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SESSION

**Self-care
and well-being
at work**



11.1 Introduction

A Peer Support Agent helps people experiencing homelessness, out of a genuine desire to be a companion on their way to their full independence and responsibility for their own lives. This important task requires a support agent to be in good shape themselves and serve as an example of a person who knows how to take care of themselves. It is not a simple task, given that most of us today live in a rush and constant stress, which often leads us to burn out and exhaustion, and exposes us to civilization diseases, such as hypertension or diabetes.

The present training unit has for objective to provide the future Peer Support Agents with basic knowledge and practical tools to apply in their every-day life, in what regards to self-care and well-being at work.

11.2 Learning outcomes

- Arouse the need to care for oneself
- Analyze areas of life in which people function on a daily basis
- Acquire tools to get to know oneself better
- Get to know methods and practices to take care of oneself on a daily basis

11.3 Learning outcomes

DURATION

3 h

MATERIALS

- ATL Trainer Curriculum
- JCS Manual (it includes worksheets, case scenarios and self-assessment exercises)
- Worksheets and case scenario
- Stationery (paper in different sizes, cardboard, pens, pencils, markers, sticky notes, etc.)
- Pieces of paper with names of machines written
- Flipchart/whiteboard

- Power Point presentations of the contents (optional)
- Computer (optional)
- Projector/TV (optional)

CONCEPTUAL CONTENTS

- Trainer Curriculum, Unit 12, Self-care and well-being at work
- JCS Manual, Unit 11, Self-care and well-being at work

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the participants to the topic of the session: the importance of taking care of oneself at work and in private life.



ACTIVITY 1	What is self-care?
DURATION	20 min
WORKSHEET REFERENCE	JCS Manual, Unit 11, Worksheet 1 “What is self-care?”
PROCEDURE	<p>Participants receive a worksheet on which they are to write all the words, thoughts and situations that they associate with caring for themselves.</p> <p>After completing the task, the tutor discusses the task using the following questions summarizing the exercise.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there words that surprised anyone? 2. What does it mean to care for yourself? 3. How do we care for ourselves on a daily basis? 4. Is what you are doing enough? <p>Then the trainer discusses the simplest forms of everyday self-care with the division into three basic spheres of human functioning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical sphere: sleep, rest, food, exercise, body care; 2. Mental sphere: understanding oneself, one’s needs and emotions, contact with family and friends; 3. Spiritual sphere: contact with God or/and nature, meditation/prayer.

ACTIVITY 2	Caring for yourself is knowing yourself and accepting yourself
DURATION	40 min
WORKSHEET REFERENCE	JCS Manual, Unit 11, Worksheet 2 “Caring for yourself is knowing yourself and accepting yourself”

PROCEDURE

Begin the next exercise by asking the participants: *Do you know yourselves?*

Let them ponder this question. Don't expect answers right away. Tell the participants that if we know ourselves, it will be easier for us to take care of ourselves, e.g. if you know what activities you enjoy most and what helps you relax, you will know how to take care of yourself in your free time.

Exercise 1.

The purpose of this exercise, which is to last no more than 15 minutes, is to raise the self-esteem of the participants.

After completing the assignment, ask the participants to share their impressions with the rest of the group. Ask them:

- If they knew the answer to all the questions?
- If they found the exercise difficult?
- How do they feel after completing the task?

Exercise 2.

This exercise is about negative beliefs. Based on the ATL trainer curriculum, the trainer discusses the problem. They explain to the participants what negative beliefs are, where they come from, and show examples of negative beliefs.

In this task, it is very important that the trainer understands the essence of negative beliefs in human life, e.g., we often do not believe in our own strength, not because we do not have enough strength to deal with the problem, but because as a child, we often heard that we can't handle this or that. Negative beliefs are traps that block a person's source of motivation.

The trainer asks each participant to choose one negative belief and write it 10 times in a positive form. E.g. I am a valuable person, I deserve happiness, My wishes matter,...

The trainer then asks participants if they would be able to believe the positive beliefs? How do they feel when reading positive beliefs?

ALTERNATIVES/TIPS

An interesting tool to distract us from negative beliefs is the *"Thank you" journal*, which is a daily record of good situations that have happened to us during the day.



