



Peer Perspective January 2023

Why I Chose Peer Support

As I come up on my one-year anniversary of being a Peer Support Specialist, I reflect on why I chose to abruptly change careers. I feel like it all comes down to celebrating new starts. Celebrating achievements in progress is always a good thing but celebrating building an achievement from the ground up is something amazing. Making a career of celebrating achievement is what I call living the dream. Just like anything else, there are ups and downs, hard days, and great days, but it is where I am meant to be for now. I read a little snippet about addiction a while ago and have kept it handy for all these years. I don't remember where it came from or how long ago it was when I first read it, but it does put the Peer in Peer Support Specialist.

An addict fell in a hole and couldn't get out

A businessman went by. The addict called out for help. The businessman threw him some money and told him to buy a ladder, but the addict could not find a ladder in the hole he was in.

A doctor walked by. The addict said "help, I can't get out". The doctor gave him some drugs and said, "take this, it will help relieve the pain." The addict said thanks, but when the pills ran out, he was still in the hole.

A renowned psychiatrist rode by and heard the addict's cries for help. He stopped and said, "How did you get in there? Were you born there? Did your parents put you in there? Tell me about yourself and it will alleviate your loneliness" So the addict talked with him for an hour and then the psychiatrist had to leave but he said he'd be back next week. The addict thanked him, but he was still in the hole.

A priest waked by and heard the addict calling for help. The priest gave him a bible and said, "I'll pray for you" The priest got down on his knees and prayed for the addict and then left. The addict was very grateful and read the whole bible but was still stuck in the hole.

A recovering addict happened to be passing by. The addict cried out "help me, I'm stuck in the hole." Right away the recovering addict jumped in the hole with him. The addict said "what are you doing? Now we're both stuck in here." But the recovering addict said, "Its okay, I've been here before, I know the way out."

-Anonymous

I hope this is not taken out of context as all of the members of a Mental Health Recovery/Addiction Recovery Team are very vital to every person we help. I just remember back to the many beginnings of my recovery, that it was the example of the addicts in recovery that gave me the most hope to accomplish what I have and where I am today.

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We are the evidence; We hold the hope.