



BOUNDARIES & ETHICS

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WHAT ARE ETHICS?

The discipline dealing with what is good and bad with moral duty and obligation. The principles of conduct governing an individual or a group.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary



TDMHSAS CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST CODE OF ETHICS

1. The primary responsibility of Certified Peer Recovery Specialists is to help peers achieve their own needs, wants, and goals.
2. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct.
3. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will conduct themselves in a manner that fosters their own recovery.
4. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will openly share with peers, other CPRS's and non-peers their recovery stories from mental illness, substance abuse, or co-occurring disorders as appropriate for the situation in order to promote recovery and resiliency.



TDMHSAS CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST CODE OF ETHICS

5. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists at all times will respect the rights and dignity of those they serve.
6. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will never intimidate, threaten, harass, use undue influence, use physical force, use verbal abuse, or make unwarranted promises of benefits to the individuals they serve.
7. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate in any form of discrimination or harassment based on ethnicity, race, color, pregnancy, creed, veteran's status, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental or physical disability, or any other category protected by state and/or federal civil rights laws.



TDMHSAS CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST CODE OF ETHICS

8. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will promote self-direction and decision making for those they serve.

9. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will respect the privacy and confidentiality of those they serve.

10. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will promote and support services that foster full integration of individuals into the communities of their choice.

11. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will be directed by the knowledge that all individuals have the right to live and function in the least restrictive and least intrusive environment.



TDMHSAS CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST CODE OF ETHICS

12. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will not enter into dual relationships or commitments that conflict with the interests of those they serve.

13. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will never engage in sexual or other inappropriate activities with peers they serve.

14. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will not use illegal substances, misuse alcohol, or other drugs (including prescription medications).

15. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to recovery and will share this knowledge with other Certified Peer Recovery Specialists.



TDMHSAS CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST CODE OF ETHICS

16. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will not accept gifts of significant value from those they serve.

17. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will not provide services, either for employment or on a volunteer basis, without supervision from a behavioral health professional.

18. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists will not provide services beyond their qualifications. This includes diagnosing an illness, prescribing medications, or providing clinical services.



TDMHSAS CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST CODE OF ETHICS

19. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists shall only provide services and support within the hours, days and locations that are authorized by the TDMHSAS-approved agency with which they work.



WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES?

Unofficial rules about what should not be done :
limits that define acceptable behavior.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary



HISTORY OF BOUNDARY/ETHICS IN THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

- ▣ **Traditional System**
 - Institutionalization
 - Professional Distance
 - Clear segregation between staff and peer

- ▣ **Recovery Oriented System**
 - Community Based
 - Concept of Mutuality
 - Integration and person first



HISTORY OF BOUNDARY/ETHICS IN THE MENTAL HEALTH FIELD

In this new environment guidelines must be:

Flexible

Case by case situations

Require more on-going supervisory dialogue
to problem solve



DEFINING THE ISSUES

The biggest contributing factor to ethical and boundary problems is when roles are not clearly defined, and communication is not occurring. A workplace boundary is the ability to know where you end and to know where another person begins.

Professional boundaries define limits and responsibility in the workplace.



DEFINING THE ISSUES

As Certified Peer Recovery Specialist the purpose is not to be hired or valued for our stories of illness.

It is to be hired and valued for our skills and stories of recovery.



DISCLOSURE BOUNDARIES

Seven Tools to Guide Disclosure

1. Orient the person to disclosure
2. Disclose to inspire not vent
3. Watch your timing
4. Focus and select to the persons recovery goals
5. Do not disclose too frequently
6. Don't burden the already overburdened
7. Be flexible

Based on Text by Gerald Eagen: The Skilled Helper



DUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Refers to any situation where multiple roles exist between a CPRS and a peer. Examples of dual relationships are when the peer is also a student, friend, family member, employee or business associate of the CPRS.



TYPES OF DUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Family member

Church member

Neighbor

Teacher

Employer

Sex partner

Friend



DUAL RELATIONSHIPS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED

Merchants of stores you use

Acquaintances

Possible support group members

Persons from interest groups/civic
groups

Involvement in other co-occurring
groups



LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT

Low-minimal level: When a CPRS runs into a peer in the local market or in the theatre parking lot.

Medium level: When a peer and CPRS share occasional encounters, as in attending church services every Sunday or occasional PTA meeting.

Intense level: When CPRS and peer socialize, work, attend functions or serve on committees together on a regular basis.



WHY ARE DUAL RELATIONSHIPS HARMFUL?

Unequal power

Privileged information

Conflict of interest

Inability to be objective



SOCIAL MEDIA BOUNDARIES & ETHICS

It is important to be very careful of who you friend and what you post on social media such as Facebook, X, Pinterest, LinkedIn or Instagram.



SOCIAL MEDIA BOUNDARIES & ETHICS

Do not friend a peer or their family members that you are providing services for.

NEVER post any information or personal comments about a peer or their family members that you are working with.

Remember that anything that is posted on the internet is there to stay even if you delete it and could be misconstrued by the reader.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Laws, rules and guidelines about confidentiality often involve difficult decisions for CPRS's. State and federal laws, as well as company policy, protect the identity and disclosures made by peers. This is important because such protections enhance peer confidence and encourage the free flow of information.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Two of the most common ethical violations involves the breach of confidentiality and sexual misconduct.



CONFIDENTIALITY EXCEPTIONS

- Disclosure of child abuse
- Disclosure of elder abuse
- Disclosure of a plan and desire to injure ones-self
- Disclosure to harm others with a plan and intent
- When there is a need to discuss a peer's session with a supervisor



Tony is a highly sought after Peer Recovery Specialist. He is charismatic and unrelenting in his support of the peers he works with. As his supervisor, you have one area of concern about Tony: he is emotionally possessive of those he works with and hypercritical of other service providers. Many that Tony serves do well in their recovery but seem to see the source of their recovery as Tony rather than themselves. Your concern is that the peers Tony works with seem to have developed an excessive emotional dependence on him.



QUESTIONS?