ACTIVITY3	In search of life balance - The Circle of Life
DURATION	30 min
WORKSHEET REFERENCE	JCS Manual, Unit 11, Worksheet 3 “The Circle of Life”
PROCEDURE	<p>The trainer discusses the Circle of Life tool with the participants. They present examples of areas in which people function, and then propose an exercise in which participants will prepare their own Circles of Life with the most important areas- according to them- in which they function on a daily basis.</p> <p>Instruction for the participants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name each piece of the Circle with one area of your life (Examples of areas are shown in the Worksheet). 2. On a scale from 1 (not satisfied at all) to 10 (very satisfied)- where 1 is near the center of the circle, and 10 is on its edge- mark the degree to which you feel satisfied in a given area of life, e.g., if you feel satisfaction at level 7 in the area of health, mark the line above half a circle. 3. Look at your Circle of Life and answer the questions on the Worksheet. <p>After completing the task, the trainer discusses the exercise with participants. Asks about reflections and difficulties in completing the task.</p>

ACTIVITY4	Individual Self-Care Plan
DURATION	40 min
WORKSHEET REFERENCE	JCS Manual, Unit 11, Worksheet 4 “Self-care plan”
PROCEDURE	<p>The trainer discusses with the participants the proposed strategies of taking care of oneself on a daily basis with reference to the guidelines presented in the curriculum. Then each participant prepares their Individual Self-Care Plan.</p> <p>After completing the task, participants share their reflections and are invited to present their individual plans to the group.</p>

ACTIVITY 5	Case scenario analysis
DURATION	30min
WORKSHEET REFERENCE	Story of Maria
PROCEDURE	Read the case scenario to the group or ask one of the participants to read it aloud. Ask participants to respond collectively to the questions or do it in small groups. In this case, then, ask each group to share their conclusions.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION During the last 5-10 minutes, invite the participants to reflect upon what they got from this session. Invite them to share what they liked most and what could improve. Let them choose if they wish to do it anonymously.

11.4 Bibliography / Webliography

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SESSION

worksheets and case scenario



Accommodating a travelling **life**

Worksheet 1 - What is self-care

What do you associate with the notion of taking care of yourself? Write down any words, thoughts, situations, and behaviors that come to your mind.



Worksheet 2 – Caring for yourself is knowing yourself and accepting yourself

EXERCISE 1

Complete the sentences. The answers will help you get to know yourself better.

I like the most ...

I am most proud of ...

My dream is ...

I can definitely ...

I am definitely ...

I definitely have ...

EXERCISE 2

List 5 negative beliefs that are limiting you. Consider how these limiting beliefs affect your life.

For example:

- 1.** People are bad, unreliable, and lying.
- 2.** The world is cruel.
- 3.** I will never be able to achieve anything in my life.
- 4.** People keep cheating on me.
- 5.** I will never meet my dream partner.

Your negative beliefs:

1

2

3

4

5



Convert one of your negative beliefs into a positive belief. Then write this positive sentence 20 times.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

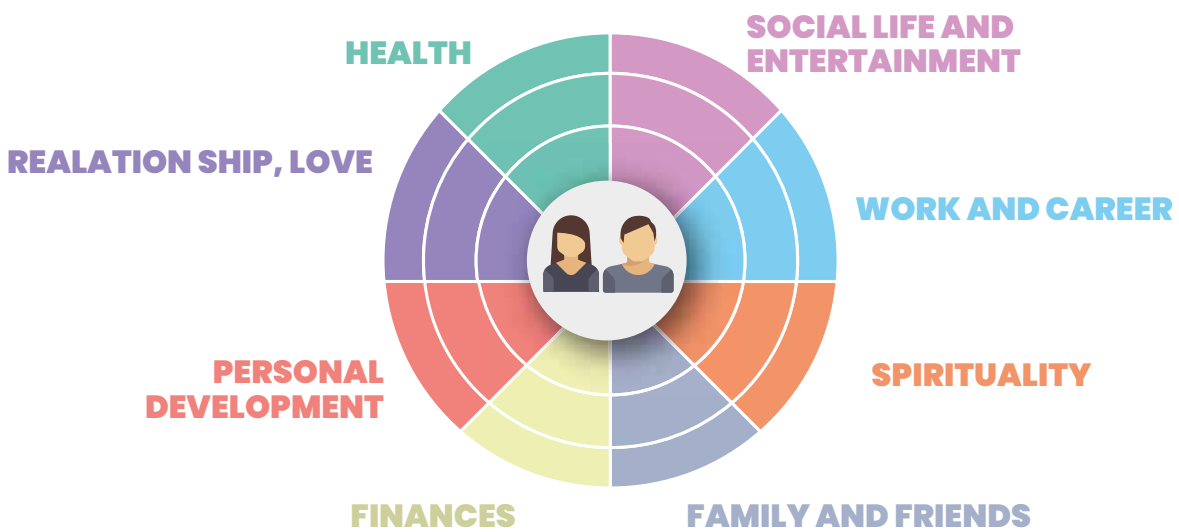
How do you feel now?

Worksheet 3 – The Cake of Life

Step 1.

Name each piece of the “cake” with one area of your life.

