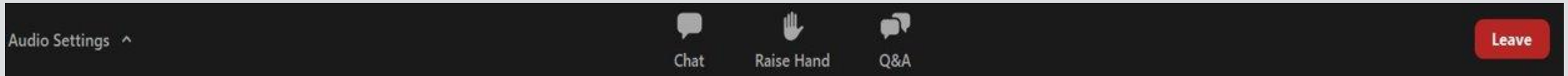# Welcome!

While we wait to start, please review ways to navigate this webinar.

If you move your **cursor** to the **bottom** of **your screen** you will see a **menu**.

This menu allows you to **control**:
- **Raise hand**
- Access to the **chat** box
- Access to the **Q & A** box

Video options are not available for participants. Participants can be unmuted by raising their hand and being recognized by the presenter.

Housekeeping

- This session is being recorded and will be available on Tomorrow's Healthcare. Ask your PERU point of contact for an account if needed.

- Chat your questions to "All Participants" throughout the session.

- **Your feedback matters!** Please complete the evaluation and post-test at the end of the webinar to receive continuing education credit and to help us improve future trainings.

Mutual Agreement

- Everyone on every PERU webinar is **valued**. Everyone has an expectation of **mutual, positive regard** for everyone else that respects the **diversity** of everyone on the webinar.

- We operate from a **strength-based, empathetic, and supportive** framework – with the people we serve, and with each other on PERU webinars.

- We encourage the use of **affirming language** that is not discriminatory or stigmatizing.

- We treat others as **they** would like to be treated and, therefore, avoid argumentative, disruptive, and/or aggressive language.

Mutual Agreement (continued)

- We strive to: **listen** to each person, avoid interrupting others, and seek to **understand** each other through the Learning Network as we work toward the highest quality services for COE clients.

- Information presented in Learning Network sessions has been vetted. We recognize that people have different opinions, and those **diverse perspectives** are welcomed and valued. Questions and comments should be framed as **constructive feedback**.

- The Learning Network format is **not conducive to debate**. If something happens that concerns you, please send a chat during the session to the panelists and we will attempt to make room to address it either during the session or by scheduling time outside of the session to process and understand it. Alternatively, you can reach out offline to your PERU point of contact.

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MOBILIZE

EDUCATE

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Together we can!

Establishing & Sustaining Psychological Safety

The Vital Foundation for Effective Care

William Stauffer, LSW, CCS, CADC
Executive Director
The Pennsylvania Recovery Organizations Alliance

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Training Objectives

Attendees will:

- Examine Psychological Safety (PS)
- Discuss why is it important in our work settings
- Discuss some of the facets that lead to people perceiving a lack of safety
- Describe why feeling safe is vital for both patients and staff
- List ways to increase PS for both the staff and persons served.
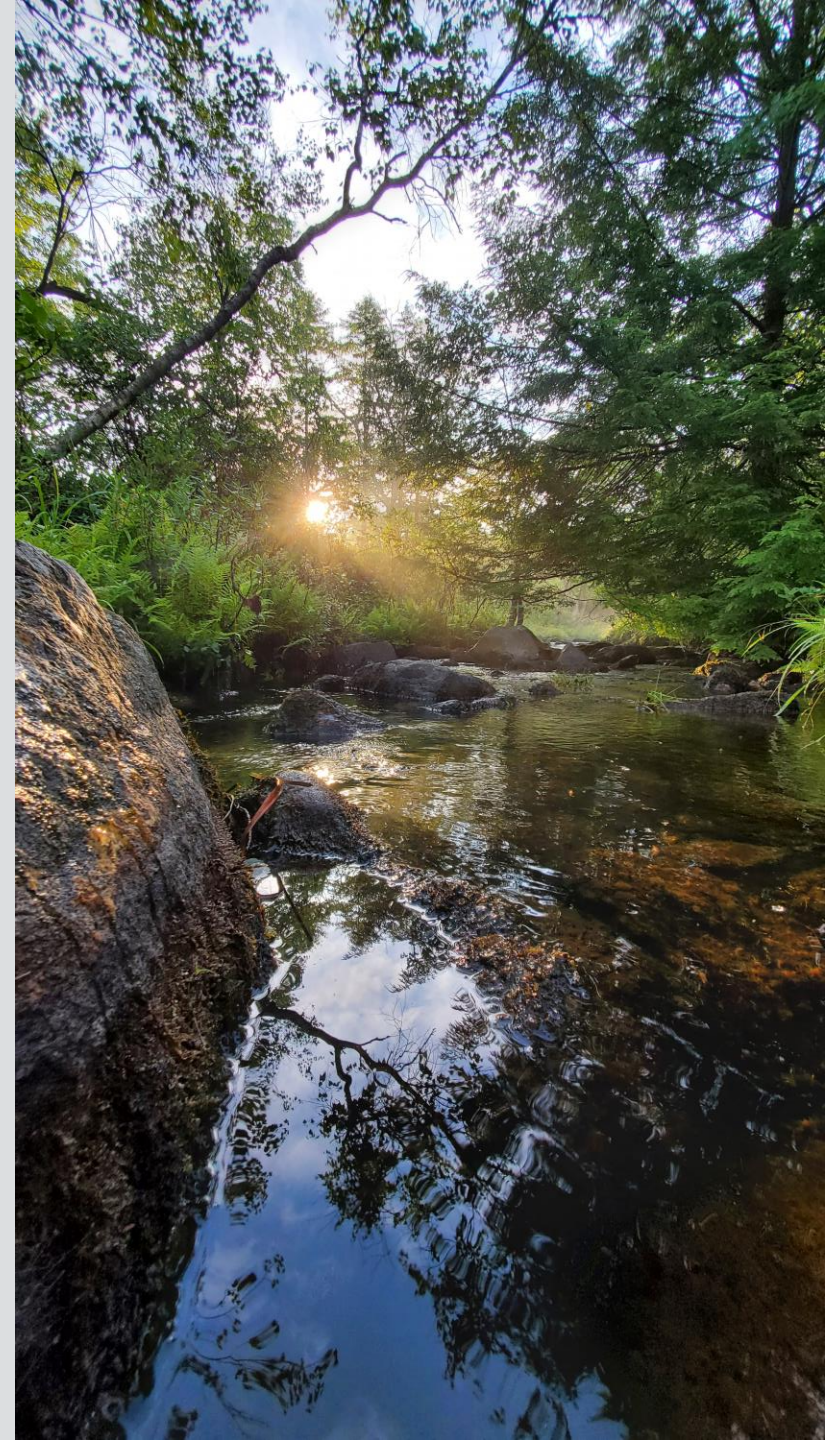
History and Background

