



CSN VOICES NEWSLETTER

The official newsletter of The Consumer Survivor Network -
Program of Friends & Advocates Peel and Surrounding Areas
Phone: 905-452-1002 ext. 332

What's Coming Up!

APRIL

Recovery is Self-Discovery

In chapter four of *Pathways to Recovery*, we take a look at recognizing our strengths and exploring ways to make the most of personal and environmental strengths. The goal during this month's presentation will be to have a full inventory of your strengths that can support your journey.

MAY

Creating a Personal Vision of Recovery

This month, we will focus on planning and creating a unique-to-you personal vision for recovery/wellness. This chapter discusses goal setting for both long- and short-term goals. The goal during this month will be to understand what success and our goals mean to us, not anyone else.

JUNE

Mapping Goals Across Major Life Domains

The domains of life we will look at this month are: Living Situations, Education, Assets, Career, Leisure and Recreation, Health and Wellness, Intimacy and Sexuality, and the Spiritual domain.



FRIENDS & ADVOCATES

Peel and Surrounding Areas

239 Queen St. E, Unit 6, Brampton, ON L6W 2B6

Work Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30am - 4:30pm

Telephone.....905-452-1002 ext. 332

Cell.....289-815-2774

E-mail.....CSN@fapeel.org

Website.....www.fapeel.org

Connect with us online:

Join Zoom by phone at 647-558-0588



Join Zoom by computer: <https://zoom.us/join>

Zoom Meeting ID: 703 571 1290

Zoom Password: 54321



[Facebook.com/consumersurvivornetwork](https://www.facebook.com/consumersurvivornetwork)



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DAILY TIPS FOR SELF-CARE

• Gratitude

- Regularly practicing gratitude can have very positive effects on our daily lives.
- *Write Your Gratitude!* It can be beneficial to see what you are thankful for in writing.

• Setting and achieving small goals

- Regularly setting small goals can create *positive momentum* in your life (e.g. waking up at the same time daily, putting on a clean shirt every other day, washing your face daily or on a schedule that works for you, etc.).
- Achieving these goals can help build self-confidence; create, improve or grow motivation; improve mental health; and create success.

• Do something that makes you feel uncomfortable and make yourself proud!

- Try something new—talk to a stranger, try a free class, sing out loud, ask a question, stand up for yourself!



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Things to know!

- **Change is happening within your CSN program!** We're currently in the very early stages of implementing updates to improve your CSN program. These changes aim to enhance the program and align it with industry standards. Rest assured, we're striving to make the transition as smooth as possible. Your feedback is valuable, so feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns. Stay tuned for updates in future newsletters.
- **Please ensure you register for all in-person activities promptly.** Recently, we encountered a situation where a public location was unexpectedly locked down just an hour before an activity. In such instances, neither F&A nor the CSN has control, but we make every effort to promptly notify all registered participants as soon as we're made aware of the situation. Additionally, unforeseen circumstances may arise that necessitate contacting all registered individuals. Your early registration for in-person activities is greatly appreciated.
- Mississauga, we are now *officially* moved to the Hazel McCallion Central Library!
- North Etobicoke, sadly we won't be able to have group in April. See you in May!
- **WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) - Brampton** runs April 2nd - May 21st - **Registration** will be open **March 15th - March 29th. I will be unavailable every Tuesday April 2nd - May 21st from 12pm - 4:30pm. If you would like to take WRAP please call the office. Those of you who are not an F&A member will need to complete a intake to join WRAP.**
- An early heads up, I will be off **June 17th - 21st**. There will be no support calls or groups happening that week.
- **Brampton participants**, we are running into the same problem as last year regarding having an indoor space for the summer. Any suggestions?
- **Share your feedback!** We're eager to hear your thoughts on how we can enhance the CSN program. What would you like to see more of in our newsletter? Additionally, we're considering adding a Peer Page, perhaps called the Peer Corner or Our Voices, where peers can share their voices, personal success stories, helpful strategies, and resources. We'd love to hear your thoughts on this idea. You can provide feedback by leaving a voicemail at extension 332, speaking directly to me, sending an email to LJoseph@fapeel.org, or passing a message through any staff member. Your input is invaluable to us!
- Please share your thoughts on the new look of the CSN Voices Newsletter and also any changes you wish to see.

CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES!

