The Peer Health Advocate Training Program

From Peers Victoria Resources Society: an organization by, with, and for sex workers



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We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples now known as the Songhees, the Esquimalt First Nations, and the WSÁNEĆ peoples, upon whose traditional territory this Curriculum was created. We recognize that this Curriculum addresses many intersectional issues rooted in colonialism that continue to be reproduced through contemporary social institutions. It is therefore crucially important throughout the Curriculum to think about how each lesson/unit is linked to the experiences of Indigenous people—and specifically Indigenous sex workers—upon whose territories this work is done.

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Background & Context

Peers Victoria Resources Society is a multi-service grassroots agency that was established by, with, and for sex workers twenty-five years ago. We operate on the unceded territories of the Lekwaungen peoples of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations in what is now Victoria, BC. Peers primarily serves the Greater Victoria region, but has also supported sex workers in nearby cities and rural areas that lack sex work community organizations and have recently been supporting the creation of new organizations to fill these gaps in services. Peers holds a strong commitment to centering experiential voices and ensures that people with lived experience in sex work, in addition to many other lived experiences, are represented amongst our team; and work alongside allies to ensure a safe, supportive, and non-judgemental environment which upholds the value of sex workers as leaders in their communities. The fundamental values of Peers Victoria Resource Society are harm reduction, social justice, individual centred service, and being guided by experiential voices.

The following Peer Health Advocate Training program (PHAT) draws on the results of an existing curriculum that was piloted in 2016 in partnership with University of Victoria based researchers (<u>https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/10504</u>). The program has subsequently been offered on four additional occasions with funding from Island Health and the Public Health Agency of Canada. It has now been updated and developed so that it can be shared and adapted to specific contexts, as well as formatted for online access. The training covers topics such as: Western and Indigenous perspectives on health, sexual health, sex positivity, understanding sexuality and gender identity from both Western and Indigenous cultural contexts, sex work history and activism, traumainformed care, mental health, internalized stigma and trauma from systemic oppression, therapeutic skills, harm reduction strategies (related to sex and substance use), overdose prevention, and accessing local health and wellness resources. Guest speakers, including those with sex work backgrounds, alongside allied health and wellness service providers, play a large role in helping to deliver the curriculum, and priority is given to Indigenous, racialized and LGBTQ2A+ voices.

Recommended Materials

- Flip chart paper or white board
- Markers
- Pens
- Journals
- High quality and diverse food/snacks

Objectives

- 1. Peer Health Advocates will gain and share knowledge that will support their ability to make informed choices and support others in making informed choices about health and harm reduction issues.
- 2. Peer Health Advocates will experience enhanced self-esteem and greater cognitive resources to manage and reframe stigmas that they face.
- 3. Peer Health Advocates will engage in leadership roles in shaping the harm reduction and health resources in the community.
- Members of stigmatized communities will be supported in engaging with public policies that affect their lives through access to supportive, peer-led solidaritybuilding contexts.
- 5. Peer Health Advocates will share hope, connection, community, and friendship within the group, with an aim towards reducing any sense of stigma and/or isolation that may exist in any individual.
- 6. The Peer Health Advocate Training will deepen participants' understanding of other forms of sex work in which they have no direct experience, in order to build awareness of community diversity, and solidarity across difference.
- 7. The Peer Health Advocate Training will mobilize both Indigenous and Western harm reduction perspectives to improve peer access to local healthcare supports, particularly around blood-borne illnesses and overdose prevention.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Before beginning the Curriculum, it is important that the facilitator(s) consider and discuss how they will approach the territorial acknowledgment. It is important that these words be said with meaning, and with the work continuing after the acknowledgment is finished. One concern with territorial acknowledgments is that the rhetoric can give an organization or individual the appearance of being an Indigenous ally, but then actions are not carried forth to match those words; or even more concerning, actions can go against the given rhetoric. Make sure that you think about <u>why</u> you are doing this acknowledgment, and <u>how</u> you can do it in a way that fosters discussion for topics that may be uncomfortable, unfamiliar, or difficult.

To help this process, it is encouraged that the facilitators do research on their local context and familiarize themselves with the history of the land and its status (if it is unceded land, treaty territory, in legal contestation, etc.) from Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives. As well, facilitators should attempt to approach local Indigenous communities and meet with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and/or Elders to better understand their communal context and to ask if they have a preference for how the territory acknowledgment should be approached or delivered in their traditional territory.

If a relationship between your organization and your local Indigenous communities does not already exist, this is the perfect time to begin developing one. If this is your first time engaging with your local Indigenous community, consider bringing a gift (such as baked goods, gift basket, etc.) to show your appreciation of their knowledge; hopefully, this will help cultivate the interaction to be one of respectful exchange. Importantly, this relationship building and information sharing can take time so do not expect this to all occur in one interaction. Instead, plan ahead in your schedule and allow multiple meetings to help foster this relationship.

However, if local Indigenous Elders/Knowledge Keepers are hesitant or resistant to engage in a relationship with your entity/organization, or do not wish to educate settlers on work that they believe should be done by settlers, then that should be respected and acknowledged. If your local Indigenous Elders/Knowledge Keepers do not wish to engage in a relationship with your organization, then this can be something that is discussed during the territory acknowledgment with the intention of starting a conversation about the history of relations in the past between settler organizations and Indigenous communities, and how to improve them in the future.

