. "Stigma and Prejudice: One Animal or Two?" *Social Science & Medicine*, 67: 358–67. doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2008.03.022

Stigma Reduction



<https://health.choc.org/5-practical-ways-to-help-reduce-stigma-around-mental-illness/>

1. Perspective

- Instead of “what’s wrong with...” try “How are you”
- Think about how they experience something
- And don’t forget “what’s right with...”

2. Choose words carefully

- Intent doesn’t negate impact

3. People-first language

- “Have”, not “is” **BUT**
- Be led by them

4. Continuous learning

5. Compassion and dignity

- Be an ally

Difference of Opinion



- Stand in middle of room
- Listen to the opinion dividers
- Choose a side

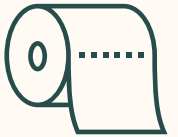
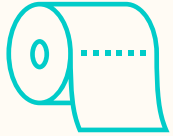


Confirmation Bias



Break

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Diversity and Inclusion



Awareness

Acknowledge your limitations but focus on your strength.

Acceptance

You can't see a person if you try to overlook their differences.

Determination

Bias takes time and practice to recognise and to address. You will make mistakes.

Focus

Focus on what is being said in the moment. Listen actively.

Harmony

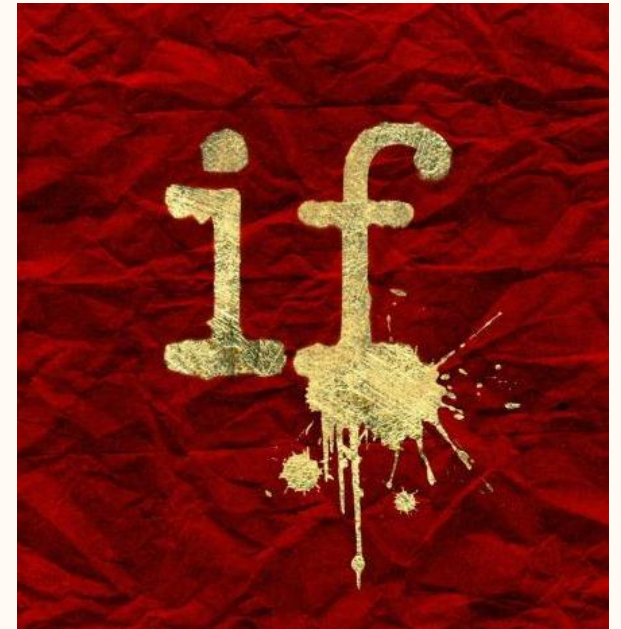
When the 4 tips above come together you can approach anyone calmly with compassion, and they will feel it!



What would you do if...

Reflection Activity

- Review the 'What would you do' handout.
- Individually make some notes on how you might handle the situation
- Group discussion to follow



Sandbox Time

Question time!





Thank You!

Anonymously share your feedback:



2026 Peer Support Training

Day 2



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Accountable Space Reminder

Thumbs Up Strategy



Day 2 Agenda



- Basic active listening skills
- Types of response

- Non-directive support

- Holding space
- Verbal and non-verbal messaging
- Introduction to empathy
- Challenging minimalisation

- Role plays

Icebreaker

'If'

- Write a "What if" question, place it in the middle
- Answer a different card
- Read your question → next person reads their answer → repeat around the group

hypothetically

[,hʌpə'thetɪkli] **adverb**

a word put in front of a question so that one doesn't end up in trouble if the answer is not what one hopes it to be.

Let's Reflect

Good Listener vs Bad
Listener Role Play

Listening tips

 Body Language

 Eye Contact

 Distractions

 Time



Listening tips

⚖️ Judgemental

👉 Directive

🔧 Problem Solving

🤝 Sympathy vs Empathy



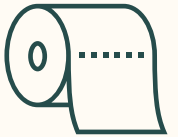
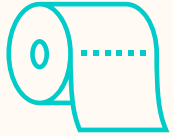
Body Language

- 👤 Open posture
- 🧑 Active posture
- 😊 Engaged facial expressions
- 👁️ Eye contact



Break

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What Kind of Question is That?

- ? Open question
- 🔒 Closed question
- 🤔 Hypothetical question
- 🗨️ Leading question
- ⚖️ Judgemental question
- 🚫 Inappropriate question



Listening Tools

Reflecting

- Mirroring a word or phrase
→ “You’re an alien...”

Paraphrasing

- Putting it into your own words
→ “You’re from another planet...”

Summarising

- Putting all the pieces together
→ “So you’re worried about money, study, and your visa...”



Listening Tools

Clarifying

- Checking your understanding

→ “So, you’ve been here for the last 8 months, but this is your second time staying here?”

Encouraging

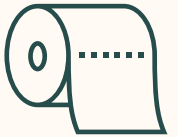
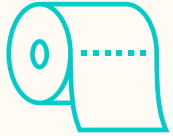
- Acknowledging interest or inviting more sharing

→ “I’d really like to hear more about where you’re from...”



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Pitfalls


- 🦜 Parroting
- Omitting
- 🧠 Over-analysing
- 🗣️ Over-expansion
- 📢 Exaggerating
- 📊 Underscoring
- ▶️ Rushing
- 🐢 Lagging





How to Avoid Giving Advice



 Ask them how they feel about the situation. “Would you say..?” “Does it feel as though..?”

 Hypothetical questions. “What do you think would happen if..?” “How do you think you would feel about..?”

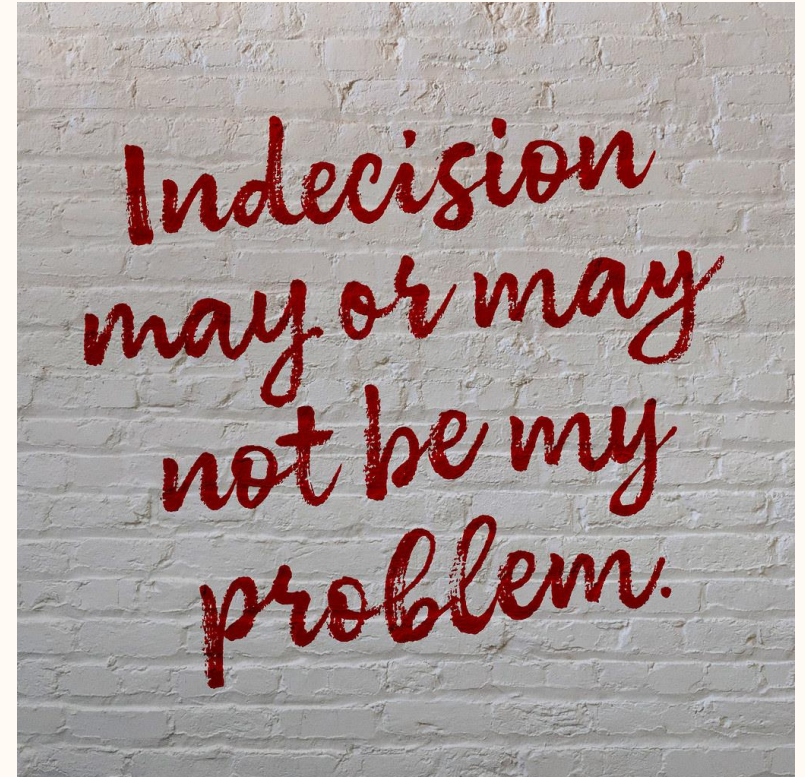
 Try not to be solution led – don’t think about the question, think about why the person is asking

 Reflect back, paraphrase, summarise... help the person to clarify what they have told you

Not My Problem

- What is the real challenge here for you?
- What have you tried already?
- If you could try anything to solve this, what would you try?
- And what else? (Repeat two or three times, as needed, to surface additional ideas.)
- Which of these options interests you most?
- What might stand in the way of this idea, and what could be done about that?
- What is one step you could take to begin acting on this, right away?