24.7 Crisis Support Line	905-278-9036
Distress Centre of Greater Toronto	416-408-4357
Telehealth	1-866-797-0000
ConnexOntario	1-866-531-2600
Centre for Grief and Healing	905-848-4337
Progress Place 4pm - 12am 7 days a week	1-888-768-2488
Talk Suicide Canada 24/7/365.	1-833-456-4566
Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 686868 to text with a trained crisis responder	

Consumer Survivor Network

In-person Group Etiquette



1. **Self-determination:** We encourage self-determination and participation according to your comfort level. Remember, you always have the right to pass.
2. **Confidentiality:** This is a space for confidential conversations. Please respect each other's privacy. Remember, what is said in the discussion, STAYS IN THE DISCUSSION and also "Nothing about me, without me." *** I will only break confidentiality if someone expresses they are at risk of serious harm to themselves or others, or if a child under the age of 16 is at risk of harm.***
3. **Conflict Resolution:** Conflict is natural in any group. Be open-minded and respect the speaker's right to express their thoughts. Hold yourself and others in high regard.
4. **Respect and Permission:** Ask for permission before asking questions. This is a space of respect, dignity, and social inclusion. It's okay to say "no." We respect reciprocity – we share our experiences and listen and learn from each other. Respect and support each other as you would want to be respected and supported.
5. **Safe Space:** This is a stigma-free, prejudice-free, and discrimination-free zone. Some topics may evoke strong emotions or discomfort. Be compassionate to yourself and others. Limit details and descriptive language, and avoid naming medications or substances. Share only what you're comfortable sharing.
6. **Ownership of Experience:** Use "I" statements when sharing your personal experiences to take ownership of your feelings and opinions.
7. **Judgement-free and Judgement-aware space:** In this space, we aim to cultivate a judgment-free yet judgment-aware environment. This means refraining from passing judgment on ourselves or others. One way to practice this is by avoiding phrases like "should" when discussing ourselves or others. Remember, we're here to support, not judge.
8. **Signaling for Support:** If you need to leave the room, signal by giving a "thumbs up" if everything is okay or a "thumbs down" if you need 1-on-1 support.

Reminders:

- Take what resonates with you.
- Listen attentively and allow everyone a chance to speak.
- Humour can be a helpful tool.
- Group safety is paramount. Please keep in mind etiquette #3, #4, and #5.



CSN AGENDA APRIL - JUNE

Join Zoom by phone at 647-558-0588

Join Zoom by computer: <https://zoom.us/join>

CSN Zoom Meeting ID: 703 571 1290

CSN Zoom Password: 54321

No entry to zoom meetings 10mins after start time.

THURSDAY APRIL 4 11:00AM ON ZOOM Topic: Recovery is Self-Discovery	THURSDAY APRIL 11 1:00 – 3:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Brampton	THURSDAY APRIL 18 1:00 – 3:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Mississauga
THURSDAY MAY 2 11:00AM ON ZOOM Topic: Planning and Creating our Vision	THURSDAY MAY 9 1:00 – 3:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Mississauga	THURSDAY MAY 16 1:00 – 3:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Brampton
THURSDAY MAY 23 2:00 – 4:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Etobicoke	THURSDAY MAY 30 11:00AM ON ZOOM Topic: Major Life Domains	THURSDAY JUNE 6 2:00PM – 4:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Etobicoke
THURSDAY JUNE 13 1:00 – 3:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Mississauga	THURSDAY JUNE 27 1:00 – 3:00PM IN-PERSON In-person group Brampton	<i>If you change nothing, nothing will change.</i>



CSN AGENDA DETAILS JANUARY

No entry to Zoom meetings 10mins after start time.

All Zoom groups last for 60 - 90 mins.

All in-person groups run for 2hrs.

For in-person activities - Please call the office to register a minimum of 2 business days before the activity!

Zoom

Location: Virtual Online

Join Zoom by phone at: 647-558-0588

Join Zoom by computer: <https://zoom.us/join>

CSN Zoom Meeting ID: 703 571 1290

CSN Zoom Password: 54321

Dates on Zoom: April 4th, May 2nd and May 30th

Time on Zoom: 11:00am

Brampton

Location: Loafers Lake Recreation Centre

Address: 30 Loafers Lake Ln, Brampton, ON

(Main intersection: Sandalwood Pkwy & Conestoga)

Time for Brampton: 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Dates in Brampton: April 11th, May 16th and June 27th - Regular front room

Mississauga

Location: Hazel McCallion Central Library

Address: 301 Burnhamthorpe Rd W, Mississauga, ON

(Main intersection: Living Arts Dr & Burnhamthorpe Road W)

Time for Mississauga: 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Dates in Mississauga: April 18th - Connections Rm, May 9th - Rm 2B, June 13th - Rm 2B

Etobicoke

Location: Rexdale Community Hub

Address: 21 Panorama Ct, Etobicoke, ON

(Main intersection: Kipling Ave and Finch Ave W)

Time for Etobicoke: 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Dates in Etobicoke: May 23rd and June 6th - Regular room for both dates

*Unfortunately N. Etobicoke, I was unable to secure a date for April, so there will be no group that month.

