

Mock CPS Application: INDs read information about Certified Peer Specialists from the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network website. INDs read about the CPS project and the CPS code of ethics and job description. Per GMHCN, "Certified Peer Specialists work from the perspective of their lived experience to help build environments conducive to recovery. They promote hope, personal responsibility, empowerment, education, and self-determination in the communities where they serve. CPSs are trained to assist others in skill-building, problem-solving, setting up and maintaining self-help mutual support groups, and building self-directed recovery tools. A critical role of the CPS is supporting others in developing their recovery goals, and specific steps to reach those goals." INDs complete a mock CPS application and answer a variety of questions about recovery, advocating in their communities, and educating and empowering others via their lived experience. MHPSP empowered INDs to answer the questions fully, citing lived experience and examples, and supported INDs in sharing their answers with fellow peer members.

<https://www.gmhcn.org/certified-peer-specialist>

CPS Job Duties and Code of Ethics: INDs visit the website for the Georgia Mental Health Consumer website to learn more about the certification process for peer specialists in GA (CPS-MH). MHPSP staff help INDs navigate the website to learn about the job duties and expectations for a CPS, the code of ethics, and frequently asked questions. MHPSP staff encourage INDs to think about what supports they would want from a CPS staff within their own program. INDs are challenged to think about what questions they might ask a CPS that wants to work in the MHPSP to learn more about them, their qualifications, and how they might be able to mentor and support others in recovery. MHPSP staff encourage INDs to think about the code of ethics and consider their own values and ethics.

Personal Attitudes Survey: INDs are asked to share common myths and misconceptions about mental health diagnoses, services and treatments, and outcomes in recovery. INDs are challenged to think about how people with mental health challenges are portrayed in movies, news media, and social media. MHPSP staff challenge INDs to think about how the information could be helpful for those in recovery and how it could be harmful for those in recovery or seeking services. MHPSP staff provide INDs with a 'personal attitudes survey' with questions that identify common myths about mental health and treatment. INDs are challenged to share their answers aloud before MHPSP staff 'debunk' the myths with facts and statistics. INDs are asked to think about their own biases and self-stigma related to their diagnoses, then challenged to 'debunk' their own myths by identifying strengths and positive qualities about themselves.

Poetry Writing: Poetry and creative writing are forms of self-expression. INDs lead informative activity on the different types of poetry (narrative, free verse, haiku, etc). INDs read examples of each type of poetry. MHPSP staff challenge INDs to write a poem(s) about their recovery or about a period in their life that influenced their recovery. INDs share their poetry with their fellow peer members and INDs are encouraged to provide feedback about the poetry they hear. INDs are encouraged to write poetry at home as a way to express themselves creatively. This activity focuses on creative writing skills, communication skills, and identifying strengths in one's recovery.

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/poetry-101-learn-about-poetry-different-types-of-poems-and-poetic-devices-with-examples#15-types-of-poetic-forms>

Create a Bucket List: A 'bucket list' is a list of activities, places to visit, goals, etc that one wishes to accomplish before they pass or 'kick the bucket.' Many activities on one's bucket list might have a

deadline (Things to accomplish by age 30, etc). INDs create a bucket list of things they would like to do and achieve in their lifetimes. INDs are challenged to think about alternatives they might consider if the activity is not immediately achievable (i.e. Visiting a space museum versus going to the moon). INDs share their bucket list activities with fellow peer members. INDs are asked what activities they will be able to check off their bucket lists this year and what they can do today to move towards accomplishing their goals.

About Me Collage: Peer-led activity on creating an art collage that reflects their strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences (SNAP). INDs were challenged to find magazine images, words, etc that reflected who they are as people. MHPSP staff reminded INDs that no one is their diagnosis and there are many facets to each person's identity and personality than a diagnostic label. INDs were encouraged to share their collages and explain their SNAP with the imagery they chose. INDs were encouraged to hang their collage at home and add to it as their SNAP changes to promote self-reflection and self-awareness.

Calendar Planning: INDs shared ideas for the March activity calendar. INDs listed outings, discussion topics, and activities they would like to do in the program. INDs were reminded of the program structure and categories for MHPSP (recovery, self-advocacy, wellness, independent living skills, and socialization.) INDs were encouraged to think of new activities to try and also encouraged to sign up to lead an activity to keep the program peer-led. INDs were encouraged to think about their own talents, strengths, and abilities that they could share with fellow peer members. MHPSP staff documented the topics and suggestions into the monthly activity calendar.

Authority Figures: INDs discussed what makes someone an authority figure. INDs were asked to name authority figures with whom they have had experience. Authority figures are anyone in a place or position of power that can mandate change or require someone to do something (Judge, police officer, doctor, landlord, parents, etc). INDs were divided into groups and given a scenario with an authority figure. INDs had to practice teamwork skills and assertive communication skills to role-play how they would respond to the authority figure to practice self-advocacy and have their needs met.

Communication Challenge: INDs participated in an interactive communication game where they took turns in pairs to describe a picture to one another using only verbal clues. One partner had to describe the image on the paper while the listening partner had to draw what the person was describing on the board. INDs were challenged to practice listening skills while the describing partner had to practice detailed communication to assist their partner in drawing an accurate image. MHPSP staff challenged INDs to think about how this activity relates to INDs' communication with others and how perspectives can be different depending on who is hearing the message (i.e. one's opinion or experience might seem one way to them but when communicated to someone else it comes across differently). INDs were challenged to discuss how sharing one's mental health challenges can be interpreted differently if the audience doesn't also have mental health challenges or if the audience doesn't have a recovery-oriented perspective.

Assertiveness: INDs shared definition of assertiveness which means to be "confidently aggressive or self-assured." INDs discussed situations where they have had to assert themselves or if they didn't, what they could have said to show assertiveness. INDs took an online quiz that guided them through statements to measure how assertive they are. Some of the statements included: I am comfortable meeting new people in social situations, I tell others when their behaviors are unacceptable to me, and I value my own experience and wisdom. INDs counted up the 'yes' responses to the prompts and if they had more than 10 they were considered assertive and able to handle most situations well. If they had fewer than 10 'yes' responses they could benefit from additional assertiveness practice. INDs were encouraged to share their responses and discussed challenges they had with any of the prompts.