Furthermore, conversation on Indigenous history with the local territory should not just be focused on colonial impacts, but also on stories of Indigenous resistance and resilience. Indigenous people are more than just survivors of colonial oppression; they have stories of strength and solidarity that should be remembered and celebrated. One idea to both help share these stories and include Peer Health Advocate Trainees in the territory acknowledgment could be to encourage participants to go out into the community, the library, or online, and take turns sharing a story of Indigenous resistance as an integral part of the territory acknowledgment.

It is good practice to learn how to respectfully approach and deliver a territory acknowledgment. As such, another option for how to approach the acknowledgements would be to offer participants the chance (after the first few units) to take turns doing the territory acknowledgment themselves, or as a pair. However, this should only be done if participants are willing to engage in these acknowledgments in a respectful and thoughtful way.

Importantly, territory acknowledgments should not be done in a repetitive manner, as they then run the risk of losing their intention and becoming meaningless. To imbue each acknowledgment with conversation, engagement, and information on local or global Indigenous movements should mean that there will be new discussions or thoughts that arise. Finally, remember that words only go so far unaccompanied by action.

Guest Speaker Requirements

- Guest speakers must know and be supportive of harm reduction perspectives and sex worker rights advocacy.
- Guest speakers should be experts in the topic they are presenting on.

- Lived experience on the topic that the guest speaker is presenting on is ideal for some topics, and necessary for others. For example, the guest speaker for the unit on "Honouring Indigenous Communities" must be Indigenous and preferably from one of the local nations; just as the guest speaker on LGBTQ2A+ pride must be a member of that community.
- Prioritizing the voices of sex workers, especially BIPOC or LGBTQ2A+ sex workers, is important in the selection of guest speakers.
- Guest speakers must be fully briefed on the policies regarding disagreements, bullying, etc.
- Guest speakers should make themselves available for the entire meeting, and be prepared to participate in the territory acknowledgement, the grounding meditation and the check-in (unless the group prefers otherwise).
- It is recommended to ask the guest speaker to provide written or verbal feedback after the session on what went well, what was challenging, and what resources would have been beneficial in aiding their workshop. This way facilitators can think about ways to better accommodate future guest speakers.

Notes on the Curriculum

- These lesson plans are loosely structured and provide examples of topics to discuss within the subject matter. However, that does not mean that topics cannot be added or removed per the needs of the course participants.
- The structure around time management is also open for adaptation depending on the needs of the participants.
- It is suggested that the course facilitators hold on to the journals for the duration of the course so that the feedback can be documented (if desired), and then given to the participants at their graduation. Alternatively, give participants the choice to keep their journal private if they so desire and, if so, have hand-outs available that the participants can fill out and hand in so that feedback might be documented.
- It is recommended that the course facilitators give handouts/reading material to the course participants at the end of each lesson/day, which will allow them to prepare for the next topic. This will hopefully enable the participants to feel prepared for the next lesson and be more comfortable participating in discussion.

- It was suggested by a participant in the first year of running this curriculum that the room be set up so that everyone is sitting in a circle facing one another. This helps to disrupt the traditional hierarchy between the facilitator(s) and participants and allows for a more collaborative atmosphere.
- Feedback from past participants indicates that having a smaller group size (around 8-10 participants) is ideal, as it cultivates an environment that encourages the engagement of all participants.

Notes For The Facilitator

- Food and snacks should be provided for each lesson so that the group can eat together. This is important as it helps build a sense of community and establish common ground between the participants and the facilitators. Eating good food together sends the signal to the participants that they are worthy and that their time is valued.
- The group agreements should be decided on together, but it is encouraged that it includes such things as: a confidentiality agreement, allowing space for others to speak, not interrupting others, being respectful of alternative viewpoints or perspectives, and not allowing for discriminatory or hateful comments, bullying, exclusion, etc. The purpose of the group agreement is to create a space where everyone feels safe, comfortable, and able to focus on the work at hand. There may be a need, or a desire, to revisit the group agreements either before each lesson, or before lessons that may be sensitive for some with lived experience in the room (for example the units on honouring diversity) depending on the group dynamic. Revisiting the group agreements before each lesson, or intermittently throughout the course, will also allow the group opportunities to modify or improve upon the agreements. It is also a practical way of modelling that consent is ongoing.
- The facilitator(s) should also have policies in place that they discuss with the group in regard to bullying or lateral violence. It is paramount that this be a safe space for participants, facilitators, and guest speakers.

- If participants are being disrespectful, or not abiding by the group agreements, it is up to the facilitator to decide how they would like to intervene. It is important that the facilitator not allow participants to be disruptive, discriminatory, or to digress the conversation in a negative way. Some tips on how to prevent this could be: asking the participant to join them after the session to further discuss the issue if the participant is keen on pursuing their question/argument; trying to refocus the conversation in a more productive direction; gently reminding the participant about the group agreements and shutting down discriminatory/disrespectful behaviour, etc. If the participant's questions/comments are directed at the guest speaker, the guest speaker may wish to offer to speak to the participant after the session. However, this possibility should be discussed with the guest speaker prior to the session, so that the facilitator knows whether to offer this as an option should an issue arise.
- Depending on the dynamic of the group, the facilitator may choose to have the check-in after the grounding meditation (or exercise). This can be effective in that the grounding meditation quiets the room and focuses participants prior to the check-in. In contrast, some past participants found the check-in to be triggering, and would have preferred the grounding meditation to follow after the check-in to give them space to re-center themselves before the work.
- There are videos that accompany this curriculum to supplement the material. These videos can be used for the facilitator's own edification, and/or can be shown during the lessons. There are two videos that are categorized as "Miscellaneous"; each are videos that can fit into different units, or just be watched by the facilitator to help support them in leading the Curriculum (ex. the video on grounding techniques).
- The group grounding exercise can be approached in many ways. There are different links that offer suggestions on how to do a group grounding exercise included in the appendix (see Appendix #1), as well as one of the videos that accompanies this Curriculum entitled: "Grounding Techniques & Practices that Support Mental Health". Note that some participants may find grounding techniques to be triggering and may prefer to step out of the room for it. It is up to the facilitator to determine how to navigate this. One suggestion is that if there are two facilitators have one facilitator leave the room with those participants who do not wish to engage in the group meditation and sit silently, outside the room, until the exercise is over.
- It is recommended that the facilitator(s) be in the practice of engaging in selfreflection and have knowledge of trauma informed practice. This work can be triggering and/or difficult for participants, facilitators, and guest speakers alike.

