



**Ontario Shores**  
Centre for Mental Health Sciences

**Fall 2022**

# **Recovery College**

Virtual Course Descriptions

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## Apologizing and Making Amends

### What will we do?

Who hasn't been hurt by the actions or words of another? When someone you care about hurts you, you can hold on to anger, resentment and thoughts of revenge —or embrace forgiveness and move forward. Forgiveness means different things to different people. Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that helps you go on with life.

### What will you learn?

- The benefits of forgiveness and the risks of resentment
- How to ask for forgiveness
- The components of a meaningful apology
- How and when to make amends

## A Good Night's Sleep

### What will we do?

Sleep is so important as it relates to so many areas of our wellness, but sometimes certain factors interfere and will prevent us from securing the required amount we need on a daily basis. This workshop is designed to help build healthy habits and to provide helpful tips to improve the quality of our sleep, even in challenging times.

### What will you learn?

- The importance of getting enough sleep and the science behind it
- Exploring common sleep problems and obstacles that prevent a good night's sleep
- Acquiring strategies for having good sleep hygiene and bedtime routine
- The effects sleep can have on both our physical and mental health

## Building Better Boundaries

### What will we do?

Do you know how to identify your boundaries? Are you comfortable saying “No,” if someone crosses your boundaries? Would you like to learn how to set personal boundaries and feel confident executing them? If so, then this is the course for you!

### What will you learn?

- Discover what a boundary is and how you can establish ones that work for you.
- Learn how your boundaries can both protect and promote yourself.
- Understand how to use boundaries to help you achieve your goals and dreams.
- Recognize how respectful boundaries can bring value to your mental, emotional and physical health.

### Building Resiliency

#### What will we do?

Resilience is when we are able bounce back from difficulties. Throughout this group, we will engage in discussions related to managing and coping with life's stressors and highlight our strengths to better equip us to cope and adapt to challenging situations.

#### What will we learn?

- What personal resiliency is
- To identify and learn how to apply resiliency skills to current and future stressors

### Committing to a Healthier Lifestyle

#### What will we do?

The purpose of this course is to encourage each participant to learn more about complimentary nutritional and physical fitness information while participating in a group discussion and fitness program. It has been proven that maintaining a healthy lifestyle decreases the risk of various illnesses and diseases, while increasing personal well-being. Studies also demonstrate that participants succeed more frequently when support systems are accessible to them. In this case, the support system includes the peer group aspect and the support of the Registered Dietitian and Recreation Therapist/Personal Trainer who facilitate this group.

#### What will we learn?

Each weekly session will have goals specific to the activity.

- To identify strategies that enables an increase in physical activity and improved dietary habits through weekly discussion and goal identification.
- To develop, maintain and/or increase personal balance in healthy lifestyle through continuous participation in this program while meeting their goals.
- The participant will actively and fully participate in both the discussion and physical segment of this weekly program.

### Connecting to Nature

#### What will we do?

Interacting with the natural world around us has many therapeutic benefits. It can make us feel more connected to the Earth, give us something to nurture, as well as other therapeutic benefits to improve well-being. Within this five-week program, participants will engage in a variety of nature-based interventions that provide them with the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of Canadian plants and to connect with others and the Earth. Activities will include a combination of nature-based games, plant education, and expressive arts.

#### What will you learn?

- Participant will increase their knowledge of Canadian Grown Plants
- Participants will increase positive feelings about self

- Participants will experience the potential benefits of how nature can improve one's well-being.
- Participants will create connections between nature and the human condition

### Coping with Depression

#### **What will we do?**

We've all been sad or had moments of a low mood at times in our lives, but what happens when we can't pull ourselves out of these prolonged funks? In this group we will increase our understanding and knowledge about depression and gain skills to help recognize and manage symptoms that can frequently occur. Collectively we'll identify and implement healthy coping mechanisms and explore a variety of treatments that help manage day-to-day symptoms.

#### **What will we learn?**

- Identify signs and symptoms of depression
- The importance of a support system and developing a crisis plan
- Exploring a variety of different treatment options and coping strategies
- Examining personal triggers and enforcing boundaries
- Discuss our experiences with stigma and how to normalize depression through effective conversations

### Creative Journaling

#### **What will we do?**

Creative Journaling melds creative interventions with journaling prompts that promote self-reflection and self-discovery within a safe, judgement-free, social environment. Within this program, participants will be provided weekly themes to spark creativity and lead them through a journey of personal growth.