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-questionologist/202103/how-guide-people-without-giving-advice>



“I” Statements

- Own personal statements about feelings, beliefs or behaviour
- Most effective in conjunction with paraphrasing or summarising
- In the right circumstances it can help to form a bond
- Can also be useful in addressing sensitive issues or resolving conflict





Silence



Verbal Messages



Experience – What has happened

Example: *"I lost my job unexpectedly."*

Behaviour/Action – What they choose to do or not do

Example: *"I applied for a new job even though I wasn't sure I'd get it."*

Feeling/Emotion – What are the feelings/emotions that arise

Example: *"I was really anxious, but also kind of proud of myself for trying."*

Verbal Messages



A. Brian, first year psychology student

- ✓ Behavior/Action: Strongly present – Brian describes specific things he’s doing (avoiding lectures, ignoring messages, isolating).
- ✓ Feelings/Emotions: Strongly present – He clearly expresses feeling drained, unmotivated, and overwhelmed.
- ✗ Experience: Missing – We don’t know why he’s feeling or behaving this way. No event or cause is given.

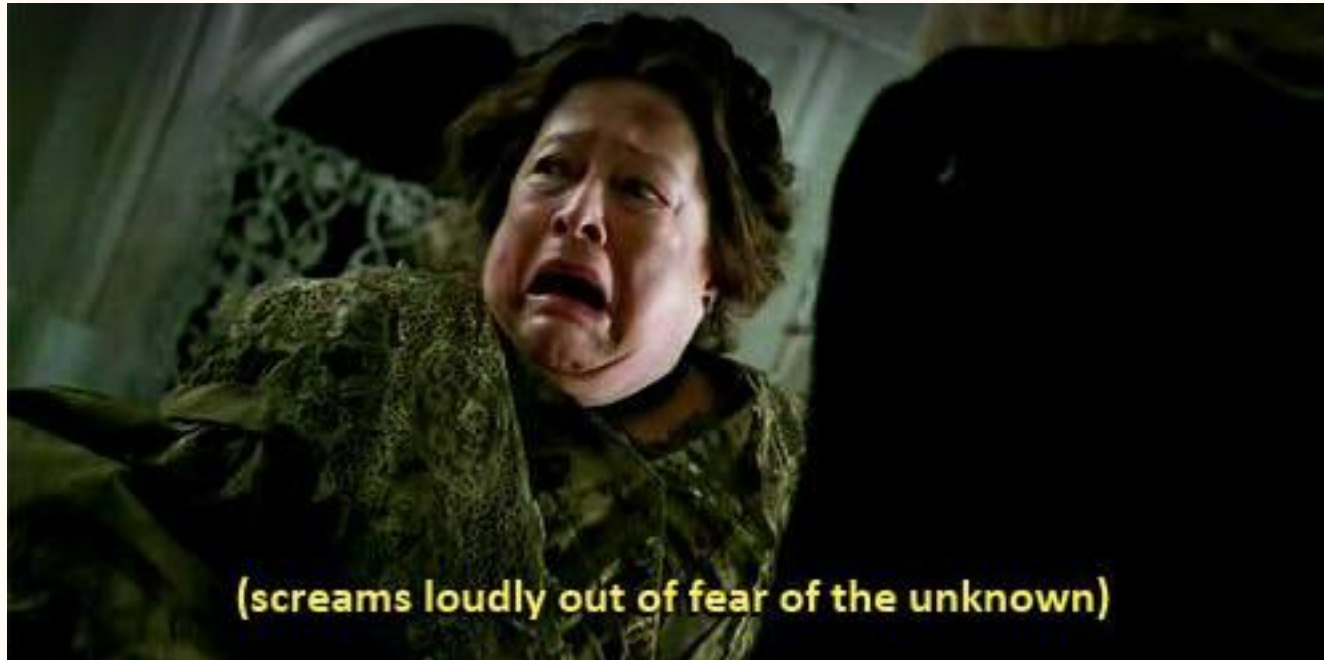
B. Ciara, final year English student

- ✓ Experience: Strongly present – Ciara clearly explains what happened between her and her housemates.
- ✓ Feelings/Emotions: Strongly present – She expresses humiliation, betrayal, and anxiety.
- ✗ Behavior/Action: Missing – We don’t know how she’s responded to the situation (e.g. avoided them, confronted them, etc.).

C. Daniel, second year biology student

- ✓ Experience: Strongly present – Daniel clearly outlines what’s happening with his studies and schedule.
- ✓ Behavior/Action: Strongly present – He lists specific behaviors like skipping lectures and withdrawing from social activities.
- ✗ Feelings/Emotions: Missing – There is no mention of how any of this makes him feel (e.g. stressed, anxious, burnt out, frustrated).

Verbal Messages



💡 What do we know?

? What don't we know?

Non-Verbal Messages (?)

Body behaviour

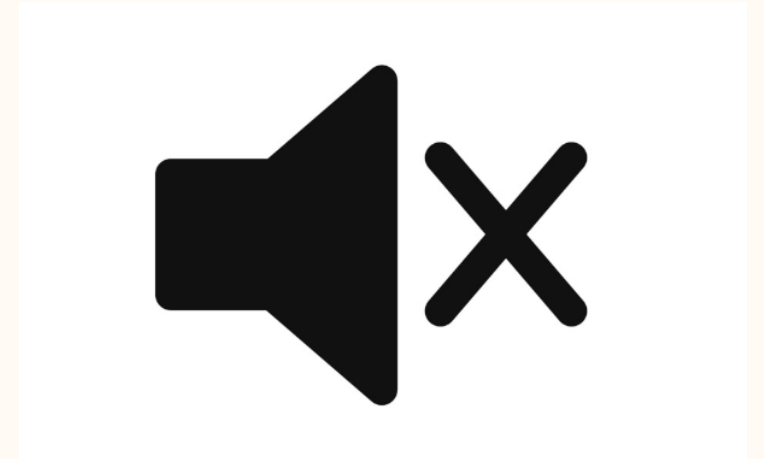
- Posture, body movements, gestures

Facial expressions

- Smiles, frowns, raised eyebrows, grimaces

Voice-related behaviour

- Tone, pitch, volume, intensity



Non-Verbal Messages (?)

Autonomic responses

- Quickened breathing, blushing, paleness, pupil dilation, tearfulness

Physical characteristics

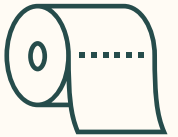
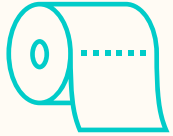
- Fitness, height, weight, complexion

General appearance

- Grooming, dress, personal style

Break

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RSA



Shorts

The Goldfish Factor (aka minimalisation)





Let's Practice

Role Plays

- Remember the verbal messages – experience, action, emotion

Sandbox Time

Question time!





