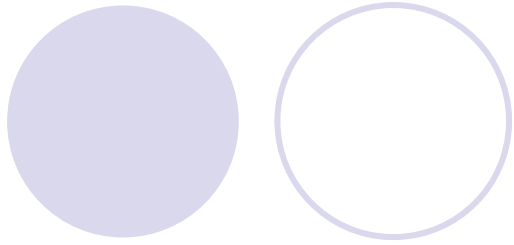


Peer Support Services For Abused Women

*OFFERING PEER BASED SUPPORT
TO WOMEN WHO ARE AT RISK OF
OR HAVE BEEN ABUSED, AND
THEIR CHILDREN*

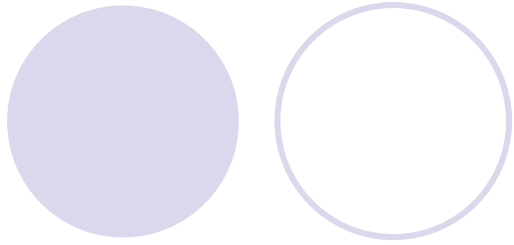


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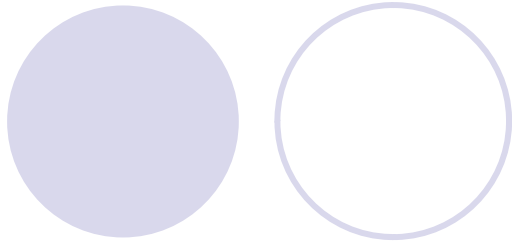


Our Mission

Creating individual and systemic change
to promote respectful, healthy and
peaceful relationships



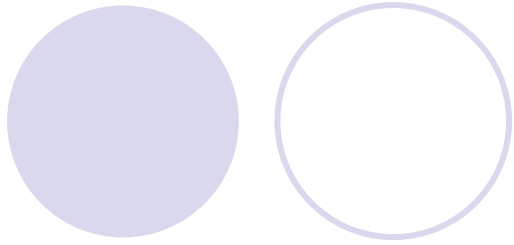
**RESPECTFUL, HEALTHY AND
PEACEFUL RELATIONSHIPS**



Who We Are

Core Beliefs:

- ♀ We believe in inclusion, that all clients are welcome regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.
- ♀ We believe in self directed change
- ♀ We believe in creating a caring and safe environment for clients
- ♀ We believe that by providing support, resources and referrals we can help clients make choices that enable them to live violence free lives
- ♀ We believe that change must happen both systemically and individually
- ♀ We believe clients are expert in their own healing
- ♀ We believe in being responsive to clients



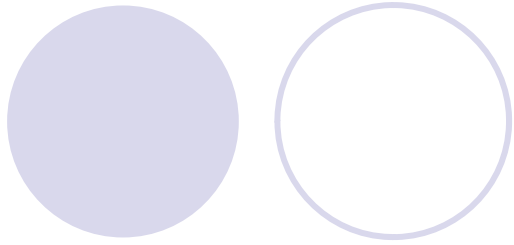
Our History

♀ Peer Support was set up in the mid-1980's in response to a high rate of recidivism observed among women utilizing women's shelters. At the time, it was theorized that one of the causes of this recidivism was the lack of peer support provided to women after they had left the shelter.



How We Do It

- ♀ Peer Support uses trained volunteer facilitators to support abused women or women at risk of being abused which enable women's to share, learn, build confidence and benefit from knowing that there are others who have had the same experience.
- ♀ Programs are offered in the communities where women live (ie in Shelters, Second Stage Shelters, or local community centres) as well as a central location.
- ♀ All services are barrier free



What We Are

- ♀ We are part of the service delivery continuum for abused women and women at risk of being abused
- ♀ We are non-judgmental and offer empathic support
- ♀ We are community based
- ♀ We operate from a self directed learning philosophy
- ♀ We are volunteer driven



Our Programs

Growth Circles

Growth Circle programs are offered to women who have left abusive relationships. In Growth Circles participants share their experiences and learn from other women who have been there too. Growth Circles are facilitated by trained volunteers who may be survivors of family violence themselves. Growth Circle program is 12 week, 2.5 hours per week. Session topics include; dynamics of violence, anger, parenting and self esteem.



Our Programs

Moving on With Mentors

The Moving on with Mentors Program offers individual peer support to women anywhere on the domestic violence continuum. The MOWM program is designed to assist women in meeting their personal goals, achieving self efficacy, accessing communities resources. There is a drop in group component of the program, that included both sharing of experiences and psychosocial learning. The Peer Support Mentor is a woman who herself, may have, experienced family violence and can act as a 'mentor' in facilitating growth and change for clients.



Our Programs

Finding Our Voices

Finding our Voices is a self esteem group. The group is available to any women whether she has experienced abuse or not. The group runs for 6 weeks, 2.5 hours a week. Topics include: communication, body image, assertiveness. The workshop is designed for any woman grappling with self esteem issues.



Our Programs

Same Sex Domestic Violence

This program is to address the often marginalized issue of same sex intimate partner domestic violence. In partnership with Safety Under the Rainbow, a collaborative initiative to address this issue PSSAW offers workshops to service providers on this issue, participates in awareness campaigns targeted to both the GLBT community and service providers and conducts research on this issue. This program is delivered province wide.



