

Principles of PEER SUPPORT

Peer Support is:

1. Relational

- Mutual, two-way relationships that encourage self-responsibility – both giving and receiving as we each have something worthwhile to contribute.
- Reciprocal - relationships about sharing and exploring different worldviews and creating solutions together.
- Safe – negotiating emotional safety, confidentiality, compassion, authenticity, honesty and non-judgemental attitudes.

2. Learning Focussed

- Non-clinical – Each of us own, understand and learn from our experiences, thoughts and feelings.
- Trauma informed – focus on understanding what has happened rather than what is 'wrong'. Challenging how normal responses to trauma and adversity end up being labelled as abnormalities.
- Explores how we've come to know what we know – how we have come to see ourselves and the world around us.
- Avoids advice giving & problem solving – based on re-framing and re-defining our experiences

3. Purposeful

- Purposeful support to learn new skills, develop new resources & reframe challenges as opportunities.
- Recovery & discovery focussed – purposeful relationships that inspire hope, generate belief, energy & commitment. Taking back control of challenges and defining our own destiny.
- Strengths based – a relationship where the peer supporter is not afraid of being with someone in their distress but seeing that distress creates possibility and self-belief. It explores what someone has gained from their experiences, identifies survival skills and celebrates all changes, no matter how small.