Psychological Safety (PS)

What is it / Why Is it Important

The most commonly used definition for PS in the literature is:

"A shared belief among individuals as to whether it is safe to engage in interpersonal risk-taking in the workplace"

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Area of Study

Grounded In Study of Organizational Change

Initially described as the extent in which individuals feel secure & confident in their ability to manage change

In more recent times, the field of study has expanded to understanding psychological safety at the team level

# What PS Looks Like

Positive Regard

Employees Feel:

- Their colleagues will not reject people for being themselves & saying what they feel

- Colleagues respect each others competence

- That there are positive intentions

- It is safe to experiment and take risks

What Strengthens PS

Building Blocks of PS

Influenced by leadership factors & team characteristics

- Supportive leadership
- High levels of agreement in teams
- Employees have a strong sense of agency
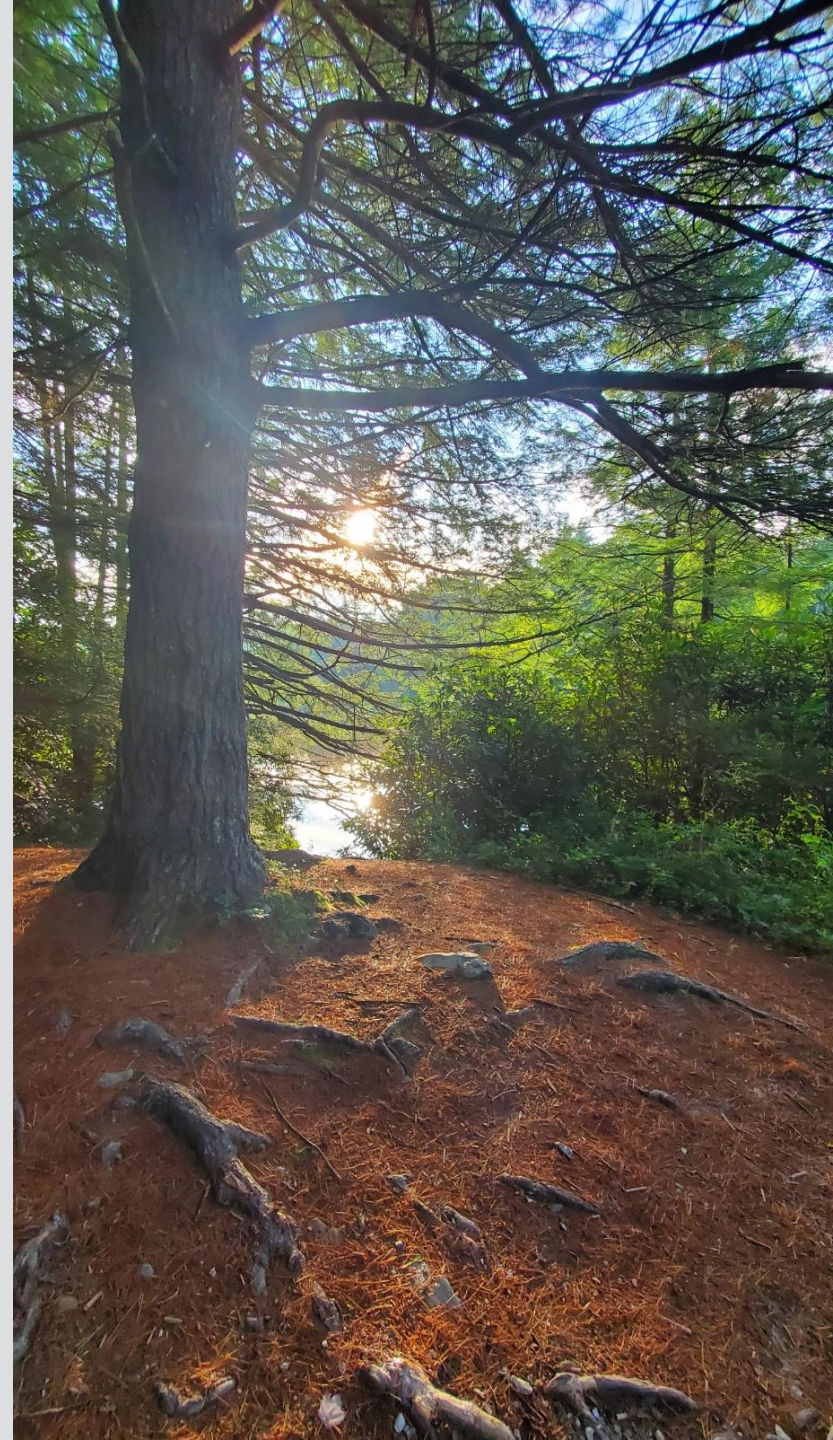
Strong Relational Networks

Social Capital is Key

Research at the individual, team, and organizational levels is finding that social support and social capital as key determinants of psychological safety.