Program Outcomes Outcomes

Short Term Outcomes

- Clients are able to identify needs
- Clients experience increased independence accessing other agencies and supports
- Clients increase their knowledge about healthy relationships

Intermediate Term Outcomes

- Clients have an increased sense of self-esteem
- Clients have an Increased sense of control, efficacy
- Clients have increased interpersonal support



Program Outcomes

Long Term Outcomes

- Clients have an established stable and accessible network of support
- Clients utilize skills and knowledge gained from the program
- Clients' sense of self-esteem has been maintained
- Clients experience reduced isolation

Longer Term

- Women are able to choose violence free lifestyles with a focus on non abusive relationships
- They are then able to have the skills and the healing necessary to come back to the agency, go through our training and become facilitators and mentors themselves.



Growth Circle Content

- Change Process
- Self Care
- Effects of Family Violence
- Support Systems and Resources
- Grief and Loss
- Anger
- Personal Power
- Boundaries
- Belief and Thinking Patterns
- Creating a Whole Life
- New Relationships
- Parenting



Volunteer Mentors/Facilitators

Demographics

- Female
- Between 25-40 years old
- Post Secondary Education
- Professional (Career)
- 80% in committed relationships
- 65% have children
- Majority have first hand experience of domestic violence either personally or within context of family of origin

Healing Journey of Clients (Short Term)

- Clients are able to identify needs*
 - Includes:
 - It might be worthwhile to think about what I want;
 - I am making my safety and well being a priority in my life;
 - I am being more assertive about my own needs;
 - I am beginning to change my ideas about what I should put up with in a relationship

Healing Journey of Clients (Short Term)

- Clients report increased independence accessing other agencies and supports
- Clients experience increased knowledge about healthy relationships*
 - includes :
 - Watching for red flags of abuse;
 - Understanding all aspects of definitions of abuse;
 - Ability to identify the desire for a non-abusive relationship;
 - Changing perspectives of what is acceptable in a relationship

Healing Journey of Clients (mid term)

- Clients have increased sense of control, efficacy*
 - Includes
 - I have learned the pleasure of making choices for myself;
 - I am being more assertive about my own needs;
 - I am doing well making my own decisions



How We Do It

- **Volunteers:**

- Screening, includes screening for past domestic violence experience, or relationship to domestic violence (i.e. sister, mother etc.), time post domestic violence, readiness to support individual experiencing dv
- Training, includes 5 weeks of training about dv and the program as well as observing a group
- Ongoing Supervision, includes: individual clinical supervision, group clinical supervision



How We Do It

Volunteer Screening Sample Questions:

- Have you or anyone close to you been abused?
- What do you think about women who go back to abusive relationships
- What can you commit you time wise?



How We Do It

Volunteer Training:

Topics Covered:

1. Agency Introduction and Program Overview, and Peer Support Model overview
2. Beliefs, values, and attitudes
3. Core conditions for support
4. Basic tools of communication
5. The role and responsibilities of the facilitator
6. Setting and maintaining boundaries
7. Ethical considerations
8. Group development
9. Common problems that arise in group
10. Role play's
11. Individual Program Content



How We Do It

Clinical Supervision of Volunteers:

1. Post every group facilitators need to complete process notes to share with Clinical Supervisor.
2. Cl. Sup. Meets with volunteer facilitators weekly informally and has one formal supervision per month.
3. An evaluation is conducted of each facilitator at the completion of a group series.

Value of the Joint Healing Process

- It allows the opportunity for peer facilitators to deal with issues related to domestic violence through a joint healing process (Hartman 1983)
- Group members find great value in facilitators that have themselves experienced abuse (Moldon 2002)

Value of the Joint Healing Process- Women's Voices

- From...

- *“Women who have been abused are looking for guidance and a light at the end of the tunnel. ...the instructors were able to do that”*
- *The key thing about a facilitator is they have gone through what we're going through so they know what we're feeling because they've been through it themselves. That's important to me. Maybe it helps to be able to do what they do. Maybe it helps them to heal too by helping other people.”*

Value of the Joint Healing Process – Women's Voices

- Continued

- *“I’ve had people in my groups go on to become volunteers. I remember one lady in particular. I said, “You are amazing! You could do this and you could give so much back” I just put that bug in her ear. She even went back to school to help with your, counseling. She’s a volunteer at Peer Support. She’s part of that new group. I have chatted with her and it’s really good.”*



Contact Information

Andrea Silverstone, Executive Director

403-234-7337 ext 1

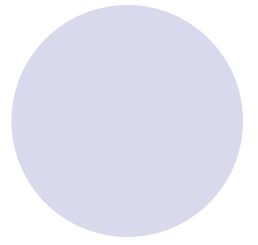
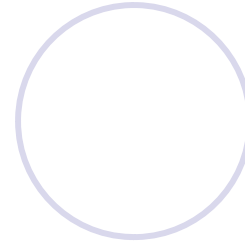
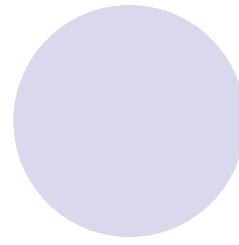
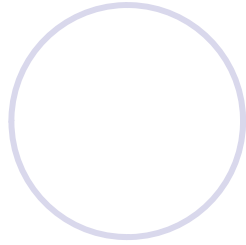
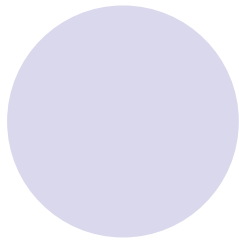
Andrea.silverstone@pssaw.org

Ada Baxter, Clinical Supervisor

403-234-7337 ext 2

abaxter@pssaw.org

www.pssaw.org



Questions?