Lesson 1: Welcome

*Video Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
30 min.	Territory Acknowledgment Acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. Here can be a good place to have a discussion around each participants' relationship to the land (local person, Indigenous from another territory, settler, etc.).	It is important to ground this work in the land and colonial history upon which it is practiced. As well as to recognize the colonial roots and intersectionality between all forms of violence, mental health, and substance dependency.
	Welcome & Introductions: Ask people to use personal pronouns in their introductions. Explain beforehand the importance of doing so: even if your personal pronouns may seem self-evident, by everyone disclosing their pronoun it allows a safe space for Trans, non-binary, or two- spirited individuals to disclose theirs.	Group building and setting tone.
	Round table check-in: Where are you at today (mentally, physically, spiritually)? Share a word, sentence, or more of what describes you in this moment.	To land together and to provide a safe space to do the work together. To foster an open and respectful environment in which this group can work together creatively.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To bring everyone into the room together and to help participants be mentally present. It is also good to ground people after what may be a triggering check-in for some.
30 min.	Group Agreements What do you need to feel safe in this group? How can we as a group enable a safe learning space for everyone? What rules/boundaries can we all agree to? Discussion on how to respect fellow participants, and how to respectfully engage in discussion/debate in the room.	Establish boundaries and expectations for the group in terms of creating a safe space for them to learn.

	Discuss the possibility of some topics being triggering, acknowledging that that is *ok*, and offering different supports for participants who experience it (whether that be encouraging a buddy system between participants for peer support, the facilitators offering to stay a half hour after class for anyone wishing to discuss something that has come up for them, etc.). Furthermore, the facilitators and group participants should discuss how disagreements, bullying, and disrespectful behaviour will be addressed; with the aim of ensuring the safety of the space for all participants.	See section "Notes for the Facilitator" for more on how to approach the group agreements.
15 min.	Break	
20 min.	 Discuss Course Expectations Discuss the honorarium and attendance requirements Discuss the objectives and phases of course. Give out journals, explain their use and process Discuss "what is a Peer Health Advocate" and the expectations for that role. Key points: It's about them, not you. Use your experience but do not assume it's the same. Know yourself and your limits/triggers. You don't have to be an expert. Most people want to be seen and heard (more on how to do that later). Finding out resources you can refer people to is helpful. 	Make sure participants understand what is expected of them both in their course and in their role as a Peer Health Advocate. The journals will allow participants to document what they have been learning and to reflect on the course. They will be kept with the facilitators for the duration of the course and will be given to the participants for their own use after the course is finished. Alternatively, the journals can be treated as private reflection for participants, and feedback can be gathered through other means.

30 min.	Ice-Breaker Activity For example: break up into pairs and allow each pair 20 minutes to get to know one another and practice their active listening skills. Each person in the pair will take 5 minutes each to listen to their partner and either memorize or write down what they share. After the 10 minutes is complete, each person will take turns introducing their partner to the group and sharing some things that they have learnt about them.	To get to know one another and to practice active listening skills.
15 min.	Closing: One takeaway/something you're excited about. Offer time to stay and write in their journals.	To process the work and learning accomplished.

Lesson 2: Therapeutic Skills

*Video Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	Guest Speaker on Therapeutic Skills: Boundaries as a Peer Health Advocate, how to address someone in crisis, basic counselling techniques. ¹² Discuss what Peer Health Advocacy is not, and the importance of confidentiality.	To better understand basic therapeutic skills, and to realize that personal boundaries are vitally important when working as a Peer Health Advocate.

	Discuss Empathetic Listening: What does empathetic listening mean?	To teach empathetic listening skills.
	 Techniques for Active Listening: 1. Body language: how do you know when someone is listening to you? They lean in, look at you, nod, use prompts, etc. 2. Repeat back what you heard: it sounds like; so, when you left the hotel; what I hear you saying is 3. Add a feeling or emotion. For example: "so when your partner locked you out of your room you felt betrayed and sad?" Note that they might disagree, but they will clarify how they did feel, i.e., no, I was angry! 4. Don't ask questions that do not pertain directly to what the peer has already said - as in the example, above, where clarification, for the peer's sake, is sought 5. Don't give advice. 6. Don't judge. Give a handout on phrases participants can use to allow them to engage with peers more. For example, "how can I help you?" "I want to understand you", etc. (See Appendix #2). 	Note: active and empathetic listening can look different for different people/cultures. It is important to acknowledge that while these are the skills being taught, these techniques may not resonate with some. Cultural awareness in your community is important when training Peer Health Advocates; as they will be engaging with these different cultural contexts within the community in their work and in their daily lives. It might be a good idea to give examples and have a discussion around cultural differences and how they may conflict with these techniques. For example, in some cultures, it is considered rude to make/maintain eye contact.
15 min.	Break	
50 min.	Discuss resources available in the community for people in crisis: Shelters, crisis support lines, where to access free counselling services, where to access free harm reduction services and supplies, etc.	To learn about available resources in the community to refer peers to.
	Group activity: Break up into groups of three, practice giving one another scenarios, pretending to be a peer that is in crisis and needs help finding supports that suit their immediate needs. This will help participants practice their new active listening skills and remember what resources in the community are available. Encourage participants to use their handout with active listening phrases if they find it helpful.	 Suggested reading on healthy boundaries (see link in bibliography): The Mind Tools Content Team. "Managing your boundaries: Ensuring that others respect your needs" (Assessed, 2021). See Appendix #2 for links on these topics, as well as the videos assigned for this lesson.

