



Conference Agenda

To register for the conference click [HERE](#).

10:00 am- 10:30 am: Land Acknowledgement by Al Landry and Opening Remarks by PeerWorks and Lived Experience & Recovery Network (LERN)

10:30 am-11:15 am: Canada's 1st Warm Line: 28 years and counting

Description:

This is a presentation on the importance of Mental Health and Addiction Peer Support from Progress Place. Progress Place Rehabilitation Centre offers mental health and addiction peer support through its Warm Line, by phone and online, and operates 365 days a year. The Warm Line's telephone support has been available for those struggling with mental illness and addiction issues for the last 28 years.

By attending this presentation participants will have an opportunity to hear about Canada's First Warm Line – how and why it began, learnings over the years, testimonials offered by callers, and where we are continuing to grow as a Peer run support line. We will also share how the success of the Warm Line opened up an opportunity to pilot a nationwide program during the Covid Pandemic offering peer support to people living with mental health issues by peer support workers.

Presenters:

Maggie Radford has been working at Progress Place since August, 2018. She began as a Peer Support Worker on Progress Place's Warmline, in 2020 she became the Warm Line Team Lead. Recently she has become the Peer Support Program Coordinator, assisting in coordinating the Warm Line, Double Recovery and Peer Navigator programs. She is a consumer/survivor of over 25 years. Her educational background is in Electronics Engineering. She has completed training as a Peer Specialist (Texas) and completed Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention and the OPDI Peer Support Training. She is currently enrolled in courses with the Addiction and Mental Health Program at George Brown College.

In addition to his work with CAYR, **Lenny Stone** is Co-Chair of the Patient Family Advisory Committee (PFAC) as part of the Northwest Toronto, Ontario Health Team, as an advisory member on the Health Equity and Digital Health Sub-Committees, & works in the community as a Peer Support Worker. Recently, Lenny completed the SAN'YAS Anti-Racism Indigenous Cultural Safety Training & OPDI's Peer Support Core Essentials Training programs. Lenny knows the positive impact community engagement can have, as in the past he served as President of S.C.O.P.E. in Edson, Alberta which provides supportive housing & programs for individuals with developmental disabilities, President of the McBride & District Chamber of Commerce, and part of McBride, B.C.'s top 25 bid during the 1st CBC Kraft Hockeyville Competition are just a few highlights of Lenny's community engagement. Lenny brings his perspective, as a consumer / survivor, working on solutions that will help lower barriers to access, ensuring everyone can receive equitable access to needed supports and care in the region, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, & socioeconomic status.



11:30 am- 12:30 pm: Online Innovations: A Guide for Virtual Peer Support Groups

Description:

“Acceptance, Community, and Fun.” Support House’s Centre for Innovation in Peer Support successfully offers virtual programming, and we want to share our learnings with you! Online Innovations: A Guide for Virtual Peer Support Groups will highlight how virtual spaces and programming can be a viable and innovative support offering within peer support services. This presentation will explore the benefits of and considerations related to utilizing virtual spaces, and various aspects of the model used by the Centre. Participants will gain an understanding of supportive strategies for preparing and offering virtual groups. Additional resources that can be used to support the implementation and enhancement of virtual supports will be made available.

Presenters:

Jacqueline Walsh has been a peer support worker since 2015, working in both community and clinical settings. In her current role, at Support House’s Centre for Innovation in Peer Support, she provides peer support in both individual and virtual group spaces. Jacqueline is highly experienced in program development and quality improvement. She has been instrumental in developing and implementing programming and practices within the Centre’s services. Jacqueline considers herself to be a lifelong learner and has provided coaching and guidance to numerous volunteers and new peer staff over the years. As a lifelong learner, Jacqueline enjoys school way too much, and has a diploma in Social Service Work, has completed a degree in Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour, and is currently completing a degree in Social Work.

Alyssa Gremmen has been involved in peer work for close to 15 years in various settings, in both volunteer and paid positions. Alyssa has a degree in Psychology and she has implemented, managed and coordinated peer programs focusing on youth empowerment, mental health and harm reduction. Currently Alyssa is the Peer Integration and System Lead at Support House’s Centre for Innovation in Peer Support. She supports partner organizations in planning, implementing, and integrating peer support and meaningful engagement of various lived/living experiences.

12:30 pm-2:00 pm: Break

2:00 pm-2:45 pm: LET(s)Lead the way: How Canadian leaders with lived experience are transforming our mental health system

Description:

Our lived experiences give us a unique insight into the mental health system that is essential in developing supports which work both effectively and compassionately for our communities. In their third Canadian cohort, Yale University’s Lived Experience Transformational Leadership Academy (LET(s)Lead) has partnered with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) to host 12 fellows in a 9-month-long program designed to facilitate personal and professional growth as an emerging leader in the lived experience field.

The LET(s)Lead program gives fellows the opportunity to build their leadership skills, participate in a mentorship with a current leader in the field, and develop a transformational change project to improve their personal community. During the first part of the program, fellows attend weekly sessions featuring talks by activists, organizers, and leaders in the lived experience field. These sessions feature topics such as transformational leadership, appreciative inquiry, racism and cultural humility, courageous conversations, organizational change strategies, advocacy and grassroots activism, critical perspectives on mental health systems, and the use of stories in leadership. In the second part of the program, fellows work amongst those same leaders in 1-on-1 mentorships, conceptualizing and developing individual community projects.

This presentation will discuss the impact and importance of lived experience leadership and outline how the LET(s)Lead program equips emerging leaders with the tools they need to create a mental health system that works for their communities.

Presenters:

Camille Alizadeh (she/her) is the coordinator of the Yale LET(s)Lead academy and a Certified Peer Support Worker in Toronto, Canada. She has been involved in the mental health community for over 10 years and is passionate about advocacy, social justice, and improving access to services for diverse mental health communities.

Maria E. Restrepo-Toro, MS is an Educator and Manager of Training and Education at the Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health. She is also the Co-Director of the New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center. Maria is a Visionary Leader, Trainer and Researcher in the fields of Latino Behavioural Health Recovery, Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Cultural Diversity. She has earned recognition as a leader in the field of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and received the USpra 2012 Leroy Spaniol Educator Award. Maria is passionate about eliminating global mental health disparities, empowering people to recover, and gain equal access to behavioural health services.

3:00 pm-4:00 pm: Introduction to Getting Started with Mindfulness Meditation**Description:**

In the role of Peer supporters, it's making sure our own needs are met is as important as taking care of those we love most. When turning our attention towards ourselves feels challenging, there are simple ways to move through the discomfort with Mindfulness Meditation.

Mindfulness meditation is a way in maintaining moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations, and surrounding environment. In order to present the core program, it's helpful to keep what, why, and how in mind. What I am introducing, why it is relevant for peers, and how to do it.

Presenter:

Janie Ann Brydges is a Mother, Grandmother, Daughter, Sister, Aunt, Niece, Cousin, Cohort and Friend. She has a Teacher Certificate from the Mindfulness Meditation Teacher Certificate Program and is an influencer, developer, and manager at MindfulNOW.online.