- Rewarding coworker relationships

- High levels of interaction

- Social support and social capital that influences individual learning

Factors Impacting PS
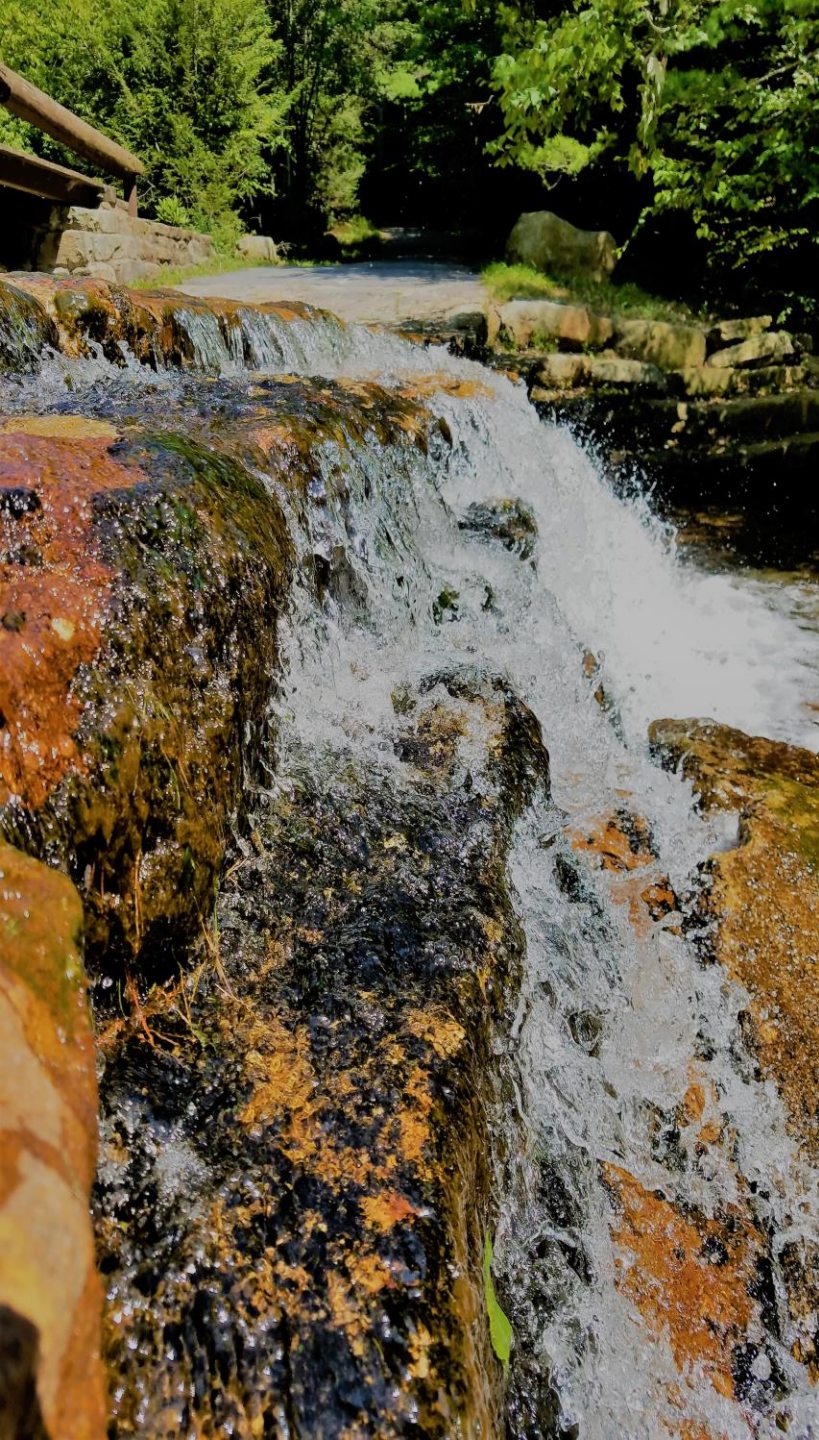
Factors Impacting PS

Leadership & Culture Can Help or Hinder

- It can be difficult to sustain PS at the organizational level, particularly in large ones
- Lack of strong interpersonal relationships can impede PS
- Leadership not attuned to PS can hinder its development

The Healing Environment

It Impacts Team Dynamics

- Too much paperwork
- Not enough time to focus on helping people
- Mismatch between the needs of the client and the services provided

Leadership can buffer these factors to Strengthen PS

COVID 19 & PS

Impact on Frontline Workers

- Lack of protective equipment
- Lack of physical & human resources to conduct the work / job strain
- Perceived physical safety
- Perceived organizational support

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OHIO PHP Report

Impact of the Pandemic on the Health and Well-being on Healthcare Workers

- Summarizes data from 13,532 respondents across 13 of Ohio's Professional Licensing Boards - July 7, 2021 / August 20, 2021.

- Includes medical and human service workers

- Perhaps the largest state sample in the nation of the impact of COVID-19 on our helping professionals to date

Report Highlights

Workforce Under Strain

- The report notes that helping professionals who think about death or suicide have nearly doubled.
- It includes a 375% increase in those who feel hopeless and overwhelmed
- A 25% increase in substance use as a way to cope during the pandemic.

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Workload

The Pandemic & Healthcare Workers

- 56% of healthcare workers surveyed indicated their workload increased during the pandemic.
- 30% of respondents stated their workload SIGNIFICANTLY increased during the pandemic.

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Reluctance to Seeking Help

Identified Obstacles

Respondents who indicated that they did not seek emotional services during the pandemic were asked to identify obstacles to seeking assistance.

