

Unit 3 is about cooperation where professionals work with peer support agents.

The focus is on



- What is the role of a professional when working with a peer supporter?
- How do we build equal and respectful partnership with a peer supporter?
- What challenges might come up in this cooperation?
- Why is it important that the whole organization prepares to work with the peer supporters?

„Professionals consider that sharing their expertise with a peer supporter is the same as sharing it with anyone else. In the case of the peer supporters, expertise comes mainly from their own experience. We believe that the professionals and peer supporters complement each other and are equals. Our experience combined with the professional's perspective is an added value in an intervention.”

– *A peer support agent*

„When a professional and a peer work together to help the client for his own benefit, the client receives the necessary care and peer support at the same time. When roles and responsibilities are clear and the peers can focus on their own work, the strength is in caring for and supporting the client. It's a win-win situation for all. ”

– *A professional*





## *Why work with a Peer Support approach?*

Studies show that clients can benefit from peer support in various ways:

- Decreased loneliness
- Increase in social relationships
- Improved self-esteem
- Improved social skills
- Improved overall functioning and psychological health
- Increased acceptance of illness and recovery
- Reduction in psychiatric symptoms
- Remain in contact with professionals and services



**What roles do you have (or may have) when working with a peer supporter?**

**Is something missing?**

**What roles would you like to have?**

