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Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

# The Road to Recovery: The Value of MHCC's Peer Support Guidelines in Strengthening Your Organization's Policies, Programs and Practices

Mental Health Commission of Canada

**March 19, 2014**  
**12:00 PM E.T.**



# Today's presenters



**Steve Lurie,**  
CMHA (Toronto)



**Wendy Mishkin,**  
Peer Support  
Expert,  
Co-author: Training  
Guidelines



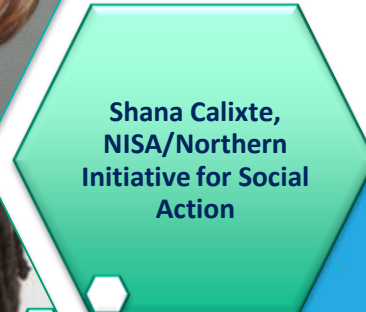
**Kim Sunderland,**  
Peer Support  
Accreditation and  
Certification  
(Canada),  
Author: Guidelines



**Roy Muise,**  
Nova Scotia  
Certified Peer  
Support Specialist  
Program



**Liz Wigfull,**  
Knowledge  
Exchange Centre,  
Mental Health  
Commission of  
Canada



**Shana Calixte,**  
NISA/Northern  
Initiative for Social  
Action



# Today's agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- What is recovery? What is peer support?
- Peer Support and the Mental Health Commission of Canada
  - Peer Support and Strategy
  - Service Systems Advisory Committee: Making the Case for the Peer Support
  - The Peer Project: The Guidelines for the Practice and Training of Peer Support
- Overview of the Guidelines
- Two examples of formalized peer support programs
- Questions
- Wrap-up



## What is recovery?

*“Recovery focuses on people recovering a quality of life in their community while striving to achieve their full potential.”*

- p. 11

*“A process ...through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.”*

- p. 13



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# What is peer support?

*Peer support is a supportive relationship between people who have a lived experience in common.*

- p. 11





Peer support works. Peer support is effective. People with lived experience of mental health challenges can offer huge benefits to each other. We found that the development of personal resourcefulness and self-belief, which is the foundation of peer support, can not only improve people's lives but can also reduce the use of formal mental health, medical and social services.

*- Making the Case for Peer Support, p.8*



## Peer Support and the Strategy

*Changing Directions, Changing Lives* suggests that Canada's mental health care system would benefit from "shift[ing] policies and practices toward recovery and well-being for people of all ages living with mental health problems and illnesses, and their families."

(p.36)





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# Promoting Peer Support

## Making the Case for Peer Support

Report to the  
Mental Health Commission of Canada  
Mental Health Peer Support Project Committee

Mary O'Hagan,  
Céline Cyr,  
Heather McKee,  
and Robyn Priest  
September 2010



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## Guidelines for the Practice and Training of Peer Support



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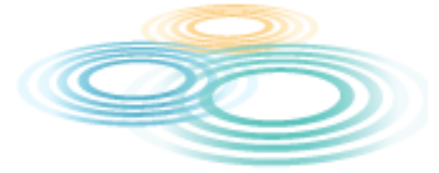
# The Peer Project





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# The Peer Project: Collaborating for Success

## *Key Success Factors:*

- ✓ Honored “Nothing About Us Without Us”
- ✓ Committed to Listen, Learn, & Continue Forward
- ✓ Willingness to Make the Case
- ✓ Dedicated to Continued Promotion of Peer Support



Kim Sunderland  
Peer Support Accreditation and Certification (Canada)



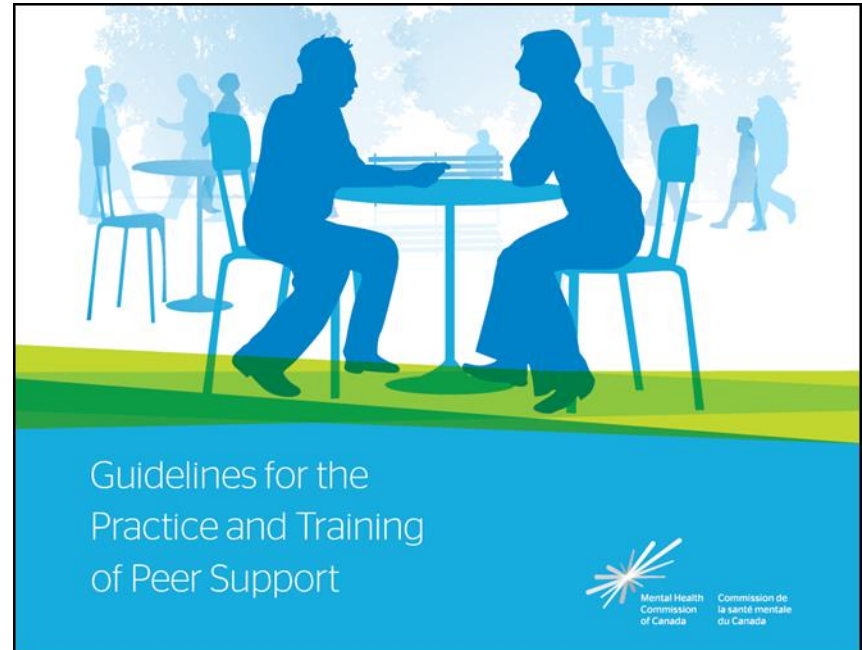
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# Guidelines for the Practice of Peer Support