Please accept my apologies. See you in May.*



A message from your CSN Coordinator

This is your reminder that I am your peer. Just like many of you who are part of the CSN Peer Support Community, I am also continuously working on myself, learning who I am, and figuring out what I need to be and do to stay well for a long time. I am saying this because even though I am the one running the program, I need you all to believe in yourselves as much as you have shown me that you believe in me (which is so appreciated every single day and always fills my heart). I also wanted to thank everyone for the wisdom, vulnerability, honesty, and humour they bring to each group. Together, we are making the CSN Peer Support Groups a great and safe space!

As a peer worker, my hope and goal for each and every one of you that connects to peer support is that this peer-ship will allow you to see and acknowledge the strength within, be leaders of your life, and feel in-control of your wellness.

It is very important that I am clear about what it is I do as a Peer Supporter and what my peer supporter role is. While peer support compliments clinical approaches, it **itself is not clinical**. Peer supporters do not focus on diagnoses or give advice. Peer supporters help people to discover and build on what's working for them, even in the midst of illness. A Peer Supporter will have lived experience in either mental illness or mental health challenges, substance abuse, and addiction (not necessarily all of them) and is trained to support others.

We are only experts in ourselves. When you connect to peer support, you are in the driver's seat, you are the expert in you!

Peer Supporter Is/Does	
A person in recovery	Support a person on how to acquire resources
Share lived experience	Support in finding clinical and supportive services
See the person as a whole person	Motivates through hope and inspiration
A role model for positive recovery behaviours	Encourage, support, praise
Supports many pathways of recovery	Help to set personal goals

Very important message:

I have heard you. Some of you have expressed uncomfortable feelings when participating in the CSN peer support group. Some have said they feel attacked by me, and I want to apologize again for my part in creating those thoughts and feelings. I am very sorry. It is never my intention to create an unsafe space in any way for anyone who connects to me and/or the CSN group. Please continue to self-advocate and provide feedback, it will help make this group better and safer. Also, as a reminder: connecting to peer support can sometimes feel uncomfortable and it can also sometimes bring up uncomfortable thoughts and feelings; please remember the etiquette when this happens and reach out for support or resources.



A Thoughtful Reminder!

"Embrace the power of vulnerability; sharing your authentic self fosters deeper connections and mutual understanding"!

Peer Page / Peer Corner / Our Voices

WHAT COULD THIS SECTION OF THE NEWSLETTER BE CALLED?

THIS PAGE WILL BE A SPACE WHERE PEERS CAN SHARE THEIR VOICES, PERSONAL SUCCESS STORIES, HELPFUL STRATEGIES, AND RESOURCES. FOR THIS 1ST EDITION, I'LL BE SHARING ON THE TOPIC OF CHANGE. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE OR SEE IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER? YOUR INPUT IS INVALUABLE, SO PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT TO ME!

Dealing with change!

The mind finds great comfort in believing things stay the same. However, everything changes!

Change can be uncomfortable for many people, and the anxiety of thinking about changing can be even worse.

Embrace being uncomfortable: We live in a world where things are so accessible it's easy to equate being happy to being comfortable. If my legs are tired, I can take the elevator; if I don't want to have a tough conversation, I can send a text message. Having accessibility is not necessarily a bad thing, but I do think it has led us to a misconstrued notion that feeling uncomfortable means something is wrong. Embracing discomfort is a sign that you are one step closer to your goal. You are recognizing growth and expanding your limits.

Take it one step at a time, no rush necessary. Don't force yourself or inflict upon yourself major discomfort. Start with an uncomfortable change you can manage, but that still feels a little uncertain.

My personal opinion. Asking questions can be uncomfortable. So one way to embrace being uncomfortable could be to start by asking a question you might have been wanting to ask. I tell myself that yes or no questions are the easiest questions to ask because I already know the answers. Either I will get a "yes" or I will get a "no". A strategy like this may help to embrace being uncomfortable, which will help to embrace and deal with the discomfort of change. It could be asking more yes or no questions, but this is just an example. Even in reverse, if you ask a lot of questions because the feeling of uncertainty and not knowing is uncomfortable, challenge yourself to not ask a question or only ask one question. Again, trying to embrace the feeling of being uncomfortable.