5 min.	Group Feedback-In Journal What went well in the session? What could be improved? What did you learn? What do you wish you learned more about? Etc.	
10 min.	Closing Circle One take away/or something you are going to do differently around self-care.	To process the work and learning accomplished.

Lesson 3: Therapeutic & Skill Share *See Video Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
50 min.	 Review Therapeutic Skills: Listening (See Appendix #2). Useful phrases (See Appendix #2). Positive phrases (See Appendix #2). Discuss roadblocks to connection (See Appendix #2). Discuss de-escalation tools (Appendix #2). 	To review therapeutic skills covered in the last session.
15 min.	Break	
50 min.	 Group Skill Share: 1. Brainstorm and share together: 2. How to stay safe with sex work/ advertising/ running your business/ etc. 3. What tips would you give someone new? 4. What resources do you use regularly and what would you recommend? 	To encourage participants to share their knowledge and lived experience. This is important, both to recognize that participants' knowledge is valued, and to prepare them for their work as a Peer Health Advocate.

	Sexy Tips: Brainstorm and share together sexy tips and tricks. For example: putting on a condom using only your mouth, sex toys that enhance sexual play, resources (books and videos) for learning how to use ropes safely and sensually.	To teach empathetic listening skills.
5 min.	Group Feedback-In Journals What went well in the session? What could be improved? What did you learn? What do you wish you learned more about? Etc.	To process the work and learning accomplished.
10 min.	Closing Circle One take away	To process the work and learning accomplished.

Lesson 4: Therapeutic & Skill Share *See Video Available For This Unit

TIME 15 min.	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES Territory Acknowledgment	PURPOSE To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	 Guest Speaker on Stigma What is stigma? (See Appendix #3). Systemic trauma, trauma stemming from colonization (and colonial institutions), and internalized stigma: how can we be aware of how external factors influence perceptions of ourselves and others?3 Lateral violence: what stigmas do we hold against others? How can we work to be aware of those stigmas & overcome them? Discussion on intersectionality: stigma around sex work and how it intersects with race, colonization, substance use, gender, sexual orientation, etc. Group discussion on personal experiences. 	To better understand stigma and its impacts. 3 Suggested reading (see bibliography): Cecilia Benoit et al., "'I Dodged the Stigma Bullet': Canadian Sex Workers' Situated Responses to Occupational Stigma," Culture, Health & Sexuality, (2019).

15 min.	Break	
60 min.	 Guest Speaker On Stress and Stress Reduction Skills: What is stress? What is stressful for you personally and how do you manage it? (Appendix #4). Share stress-relieving techniques. 	To constructively brainstorm tactics and techniques that help reduce stress.
15 min.	Journals and Closing Circle: One take away from the session.	

Lesson 5: Mental Health

*See Videos Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment Check-In	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities. To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in
		with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	 Guest speaker on Mental Health: Trauma and the body: how does the body respond to trauma? How can you understand and "retrain" your brain through cognitive therapy and/or other methods? Cognitive behaviour therapy and/or some exercises that you can do at home when feeling stressed or triggered, or if you want to change behaviours. See Appendix #4 and #5. 	To better understand how Trauma affects the body and mind. To better understand practices that can help with mental health.
15 min.	Break	

60 min.	 Guest Speaker On Understanding Mental Illnesses: Understanding PTSD, schizophrenia, anxiety and depression. Learning about substance-induced psychosis: how to identify and help peers experiencing it. 	Learning about some common mental illnesses/states.
15 min.	Journals and Closing Circle: One take away from the session.	To process the work and learning accomplished.

Lesson 6: Mental Health

*See Video Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment Check-In	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities. To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in
		with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
30 min.	Sex workers as Peer Health Advocates Brainstorm amongst the group what it means for them to be a peer health advocate. Accessing health care as a sex worker: 4 Discuss as a group what barriers you may have faced accessing health care as a sex worker, and what challenges you've experienced.	The facilitators may feel free to add their own ideas as well.
15 min.	Break	
		4 Suggested reading (link in bibliography): Cecilia Benoit et al., "Canadian Sex Workers Weigh the Costs and Benefits of Disclosing Their Occupational Status to Health Providers", Sexuality Research and Social Policy 16 (2019): pp. 329-341.

50 min. Guest speaker on what is "Health"?

Western, Eastern, and Indigenous perspectives on health.

- Discuss local Indigenous perspectives on health, as well as the perspectives of Indigenous scholars. (It would be ideal for the guest speaker this week to be Indigenous). ⁵
- Discuss Western understandings of health: Ottawa Charter for Health promotion deems health as: "a state of complete physical, mental
- How does this compare to Indigenous perspectives on health?

