

Peer Support with Tony Consent Form

The purpose of peer support

Mental health peer support involves individuals who have lived experience with mental health challenges providing support to others who are facing similar issues. The concept is rooted in the idea that someone who has experienced mental health difficulties can offer unique understanding and empathy that professionals without such experiences might not be able to provide.

Our Peer Support sessions

I want to join you on your journey to mental wellness. I'm here to give you space to express yourself and to listen to and understand your struggles and feelings.

In our peer support sessions, we can explore books from various evidence based therapeutic approaches together, including DBT, CBT, mindfulness or any other methods that interest you. As we read through the material, we'll engage in meaningful discussions about the techniques, share our thoughts, and tackle any challenges that arise. It's a collaborative process where we learn, reflect, and implement together. For instance, if we decide to complete cognitive behavioral therapy thought records for the week, we can work in parallel, with each of us completing our own records. We can then discuss the challenges that came up, the difficulties we faced, and the feelings we experienced throughout the process.

Additionally, if you have homework assigned by your therapist, such as readings or workbooks, I'll work on it alongside you. I'll read the material and complete the assignments alongside you, which will not only motivate you by showing that you're not alone in the process but also help keep you accountable. By working together on the therapy homework, I can support you in staying on track and getting the most out of your therapy sessions.

We can create weekly plans and discuss your accomplishments and obstacles. We can brainstorm solutions to some difficulties you're experiencing. We can set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) together.

Further, I believe that it is very important to recognize and celebrate pieces of progress and small wins. Once you attain some level of progress towards recovery or other goals, let's celebrate together!

About Tony

I have faced the challenges of depression and anxiety for the past 13 years. My journey has included significant periods of anxiety that impacted my academic and

professional progress, such as needing extra time to complete my undergraduate degree and ultimately leaving grad school due to being overwhelmed by health and social anxiety. In the depths of my most severe anxiety, getting out of bed each day was a daily struggle.

Recently, I have focused on wellness techniques that have greatly improved my well-being, including engaging in positive social interactions daily and taking consistent, small steps towards my goals.

I am a trained peer supporter, have founded successful online peer support communities and bring 3 years of experience in providing peer support.

Flexible Peer Support, On-Call Support

Flexibility is key during our peer support sessions; we can have our sessions online or I can travel to a meeting location you decide (within the City of Toronto). We can also decide on a location together! I know of a few nice meetings places such as: public libraries, community centres, coffee shops, online video call, or even taking a walk together. The theme of each session can be decided by you, whether you want to vent, work on wellness, or vent, everything is up to you.

In addition to regular weekly sessions, I offer flexible on-call support to ensure you receive assistance whenever you need it. If you find yourself in need of extra support, you can check my bookable hours (check my calendar via the link at the end of this agreement) and schedule an appointment at any available time, even on short notice.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tony at +1 416-275-3005 via phone, text or WhatsApp. You can add Tony on discord: “renewedalpaca”. You can email Tony at caringpeer@gmail.com

Confidentiality

All information shared during peer support sessions will be kept confidential within the bounds of the law and organizational policies. However, there are limits to confidentiality, and information may be disclosed if there is a risk of harm to self or others, or if required by law.

Peer Support Relationship Boundaries

As part of this peer support service, it is important to establish clear boundaries to maintain a professional, supportive environment. The relationship between a peer

supporter and a peer is not intended to develop into a friendship or romantic relationship.

- **Professional Support:** Peer support is a professional service, designed to be consistent and reliable. Unlike friendships, where personal commitments or interests may sometimes take precedence, a peer supporter's primary focus is on your well-being. You can expect your peer supporter to be there for you consistently, without the distractions or compromises that often accompany personal friendships. A peer supporter is dedicated to your needs and is not there to fulfil personal desires or to receive support in return.
- **No Romantic Relationships:** To uphold the integrity of the peer support relationship, romantic relationships between peer supporters and peers are strictly prohibited. Romantic involvement can compromise the objectivity, safety, and effectiveness of the support provided.

Payment Terms

The cost for each online or in person peer support session is \$35. Payment options include Interac e-transfer, PayPal, and cash (in person only) to be made immediately after a session.

- **Interac e-transfer:** Payments can be made to tonyhanggao@yahoo.com. Payment must be made immediately after a session.
- **PayPal:** Payments can be made to tonyhanggao@yahoo.com. Payment must be made immediately after a session.
- **Cash:** This option is only available for in person appointments. Payment must be made immediately after a session.

Cancellation Policy

If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, please provide at least 24 hours' notice.

I, _____, consent to the above terms and conditions and agree to participate in one-to-one peer support sessions provided by Tony Hang Gao.

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____