

Call your mental health service provider and ask if a referral to this program is appropriate.



### **Mission Statement**

*The purpose of the peer support program is to **enhance the quality of life for people in recovery from a mental illness.** This program **builds on hope and empowerment** in supporting people to understand and live with their illness, learn new skills, establish social connections and link with community resources.*



*For more information about the program please call (250) 493-7338*

## **WHO BENEFITS?**

- People in varying stages of recovery from a mental illness**

*How?* Assist people reach attainable goals

- Peer Support Workers**

*How?* Employment and most importantly a way to give back to their peers

- Family members and friends**

*How?* The Peer Support Worker could connect family and friends to Strengthening Families Together education course, bi-monthly family support groups and educational resource materials offered free from BC Schizophrenia Society in Penticton

- Mental Health Professionals**

*How?* By collaborating in an individual's psychosocial rehabilitation plan

- Businesses**

*How?* As people become more confident they are able to join or rejoin the work force.

- Communities**

*How?* People in recovery are able to become active and contributing citizens in our communities.

# Peer Support Program

## for the South Okanagan Similkameen

### So what is Peer Support anyway?



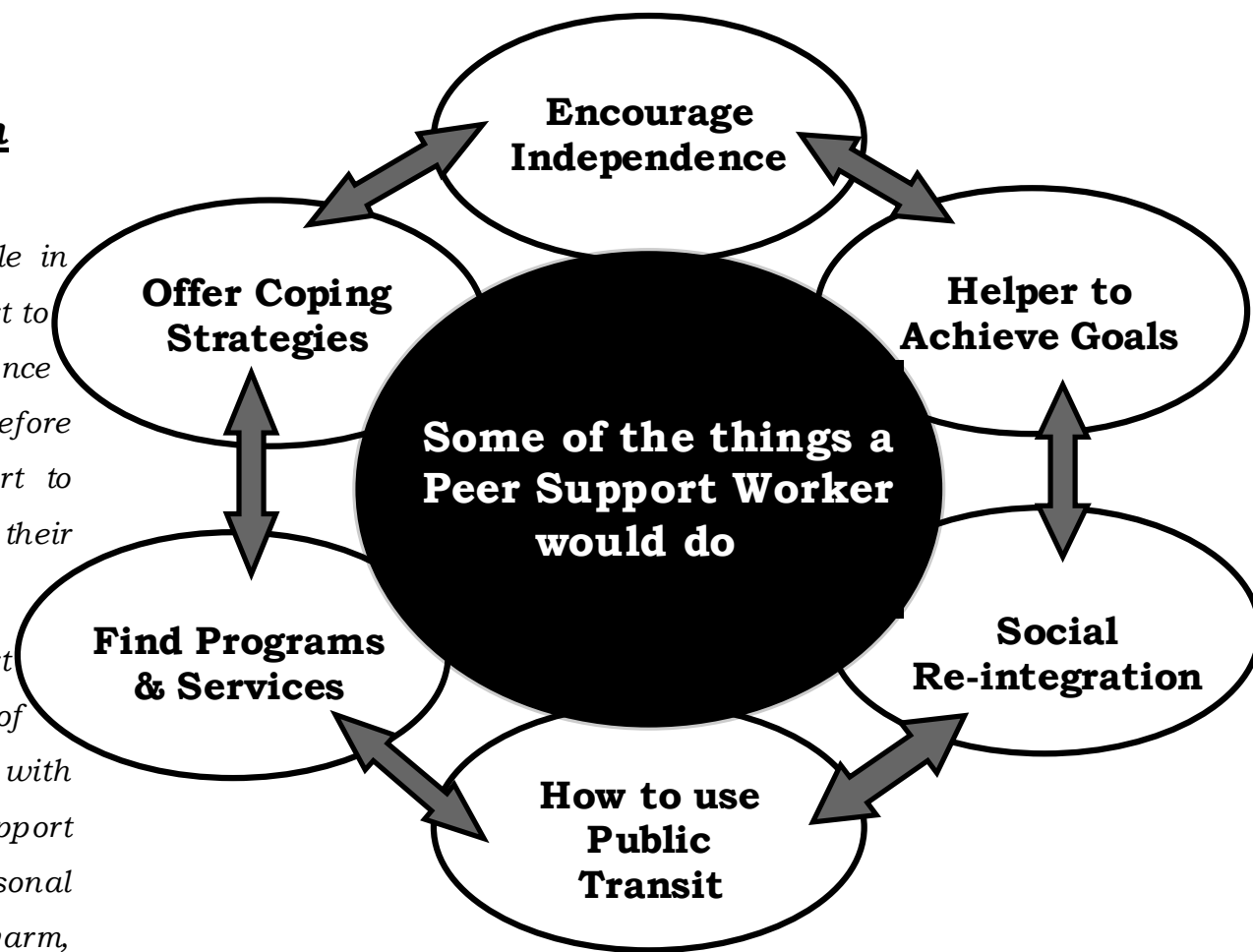
---

In Partnership With  
BC Schizophrenia Society—Penticton Branch  
&  
I.H.A. Penticton Mental Health Centre

## **Definition of South Okanagan Similkameen Peer Support Program**

*Peer support is a process in which people in recovery from a mental illness offer support to their peers. Peer Support Workers experience their own mental health issues and therefore are in a unique position to offer support to others in order to improve the quality of their lives.*

*Providing and receiving peer support stands as an integral component of rehabilitation and recovery for people with mental illness. The concept of peer support relates to the creation of an interpersonal context that is respectful, trusting and warm, allowing individuals to find their own answers and empowering them to make changes that will enhance their lives. Roles of peer support workers relate to helping individuals understand and live with their illness, providing emotional support, helping individuals follow through on goals and action plans, helping re-establish social networks, decreasing isolation in individuals, accessing community resources.*



### **Frame of Reference**

The frame of reference for the peer support program is psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery. The assumptions of this frame of reference are that people in recovery from a mental illness will benefit from participating in over decisions which can affect their lives; services are based on the needs of the people in recovery from a mental illness; and have a potential for growth and for community integration; and that people in recovery from a mental illness will gain support and a sense of belonging from involvement with their peers.