If you want to
CHANGE

You have to be willing to be
UNCOMFORTABLE



Values of Peer Support



Hope and Recovery

Acknowledging the power of hope and the positive impact that comes from a recovery approach

Self-Determination

Having faith that each person intrinsically knows which path towards recovery is most suitable for them and their needs, noting that it is the peer's choice whether to become involved in a peer support relationship

Health & Wellness

Acknowledging all aspects of a healthy and full life

Empathetic & Equal Relationships

Noting that the peer support relationship and all involved can benefit from the reciprocity and better understanding that comes from a similar experience
(common threads of connection)

Dignity, Respect & Social Inclusion

Acknowledging the intrinsic worth of all individuals, whatever their background, preferences or situation

Integrity, Authenticity, & Trust,

Noting that confidentiality, reliability and ethical behaviour are honoured in each and every interaction

Lifelong Learning & Personal Growth

Acknowledging the value of learning, changing and developing new perspectives for all individuals

Source: Sunderland, Kim, Mishkin, Wendy, Peer Leadership Group, Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2013). Guidelines for the Practice and Training of Peer Support. Calgary, AB: Mental Health Commission of Canada. Retrieved from: <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca>

Want to learn more? Click here!

[Mental Health Commission of Canada. \(2013\). Guidelines for the Practice and Training of Peer Support.](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)

If you'd like to speak 1-on-1 please check the first page of this newsletter for ways to contact me. I look forward to connecting with you and answering any questions you may have.

You can also go to calendly.com/csn-peersupport to book a 1-on-1 connection.

This is how I aim to support the peers who connect with me 1on1 and in groups.

Peer Support Values in Action

The Centre for Innovation in Peer Support recognizes that peer support is made up of values based actions and is not necessarily defined by task oriented work. Using the Mental Health Commission of Canada's Core Values of Peer Support, the Centre has facilitated the creation and promotion of 17 expectations for peer support workers known as the Values in Action.

Through a research process people engaging in services identified the following statements as integral actions of peer support services, setting these expectations for Peer support workers to use these Values in Action in their work. It is an organization's role to support the peer worker in their ability to act on these values in action within their role.

These statements are validated and reliability tested, the items cannot be changed or altered.

- **The peer support worker** reminds me that my health and wellness is unique to me
- **The peer support worker** tells me about their experience in a way that is meaningful to me
- **The peer support worker** gives me encouragement
- **The peer support worker** shares information with me, e.g., community resources that are available, different learning opportunities
- **The peer support worker** helps me explore options open to me when I have a decision to make
- **The peer support worker** does not express disapproval of me or the choices I make
- **The peer support worker** tells me they believe in me
- **The peer support worker** tells me my feelings and opinions are worthwhile
- **The peer support worker** genuinely listens to me
- **The peer support worker** follows through on commitments they make
- **The peer support worker** discusses confidentiality with me
- **The peer support worker** tells me that I am not alone in my experiences and struggles
- **The peer support worker** encourages me to do things for myself instead of doing things for me
- **The peer support worker** learns from me and I learn from them
- **The peer support worker** reminds me that I have the right to express my needs
- **The peer support worker** demonstrates ways they take care of themselves
- When I meet with others in a group, **the peer support worker** tells me that I can participate in a way that is comfortable for me and the group

**Support
House**



Centre for
Innovation in
Peer Support

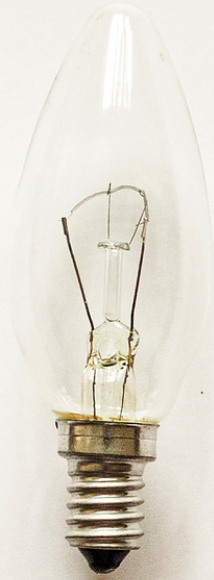
1-833-845-WELL (9355) Ext 390

supporthouse.ca | centreinfo@supporthouse.ca

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If you'd like to speak 1-on-1 please check the first page of this newsletter for ways to contact me. I look forward to connecting with you and answering any questions you may have.

You can also go to calendly.com/csn-peersupport to book a 1-on-1 connection.



***BELIEVE IN
YOUR
POTENTIAL***

**NEW
MINDSET**

**NEW
RESULTS**

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?