## Peer Support of a More Formal Nature

- Intentional
- Values Lived Experience
- Complements mental health system
- Recognizes both personal & family-based peer support





# Guidelines for the Practice of Peer Support

## Peer Support of a More Formal Nature

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*“You cannot truly empathize with the recovery process by only studying or reading about it, the same way that you cannot truly empathize with the impact of hopelessness unless you have lived it.” p.24*

Guidelines for the  
Practice of Peer Support



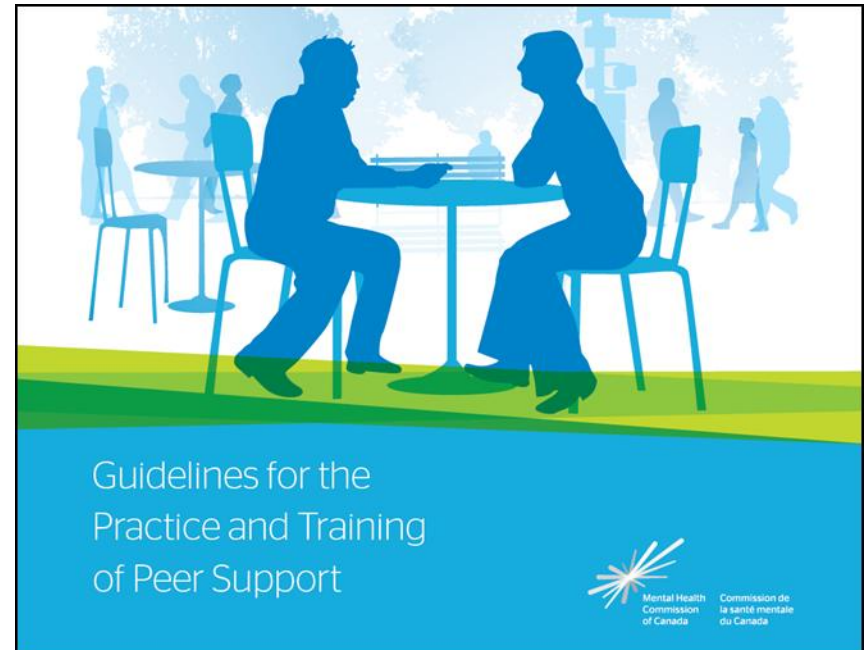


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# Guidelines for the Practice of Peer Support

- Guiding Values
- Principles of Practice





# Guidelines for the Practice of Peer Support

- Guiding Values
- Principles of Practice
- Requirement of Lived Experience and Recovery

*“When a person feels truly accepted by another, as they are, then they are freed to move from there and begin to think about how they might become more of what they are capable of being.”*

Guide  
Practice and Training  
of Peer Support

p.11



# What is meant by Recovery?



- A sense of **hope** for the future, rather than hopelessness, allowing peer support workers to be beacons of hope for others.
- A sense of **mastery over one's life** that includes self-care and resiliency strategies to help maintain a sense of wellness and emotional health, even if mental health challenges are still present.
- A **self-awareness** that allows a person to know when stressors or stress levels are reaching an unhealthy level.
- A confident and empowered **sense of self** within relationships and community that contributes to quality of life.
- A **readiness to share** aspects of own lived experience in a manner that is helpful and keeps the focus on the peer's experience.



# Guidelines for the Practice of Peer Support

- Guiding Values
- Principles of Practice
- Requirement of Lived Experience and Recovery
- Skills, Abilities, and Personal Attributes

*Lived Experience*  
*Interpersonal Communication*  
*Critical Thinking*  
*Teamwork and Collaboration*  
*Ethics and Reliability*

Guideline  
Practice and Training  
of Peer Support





# Guidelines for Peer Support Training

## RESPECT FOR ETHICS & THE PEER SUPPORT ROLE

- > Hope
- > Recovery
- > Empathy
- > Self-determination

- > Interpersonal communication
- > Critical thinking
- > Supporting change

## NON-JUDGMENTAL APPROACH

Recognizes the gifts and insights of each participant:

- Individual lived experiences
- Self-awareness
- Innate interpersonal communication skills