56% - Time Commitment

40% - Did not know where to turn for support

31% - Confidentiality concerns

Other COVID Workforce Studies

Deep Cause for Concern

- A study of 8,000 healthcare workers from Australia:
  - 10% had thoughts of self-harm/suicide
  - Fewer than half had sought help from a mental health professional.
- The American Nurses Foundation found:
  - One in five nurses increased alcohol consumption
  - 3% had increased their substance use.
  - Critical Care / intensive care nurses' alcohol consumption jumped to one in three.
- A University of Utah suggests that half of our national healthcare workforce is at risk for mental health issues.
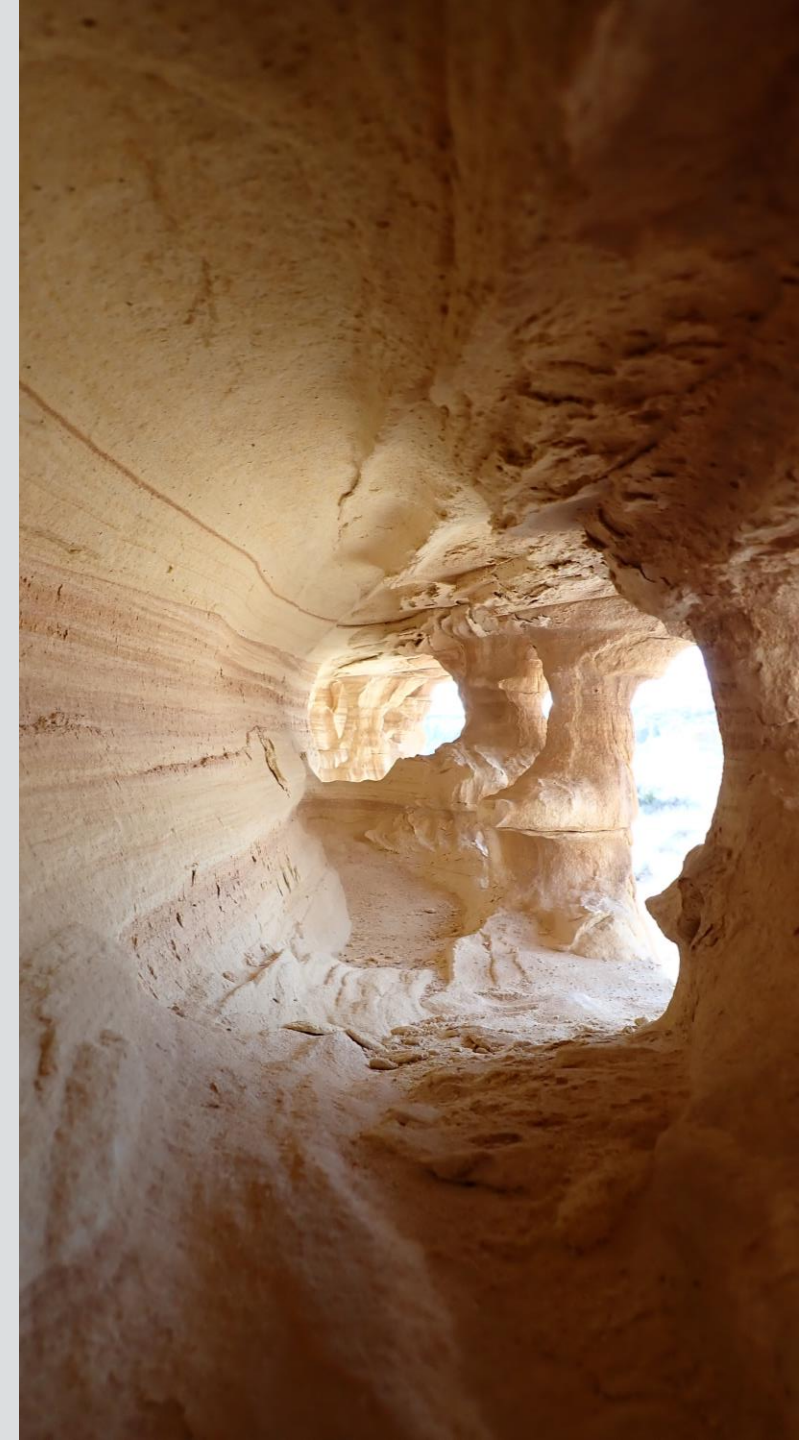
Question 1

COVID-19 likely had _____ on psychological safety.

a. a positive effect
b. a negative effect
c. no impact

Discussion Question

What effects on psychological safety did you notice at your COEs with regard to COVID-19?

Job satisfaction

Based on Maslow Five-Stage Hierarchy of Human Need

- Employee morale is critical
- Job satisfaction and job performance are correlated.
- Poor job satisfaction leads to increased turnover, adversely affecting job satisfaction.
- Creating an environment that promotes job satisfaction can contribute to higher quality patient care and patient satisfaction.

Measuring PS

Developing Observational Measures

In healthcare teams, the presence of PS is critical to delivering safe care.

- Focus on patient safety was found to facilitate PS in teams
- Workers at the lower end of the hierarchy find it more difficult to speak to their superiors

A Culture of PS

How Do We Create It?

Asking the right questions & listening to the answers:

1. What can we count on each other for?

2. What is our team's purpose?

3. What is the reputation we aspire to have?

4. What do we need to do differently to achieve that reputation and fulfill our purpose?

Discussion Question

Are there characteristics at your COE that you see benefiting psychological safety?

