



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Guiding Principles are adapted from the following resources:

Western Massachusetts Peer Network's Declaration of Peer Roles and Shery Mead's Intentional Peer Support (IPS)

Healing Connections Peer Support Groups were created for and by people who experience emotional distress, voices and visions, extreme and altered states of consciousness, labels of psychiatric diagnosis, substance use, and trauma/trauma responses. We come together to share information, hope, joys, fears, successes, and hardships in the 'most' safe space we co-create to mutually support, heal, and grow together. We all are collectively responsible for the comfort of our group!

Healing Connections' facilitators are trained Peer Specialist, who have their own experience with emotional distress. The facilitators are there to guide the support group and offer peer support.

- We are based in self-help and mutual support.
- We believe that healing is possible and probable for all.
- We value human language that is non-clinical. This allows each person a space to explore and find their own meaning in their life and their experiences (worldview).
- We believe in the healing power of choice. Attendance and participation are completely voluntary. It's okay to just listen.
- We are not here to "fix" each other or give advice, but rather "be" with one another, creating a culture of reciprocal respect and support.
- We refrain from universalizing our experience and our worldview. Difference is expected, welcomed, and honored.
- We refrain from judgment! We challenge ourselves to intentionally come from a place of genuine curiosity when people share their experience and worldview.

Healing Connections Peer Support Groups

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