

What Do I Bring to the Table?

A Reflection Worksheet for People with Lived Experience

Your Experience Matters

You do not need to be a professional or have special titles to make a difference. Your lived experience gives you knowledge that no textbook can teach.

Your voice can help improve services, inspire hope, and create systems that work better for others.

My Story Has Value

Think about your experiences:

- What challenges have you overcome?

- What helped you in your recovery journey?

- What barriers did you face?

- What would you want providers or leaders to better understand?

Strengths I Bring

Check all that apply:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ I know what it feels like to ask for help | ☐ I understand recovery firsthand |
| ☐ I listen well to others | ☐ I care about improving services |
| ☐ I can speak up for people who are not being heard | ☐ I understand how systems affect people |
| ☐ I encourage hope in others | ☐ I bring honesty and real-life perspective |
| ☐ I can recognize gaps in services | ☐ I work well with others |
| ☐ I bring compassion and empathy | ☐ I am willing to learn and grow |

Other strengths I bring:

My Voice Can Help By...

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Sharing ideas for improving services | ☐ Identifying barriers people face |
| ☐ Helping organizations understand what people really experience | ☐ Supporting dignity and respect for people receiving services |
| ☐ Encouraging recovery-oriented approaches | ☐ Helping create more welcoming environments |
| ☐ Speaking from the perspective of lived experience | ☐ Helping others feel less alone |

What Matters Most to Me?

Please circle the topics or issues you are most interested in?

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| • Housing | • Employment |
| • Peer Support | • Crisis Services |
| • Access to Care | • Transportation |
| • Substance Use Recovery | • Veterans Services |
| • Youth Services | • Family Support |
| • Cultural Respect | • Trauma-Informed Care |
| • Stigma Reduction | • Other: _____ |

What Makes a Strong Committee Member?

A strong committee member does not need to know everything.

Strong committee members:

- Listen respectfully
- Ask questions
- Work together
- Stay open to learning
- Share honestly
- Care about helping others
- Bring hope and ideas
- Cares to make a difference in the system

Reflection Questions

1. What life experiences have taught you the most?

2. What changes would you like to see in the mental health system?

3. How could your voice help others?

4. What gives you passion or purpose?

Remember

Your experiences matter. Your voice matters. Your ideas matter.

The system becomes stronger when people with lived experience help shape it.