Understanding Peer Roles and Practices

One must feel understood to feel heard

Supervisors need to:
- Understand the **variety** of peer roles
- Have a deep understanding of the peer work core competencies
- Understand the **specific** peer support job of the person they supervise
- Be dedicated to learning more about the **fundamentals** of peer support and peer roles
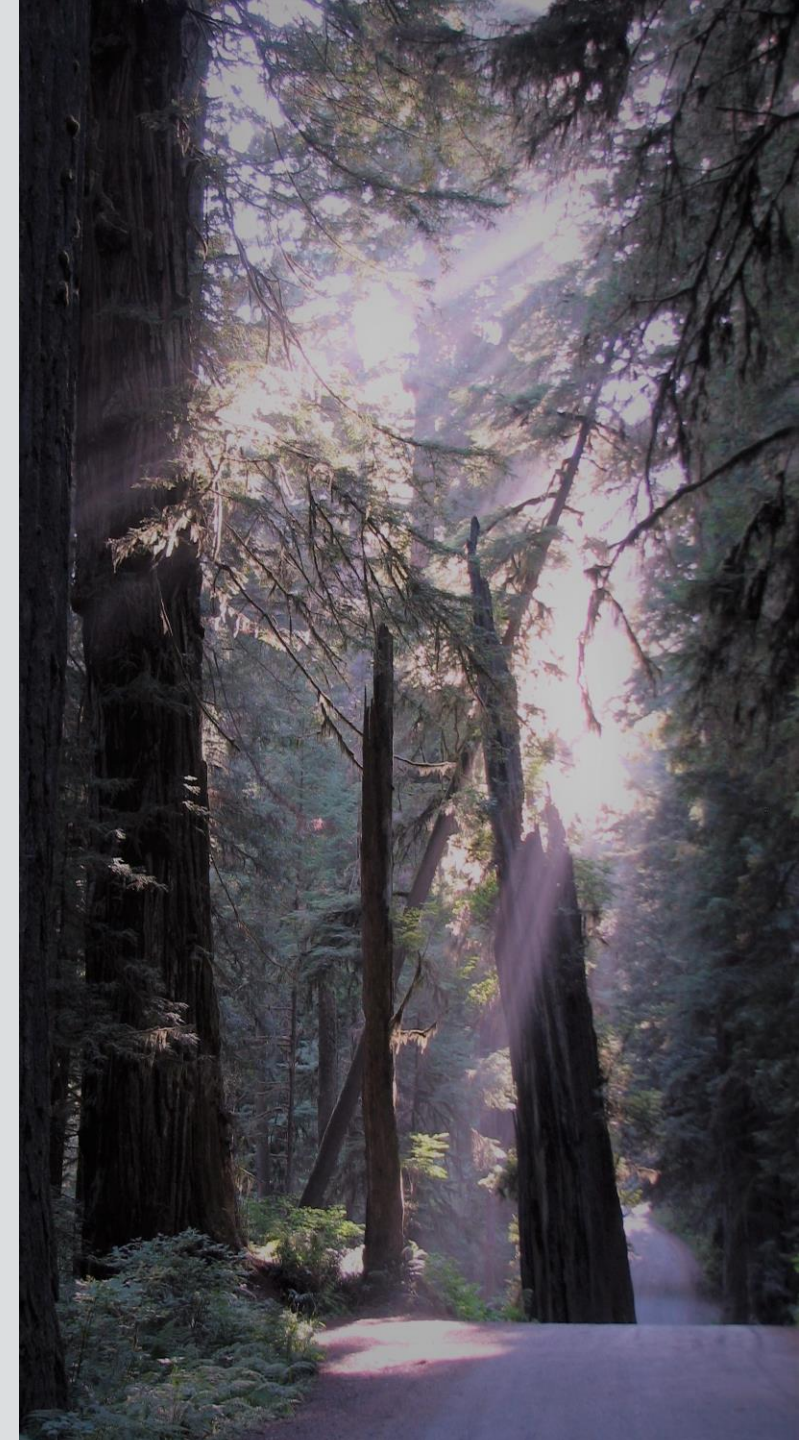
Supervision as a Safe Space

Examining Performance in Safe Affirming Ways

- Are we doing routine supervision that addresses all three core roles (administrative, educative & supportive)?
- Do supervisors have sufficient understanding of peer roles to address all three?
- Do we establish an environment to examine sensitive issues in ways that communicate constructive learning and support?

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Strengths-based Supervision

Modeling a recovery orientation

Strengths-based supervision is a collaborative process between the worker and supervisor enabling them to deliver **quality** services and **supports** that draws on the person's strengths and assets

- Seeks to discover and **amplify** the worker's strengths and competencies
- Intentionally **identify** and amplify the worker's success
- Encourages **learning** and **shared responsibility** for setting learning goals

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Supervisors as Peer Champions

Integration of peer workers in the workplace

Supervisors:

- **Educate** others in the workforce about the peer support roles and practices

- Create **opportunities** for peer support workers to interact with other team members

- Work with leadership to create more **optimal** working conditions for peer workers
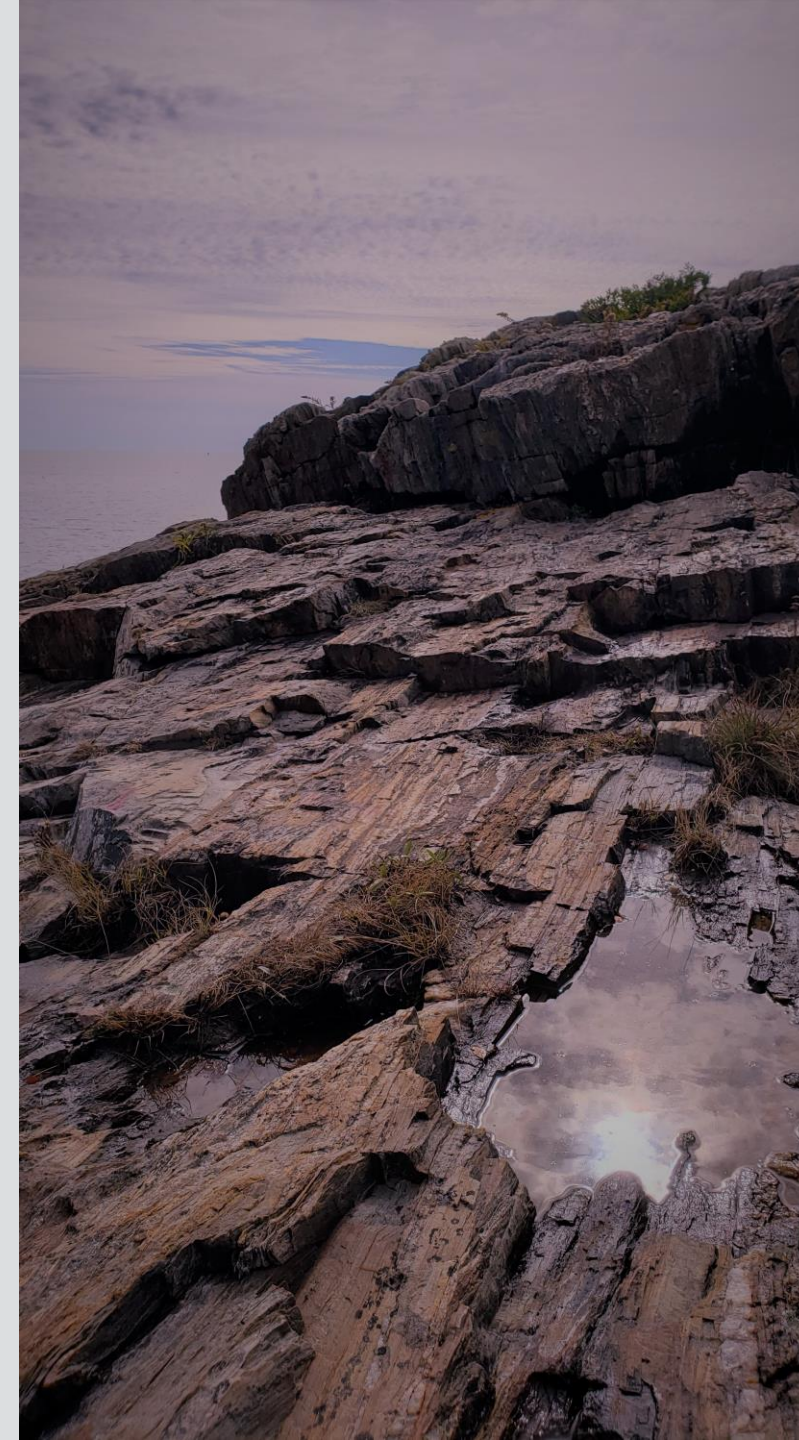
Developing Competency