Thank You!

Anonymously share your feedback:



2026 Peer Support Training

Day 3



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Accountable Space Reminder

Thumbs Up Strategy



Day 3 Agenda



- Vulnerability
- What is Empathy

- Triggers

- Referral
- Confidentiality
- A&E Accompaniment

- Role plays

Icebreaker

Fruit Salad

- Sit in circle
- Chair gets removed
- Person without chair stands in middle and says something about themselves
- Swap around, and so it continues!





Value of Vulnerability



What is Empathy?

- Walking in someone else's shoes
- Not how you would experience a situation; how they experience a situation



The Empathetic Approach

- Giving a person the space and time to express how they feel
- Using active listening to encourage a person to express themselves
- Clearing your mind of assumptions, personal emotions and prejudices
- Reflect on what they say, and check your perceptions
- Encourage exploration – use your distance from the situation described to offer paths and possibilities that they may not have seen

What Empathy is Not

It is not
counselling.

It's not about
changing a
person.

It's not about
offering
advice.

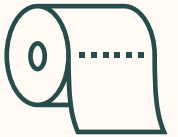
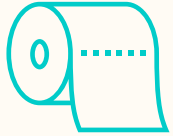
It's not
sympathy

It's not about
being right all
the time.

It is all about
possibility

Break

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Trigger in a box

Think about the things that have had an impact on you. What might be difficult to hear someone else talking about?

Write a brief description of your trigger – keep it anonymous.

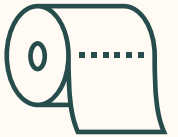
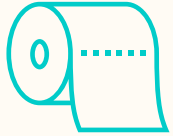
Everybody puts their trigger into a box

Pick out a trigger, and think about what it would feel like to be the person whose trigger this is

If this were me, I think I would feel...

Lunch

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Energiser

What are you doing tonight?

- With your partner share with each other what you plan to do this evening
 - Dinner? Movie? Call someone? Journal?
 - If you don't have a plan, what can you do that will make you feel good?
 - Why are you looking forward to it?
 - What do you hope to feel after?



Referral



Difference between Signpost and Referral

- Signposting: Looking at other sources of support with someone (ideally at least 2 or 3) and helping them to decide if/what they would like to try
- Referral: Knowing that someone is in need of more help and leading them there directly

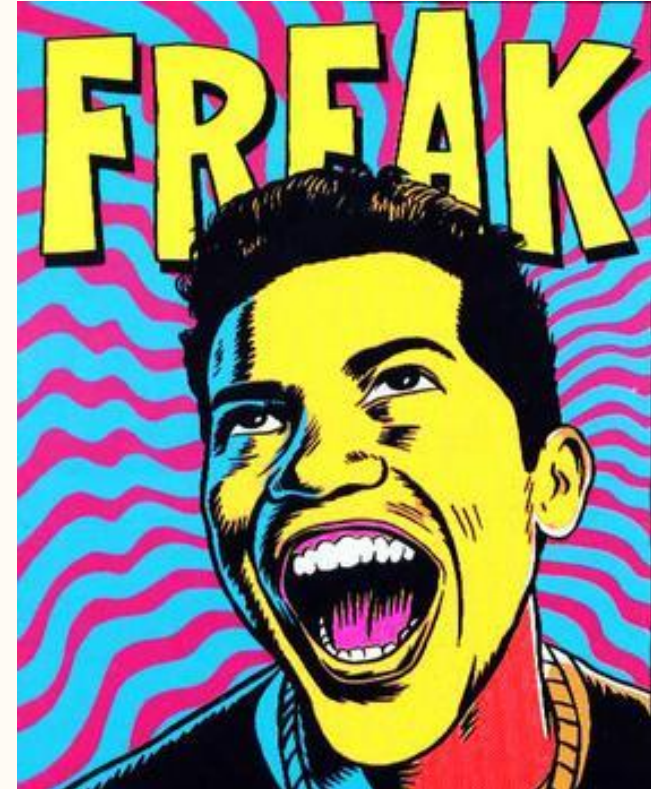
When to refer?

- It's not appropriate for you to be involved
- The issues are too close to your own personal experience
- You feel out of your depth
- Professional support/care is required

How to Phrase a Referral

What do we mean by 'Sensitive Referral'?

- Keep calm!
- Explain why you're referring – be honest.
- If possible, let them know that you're still there to help as well, you're just suggesting additional support.



Choose your words carefully - use phrases like:

- “You might find it helpful to...”
- “You might like to talk with...”
- “Would you consider talking with...”
- “I think it might be useful for you to...”
- “How would you feel about talking to...”
- “What do you think might happen if you spoke to...”

• Do not say:

- “You need to see...” or
- “You must talk...”
- Know your **limitations** and do not get out of your depth.
- Remember, ultimately, it is **another person’s problem** - not yours. Try not to feel overwhelmed or guilty if you cannot offer the help they’re expecting from you. Sometimes, it’s better if the help doesn’t come from you!

Tips for Referring a Reluctant Peer

- Explore reluctance
- Dispel the myths
- Make two or more suggestions
- Encourage a 2nd opinion
- Have the information to hand
- Make the appointment with them
- Be honest about why, let them decide who
- You can drag a horse to water...
- Get support for yourself!



Critical Protocols



- GDPR
- Child/vulnerable adult
- Safety first!

Confidentiality



Tusla Children First



<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>

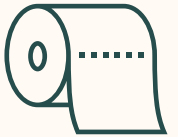
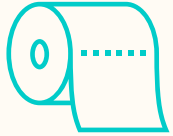


A&E Accompaniment



Break

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Let's Practise!

Role Plays

- Remember the verbal messages –
experience, action, emotion

Sandbox Time

Question time!





Thank You!

Anonymously share your feedback:



2026 Peer Support Training

Day 4



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Accountable Space Reminder

Thumbs Up Strategy

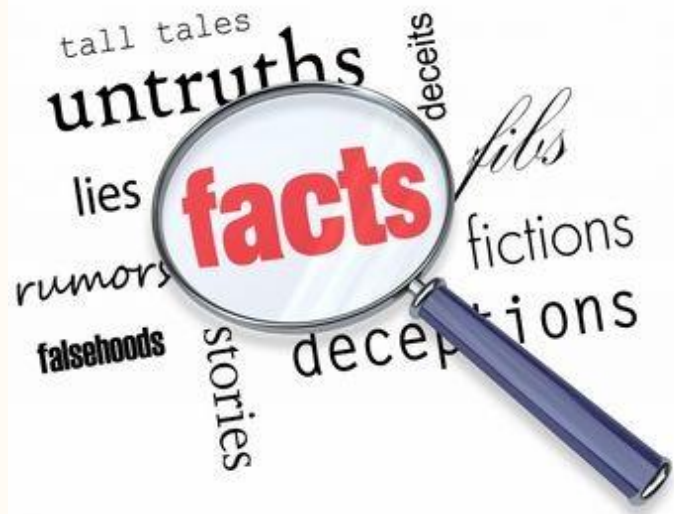


Day 4 Agenda

- Suicide Response Training
- Debriefs and Supervision
- Protocol
- Case Management



Icebreaker

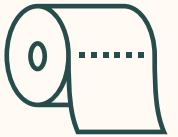
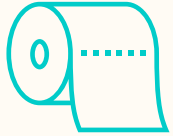


Bet you didn't know...

