Member and Participant Rights & Responsibilities

Mission Statement (adopted 3/13/19 by the Board of Directors): To support our mental health peers on their personal paths toward wellness within a community free from judgment where we share feelings, experiences, and tools in a respectful way.

Code of Conduct – We expect all employees and visitors to respect others and their property, be honest and accountable, and maintain confidentiality. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or disruption which interferes substantially with the use and enjoyment of the Center by others. We believe it is everyone's responsibility to report to staff any practice or situation that endangers the health, safety, or well-being of anyone at the Center, including yourself.

Minimum Engagement – While attending the Peer Support Agency or in the larger community at an Agency-sponsored trip or event, I agree to our Code of Conduct and Member and Participant Rights & Responsibilities.

Our programs are grounded in the 3 Principles of Intentional Peer Support (IPS):

1. **Moving from Helping to Learning Together:** IPS is specifically about building a relationship where both people learn and grow, rather than one person helping the other (or taking it in turns to help each other). This changes the dynamics of the relationship - both are there to learn, not to fix problems.
2. **Moving from Individual to Relationship:** Rather than focus on one person, IPS specifically shifts the focus to the relationship. Each person is encouraged to be present to the other and to engage in a way that is real. This also encourages a shift away from helping to both people using the relationship to learn more about themselves and their relationships.
3. **Moving from Fear to Hope & Possibility:** IPS is about approaching discomfort and fear in new ways. Rather than operating from a place of fear, we operate from a place of hope. This hope is underpinned by the knowledge that there is learning to be gained by moving through discomfort.

Our programs are grounded in the 10 Values of Intentional Peer Support:

1. Commitment to living well
2. Accountability (personal and relational)
3. The Power of Language
4. Direct, honest, respectful communication
5. Consciousness raising and critical learning
6. Worldview, diversity, holding multiple truths, trauma informed
7. Mutual responsibility: Belief in the power of relationship
8. Shared risk
9. Moving toward
10. Creating community and social change

Our programs are grounded in the 4 Tasks of Intentional Peer Support:

1. **Connection:** Connection is the core of peer support. It is the powerful sense when we realize that someone else "gets it." It is the beginning of building trust. The connection isn't permanent - we have to work at it; when we notice disconnection, we need to be willing to explore what's happening.
2. **Worldview:** Through honest connection we can then explore with each other, seeking to understand how we have come to know what we know. Together, we look at how we make sense of what's going on, and learn to sit with the differences in our worldviews. This process may challenge us to rethink our ideas and the stories we tell ourselves.
3. **Mutuality:** In a relationship based on IPS principles, both people learn, grow and are challenged through the relationship. Mutuality is not to be confused with reciprocity - people taking it in turns to help each other. Mutuality means being in relation with another person, while staying present and aware of our own reactions, worldview, needs, and assumptions.
4. **Moving Towards:** Instead of thinking about moving away from what we don't want, in IPS each person in the relationship reflects on what we want to move towards. Often in mental health focusing on our problems keeps us stuck. It's important to note that this task is not just about positive thinking or problem solving - it builds on the work in the other steps - the mutuality and real connection of the relationship, and thoughtfully reconsidering our worldview and how we have come to know what we know about ourselves and the world. In some ways, this last task arises naturally out of the other three - the tasks are in order for good reason!

Our programs are grounded in Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s 4 major dimensions that support a life in recovery:

1. **Health:** Learning to overcome, manage or more successfully live with symptoms and make healthy choices that support one's physical and emotional wellbeing;
2. **Home:** A stable and safe place to live;
3. **Purpose:** Meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteer work, or creative endeavors; and increased ability to lead a self-directed life; and meaningful engagement in society; and
4. **Community:** Relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope.

We also believe in:

- growth beyond stigma, discrimination, shame and limits placed upon us;
- providing a place where people feel valued and not judged;
- advocacy and self-determination;
- a safe, supportive environment within our community;
- courage and empowerment; and
- forgiveness.

Member and Participant Rights:

- The right to freedom of religion and spirituality and religious preference, including the right to be free from engaging in any religious or spiritual activity or practice.
- The right to be free from discrimination and harassment because of my race, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, national origin, age, disability, socio-economic class, political ideology, Veterans status, or gender identity.
- The right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- The right to be free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- The right to confidentiality of membership and participant records except:
  - a PSA may disclose to law enforcement personnel that information necessary to report a crime committed at the agency.
  - the PSA shall disclose the information specified above:
    - to the department of health and human services;
    - when required to report abuse or neglect of a child;
    - when required to report abuse, neglect or exploitation of an adult; and
    - as otherwise required by law.
- The right to privacy including the right to courtesies, such as knocking on closed doors before entering.
- Reasonable access to a telephone and a computer, if one is available for use, with such privacy as agency facilities allow, provided that Members and Participants may be required to pay for long distance calls.
- The right for Members to vote at Member meetings regarding PSA business and how money from the Members bank account is spent and to vote at the annual meeting to elect a Board of Directors.
- The right to complain and file a complaint;
- The right to an environment that actively supports the Mission and values of the agency, is recovery-based, and free from behavior that interferes with the use and enjoyment of the PSA.
- The right to clear and understandable House Rules.

I have read and understand the Member and Participant Rights & Responsibilities, and I agree to follow them while attending the Peer Support Agency or in the larger community at an Agency-sponsored trip or event.

_____ _____

Member's or Participant's signature Date

_____

Please print your first and last name

The following information is for Members only and optional. We encourage you to complete it as it will ensure we provide meaningful support to everyone who wants it. We report this information to funders without your name.

Date of Birth: _____ Town or Zip Code: _____

Please circle your choice:

Gender: Female Male Transgender Non-binary/non-conforming Other Choose Not to Answer

Race: White Black or African American American Indian or Alaska Native Asian

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Unknown Other Choose not to Answer

Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino Not Hispanic or Latino Unknown Choose not to Answer

Approved by:	Members; BMHS; Board of Directors
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