Strengthening Relationship Skills

Psychotherapy trainees have been found to develop **professional competence** in the following order, indicating that a working **alliance** is essential:

1) skills for building rapport with the patients

2) skills at specific therapeutic techniques and interventions

3) ability to articulate a personal theory of psychotherapy
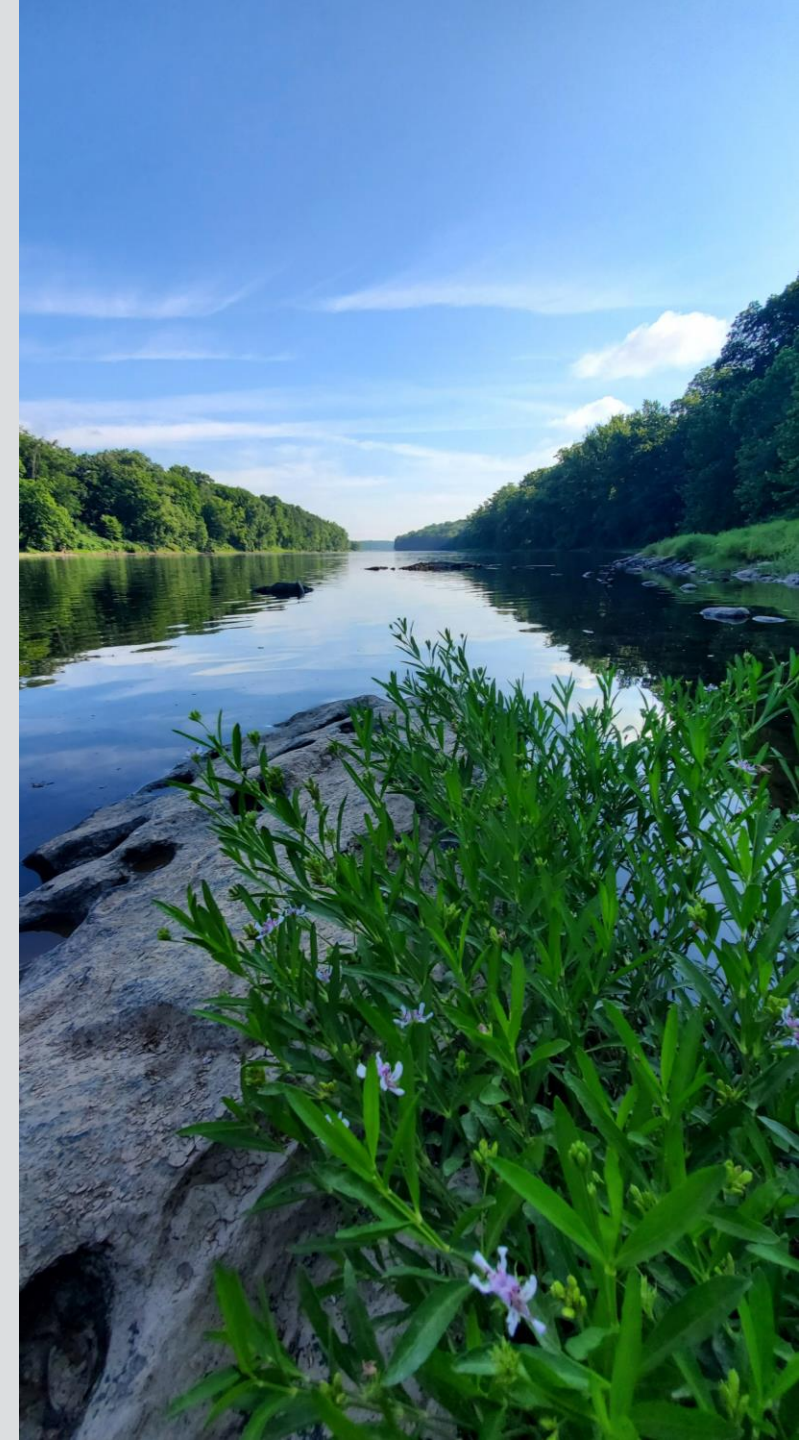
Organizational Considerations

Recovery Orientation

Organizational modeling recovery-oriented practices

- Endorse and enact recovery-oriented practices and values
- Believe in the capacity of peer workers to **grow** and develop professionally
- Frame difficulties as learning **opportunities** and structure learning opportunities to help the worker grow
- Support the development of **individualized** professional goals

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Recovery-oriented Values

Grounding services in what is important

- Hope: inspiring growth **potential**
- Person-centered: based on individual **aspirations**
- Strength-based: focused on **talents**
- Personal responsibility: holding people **accountable** for their commitments
- Interdependence: a balance between teamwork, autonomy, and mutual support
- Supervisors **model** these values in their work
- Agencies operationalize values in their policies, procedures, and practices

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Development of Knowledge and Skills

