

### Peer Specialist Readiness Assessment

The job of a Certified Peer Specialist is to help instill the hope of recovery from mental illnesses, addiction disorders or both, in part by being able to demonstrate or model recovery skills they have learned. A person wanting to become a peer support specialist must complete a 35 hour training program and pass an online exam. The “expertise” a peer has comes not from a book or training program, but from having “walked the walk”.

A peer specialist must be aware of, able to publicly describe, and role model to others the things that they learned that helped them to recover.

To help you decide if you are ready for peer support certification training, please answer the YES/NO questions below. A “YES” answer means you are willing & prepared to give a detailed response

Question	Yes	No
1. Are you willing to disclose to clients, staff and the general public that you have been diagnosed with a mental illness, addiction disorder or both?		
2. Can you describe in detail what has helped you to move from where you were to where you are now? What did you do? What did others do?		
3. Can you describe what you have had to overcome to get where you are today?		
4. Can you describe what you have learned about yourself and what we call recovery? Can you describe some of the strengths you have developed?		
5. Can you describe some of the things that you do daily to keep yourself on the right path?		
6. Can you describe what your diagnosis means, how it impacted your life and what things you did to change that?		
7. Can you describe the purpose of your medications, any side effects you experienced and plans you developed to deal with them? (If you do not take medications leave blank.)		
8. Can you describe some of the beliefs and values you have or have developed that helps to strengthen support your recovery and why do you believe they do?		
9. Can you describe some of the things you have found helpful in combating negative self-talk?		
10. Do you have a WRAP plan or other type of written wellness plan? Can you describe what it was like to put one together and how it has helped you?		
11. Do you believe that you could talk to a person to help them understand recovery or try to convince someone who did not believe in recovery that it is possible?		
12. Can you describe the role that a sense of hope and resiliency played in your life, your recovery?		
13. Can you describe some of the community supports you have and how they help you deal with your mental illness/addiction?		
14. Can you describe how you deal with crisis? With recurrence of your symptoms? With relapse?		
15. Have you ever lead a group? What did you like about it?		
16. Do you have experience with advocacy organizations like NAMI Missouri, Missouri Recovery Network or Mental Health America? Can you discuss how they supported/helped your recovery efforts?		

If you answered YES to 6 or less questions you may not be ready to be a peer support specialist yet. We suggest that you check out the recovery programs available at your community mental health center, Mental Health America, Missouri Recovery Network and Missouri Alliance on Mental Illness. Being grounded in your own recovery is the best step you can take to help others become grounded in theirs.