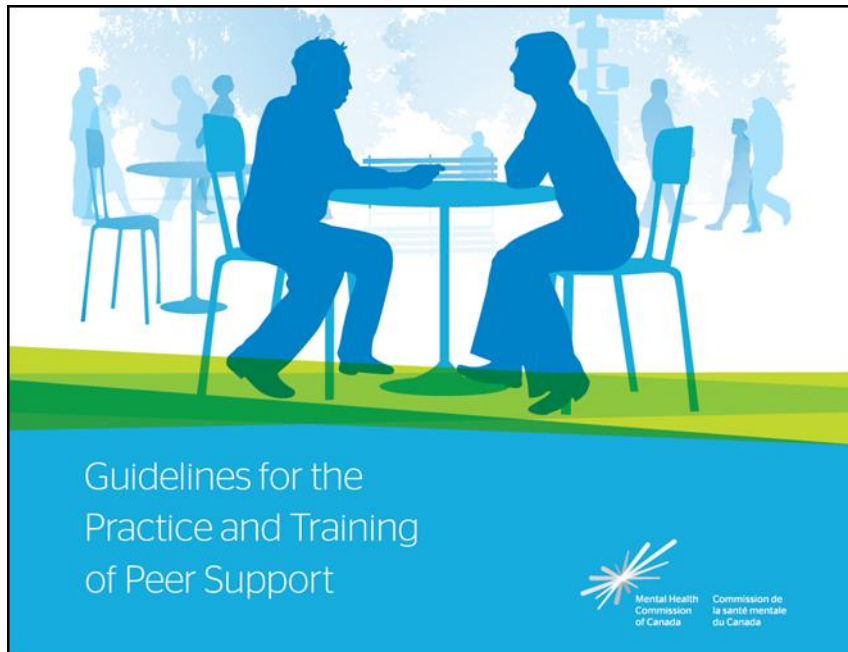




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# Guidelines for Peer Support Training



## Training Themes include:

- Fundamental Principles of Peer Support
- Social and Historical Context of Peer Support
- Concepts and Methods that Promote Peer-to-Peer Effectiveness

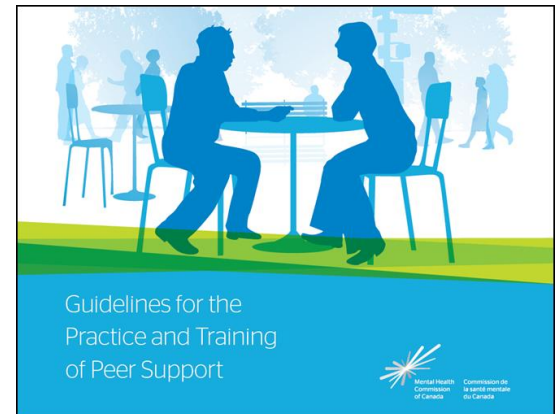
# Where can you find the Guidelines?

On the MHCC website:

[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)

Email Liz Wigfull for a hard copy:

[lwigfull@mentalhealthcommission.ca](mailto:lwigfull@mentalhealthcommission.ca)

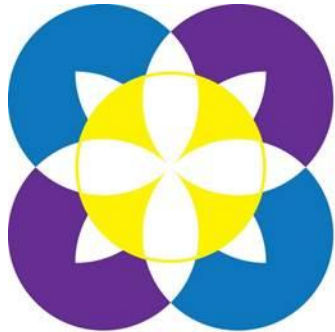




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## Expanding Peer Support in Nova Scotia



# NOVA SCOTIA CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST PROGRAM



**Roy Muise**  
Program Coordinator and Peer Mentor



## Advice from NSCPSSP

1. Don't rush things – take the time to roll out properly
2. Establish a good training program
3. Recruit like-minded people to work with you as part of your team.



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# NISA and Peer Support in Northern Ontario

NORTHERN INITIATIVE  
FOR SOCIAL ACTION



Being.  
Belonging. Becoming.



Shana Calixte  
Executive Director





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# Advice from NISA

1. Collaborate
2. Provide research/evidence when seeking buy-in
3. Provide training to your peer support workers



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# To Learn More

[www.PSAC-Canada.com/NCPS](http://www.PSAC-Canada.com/NCPS)

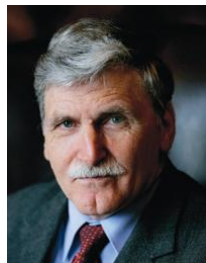
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Communicate. Contribute. Collaborate.



COLLABORATIVE SPACES is an online repository and conversation place for mental health in Canada. Share mental health information with others and learn from others as they post. The more you contribute, the more robust a resource it will be!

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/spaces>



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# Thank you

Contact us: [lwigfull@mentalhealthcommission.ca](mailto:lwigfull@mentalhealthcommission.ca)

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*The views represented herein solely represent the views of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.  
Production of this document is made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada.*

*Les opinions exprimées aux présentes sont celles de la Commission de la santé mentale du Canada.  
La production de ce document a été rendue possible grâce à la contribution financière de Santé Canada.*