

TOOLKIT

Foundational patterns for peer-to-peer responses

Guiding foundations to consider when developing and scaffolding your own peer-to-peer responses

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Why this toolkit?

Together with people with lived and living experience, TACSI has co-designed and co-delivered dozens of people-powered responses, including:

- Scaffolded peer-to-peer support model Family by Family
- Scaffolded peer-to-peer caring support model Weavers
- Scaffolded peer-to-peer intensive regional family program Virtual Village

In 2020, we realised that each of these initiatives drew on the same patterns of success.

We've documented these patterns in this toolkit, which we hope will help you create your own blueprint for peer-to-peer success.



The Virtual Village



**Two more toolkits
are on their way!**

Subscribe to TACSI's newsletter or follow on LinkedIn and Facebook to be the first to get access.

How to use this toolkit

This first instalment of the toolkit outlines **seven essential foundations** to help you build a peer to peer response.

Use these evidence-informed framing foundations to:

- Reflect on your current work
- Inform planning stages of how you could work alongside peers in your responses
- Amplify elements of your current responses
- Promote team discussion and reflection on how to apply these in your approach to co-creating new responses or adapt current responses to incorporate peers and their lived/living experience.

These indicative foundational patterns have been tested with various collaborators over the last three years.

Together, we can support organisations, communities and institutions to co-create their own peer-to-peer responses for new and specific contexts and purposes.



FOUNDATION 1

Co-design and working with intention and care

- Co-design is intentional, and working alongside lived experience in a peer-to-peer response needs to hold the same intentionality.
- It's not consultation or intermittent collaboration alone. It's a process that engages all stakeholders in equitable collaboration, which leads to actions to try, test and learn from joint engagement.
- Co-design develops the capacity of all stakeholders to drive outcomes and build communities of support with peers as experts alongside practitioners.
- Each aspect of a co-design approach is intentional – each role, interaction, tool and process has an intent and purpose that supports the key 'actors' in the response (usually practitioner, peer and end user are more likely to achieve intended outcome when focused on joint purpose).

FOUNDATION 2

Boundaries and frameworks

- Peer work is held within the scaffolding of frameworks that support both practitioners and people with lived and living experience to achieve outcomes.
- People are clear on who is doing what, when, for how long, and for what purpose.
- Peers are provided with the right structure, support, training and debriefing to enable successful outcomes for the end user and manage risks.
- All actors in the response know how they contribute to change. Clarity is given to peers, participants/end users and professionals with a shared understanding of what is to be achieved.
- Reciprocal learning features between practitioners, peers and end users, and this creates joint and continuous learning opportunities without the dynamics of a hierarchy of knowledge holders. It also enables side-by-side practice and delivery with less perceived power or control of any one actor.

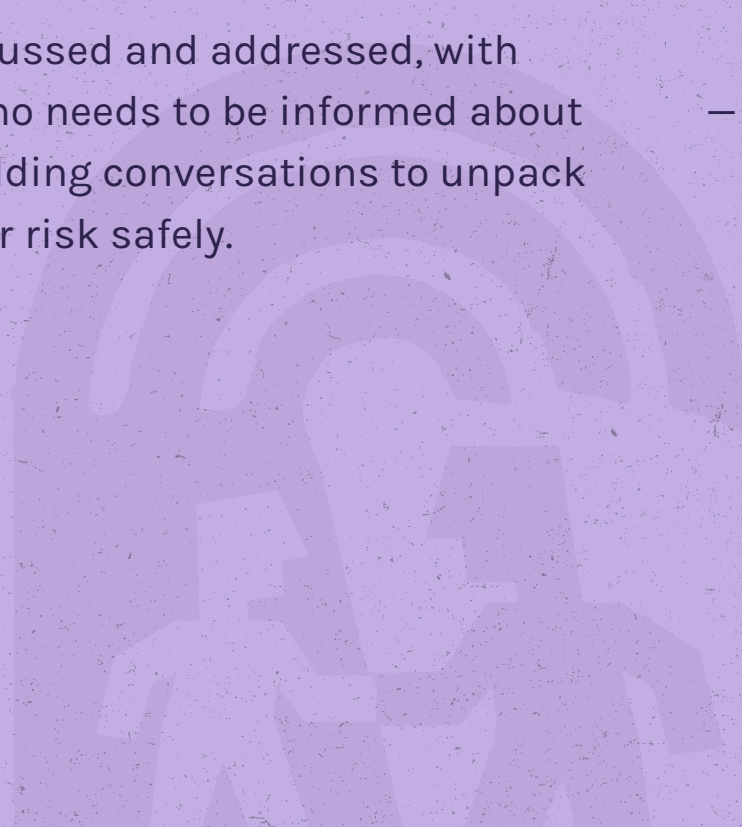
FOUNDATION 3

Equity and balance

- Peer-to-peer responses are informed by deep insight of lived and living experience and create a response that meets the needs of peers, end users and practitioners so they can work effectively.
- When practitioners are present, they act as facilitators and coaches to those with lived expertise, operating in flexible responsive ways to maintain rigour and hold risk while also valuing the voice of the lived and living experience in the room.
- Power sharing is key, where the voice of the peer and lived/living experience is considered equal alongside the practitioner. This supports a response to consider both perspectives in its design and/or development.
- Interactions are neither top down nor bottom up.
- Truly sharing success and ownership of a project outcomes for people are increased.

