

MY VIEWS ON THE PEER MODEL

I believe that the peer model in treatment is important because of the support that it provides. The peer model helps young adults connect with their peer mentor on a more personal level. This level is a deep understanding of what young adults are going through. Since I have already gone through a similar situation, as a peer mentor I can show other young adults that mental illness does not have to control their lives. More importantly I show that an individual can recover from a mental illness and be a productive part of society. The other helpful part is that, as a peer mentor, I have had the chance to interact with these young adults in their community. This way the young adults have a chance to start their recovery within their community and not outside of it. I believe this helps promote a higher chance of recovery and stability for them. Overall, I believe the peer model helps show young adults that recovery is possible; however, it takes time and a helping hand.

Being a peer mentor has benefited me in many ways. I feel the most important change I have seen in myself since starting this position is that I am more outgoing and open. Before starting this job, I was a shy and introverted person. This job challenged me to be more extroverted. This change, however, has not only been seen in my work as a peer mentor but also in my school, personal, and family settings. This job has also challenged me to travel out of my comfort zone. For example, some of our young adults do not know how to use public transportation. This job has challenged me to learn different forms of public transportation and to not only use it but also to show and teach other young adults how to use it as well. Overall, this job has changed how I look at my own treatment going forward and how I can benefit both myself and other young adults.

– Justin Drakos

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