Self-reflective prompts that will be presented will include but are not limited to growing the good, gratitude, inspiration, motivation & self-care, and life's journey. During the first week, participants will have the opportunity to make their own personalized journals using Japanese demonstrations of different art interventions to inspire and bring out participants' creative side. Six reflective questions will be assigned relating to weekly themes. Participants are encouraged to share part of their journaling process with peers, however this is not mandatory.

#### **What will you learn?**

To demonstrate increased knowledge of a variety of journaling styles and art techniques as demonstrated in weekly themed exercises.

- Participants will be able to identify, explore, and utilize a variety of artistic techniques while creating their journals.
- Participants will be able to tap into their creative side recognizing that we all have the ability to be creators acknowledging the importance of the process of creating not just the finished product.

- This course will provide a non-judgmental creative space for participants to share and self-reflect.
- Participants will engage in positive social environment sharing with others.
- Participants will be motivated through creativity and sharing when creating goals and intentions for their journals.

### CMHA Codesign Class - LGBTQ+/LGBTQ2S+ Resources

#### **What will we do?**

If you are interested in developing a new Recovery College program to develop resources for those who identify as or support the **LGBTQ+/LGBTQ2S+ community** then this is the course for you!

You are an expert on your own mental health journey, and we greatly value this expertise! As like-minded peers, we will come together brainstorming ideas and developing content for this course to be presented in future Recovery College semesters!

We will collectively decide on a course name, content and topics, and how to engage participants who join.

We can't wait to learn and create alongside you!

#### **What will we learn?**

- Co-design skills and the Recovery College philosophy.
- How to leverage personal experiences as a source of strength and value.
- How to apply the principles of co-design, lesson planning, and how to work effectively in a group while producing and/or sourcing course content.
- How to help meet the mental health needs of your peers by creating a new, innovative and interactive course.

### Environmental Services Skills

#### **What will we do?**

Are you aware that there is an established way to clean properly? Would you like to learn cleaning skills that you can use in your daily life or put on your resume to help you obtain a career in Environmental Services? If so, then this is the course for you!

#### **What will you learn?**

- Overview of duties and tasks of an Environmental Service Worker
- Proper use of housekeeping carts and equipment
- Safe working habits and musculoskeletal disorders
- The 3 moments of hand hygiene for an Environmental Service Worker
- Introduction to chemicals and safe usage
- The essentials of cleaning and methodology
- The modes of transmission
- How to clean floors safely
- Waste management

- How to properly plunge toilets

### Exploring Core Beliefs

#### **What will we do?**

Core beliefs are a person's most central ideas about themselves, others, and the world. These beliefs act like a lens through which every situation and life experience is seen. Because of this, people with different core beliefs might be in the same situation, but think, feel, and behave very differently. Through structured curriculum, activities and discussion we will explore our core beliefs and find ways to leverage them while maintaining our recovery wellness.

#### **What will we learn?**

- To explore our Core beliefs
- To understand where our core beliefs come from
- How our core beliefs impact us on a day to day basis
- How to leverage our core beliefs in perusing, maintaining our recovering wellness

### Exploring Employment as Part of Your Recovery

#### **What will we do?**

- Self exploration activities
- Exploring readiness and your own personal needs
- Transition planning
- Learning about ways in which Vocational Services can help to support with your employment goals

#### **What will we learn?**

- Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation Services at Ontario Shores and how to get referred
- The benefits of work as part of your recovery
- Exploring your own personal readiness to engage in job preparation
- Beginning the process of skills identification

### Guided Painting

#### **What will we do?**

Within this course you will learn to paint something new each week. In This guided painting experience you will be able to create your one of a kind pieces that teaches the following painting techniques: Stenciling, sponge painting, and using a tooth brush as a painting tool. You do not need prior painting experience to join in the fun, this program is for all levels!

#### **What you will learn?**

- Within this workshop you will have the opportunity to self-express through painting.



- Learn a variety of painting techniques with brushes, stencils, and everyday household objects
- Build self-esteem and creativity
- Participate with others in a judgement free social environment
- \*Please note that registration for all virtual guided paint sessions must be completed with a minimum of two weeks notice to arrange for canvases to be mailed out. Participants will be required to provide their own paint and brushes, a list of paint colours that will be required for the session will be sent out upon registration.

### Learning About Mindfulness

#### **What will we do?**

Mindfulness is a tool that you can put in your tool belt to help you manage difficult situations and bring you back to the present moment. In this group, we will engage in both discussions with our peers and with the curriculum to learn about the 9 attitudes of mindfulness to help us set the stage for positive emotional experiences.