FOUNDATION 4

Accountability

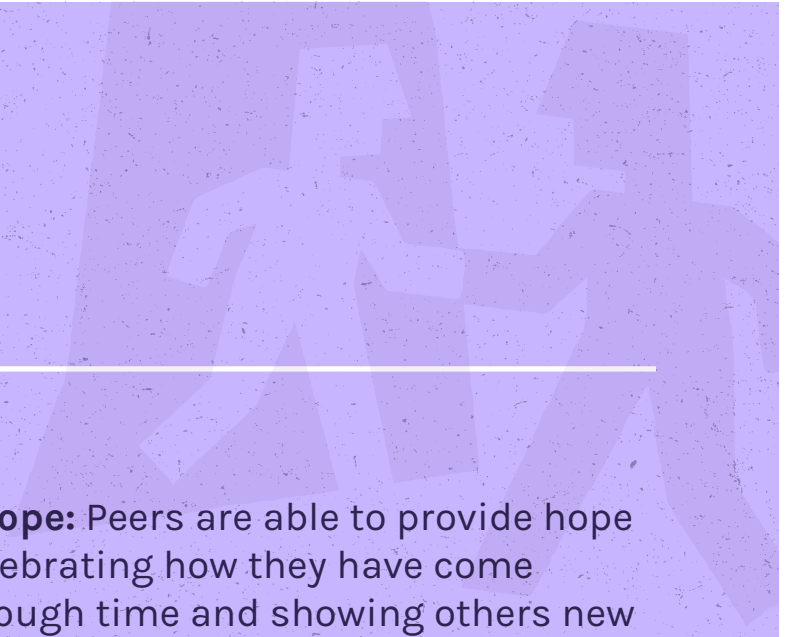
- Professionals and peers work side by side, with clarity of who is responsible for key actions and risk responses.
 - Risk is discussed and addressed, with clarity of who needs to be informed about risk and holding conversations to unpack and uncover risk safely.
 - Shared accountability takes the diversity of experiences, cultures and histories of communities into account so informed risk mitigation responses can be created.
 - Through honest conversations both practitioners and peers can hold risk together (where appropriate).
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FOUNDATION 5

Mindsets and behaviours

At the centre of the process of change is establishing relationships that reflect key mindsets and behaviours, including:

- **Reduction in shame and blame:** Lived experience is seen as strength, and we harness the strength in the human story as a skill set that can be drawn upon as a useful asset for others to learn and heal from.
- **Creative problem solving:** Lived experience of navigating or negotiating challenges often provide creative and unexpected solutions to problems.
- **Collaboration:** True collaboration between practitioners and lived experience as well as between peers leads to more innovation and better problem solving.
- **Instilling hope:** Peers are able to provide hope through celebrating how they have come through a tough time and showing others new possibilities.
- **High expectations:** From expecting little from those with lived experience to expecting much, we raise the bar on what is possible when working together.
- **Deep empathy:** Entering into the mindset of another in order to understand what they think and feel leads to more responsive solutions for people.
- **Choice and self determination:** Tools and interactions that enable increased choice and decision making for end users are present.
- **Learning is reciprocal:** Professionals learn from lived/living experience and vice versa.



FOUNDATION 6

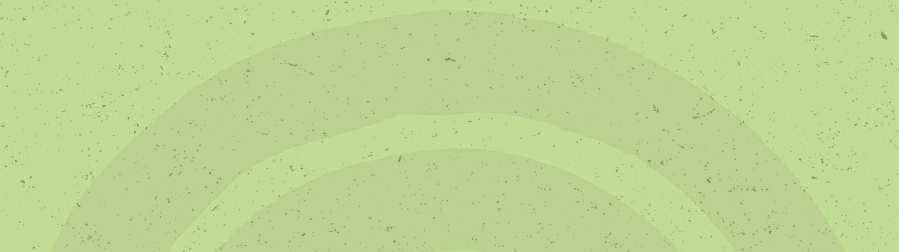
Communication

- Clear communication that is based in mutual respect and knowledge is key.
- All communication around the response is in the everyday language of the key cohorts, and done so in a way that removes barriers to participant engagement.
- Tools, processes and touchpoints are primarily aimed at participants upskilling and active engagement, not solely to service the broader response system.



FOUNDATION 7

Enabling environments

- Organisations encourage peer-to-peer responses and enable outcomes to be created through this mechanism
 - To do this work, key enabling environments include humility and vulnerability as part of the human experience, rather than a them (peers) and us (practitioners) mentality.
 - This enables lived experience voice to be heard and influential, which leads to individuals' experiences (peers and end users) and behaviour impacting systems that operate around them, seeing positive shifts in:
 - Cultural
 - Institutions
 - Workplaces
 - Families
 - Community
 - Relationships
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Interested in learning more?

If you're curious about peer-to-peer practices or organising training and coaching for your own organisation, TACSI is here to help.

[Get in touch](#)

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