- Everyone takes two slips of paper
- Put one interesting/funny thing about yourself on each slip – ideally something no one else in the room knows
- We'll jumble the slips up, then you take 2 (making sure you don't have your own)
- You'll have 10 minutes to find who the person on each of your slips is
- BUT – there's a catch!

Break

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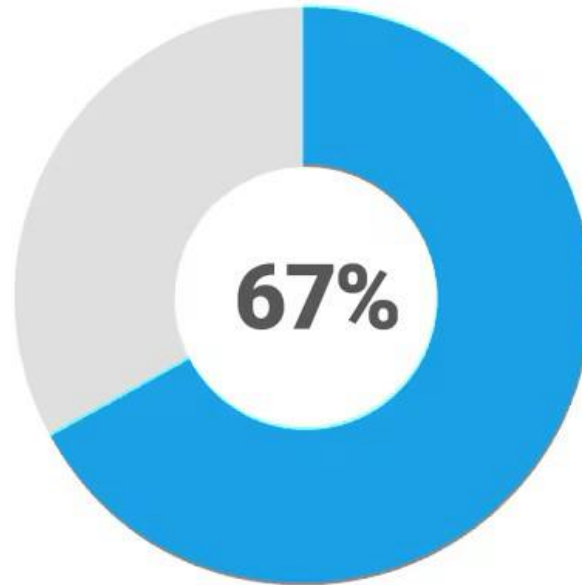




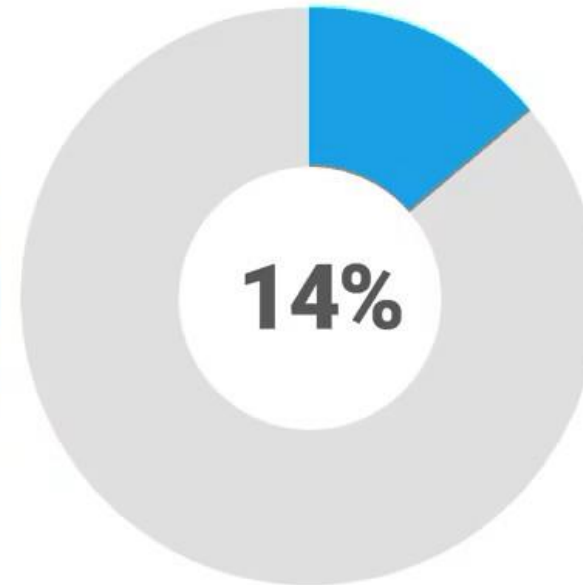
Suicide Awareness

Healthy Ireland Survey 2022

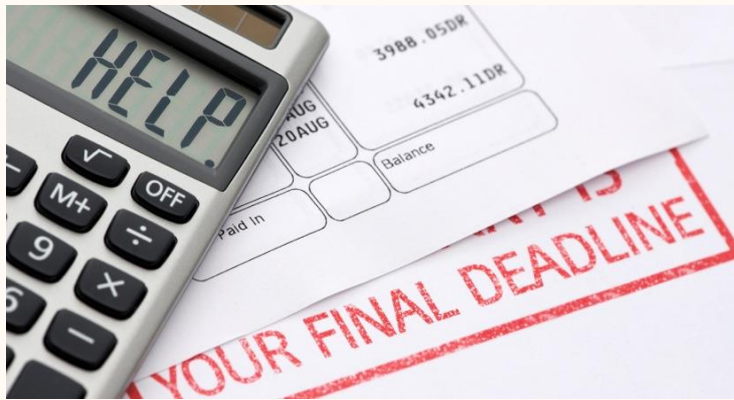
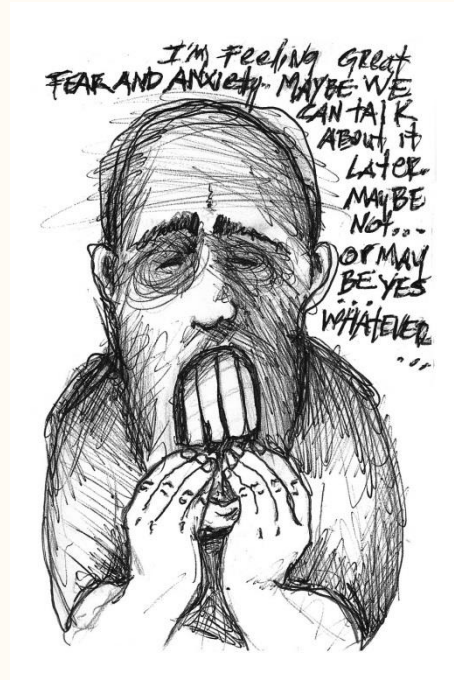
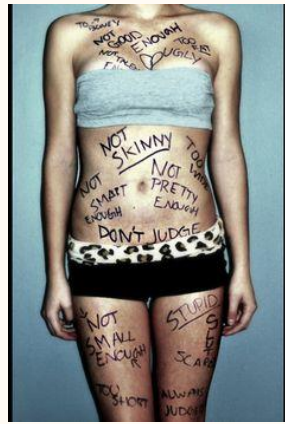
Suicide awareness



Know someone who has died by suicide

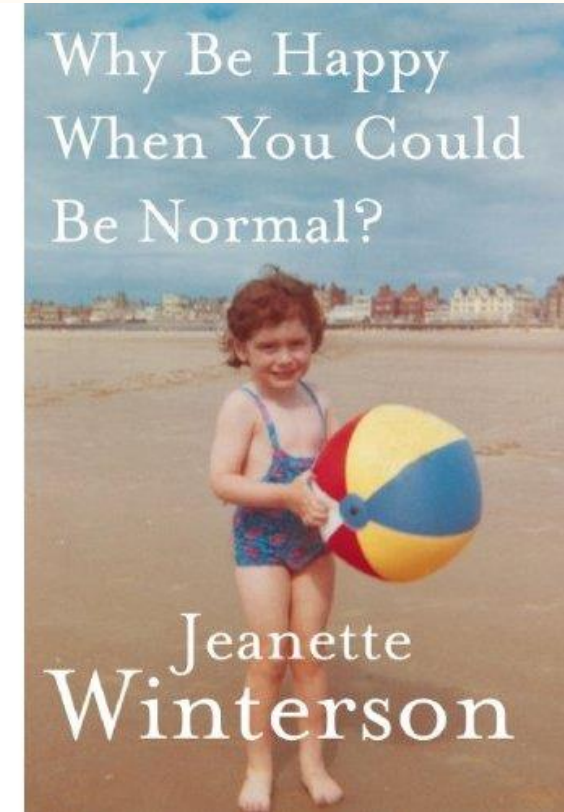


Know someone close to them who has died in this way



- May relate to experience of several unique and personal losses impacting on their health and/or normal coping mechanisms.
- Not a simplistic response to an event - multifaceted, complex.
- Those bereaved by suicide find it difficult not to have a clear explanation/rationale, and struggle not to hold and/or assign blame.

