

Interactive Skills Reboot

Let's get back to the basics



This workshop is designed for practicing Certified Peer Specialists, Certified Parent Peer Specialists, and others interested in the Peer Specialist field.

This workshop is designed using real experiences & challenges our workforce have experienced. Reboot is getting back to basics, helping the workforce stay true to the Certified Peer Specialist profession.

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Reboot Boundaries & Self Care

What is ok and what is not okay.

Boundaries professional

Certified peer specialists are expected to understand and follow the employing agency's policies, procedures, and performance expectations. However, there may be times that the certified peer specialist's work conflicts with agency expectations.

This provides an opportunity to advocate for peer values. The nature of conflict may be due to differing service delivery philosophies, values, and approaches. For example, the certified peer specialist approach is grounded in a person-centered, strengths-based, collective recovery orientation, while most human services agencies follow a medical model approach.

Conflict is an opportunity to educate and grow both professionally and personally. Because the certified peer specialist role is relatively new to the field, clarifying professional boundaries will be necessary. The certified peer specialist can initiate an ongoing conversation within the agency in several ways:

- **Discussions with leadership.** Ask leadership to review the employer toolkit provided on the Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Employment Initiative website. This toolkit provides information about the role of a certified peer specialist. Schedule time to meet, review, and discuss.
- **Discussions with a supervisor.** Share the following documents: Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Scope of Practice, Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Core Competencies, or Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Code of Ethics. Schedule time to meet, review, and discuss.
- **Discussions with co-workers.** There are many opportunities for informal discussions with co-workers as well as formal discussions during team meetings about the philosophies, values, and approaches of peer support. Through these discussions, challenging perceptions of the world is also critical to moving in a collective direction with co-workers.

CPS Participant Guide 6/2023 page 48



<https://www.wicps.org/employer-assistance/>

Boundaries-

- Personal
- With Peers

Boundaries can be self-defined, mutually identified, flexible or firm, specific to each unique relationship, and can adjust over time as relationships and roles change.

There are several reasons to consider setting healthy boundaries.

- Compassionate people set boundaries. Setting boundaries also demonstrates self-care and allows greater capacity for empathy with others.
- Boundaries help us to be present with our whole self. If you do not set boundaries, you could be overextending yourself. You might be at risk of burnout. Boundaries
- Boundaries allow growth. Boundary setting communicates to others what is important to you and what you need to stay in a mutual relationship.

CPS Participant Guide 6/2023 pages 143 & 144

Remember Brene Brown – *“I assumed for the first 35 years of my life that people were sucking on purpose just to piss me off. I was like why are they choosing these things, why are they making those choices? They should know better ... And then this thing came up with my therapist: “What if people are doing the best they can?” My husband had the most beautiful answer to that question: “I’ll never know if people are doing the best they can or not, but when I assume people are, it makes my life better.”*

This has changed me.

Boundaries look different for everyone.

Why is it so difficult to set boundaries and even identify what boundaries are?

Answer:

Boundaries can be difficult because peers we work with may not understand them and no one really wants to be told no.

Try discussing boundaries with peers and what they think they are.

Many times, people don’t set boundaries because fear losing approval and wanting to be liked.

Examples of boundaries

Time Boundary “I can only stay for an hour” or “If you’re going to be late, please let me know ahead of time.”

Energy Boundary “I don’t have the energy to help you with [their request] right now, but maybe [this resource] can help.”

Emotional Dumping “I understand you’re having a hard time and I want to be there for you, but I don’t have the emotional capacity to listen right now.”

Personal Space Boundary “It makes me feel uncomfortable when you [touch or action]. If you can’t respect my space, I’ll have to leave.”

Conversational Boundary “This is not a topic I’m willing to discuss right now.”

Comment Boundary “I don’t find those types of comments funny.”

Mental Boundary “I understand we see things differently and I respect your opinion, but please don’t force it on me.”

Material Boundary “Please ask me first before borrowing my [possession]” or “I would appreciate it if you didn’t touch my [material thing].”

Social Media Boundary “I don’t feel comfortable with you posting that on Instagram.”

Language Boundary – Please do not use that language, it makes me feel uncomfortable.

Work Boundary – Please don’t take my things from the refrigerator without asking.

Physical boundary- take a lunch break.

Emotional Boundary- Separate your emotions from other peoples. (If your co-worker is having an outburst, do not get involved)

Others? Fill in the Blanks

But what does self-care have to do with boundaries? Everything!

Do the work on yourself.