Empowerment and Health Promotion Approach to Health Care:

- Initiatives that are community-led, designed, implemented, and assessed by sex workers.
- Seeks to ensure the health and human rights of sex workers rather than aiming to rehabilitate, rescue, or transition sex workers out of sex work.
- Recognizes sex work as a legitimate occupation.
- Promotes and advocates for the protection of sex work as a legal occupation.
- This might be a place to talk about intersectionality---how the social determinants of health overlap to create different health outcomes for people depending on social location. A good primer for this discussion would be to discuss barriers such as: stigma, discrimination, colonization, etc.

Q. Reflection

- How to these understandings of health relate to your work in the sex industry?
- Break into groups and take a couple of minutes to record some ideas and then share them with the class.

To think about different perspectives around health, and how these perspectives shape views around self-care and can affect how to approach being a Peer Health Advocate.

Learning about some common mental illnesses/states.

5 Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): World Health Organization, "PDF" (Ottawa, 1986).

15 min.	Group Feedback-In Journals and Closing Circle What went well in the session? What could be improved? What did you learn? What do you wish you learned more about? Etc. One take away/or something you are going to do differently around self-care.	To process the work and learning accomplished.

Lesson 7: Sex Positivity

*No Video For This Unit

Journal of Human Sexuality 26, no. 3 (December 2017).

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check ir with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
50 min.	 Guest speaker on Sex Positivity ⁶ Outline where the term originates (liberal feminism). Discuss the social justice politics that underwrite a sex positive approach. Discuss how "sex positivity" comes out of a Western ideological framework and that it may be a foreign concept to some cultures/people. Furthermore, discuss how colonial violence is intersected with sexualized violence, and how this may have resulted in a resistance to/prevention of "sex positivity" from taking root in certain communities. For instance, in Canada residential schools were filled with sexual abuse and the imposition of Western culture. This trauma was deployed alongside 	Explore diversity from a sex positive perspective. Understand the philosophy behind sex positivity.

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	 the forced adoption of Christianity. All of this has created a lot of shame around sex for some individuals within Indigenous communities. Therefore, the concept of sex positivity might be foreign or difficult for some people as a result of this history of colonial violence. Discuss as a group how a sex positive approach could relate to sex work specifically. Question: what does sex positivity mean to you? Do you have a sexual philosophy? 	
15 min.	Break	
	 Finding, keeping, and exploring your sexual pleasure and desires: How do the external factors affect desire and pleasure, including stress, body changes, aging, and working in the sex industry? Staying connected with yourself, lovers, and partners erotically. 	Exploring the practice of sex positivity.
	Alternative relationship styles and sexual practices Quick overview of kink, BDSM, and fetish (i.e., cuckold, furry, wet work, etc.) ⁷ Discuss and answer questions: How would you feel about helping those with kinks/interests you were not into? Discuss boundaries and comfortability coupled with a non-judgmental sex-positive approach.	Exploring Diversity.
15 min.	 Ethical non monogamy: Poly, relationship anarchy, swinging, open, etc. Exploring different types of non-monogamous relationships. ⁸ Closing Circle: To process work and learning One take away from the session. Allow time for journaling final thoughts. 	 7 Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): Laura Bell, "How Kink Made These People's Sex Lives Healthier," VICE, (October 9, 2018). 8 Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): Elizabeth A Sheff, "7 Different Kinds of Non- Monogamy," Psychology Today, Sussex Publishers, (July 22, 2014).

Lesson 8: Sex Work Advocacy & Legal Context

See Video Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
50 min.	History of Sex work Advocacy: Guest speaker to discuss the history of sex work advocacy. For example: NYC stripper strike, the 1975 sex worker strike in Lyon, 2019 sex worker strike in London, the Bedford v. Canada case in 2013, etc. ⁹	Historical Perspective, empowerment around rights and agency.
	Discuss the sex worker rights' movement and how that intersects with other rights movements such as the transgender rights' movement, racial justice (including the Black Lives Matter and Indigenous Sovereignty movements), migrant justice, labour rights' movement, etc.	It is important to pick a guest speaker who has either first-hand experience in sex worker advocacy, or who has expert knowledge in this field. It is preferable to have a sex worker guest speaker for this week.
	Discuss Indigenous perspectives on sex worker rights' movements in Canada (for example, the sex sovereignty movement) ¹⁰	
15 min.	Break	
40 min.	Discuss and share as a group the current legal context in Canada and its impact upon sex workers Discuss PCEPA (the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act) and compare ¹¹	To better understand their rights, and to learn about different legal contexts for sex work (including decriminalization vs legalization). To think about the impact this legislation has upon the community.

20 min.	Brainstorm different types of sex work and write on flip chart Talk about differences in relation to legal impact, health, stigma, gender, safety, harm reduction, etc.	
15 min.	Closing Circle and Journals: What went well in the session? What could be improved? What did you learn? What do you wish you learned more about? Etc. One take away/or something you are going to do differently around self-care.	To process the work and learning accomplished.

10 Suggested Reading (links in bibliography): Native Youth Sexual Health Network, "Indigenous Peoples in the Sex Trade – Speaking For Ourselves," INCITE! (July 15, 2011).

Indigenous Sex Sovereignty Collective, "Centering the Voices of People Who Trade or Sell Sex in Indigenous Anti-Violence Organizing" Indigenous Sex Sovereignty Collective, (2015).

11 Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform, (September 30, 2019).