“There's the hap- the fate, the draw that is yours, and it isn't fixed, but changing the course of the stream, or dealing new cards, whatever metaphor you want to use- that's going to take a lot of energy. There are times when it will go so wrong that you will barely be alive, and times when you realize that being barely alive, on your own terms, is better than living a bloated half-life on someone else's terms.”



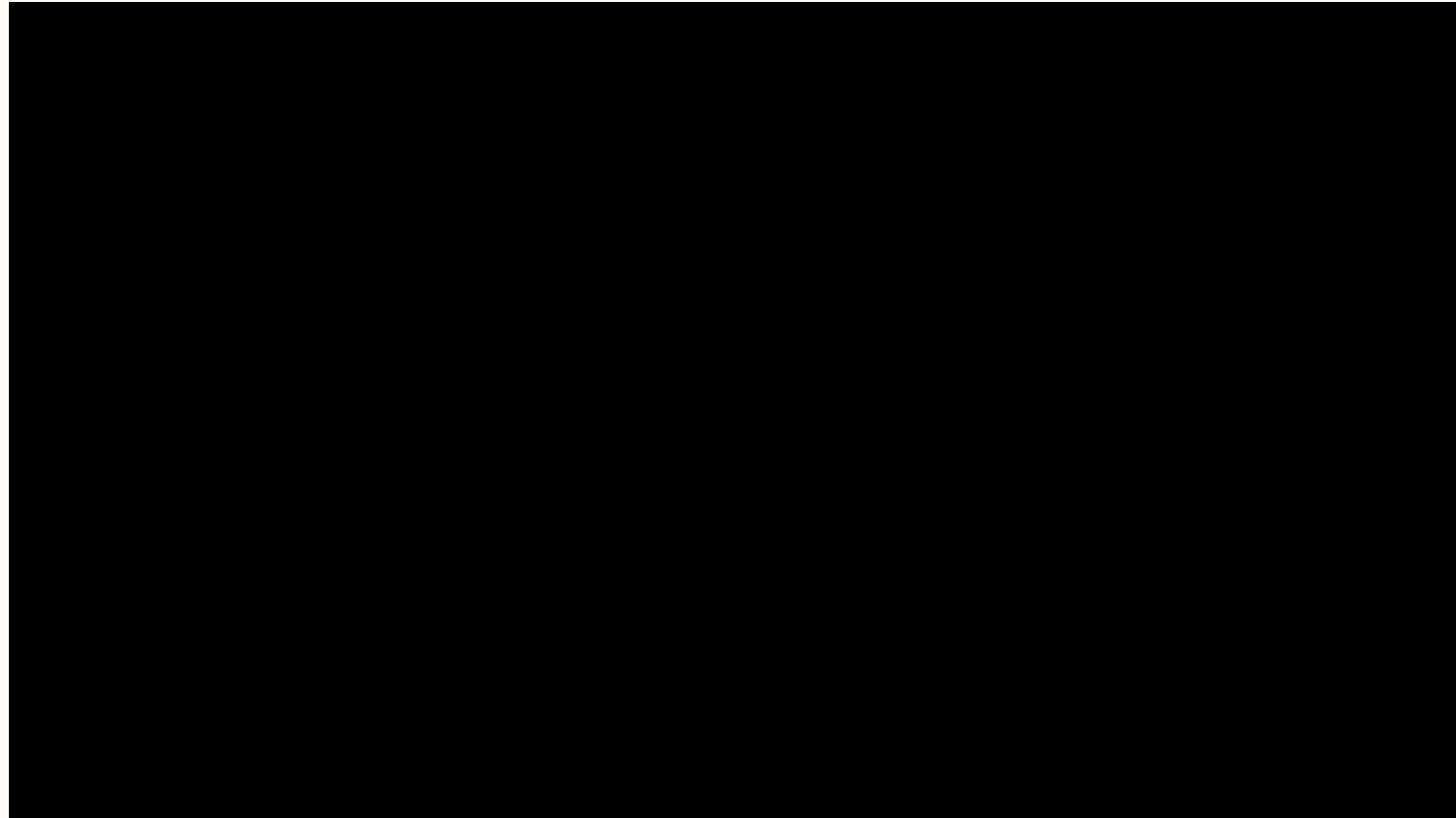
The challenge of understanding

Suicide may be the experience of psychological pain termed 'psychache' (Dr Edwin Shneidman 1996)

'Psychache is the hurt, anguish or ache, that takes hold in the mind... suicide happens when the psychache is deemed unbearable and death is actively sought to stop the unceasing flow of painful consciousness....only a small minority of cases of excessive psychological pain result in suicide, but every case stems from excessive psychache'