Boundaries are self-defined limits.

When setting healthy boundaries, it's important to remember that there's no right way; what works best for you!

You can't communicate your boundaries if you don't know what they are.

They stem from your personal beliefs, values, and passions according to your own moral code.

- Identify your values and decide what is non-negotiable for you.
- Spend some time with yourself and reflect on your life and your values.
The time you set aside for self-care will bring clarity into your relationships both personal and professional.

Does this seem selfish? In current society there is a tendency toward self-sacrifice and too much work has led a large number of people to dismiss their boundaries or sacrifice their well-being to please other people.

Self-care and healthy boundaries are not selfish; they are a form of self-love that leads to meaningful relationships and better experiences.

While it may seem daunting, setting boundaries doesn't need to be complicated:

Define your limits (what supports you versus what detracts from your personal well-being)

Openly communicate your boundaries to people in your life

Remind people if needed (but always stick to your boundaries)

Don't be afraid to say "no"

Take time for yourself.

****What does your gut tell you?****

Your instincts can help you determine when someone is violating your boundaries or when you need to set one up.

“Check in with your body (heart rate, sweating, tightness in chest, stomach, throat) to tell you what you can handle and where the boundary should be drawn,”

Maybe you clench your fists when your roommate borrows your new coat, for example. Or you tighten your jaw when your relatives how your recovery is going or how are the meds working for you?

Peer specialists

- Remind the peer the relationship is strength based- strengths not deficits.
- discuss what peer support is and is not- (let the peer give you their opinion)
- I am not a taxi service (in a nice way)
- peer support sessions focused on the peer's goals and needs.
- Reflect on the reasons for your boundaries.
- Start with a few boundaries.

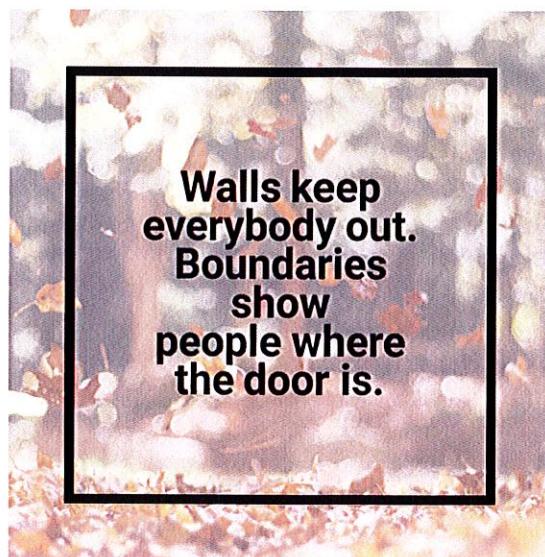
Warning signs of Boundary violations

- Choosing sides
- Making exceptions
- Keeping secrets
- Giving or receiving gifts
- Borrowing or lending money
- Feeling as if no one but you has interest in the peer
- Feeling only you will be able to assist the peer
- Feeling responsible for a peer's progress or failure
- “Owning” a peer's successes or failures
- Confiding personal or professional issues or troubles with a peer

Take some time and reflect on your own boundaries.

- Are you missing anything?
- Does it seem a little clearer?

Discussion



Susie Austin Reboot - Back to Basics in Peer Support



Diversity

Equity

Inclusion

Diversity – Diversity means difference.

- examples of diversity include visible diversity such as age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities/qualities, race. Invisible diversity examples are sexual orientation, educational background, and work experiences. Personal diversity includes religion, geographical location, and general worldview.
- Empowering people by respecting what makes them different.
- What is your background?
- Where do your ancestors come from?
- What makes you different from others?

Equity – stands for fairness and justice in the way that people are treated. This translates as impartiality and equal access when it comes to processes, programs, opportunities, and advancement. To ensure everyone can reach their full potential.

Inclusion – means our ability to include differences.

Inclusion means that everyone has a sense of belonging, and that everyone feels like they can participate. Inclusive environments are those in which differences are embraced and supported and people feel like they can bring their true selves to work.



Self-Care with Susie Austin

What is it anyway.

Self-Care is anything you do to care for yourself.

It means that you are being mindful of your own needs, and when do, you are better able to support the people around

you. When you take care of yourself and are not stressed, you are able to meet the needs of others.

Self-care comes in a variety of forms. It does not require an elaborate plan; self-care can be as simple as taking a deep breath when you notice you are becoming stressed. By maintaining your physical and mental health, you will likely be better equipped to handle the stressors that come along with supporting someone you care about.

