

Peer Engagement Policy – Peer Support Plus[®]



Peer Support Plus is a small charity with no regular source of funds.

We aim to engage with as many Peers as possible but our Volunteer numbers and financial resources are limited, so we may not be able to support you right now.

Engaging

Before entering into a *Peer Relationship*¹ with us you must attend our 2-hour Workshop *Introduction to Group Work*¹. There you will experience Peer Support Plus Group Work and learn more about entering into a beneficial relationship with us.

Before joining one of our regular (usually weekly) Peer Support Groups, you must have an *Initial conversation with Support Group Facilitators*¹ designed to help you decide if joining a Support Group would be the right move for you right now.

Providing you continue to be eligible as defined in our charitable Objects, (see our *Constitution*¹) your Peer Relationship with Peer Support Plus will be open-ended. By open-ended we mean that you can continue your *Peer Relationship*¹ with us until you feel ready to self-manage your mental health and move on. Some people may remain Peers for a few months, some for years.

Some Peers go on to Volunteer for our charity as Facilitators, administrators, or even Trustees.

Seats at sessions

Any Peer may apply for a seat at any Peer Support Group, Workshop or Course described on our website; by email to enquire@peersupportplus.org or by calling 07434 614 829.

We will let you know when a seat becomes available. You may not join a session unless your seat has been confirmed.

Cancellation and absence

If you are unable to take up a confirmed seat at a Peer Support Group, Workshop or Course, please: tell the Facilitator; or call 07434 614 829; or email enquire@peersupportplus.org just as soon as you know you will be absent. If you fail to let us know you may prevent us helping another Peer who could have taken the vacant seat.

If on three occasions during any rolling 12-month period you have unreasonably failed to let us know, by noon the day before, that you will not attend a confirmed Workshop or Course, then your name may be placed at the foot of our waiting list when you apply for a seat at any subsequent Workshop or Course.

Key information is introduced during the first session of a Course. If you do not attend the first week you may not be able to get full benefit from the rest of the Course. If you are absent from several sessions of a Course, you may have missed too much content, and gaps in your understanding may disrupt, undermine or delay other Peers' progress. You may prefer to re-apply to attend a later course.

Lateness

We recognise that everyone lives busy lives and has other commitments, so our Facilitators try hard to ensure sessions start and finish on time.

Please arrive at least 5 minutes before every Peer Support Group, Workshop or Course session is due to begin.

If you arrive more than 5 minutes late for a regular Support Group you may be admitted at the Facilitators' discretion. If your admittance to the room might cause disruption, they would probably not admit you before the mid-meeting comfort / refreshment break.

If you arrive late for a Workshop or Course session you may be admitted, at the Facilitators' discretion, at a point when helping you settle-in and catch-up would not disrupt, undermine or delay other Peers' progress.

Intoxication

For the safety of yourself and others, you may not participate in any activity at Peer Support Plus when affected by non-prescription drugs, alcohol or other substances because your judgment, mental or physical control might be diminished.

Leaving a Course or Support Group

Please let the Course Facilitator know immediately you have decided that you don't plan to attend future sessions.

We won't assume that you wish to end your whole Peer Relationship with us.

If you have been a long-term member of a Peer Support Group, please let us know in advance that you plan to leave. Your Peers will wish to prepare

themselves for your departure, acknowledge at a Group session all they have gained from their relationship with you, and help you bring your participation to its end in a good way.

Ending your Peer Relationship with Peer Support Plus

If something has gone amiss in your Peer Relationship with us, or you feel we have fallen short of reasonable expectations, please use our *Comments, Compliments and Complaints*¹ procedure to tell us about it, rather than just walking away.

When you feel the time is right to end your Peer Relationship with us and move on, please either tell your session Facilitator; or email to enquire@peersupportplus.org; or call 07434 614 829. In case you change your mind, we will wait 1 month before formally noting in our records that your Peer Relationship with us has ended.

Alternatively, if you haven't told us you will be absent and don't make any contact with Peer Support Plus for 2 months, we will conclude that you have chosen to end your Peer Relationship with us and formally note that in our records.

In either case we would like you to tell us why you have chosen to move on. If you haven't told us we will ask. Some people's domestic circumstances change, or they find they are no longer available, or eligible to benefit. We hope that when you move on you will have decided that you have learned what you can from your Peers, and now feel able to self-manage your mental health without support from them.

It is OK to leave and it is OK to come back

That is one of our *Guidelines for Behaviour*¹, and we mean it.

Note ¹ available on our website peersupportplus.org

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