Every worker is unique

Supervisors:
- Teach workers the knowledge and skills they need to perform work tasks
- Evaluate work performance through **direct** observation, co-working, assessments, and reflection in collaboration with the peer worker
- Structure learning opportunities to help workers **grow**
- Advocate for worker's participation in **on-going training**
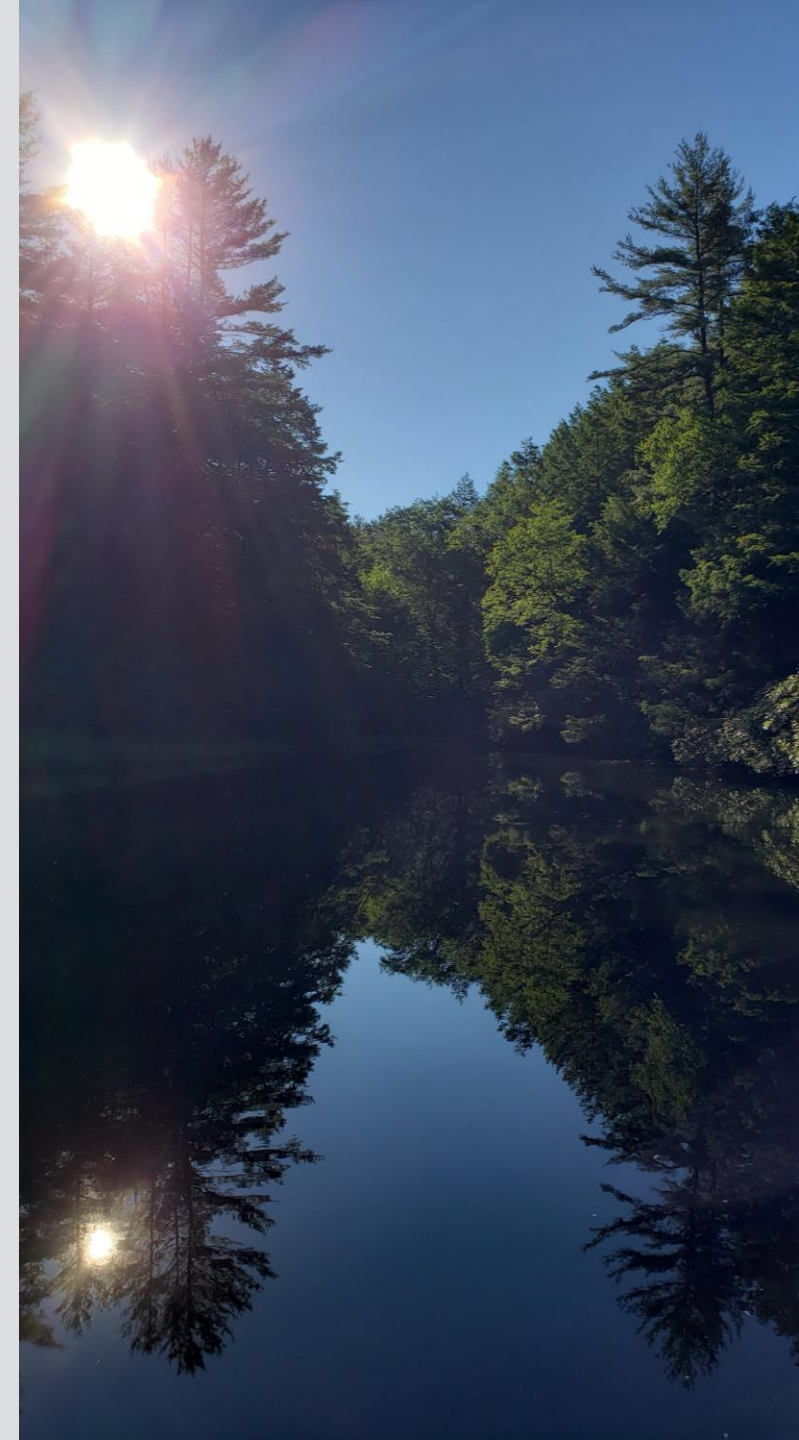
Growth Focused

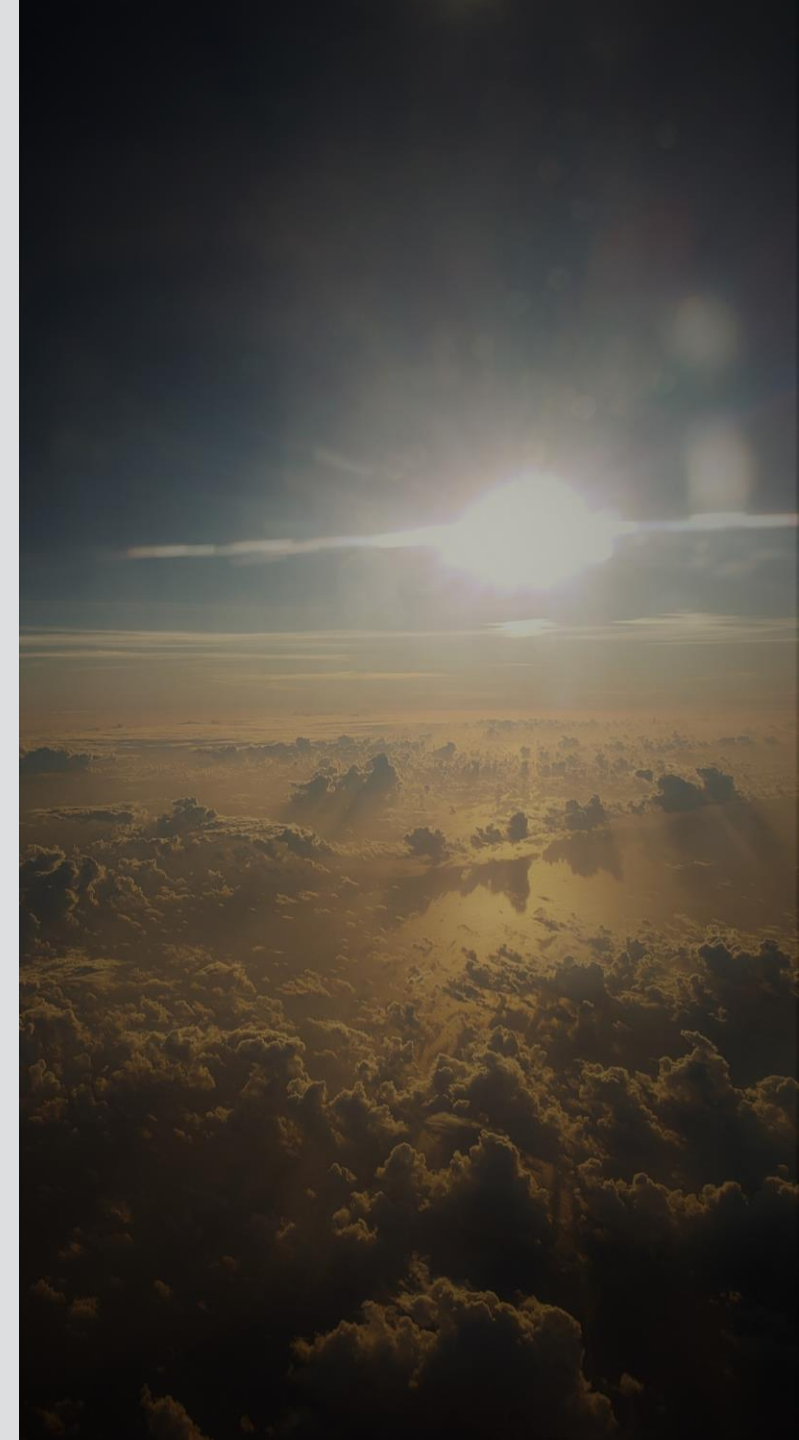*Reframing challenges as opportunities across our programs*