Naming, Not Shaming

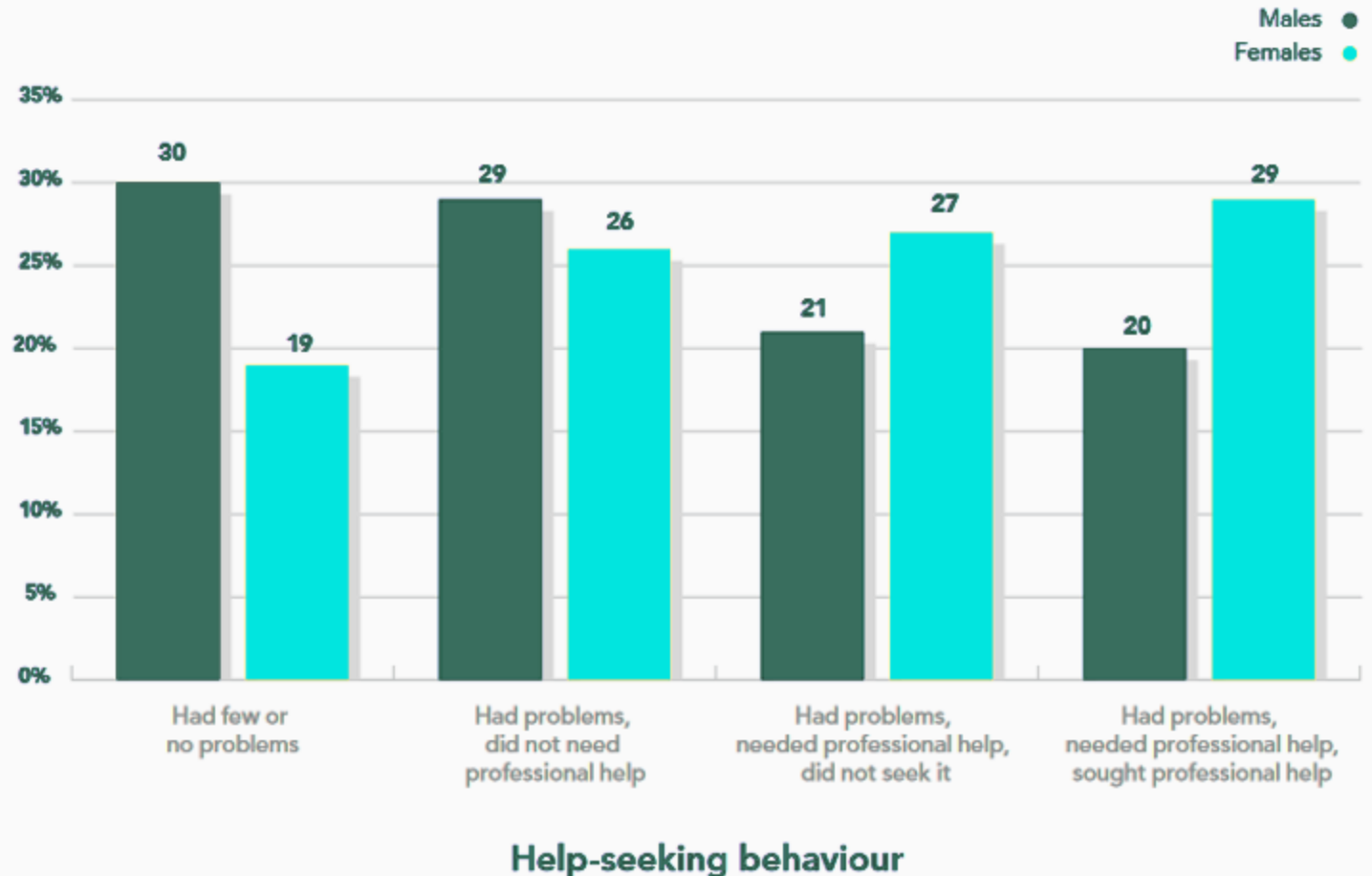


The Research

Less than 1% of respondents identified as non-binary/ other/ prefer not to say

Figure 5.13.

Help-seeking by gender



Suicidal Thoughts

- Can be transient, common and they can pass
- Throwaway remarks can be scary
- If it's a "cry for help" then help is needed
- Suicidality can be passive, active, fleeting, frequent
- Noticeable changes can be indicators

Common Indicators

People may show suicidal feelings through:

- Being withdrawn and unable to relate
- Expressing a sense of isolation and aloneness
- Expressing feelings of failure, hopelessness or low self esteem
- Dwelling on problems
- Struggling to generate options
- Expressing a lack of a philosophy of life
- Lacking a vision of a future for themselves
- Tidying up affairs
- Talking of methods of suicide
- Expressing beliefs others would be “better off without them”
- By verbalising /indicating intent to self-harm

Myths about Suicide

Suicidal people are
intent on dying

After a crisis,
improvement means
the risk is over

Suicide always
happens without
warning

Suicidal behaviour
is a sign of
mental illness

People who talk
about
it don't do it

You are a suicidal
type or not

Building Trust

- I'm so glad you have told me how you feel
- Can we think about who else you can trust and talk to?
- How would you feel if we did this?
- How can I help you with this?

Know your limits

- Awareness of what you are **able** to do
- Reach out, support, give information
- It is ok to tell them you are upset and worried and want them to seek help but try not to criticise their actions.
- Watch for your gut feeling and take care of yourself
- Seek supervision if worried /consult in person or by phone
- If worried someone is at risk don't leave them alone



The 3 Core Conditions

Acceptance:

Unconditional Positive Regard

- Accepting someone for who they are and what they are
- Respecting individual beliefs
- Valuing the person and their views
- Being non-judgemental
- Not glossing over difference

Genuineness:

Authenticity

- Willing to be your full self
- Accepting of your own strengths and weaknesses
- Truthful, whilst still upholding the non-judgemental space
- Acknowledging your own vulnerabilities
- Sincere
- Open and clear

Empathy:

- Trying to understand what is really going on for a person
- Asking relevant questions
- Finding authentic connection
- Staying person-centred
- Refraining from assumptions/judgements

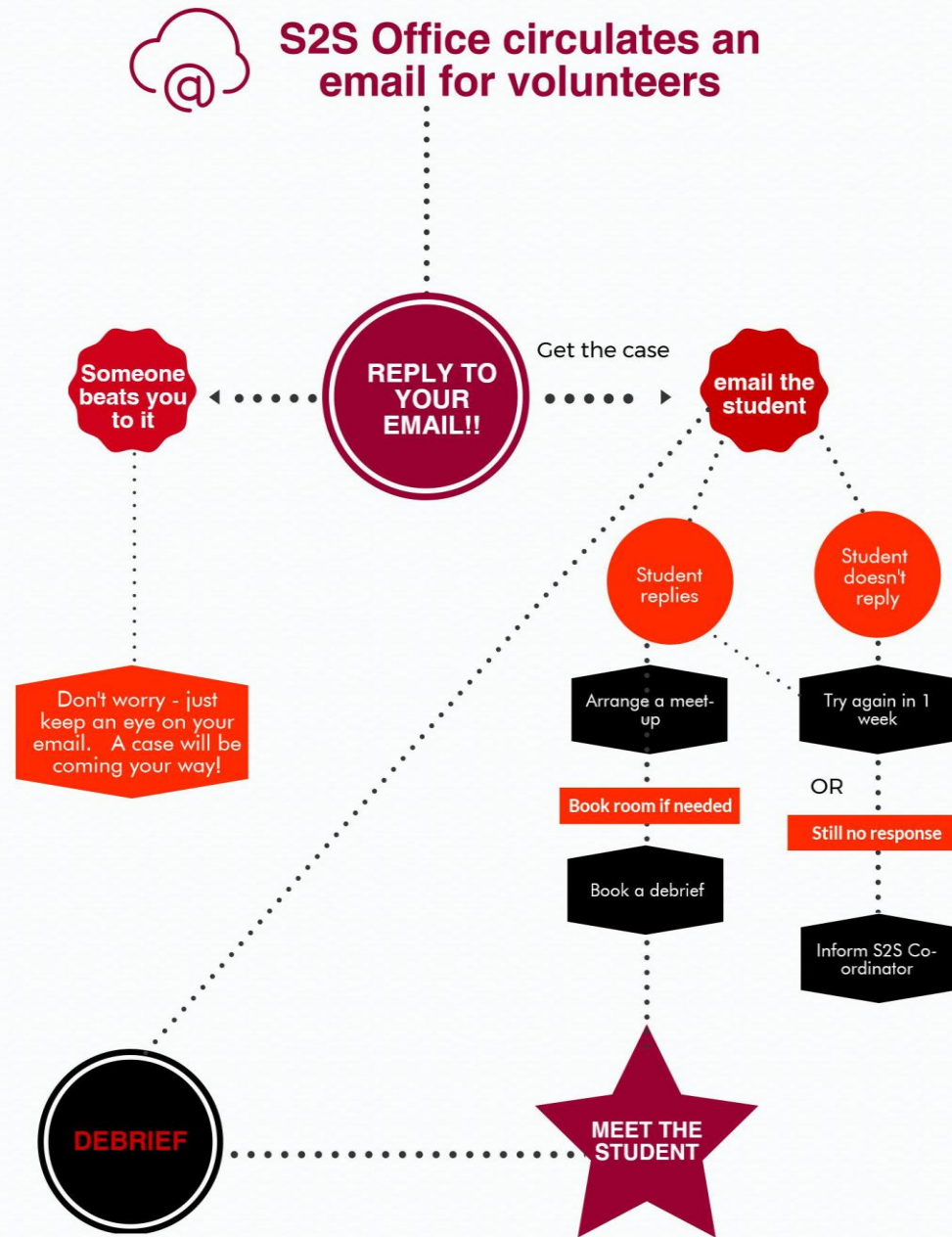
- Empathy for yourself as well



EXPECTO PATRONUM



Case Allocations



Email essentials

- Think about your subject line
- Don't use a generic template – be yourself!
- Offer choice, but don't overwhelm people or leave them to make complicated decisions
- Give at a week, then follow-up if you don't hear from them
- Reply emails to cases should not be immediate – remember that you might be creating expectation
- Responses to office emails can be as swift as you like, though!
- Manage up!