⁹ Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): "Infosheets: Bedford v. Canada," Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform, (June 13, 2017).

Lesson 9: Consent

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
45 min.	Guest Speaker on Consent Discuss consent and boundaries and how is it ok to assert your boundaries and stick to them. Possible topics: Discuss boundaries in regard to kink and experimentation in sex work. Discuss Indigenous perspectives on the intersectionality between consent in terms of land and how it connects to the body. ¹²	To empower participants to be confident asserting their own boundaries, and to understand the complexity of consent.
5 min.	Journal: My boundaries look like	
15 min.	Break	
15 min.	Discuss resources available for people who have experienced sexual assault (crisis lines, sexual assault centres, etc.), as well as centres that cater to specific demographics (sex workers, males, Trans individuals, etc.)	To be made aware of resources in the community that they can access and/or refer peers to.
	Is there a bad date report database that you can access? Is there a police liaison in your area? What police or legal services are available for sex workers to assess if necessary?	Distribute handout containing contact and other information about resources available for different demographics in the community.

"PDF," (2017).

	 Provide a scenario of a peer situation to the group. Given the circumstances presented brainstorm as a group what resources you as a peer health advocate might recommend. Ex. A Trans sex worker who has just experienced sexualized violence but does not wish to contact the police and is concerned about possible exposure to STDs/STIs. 	
15 min.	Closing Circle: One take away from the session. Allow time for journaling final thoughts.	To process the work and learning accomplished.

Lesson 10: Honouring Diversity in LGBTQ2A+ Communities

See Videos Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
100 min.	History of Pride Week: LGBTQ2 rights/barriers in relation to sex work/health.	To better understand the context of pride month, and the history of the LGBTQ2A+ community and their fight for equal rights.
	Stonewall riots: (watch clip) 1^3	
+15 min. Break	Marsha P. Johnson-trans woman of colour Sex Workers: (watch clip) ¹⁴	To discuss intersectionality of sex work with race, LGBTQ2A+ identities, etc.
	Video what it means to be "Two-Spirit" (watch clip). ¹⁵	
	Discuss the intersectionality of being both a sex worker and an LGBTQ2A+ individual.	How to be an ally for the LGBTQ2A+ community.

20 min.	 What does being an ally to the LGBTQ2A+ community look like? Optional PowerPoint presentation to use (see Appendix #6). Discuss preferred terms for LGBTQ2A+ individuals, and why proper use of pronouns is so important. Discuss and brainstorm ideas on how to be an ally as a group. Then watch the short clip below and see if there are any thoughts that came up that the group did not touch on. 16 	Allow time here for folks to ask questions about the proper use of pronouns and to practice the pronunciation of some less well- known ones. For example, the pronoun "hir" is pronounced like the English word "here".
	Journal: How can I be a better ally? Or, how can advocacy work for sex work include LGBTQ2A+ communities? Closing Circle: One take away from the session.	To process the work and learning accomplished. To process the work and learning accomplished.

¹³ Suggested Video (link in bibliography): History Channel, "How the Stonewall Riots Sparked a Movement | History," YouTube (June 1, 2018).

¹⁴ Suggested Video (link in bibliography): "Did Marsha P. Johnson Start the 1969 Stonewall Riots?" New York Gritty. (Inside Edition, 2019).

¹⁵ Suggested Video (link in bibliography): Paola Ramos, "BESE Explains: Two Spirit", YouTube (2019).

¹⁶ Suggested Video (link in bibliography): VICE Labs, "What Does It Mean to Be an LGBTQ+ Ally?" VICE TV, (accessed November 5, 2020).

Lesson 11: Honouring Indigenous Communities

No Video For This Unit

TIME 15 min.	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES Territory Acknowledgment Check-In	PURPOSE To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities. To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	 Understanding the complexities, diversity, and wealth of knowledge in Indigenous Communities: The guest speaker(s) (either local elder or knowledge keeper) should represent the local Indigenous community/communities and speak on whatever topic they believe is important for this Curriculum. Content could include (but is not limited to): Indigenous perspectives on harm reduction, ¹⁷ History and experiences of Indigenous peoples in Canada: residential schools, colonial oppression, 60's scoop, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, etc. Intersectionality between being both Indigenous and a sex worker. 	To discuss the views of local knowledge keepers or elders in terms of the specific context of the territory this work is taking place on. It is important that the guest speaker choose whatever topic is pertinent to their community, this work, and their local territorial context.
15 min.	Break	
50 min.	Group discussion/brainstorm: Discuss ideas around decolonizing sex work with Indigenous communities. 18 How does what was presented today apply to your sex work context?	To think about how colonialism shapes everyday life, and brainstorm ways to challenge that.

	What decolonizing practices can we engage in in our daily lives, as well as in our work as peer health advocates? How can non-Indigenous people act as allies for Indigenous people?	
15 min.	Journals and Closing Circle: One take away from the session.	To process the work and learning accomplished.

¹⁷ Suggested Reading (links in bibliography): "What Is Harm Reduction?" Indigenous Harm Reduction Team, (accessed, November 6, 2020).

Native Youth Sexual Health, "Indigenizing Harm Reduction," Harm Reduction Model with Central Fire, (2014).

¹⁸ Suggested Reading: Sarah Hunt, "Decolonizing Sex Work: Developing and Intersectional Indigenous Approach," in Selling Sex: Experience, Advocacy, and Research on Sex Work in Canada, Vancouver: UBC Press (2013).