Do you have any stress? (Funny right) It's important and healthy to acknowledge your limits.

Do you feel...

- Anxious or full of worry?
- Unable to concentrate?
- Sad or generally unhappy?
- Overwhelmed and constantly worried?
- Irritable or short tempered?
- Tired often?
- Lonely or alone?

Do you have trouble...

- Remembering things?
- Relaxing?
- Getting your work done?
- Making good decisions?

Have you...

- Been sleeping too much or too little?
- Been eating too much or too little?
- Gained or lost weight?
- Isolate yourself from friends and family?
- Neglected responsibilities?
- Lost interest in activities you used to enjoy?

If you think stress-overload might be affecting your life, there is something you can do about it.

Self-Care Strategies for Managing Stress

TAKE CARE



OF YOURSELF

Self-care, as the word itself suggests, is what we do to take care of ourselves. When we get stressed out, we tend to ignore the very things that might make us feel better, so it is important to find time to take care of yourself.

Remain socially connected. When you are supporting someone else, it can be easy to lose sight of your other social connections. It is important to stay in touch with your family and friends who can offer support. Set aside some time each week to spend time with others in your support network.

Why not make a commitment to give yourself a little extra love. Too often, we tell ourselves that we don't have enough time for self-care. We might even feel guilty about taking time out to focus on our own needs. That's especially true in peer support.

Self-care is not only the most important thing you can do for yourself, but also the best way to stay strong so you can care for others. When we're stressed, burnt out, and overscheduled, we don't have the resources we need to be there for other people in our life.

Weave Mindfulness into Your Day

Learning to slow down and appreciate each moment, rather than rushing through one task after the next. **Take the time to notice your experience instead of getting caught up in thoughts of what's.** By doing this you're recharging your spiritual and emotional batteries.

Mindfulness helps you to look at the world with fresh eyes—seeing “the miraculous in the common,” as Ralph Waldo Emerson put it.

Here are three ways you can add mindfulness into your life, so it becomes part of your daily routine.

Conscious breathing: Take a slow deep breath in through your nose counting to 4. Hold it for the count of 4 then exhale to the count of 8. When you get all your breath out, give it a little push at the end. You can also do this anytime of your day. Keep the word **Breathe** in the front of your mind.

Body scan: When you get in bed at night or before you get out of bed in the morning, do a body scan. Specifically, send your attention to each part of the body, starting with the toes and moving up to the head, and focus on the sensations you feel in each area. Relax the muscles in each area of the body before moving on to the next.

Activate your senses: While you're walking the dog, or walking from your car to your workplace, or even to the grocery store, observe what's around you. Additionally, pay attention to the way the air feels, what you see nearby and, in the distance, and the sounds you hear. Tune in to what is beautiful and interesting in your environment.

When my daughter was very young, I drove her to school every day. We would look for something new every day, as the seasons change in autumn, we would count the bird nests in the trees when all leaves had fallen off, or how the snow glistens on the trees in the new fallen snow. Stop and smell the roses, instead of just looking at them.

Blood flow: Bend over let your arms hang down in front of you. Let the blood flow down. Slowly start to stand up and concentrate on one vertebra at a time. Slowly rolling your shoulders all the way back and tipping back your head. Bring yourself back to a comfortable position.

Recognize, refrain and relax, Repeat! Repeat Mindfulness is an ongoing process—This is very important part of self-care.

A meditation activity

This exercise teaches basic mindfulness meditation.

1. Sit on a straight-backed chair or cross-legged on the floor.
2. Focus on an aspect of your breathing, such as the sensations of air flowing into your nostrils and out of your mouth, or your belly rising and falling as you inhale and exhale.
3. Once you've narrowed your concentration in this way, begin to widen your focus. Become aware of sounds, sensations, and ideas.
4. Embrace and consider each thought or sensation without judging it good or bad. If your mind starts to race, re-turn your focus to your breathing. Then expand your awareness again.

The benefits of mindfulness meditation tend to be related to the duration and frequency of your practice—the more you do, the greater the effect it usually has. Most people find that it takes at least 20 minutes for the mind to begin to settle, so this is a reasonable way to start. If you're ready for a more serious commitment, But you can get started by practicing the techniques described here for shorter periods and still derive a benefit.