Managing a No-Show



- Notify the S2S Office
- Name any concerns
- Follow-up email
- **If your case ends let the S2S office know**

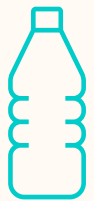
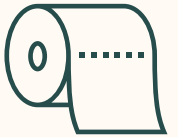
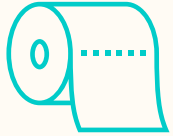
Curbing Over-Dependency

- Always have some place to be after your first meet-up; preferably a check in with S2S so they don't/can't keep walking with you!
- Remember to use your wrap-up skills!
- Keep a professional relationship – no phone numbers or social media!
- Follow-up emails should not be immediate – remember that you might be creating expectation
- Discuss any concerns you have about their dependency with S2S staff



Lunch

- Lunch will be provided in this room.
- Training will start back promptly after 1hr lunch.
- Please don't gather in the hall as counselling sessions are taking place!



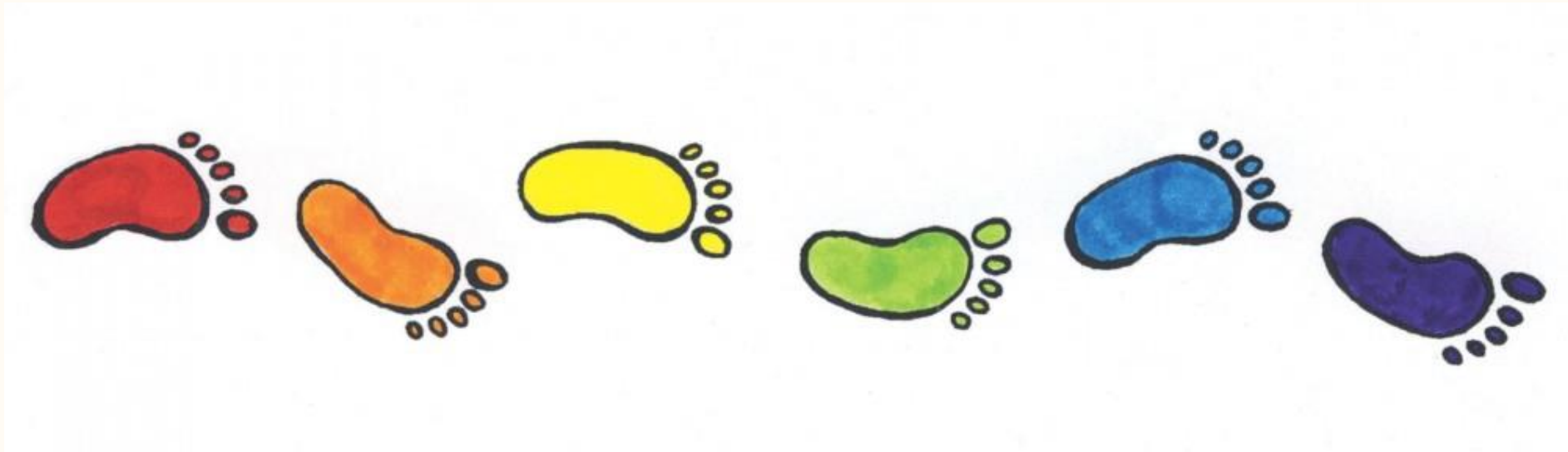
Energiser



Group Order

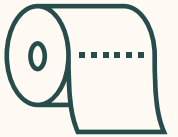
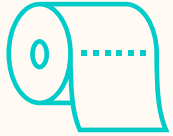
- Get up and moving till we say stop
- Get yourself in order based on the criteria called out

Case Management: Step By Step

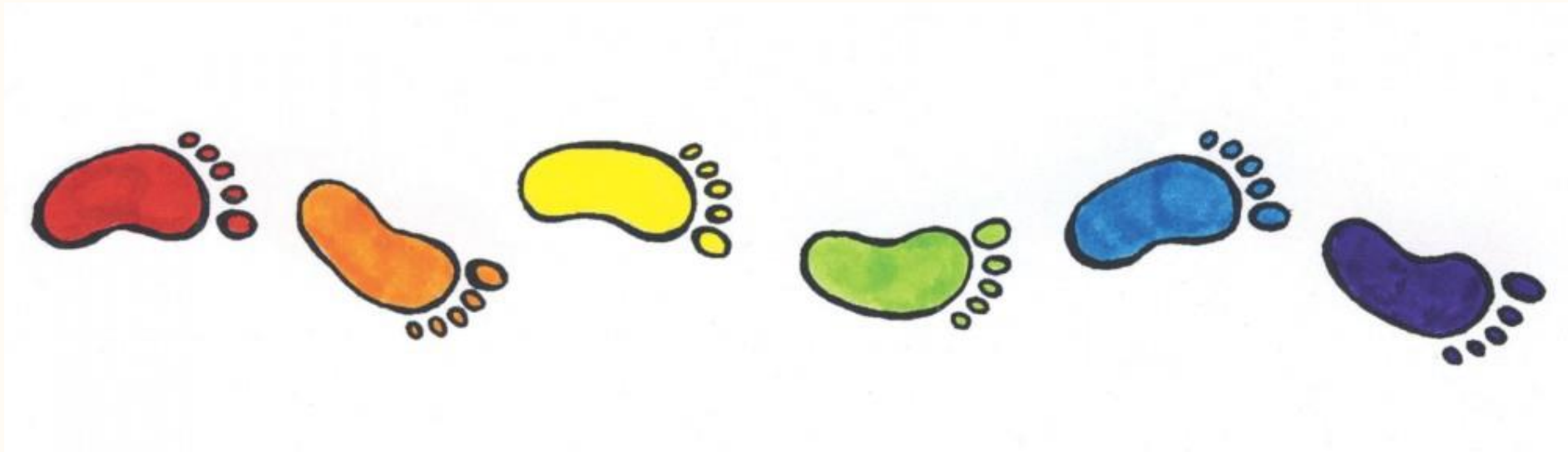


Break

- Time for bathroom break, water-bottle filling, leg-stretching etc!
- Please be punctual and back in less than 15 minutes.
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Case Management: Step By Step