Lesson 12: Sexual Health

*See Videos Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	 Guest speaker on Sexual Health for Sex workers: STI/STD and sexual health awareness: prevention and available treatments and supports. 19 Harm reduction for prevention of HIV and HCV. ²⁰ Information on PREP and PEP. ²¹ Discuss working with an STI/STD: what precautions to take, alternative methods while recovering, etc. Discuss the different stigmas around sexual health and STIs/STDs. 	 To better understand how to prevent the transmission of STIs/STDs. To reduce internalized stigma around STIs and STDs To be informed about resources available for individuals who have experienced a potential exposure, or who have tested positive for an STI or STD.
15 min.	Break	
	 Sexual Health Continued Group Discussion: How can we reduce stigma surrounding STIs and STDs? What stigma have you experienced in this area in your life? How can sex workers keep themselves safe from STIs and STDs? What local community resources are available for those living with an STD? Journals and Closing Circle: One take away from the session. 	 19 Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): "Fact Sheets," CATIE, (accessed, November 6, 2020). 20 Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): Kate Shannon, "HIV Prevention, Criminalization, and Sex Work: Where Are We at?". Prevention in Focus, (Catie, 2016). 21 Suggested Reading (link in bibliography): "Pre- Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post- Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (September 10, 2020).

Lesson 13: Harm Reduction

*See Videos Available For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	Guest speaker on Harm Reduction Brief introduction discussing the grassroots of the harm reduction movement /philosophy. ²² Harm reduction for prevention of HIV and HCVboth for safer sex work and for safer substance use.	 Ideally the guest speaker(s) will represent a peer-led harm reduction organization. To better understand how to prevent the transmission of STIs/STDs and how to practice safer substance use. To learn about harm reduction philosophies and approaches.
15 min.	Break	
15 min.	Break Indigenous perspectives on harm reduction (beginning with local perspectives rooted to the land this work is being done on). ²³ Information on local resources available for harm reduction avenues such as: access to free clean needles/supplies, access to needle-	To be informed about resources available in the community for individuals who need access to supplies or safer injection sites.
15 min.	Indigenous perspectives on harm reduction (beginning with local perspectives rooted to the land this work is being done on). ²³ Information on local resources available for harm reduction avenues such as: access to free	the community for individuals who need

Lesson 14: Overdose Prevention

*See Video Available For This Unit

Informed," Stop Overdose BC, (June 22, 2020).

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	 Guest speaker on Overdose Prevention and Naloxone Training Discuss supervised and safer consumption (including peer witnessing) and drug checking resources available in the community. Learn the risks and signs of an overdose.²⁴ Learn how to respond to an overdose. 	 Ideally the guest speaker(s) will represent a peer-led harm reduction organization. To inform Peer Health Advocates on local resources available for overdose prevention. To educate Peer Health Advocates on the signs and symptoms of an overdose.
15 min.	Break	
	 Check-in after break with everyone, this can be a very triggering topic for some. Distribute naloxone kits and discuss how to use them (optional: show video in link from footnote 20). Practice responding to an overdose and using the naloxone kit. It is recommended to use oranges or another object/dummy so the participants can practice releasing the air from the syringe and get comfortable using the kit. Introduce nasal naloxone and compare/contrast with injectable naloxone. Journals and Closing Circle: 	To train Peer Health Advocates on how/when to administer naloxone and prevent overdoses.
	One take away from the session.	24 Suggested reading (link in bibliography): British Columbia Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, "Ge

Lesson 15: Topical Issue

No Video For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
60 min.	Guest speaker on subject of group's choice on a topical issue For example: Black Lives Matter movement; defund the police movement; racism at work and with clients; etc. Regardless of what topic you choose the intersectionality of the topic with sex work, racism, discrimination, and stigma should be at the forefront.	
15 min.	Break	
	 Group Discussion How does the context of this discussion correspond with my sex work? How does the context of this discussion correspond with my work as a Peer Health Advocate? Journals and Closing Circle: One take away from the session. 	

Lesson 16: Practicum

No Video For This Unit

TIME	ACTIVITY & RESOURCES	PURPOSE
15 min.	Territory Acknowledgment	To acknowledge the communities and Nations in whose territories we live and work. To encourage participants to reflect on how they can be better allies to Indigenous communities.
	Check-In	To mentally, physically, and spiritually check in with participants in preparation for the class.
10 min.	Grounding Exercise	To ground participants in the room in order to improve focus on the material.
100 min. with 15 min. Break	 Quick review on therapeutic Skills and what makes a good Peer Health Advocate. Peer Health Advocate's Practicum Participants will break into groups of 3. One will play the role of the Peer Health Advocate, one will be the "client", and the third one will observe. The exercise will last about 10-15 minutes, at which point the observer will be asked to provide feedback. See appendix #7 and #8 for examples of scenarios and checklist for observers. After about 10 minutes of debriefing, we will reconvene to debrief as a group. 	To practice being a Peer Health Advocate and providing support to those who ask for it.
30-60 min.	"Graduation" and Group Social	To celebrate all that has been accomplished as a group.