2. Practicing awareness in daily life

A less formal approach to mindfulness can also help you to stay in the present and fully participate in your life. You can choose any task or moment to practice informal mindfulness, whether you are eating, showering, walking, touching a partner, or playing with a child or grandchild. Attending to these points will help:

1. Start by bringing your attention to the sensations in your body.

2. Breathe in through your nose, allowing the air to fill your lungs. Let your abdomen expand fully. Then breathe out slowly through your mouth. This pattern may slow down your heart rate and lower your blood pressure, helping you relax. Notice the sensations of each inhalation and exhalation.
3. Proceed with the task at hand slowly and with full deliberation.
4. Engage your senses fully. Notice each sight, touch, and sound so that you savor every sensation.
5. When you notice that your mind has wandered from the task at hand, gently bring your attention back to the sensations of the moment.

SELF-CARE is more than just pampering ourselves.

- Mental health -
- Spiritual health-
- Physical health-
- Social health

What are your thoughts?

What would you like to start doing?

What are you doing currently for your own self-care?

How can you challenge yourself?





E - OARS

E - Empathy

O - Open Ended

A - Affirmation

R - Reflection

S - Summary

Effective communication

O - Open Ended

- Questions that cannot be answered with a yes or no.
- These questions are designed to encourage peers to share and develop connections.
- Examples of questions you may use in your practice.
 1. How might we be able to improve these workshops?
 2. How would describe your perfect life?
 3. If you could design a reality TV show, what would it be?
 4. What questions can you ask to learn the most about a person?
 5. What makes you who you are?



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Effective communication

A – Affirmation

- Affirm the peers' strengths, successes, positive changes.
- REMEMBER- this is not cheerleading.
- Examples from your own practice
- Open ended question starters
 - What
 - How
 - Tell me about
 - Describe



E - OARS

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S - Summary

Effective communication

R – Reflective listening

- Reflective listening is carefully listening with interest and curiosity to understand the peer's perspective and experience- then like a mirror, reflecting the meaning of what the peer said.
- Reflective listening is the most important communication skill in the process of providing peer support.
- Reflective listening is helpful in bringing feelings out.

Reflective listening or reflection is the skillful expression of empathy. Whereas empathy is a way of being with people, reflection is what the listener does. Peer support manual page 69



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Effective communication

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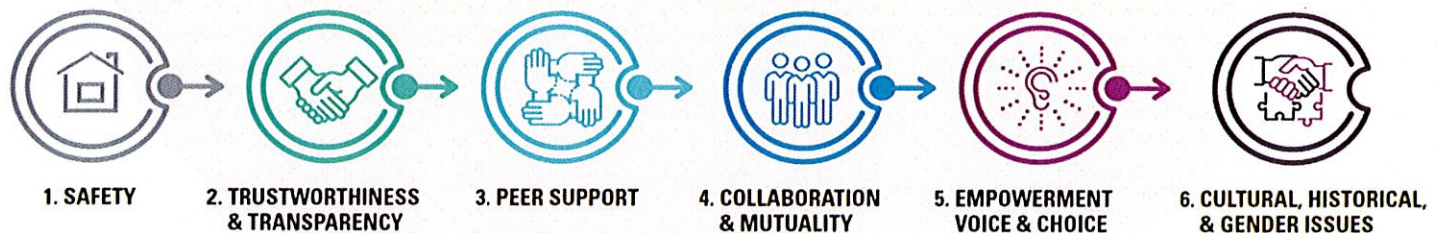
- Summary is useful for moving on to another subject.
- Ending the session.
- Summary usually is for longer
 - - Here is what I heard
 - - Did I miss anything?

Re-Boot — Susie Austin

Trauma Informed Care

6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

The CDC's [Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response \(OPHPR\)](#), in collaboration with SAMHSA's [National Center for Trauma-Informed Care \(NCTIC\)](#), developed and led a new training for OPHPR employees about the role of trauma-informed care during public health emergencies. The training aimed to increase responder awareness of the impact that trauma can have in the communities where they work. Participants learned SAMHSA'S six principles that guide a trauma-informed approach, including:



Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single particular technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level. On-going internal organizational assessment and quality improvement, as well as engagement with community stakeholders, will help to imbed this approach which can be augmented with organizational development and practice improvement. The training provided by [OPHPR](#) and [NCTIC](#) was the first step for CDC to view emergency preparedness and response through a trauma-informed lens.

1. **Safety**
2. **Trustworthiness & transparency**
3. **Peer support**
4. **Collaboration & mutuality**
5. **Empowerment & choice**
6. **Cultural, historical & gender issues**