Below you can see the areas in which people are typically present. They are the most common, but yours may be different.



**Step 2.**

On a scale from 1 to 10 (where 1 is near the center of the cake, and 10 on its edge), mark the degree to which you feel satisfied with that particular area of your life, e.g. if you feel satisfaction at level 7 in the area of health, draw a line above half the circle.

Step 3.

Look at your Cake of Life and answer the following questions:

1. What are your conclusions looking at your Circle of Life?

2. Which area is most important to you today and why?

3. In what areas of life would you like to raise the level of your satisfaction?

4. Think about how you could take care of yourself in these areas, what could you do?

Plan at least one activity in each area that will help you raise your level of life satisfaction.

Worksheet 4 : Self-care plan

EXERCISE 1

Try to recall all the tasks you have to do in the next few days/ weeks, e.g., visiting a doctor, calling a friend I haven't talked to for a long time, meeting with a friend/relative, delivering an overdue report at work..., then sort according to the matrix below.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
NOT IMPORTANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •



EXERCISE 2

Create your own self-care plan. Write what you will do. In what way? How often?

For example, *I will go for a walk in the park twice a week.*

You can include the reason to do this, e.g. I will go for a walk in the park twice a week because it will help me clear my mind or distract me from the daily burdens, or I will go for a walk in the park twice a week because it will help me be more active.

CASE SCENARIO – Story of Maria

Maria, aged 26, has been homeless for two years. Shortly before becoming homeless, she came out as a transgender woman. At that time, she was living with her spouse who could not handle the fact that Maria was transgender and decided to end the relationship. Maria moved out. At first, she stayed at her parents' house, but it was difficult to live with them because her father was disrespectful about her gender identity. Following this, Maria was forced to couch-surf at her friends' homes. She faced discrimination in the rental market as a result of her being transgender. She didn't reach out to social services because she felt she wouldn't get any help from them. She knew that she'd have to explain her gender identity to the social workers and the idea of that was hard for her. She expected the social workers would call her by her old name. Additionally, she was very ashamed of being homeless.

Maria considers that her childhood was a quite happy one, even though she felt that she was different from the other boys. She has two older sisters, one of whom started using drugs during her adolescence. She asked Maria to steal from shops for her, which made Maria feel guilty and insecure. Nowadays, she and her sister talk from time to time but aren't very close— her sister still uses drugs. Maria's other sister lives abroad and is estranged from the family, and they only get in touch once or twice a year. The only person that supports Maria in her family is her mother. Even though Maria has some friends, she often feels very lonely.

Years before, when Maria was living “in the role of a man” she spent time with acquaintances who had problems with alcohol. She didn't drink too much herself but her daily life was still far from what you could call normal. She interrupted her studies several times and, to this day, she has barely had any experience working. She has been living on the lowest income for years. She uses most of her money to pay the friends that let her stay over at their apartments.

Maria has a panic disorder, asthma and numerous allergies. Because of the lack of money, she can't always afford the food that she is not allergic to, meaning she is often hungry. She is constantly tired and depressed because of her situation. Her dream is to become a librarian because she loves books and stories. She has tried to go back to school but it was difficult to keep up with the studies while being homeless. At present, Maria's latest application for social benefits remains unresolved and she has accumulated debts. She doesn't dare to turn to the social services or health services because she is afraid of experiencing discrimination. She looks quite feminine but people on the streets still stare at her. She has been physically assaulted on multiple occasions because of her transgender identity.

Maria has tried to find an apartment, but she faces discrimination in the housing market. Her debts, coupled with her low income, make most of the apartments too expensive for her. All her belongings can fit inside one bag. She had to sell and give away most of them once she became homeless. Her mobile phone is old and doesn't work well.

Maria is very depressed and feels hopeless. She wishes she could get a job to be able to pay a higher rent, but she thinks no one will want to employ the kind of person she is— an untrained and unexperienced transgender woman. At the same time, she doesn't want to turn to the employment services because she is afraid she might be forced to do a job she doesn't want to do. She claims that, for instance, she doesn't want to work in customer service because of her manly voice.

Maria is quite shy and doesn't talk very much. She needs time to get to know a person in order to build trust before she feels safe enough to share information about herself. She seems to be



a clever young woman who can express herself well. She says that officials make her so nervous she always forgets what she is told in meetings with professionals. She used to have a notebook where she wrote down this kind of information, but it was stolen.

Questions for reflection

- 1.** What are Maria's primary needs at this point?
- 2.** How belonging to a gender minority is reflected in different areas of Maria's life?
- 3.** How can support services approach Maria in a sensitive way to help build trust towards the service system?
- 4.** How could health professionals help Maria?
- 5.** How could a peer supporter help Maria?



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end of session

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