Appendix

- 1. Ideas for group grounding exercise:
 - https://www.headspace.com/meditation/techniques
 - <u>https://mindfulnessexercises.com/guided-meditation-scripts-for-groups/</u>
 - See video in this package labeled "Grounding Practices"
- 2. A PowerPoint presentation that you may use for the lesson on empathetic listening/basic counselling skills. It can be converted into handouts if you prefer.
 - ../../../../../../Downloads/Basic Counselling Skills.pptx
 - These two links give tips on "The 10 Principles of Listening" and "Listening Skills".
 - <u>https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-principles.html</u>
 - https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-skills.html#ixzz3x3502nDw
- 3. This next PDF is from a presentation done by Cecilia Benoit, who was a guest speaker for the unit on Stigma. It can be used for the facilitator's own knowledge on the subject, and the facilitator may choose to share parts of it with the group.
 - ../../../../../Downloads/2018 08 18 Peers talk.pdf
- 4. This next handout could be used either for the unit on stress & stigma, the unit on mental health, or it could be used as an icebreaker of sorts at the start of each lesson for the facilitators, course participants, and guest speakers (optional). If utilized as an icebreaker, a question could be posed at the beginning of each lesson with the objectives being: to know oneself better; to be held accountable for one's triggers and knee-jerk reactions in a supportive way; to learn to be vulnerable in a safe space; to learn to deal with others' vulnerability; to 'level the playing field' in the room between the facilitators, guest speakers, and the Peer Health Advocate training participants; to establish a space of trust, cooperation, and collaboration; and to provide and practice a side-by-side model, rather than a top-down model of learning and teaching.

How To Deal With Me: A User's Guide

- How do you interact with the world? What do you do "differently" than other people?
- What (not obvious) things make you feel terrible? What makes you feel awesome?
- When you don't feel well (mentally or physically), do you prefer people to stay away from you or get closer?
- What's your schedule like? Does being a morning or evening person affect anything?
- Do you have a ritual in the morning or before bed that's important to you?
- What random things annoy you for no good reason?
- What's your communication style?
- How do you prefer people approach you about important topics?
- How do you approach people? Do you prefer people be blunt with you, or soften the blow? How do you make decisions? How do you handle making decisions on-the-fly?
- Do you prefer to be alone when you're hashing things out, or get help from others?

5. Hand-out For Mental Health Unit:



Become aware of the emotion and identify where you sense it in your body.

Identify and label the emotion

To stay mindful, say to yourself, "This is anger" or "This is anxiety."





Accept your emotions

Don't deny the emotion. Acknowledge and accept that it is there.

lealize the impermanence of your emotions

Even if the emotion feels overwhelming, remember that it will pass.





Inquire and investigate

Ask yourself, "What triggered me? Why do I feel this way?"

Let go of the need to control your emotions

Be open to the outcome of your emotions and what unfolds.



The Gottman Institute

- 6. Linked below is a PDF that you can either turn into a PowerPoint or use as a handout for the unit on honouring diversity in LGBTQ2+ communities.
 - ../../1ECED270-E778-4EBB-A83A-533525FF3A8D/Gender 101 for Peers
 Victoria Feb 21 2017.pdf
- 7. Example of a Scenario for the Practicum:
 - Seneca is a 32-year-old Indigenous woman. You are walking the stroll and see that she
 is also working. You have never seen her here before. You introduce yourself to her.
 She tells you that she has been off work for a while because she was in rehab. She
 came to Victoria to stay with an auntie. She asks you about the local drug scene and if
 you can hook her up.
- 8. Checklist for Observers for the Practicum:
 - How did the Peer Health Advocate greet the person?
 - What was the Peer Health Advocate's non-verbal communication like?
 - Did they ask open-ended questions to get more information?
 - Did they listen actively (i.e., using a calm, non-directive tone of voice, allowing their peer to express themselves without interruption while remaining respectful and non-judgmental)?
 - How was their communication regarding the prevention of STIs, HIV, HCV, and other potential harms related to sexual activity and substance use?
 - How was their communication regarding healthy living (i.e., referrals to services to meet basic needs, helpful tips to stay safe, etc.)?
 - How did the Peer Health Advocate support the person regarding stigma and discrimination?
 - How did the Peer Health Advocate take care of themselves during the interaction (i.e., honouring their boundaries, trusting their instincts, etc.)?

Videos For Curriculum

Included in this package are supplementary videos that can be shown in class, sent out to participants before each lesson, or can be used for the facilitator's own edification in preparation for each lesson. Below is a list of the different videos and the units/lessons that they correspond to. There are also some videos categorized under "miscellaneous" that do not correspond to a specific unit and can be used for more than one purpose. Additionally, some lessons do not have videos to accompany them; this was due to a need for the content to be driven by the guest speaker for that week, and/or because the discussion needs to be grounded in that specific regional context (for example the unit eleven), or because the topic has yet to be decided (unit fifteen), or because they were introductory and closing sessions.

Lesson/Unit:	Name of Video:
One	No video. If curriculum is being used to educate non-sex workers
	show "Introduction to Sex Work".
Тwo	"Basic Therapeutic Skills".
Three	"Basic Therapeutic Skills".
Four	"Stigma"
Five	"Trauma and the Body"; "Grounding Techniques & Practices that
	Support Mental Health".
Six	"What does Being a Peer Advocate Mean?".
Seven	No video.
Eight	"Canadian Legal Context for Sex Work".
Nine	"Consent & Sex Work".
Ten	"Honouring Diversity in LGBTQ2A+ Communities: Part One";
	"Honouring Diversity in LGBTQ2AI+ Communities: Part Two".
Eleven	No video
Twelve	"HIV Awareness"; "HCV Awareness".
Thirteen	"What is Harm Reduction"; "Harm Reduction Part Two: Risk and
	Stigma".
Fourteen	"Overdose Prevention".
Fifteen	No video
Sixteen	No video
Miscellaneous	"Introduction to Sex Work"; "Grounding Techniques & Practices
	that Support Mental Health".

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