Hello from...
Jo Harney

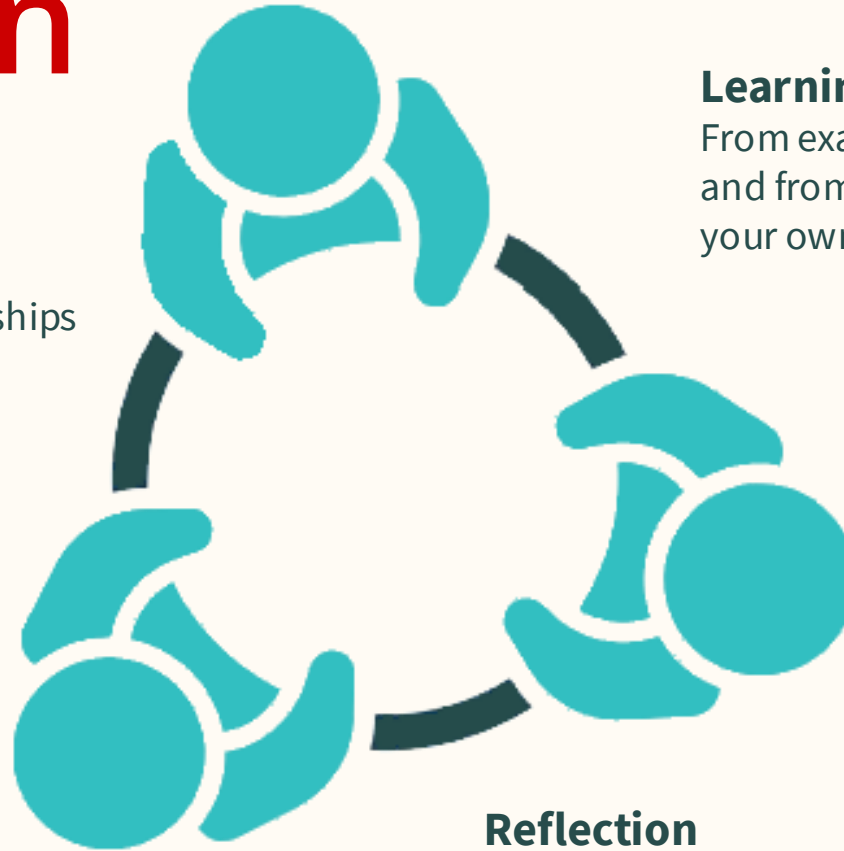
Debrief



Supervision

Connection

Maintaining the relationships built during training. Getting to know other volunteers better



Learning

From examples others are bringing up, and from responses to and suggestions for your own case work

Reflection

Time to think about whether you're responding to/feeling the same way about casework. What are the similarities and differences between you and other volunteers in terms of your approach?

Sandbox Time

Question time!





Thank You!

Anonymously share your feedback:



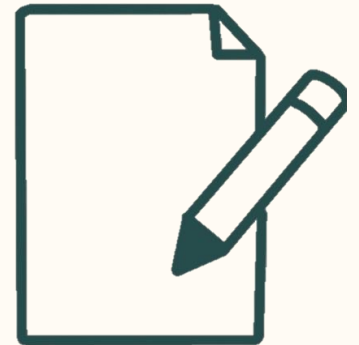
2026 Peer Support Training

Day 5



Remember to sign in!

Sign in sheet beside the tea and coffee



Accountable Space Reminder

Thumbs Up Strategy



Day 5 Agenda



- Boundaries
- Sticky Situations
- Consent and Disclosure
- The Wholehearted Approach
- Me Time
- Self-Care
- Relaxation Session
- Reflection

Icebreaker

Make a Web

- You'll be given string and will need to pick a number.
- Answer the question associated with that number.
- Hold the end of string and throw the roll to someone else.
- Next person picks a number and continues.



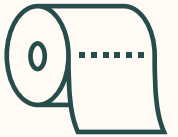
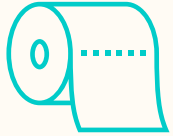
Boundaries

- I'm here to support anyone who wants assistance
- If a student has a problem, I should be able to help
- I should not discuss anything a student tells me with anyone else
- It's important to keep going, because I'm the only person they've opened up to



Break

- Time for bathroom break, water-bottle filling, leg-stretching etc!
- Please be punctual and back in less than 15 minutes.
- Please don't gather in the hall as counselling sessions are taking place!



Sticky Situations



Let's Practise

Sticky Situations

- Discuss the handout in groups.
- What would you do and why?



<https://brenebrown.com/wholeheartedinventory/>



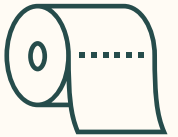
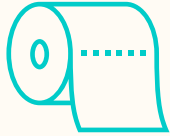




There is a part of myself
that I save for my project
and all of you.
There is a part of myself
that is just for me, and I
don't want that taken away
from me.

Lunch

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Looking after yourself

- Without volunteers there is no S2S – you are more important than anything else
- Who's there to support you? You can't go home and talk about the students you've supported
- How can you switch off?
- What can you do if it gets to be too much?



'Me' Time



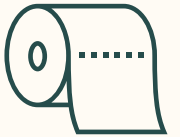
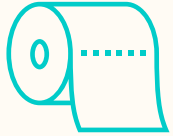
**“CARING FOR MYSELF IS
NOT SELF-INDLUGENCE, IT
IS SELF-PRESERVATION,
AND THAT IS AN ACT OF
POLITICAL WARFARE.”**

~AUDRE LORDE



Break

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Relaxation Session



Vevox Session

What song do you play when you need a boost (title and artist)?

- Join the session with the QR



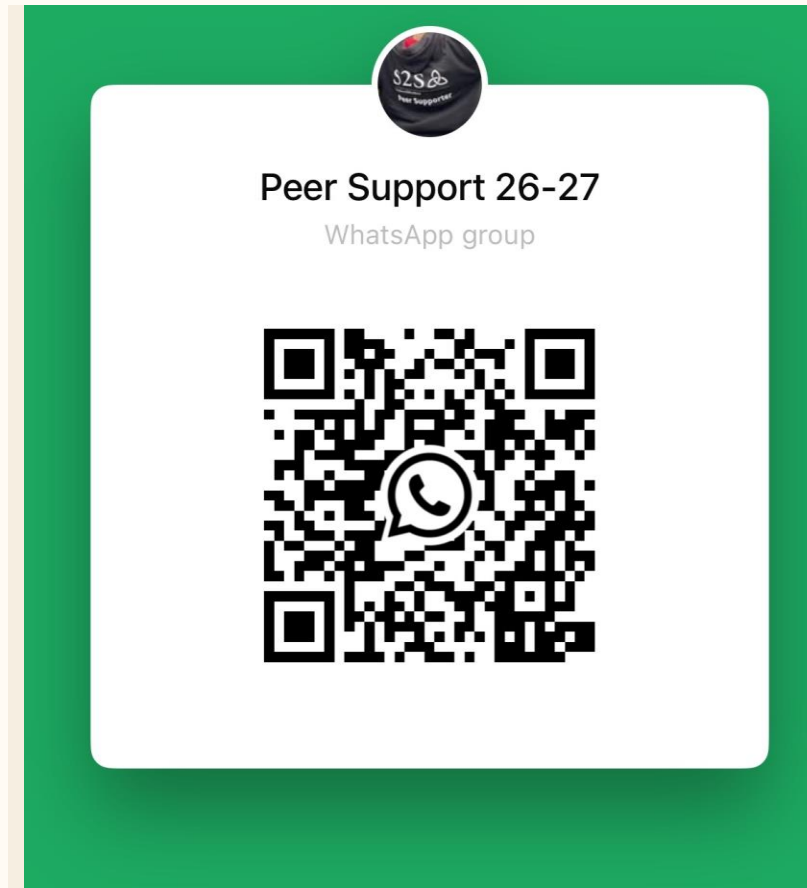
One More Vevox Session

What's your go-to movie when you want comfort?

- Join the session with the QR



Peer Support WhatsApp



Envelopes

- Time to reflect on your goals from Monday

Sandbox Time

Question time!





Thank You!

Anonymously share your feedback:

