

## Vermont Crisis Alternative

### Training and Staff Development for Crisis Alternative

Recommendation: Intentional Peer Support for Crisis Alternatives

This training (guided by the COSP Evidence Based Practice Toolkit) frames crisis as an opportunity to build mutual learning and growth. The 7-day training (3 days basic, 4 days advanced) encourages people to sit with their own discomfort while negotiating new meaning and new relational dynamics.

Participants will learn the 4 basic principles of Intentional Peer Support (Connection, Worldview, Mutuality, Moving towards), listening differently (with a focus on understanding people's behaviors through the lens of trauma), how to develop mutually responsible relationships and use them to negotiate through even the most difficult times. At the end of the training participants will go through a co-supervision training that will be used for continuous staff development.

Pre-requisites: WRAP Training

### Evaluation of staff and program.

The tendency for programs trying to do something new is to drift off course when things get challenging. Providing an evaluative framework that captures the skills, relational dynamics, and culture of the organization is critical.

Shery Mead Consulting has been working with Chyrell Bellamy Yale University to develop such a methodology. Therefore we recommend that the project contract with Yale to evaluate the staff and program through the first couple of years, leaving a methodology that can be self-sustaining when the evaluation is finished.

# **Crisis Alternative Training**

## **Intentional Peer Support: An Alternative Approach to Crisis**

By Shery Mead

### **What will the training cover?**

Some areas covered:

- Learning vs. helping
- Thinking beyond the individual to the relational The Four Tasks: (and what is unique about peer support)
  1. Connection and disconnection
  2. Worldview
  3. Mutuality
  4. Moving towards
- The power of language
- Listening Differently
- Mutual responsibility
- Shared risk
- The impact of trauma
- Relationship patterns
- Moving forwards in relationships
- Boundaries and limits
- Issues of power and privilege
- Conflict dynamics and resolution
- Challenging situations and conversations- e.g.
  - \* Suicide
  - \* Self-harm
  - \* When someone's reality is different from our own Co-Supervision Values & Responsibilities

### **What is Intentional Peer Support?**

Intentional Peer Support (IPS) is a way of thinking about purposeful relationships. It is a process where both people (or a group of people) use the relationship to look at things from new angles, develop greater awareness of personal and relational patterns, and to support and challenge each other in new ways as we try new things. IPS has been used in Crisis Respite Programs/Centers (alternatives to psychiatric hospitalization) by peers, mental health professionals, families, friends and community-based organizations.

**IPS is different from traditional service relationships because:**

- It doesn't start with the assumption of "a problem." Instead people are taught to listen for how and why each of us has learned to make sense of our experiences, and then use the relationship to create new ways of seeing, thinking, and doing.
- IPS promotes a 'trauma-informed' way of relating- instead of asking 'what's wrong' we ask and think about 'what happened'?
- IPS looks beyond the notion of individuals needing to change and examines our lives in the context of our relationships and communities.
- Peer Support relationships are viewed as partnerships that enable both parties to learn and grow- rather than as one person needing to 'help' another.
- Instead of a focus on what we need to stop or avoid doing, we are encouraged to move towards what and where we want to be and go.

## 5 Day Agenda for Intentional Peer Support for Crisis Alternatives

<b>Day One</b>	
9:30	Welcome Opening ritual
9:45	Introductions, overview
11:15	Break
11:30	Crisis as opportunity
12:15	Lunch
1:15	Connection, worldview
1:45	worldview
2:45	break
3	Mutual responsibility, moving towards
4:15	Quick review Homework: Read what is peer support, language and listening differently

<b>Day 2</b>	
9:30	Questions, intro and overview of day
9:45	Learning vs. helping, Language
11	Break
12	Lunch
1	Listening differently
2:30	Break
2:45	Listening differently
4	Review, use review sheet and discuss Homework: read mutual responsibility chapter

<b>Day 3</b>	
9:30	Intro, Questions, overview
9:45	Understanding trauma and trauma dynamics
11	Break
11:15	Mutual responsibility
12:15	lunch
1:15	Boundaries and Power
2:45	Break
3	Practice
4	Review all Read conflict and challenging situations

<b>Day 4</b>	
9:30	Intro, questions overview
9:45	Conflict
11:15	Break
11:30	Talk about alternative response to crisis. Use discussion questions
12:00	Lunch
1	Shared Risk
2:45	. Break
3	Shared Risk cont
4:30	Close read co supervision and proactive interviewing

<b>Day 5</b>	
9:30	Questions from yesterday
10	Interactive interviewing
11	Break
11:15	Continue
12	Lunch
12:45	Co-supervision
3	Questions and parking lot
4	close

## Evaluation Form

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1. What worked well in this training and why?
2. What contributed energy to the training and what took energy away from the training?
3. What didn't work so well and why?
4. What did you learn and how will you apply it?
5. What was missing? What do you think the ideal would have been?
6. What's one thing that surprised you about today's training?
7. How did I feel about my own participation (e.g. did I talk too much/too little)?

Thank you!

## Vermont Crisis Alternative

### Staff Trainings

#### **All required training for VCA employees:**

- Wrap & Peer Support
- Intentional Peer Support: An Alternative Approach
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Warm Line
  - Crisis Support
- Annual Sexual Harassment Training
- Communicable Diseases
- Stress Management
- Self Care
- Defensive Driving
- Vermont Civil/Human Rights
- Any and all State contract required trainings and those additional trainings requested by the Executive Director and this organization.

#### **Additional required training for Administrative employees:**

- Financial Management
- Staff Development, Supervision & Evaluation (This Supervision is in addition to IPS Co-Supervision.)
- Program Development

#### **Board Of Directors:**

- Annual Board Training & Development
- Annual Presentation of VCA Program: The Values & Principals of Intentional Peer Support: An Alternative Approach to Crisis

**Vermont Crisis Alternative**

**Employee Performance Review & Staff Development Form**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Position	Meets or exceeds Job requirements	Needs Improvement	Unable to evaluate or N/A	Comments:
Is able to perform functions of the job.				
Collaborates as necessary with supervisor, peers and outside entities.				
Communicates well with supervisor, peers and outside entities.				
Is punctual, takes initiative and is reliable with follow through.				
Is flexible and adaptive to change.				
Practices good Self-Care.				
Manages stress effectively.				
Uses good judgement/discretion in decision-making.				

**Your Comments are appreciated:**

Please identify any barriers adversely affecting your ability to carry out your job. Do you have any suggestions that might help eliminate these barriers? Are there any comments that you wish to make?

Executive Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_