Focusing on strengths does not mean ignoring problems

Supervision frames problems as learning opportunities

Feedback and self-assessment are tools in strengths-based supervision

What's Next?

Factors in Retention

How Do We Keep People Engaged?

- Premature dropout of patients from therapy has been found more frequently with inexperienced therapists

- Therapists with more than 6 years of experience had higher percentages of patients who improved and lower percentages of patients who deteriorated

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Social & Recovery Capital

Stage of Recovery Journey

The therapeutic alliance is very important for "in treatment" outcomes, and what happens with patient outcomes impacts worker PS

Strong recovery capital is associated with better patient outcomes

Better patient outcomes are associated with improved PA
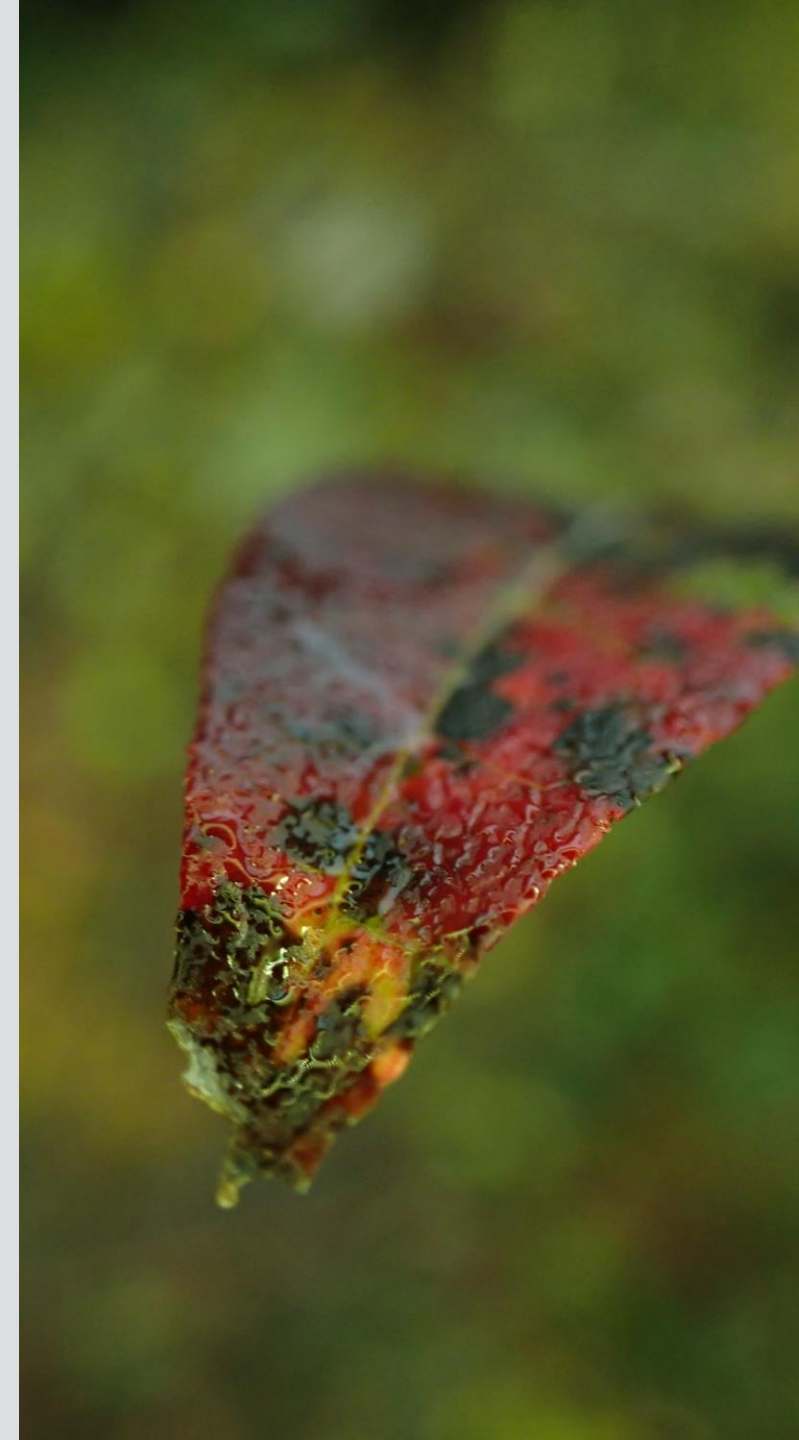
Ingredients

Elements that improve patient care

Empathy – The ability to share feelings is paramount

Expertise – The client must sense that you possess the skills to help

Hope – Underlying belief that change will happen

Strength-Based – Strengths emphasized over barriers

Hard But Important Stuff

Lives are at Stake

- Being open, authentic and vulnerable are key elements to establishing and sustaining PS.

- Focusing on PS can be a challenge when programs are struggling with high demand and staff turnover.

- It is important to strike the right balance to ensure people experience a place of hope.

- Perceived physical safety is vital

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Challenging times are times of innovation and growth.

What we do next matters!

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