#### **What will we learn?**

- The 9 attitudes of mindfulness from mindfulness expert, Jon Kabat-Zinn
- To stay in the present in order to foster a positive and comfortable emotional state

### Let's Butt Out Together

#### **What will we do?**

This 2-session workshop will focus on the addictive nature of tobacco and explore different strategies to curb cravings through presentation, 'did you know' questions, helpful tools and group discussions to assist those who smoke with a better understanding of why they smoke and provide techniques and external support services to better equip them with reducing or quitting.

#### **What will we learn?**

You will learn how to recognize triggers to smoking and how best to manage them with strategies, behavioural change and with the help of resources, participant support, and free online apps.

### Let's Talk About Art!

#### **What will we do?**

If you are a creative mind that likes to use art as an outlet for sharing your mental health journey, or perhaps you enjoy looking at Art that depicts others mental health journeys then this course is for you!

Within this course we will come together to talk about art. We will share with each other how we tell our stories through art, learn about artists throughout history that create work about the human condition, and learn new ways to communicate through art.

#### **What will you Learn?**

- To share your story through art
- Learn how others share their stories
- Learn about different artistic techniques/outlets
- Learn to write an artist statement about your work

### Learning About Mental Health Treatment Options

#### **What will we do?**

Throughout this course, we will consider signs, symptoms, and severity of mental illnesses as we learn of the variety of therapeutic options within the hospital and our community. Discover prospective paths to move from mental illness to mental wellness. Mental health professionals within Ontario Shores will join us to speak about their scope of practice and how it may contribute to the patient's personal recovery and inform their choices.

#### **What will you learn?**

We will learn to distinguish between the medical-model and personal recovery. We will learn how therapies such as CBT, DBT & CPT differ. We will learn of complementary therapies that can supplement our existing care plans. We will learn how to find reputable information about treatment options and services to empower us to make informed decisions regarding our mental health care.

### My Story. My Voice - DMHS Collaboration

#### **What will we do?**

Sharing your experiences can be a meaningful way to change your story from one of illness to one of strength and wellness. In this course, you will learn how to use your own personal and unique lived experience to craft your own story. You will work towards feeling comfortable and confident with sharing your work in progress in front of a group of peers while accepting gentle feedback in order to make your story the best it can be.

#### **What will you learn?**

- Participate in a series of activities that will help you to get comfortable with the process
- Mine your memory for experiences you would like to use in the story you choose to tell
- Have one on one feedback sessions with an instructor
- Have the opportunity to share your story in progress with your group of peers
- Tell your story during the final session of the course

### The Art of Craft

#### **What we will do?**

Crafting has long been a favourite pastime of people of all ages. Many of us can often remember from a young age being taught different crafting techniques from family or within school. Within this five-week group we will further examine craft practices using both paper

arts and textile practices. Each week we will focus on a different medium and learn how to use these techniques to create beautiful finished pieces.

Week 1: Paper Quilling

Week 2: Weaving Without the use of a loom

Week 3: Needle Felting

Week 4: Embroidery

Week 5: Book Binding

**What will you learn?**

To demonstrate increased knowledge of a variety of crafting styles and techniques as demonstrated in weekly themed exercises.

- Participants will be able to learn how fine art can be created with crafting techniques.
- Participants will have the opportunity to create conceptual work that they can share with the group.
- Participants will be able to tap into their creative side recognizing that we all have the ability to be creators acknowledging the importance of the process of creating not just the finished product.
- Participants will engage in positive social environment sharing with others.

\*Please note that registration for all virtual Art of Craft sessions must be completed with a minimum of two weeks' notice to arrange for delivery/pick up to be arranged. Participants will be required to provide some of their own supplies and material list will be provided upon registration.

### Open Peer Discussion

**What will we do?**

During this unprecedented time, it is important now, more than ever, to maintain connections with like-minds, those that are a part of our peer support system. The purpose of this open discussion workshop is to touch base virtually and learn from one another by sharing how we're managing during this difficult time.

**What will we learn?**

In this group we will learn to support one another in our recoveries in a safe and confidential environment, and discuss how connection plays a vital role in our mental health.

### Overcoming Challenges

**What will we do?**

It is all too common for individuals living with mental illness and addiction issues to be faced with many challenges in society. Although 1 in 5 Canadians will commonly experience a mental illness at some point in their lifetime, we still find ourselves facing discrimination and feel

devalued in most everyday environments, including schools, the workplace, healthcare settings, urban communities, and even amongst our own families and friends.

In this course we will explore a wide variety of ways of how we can collectively work towards combatting stigma and equip ourselves with the education needed to work towards a societal changed behaviour of acceptance.

**What will you learn?**

- What is stigma and the impact it has in our communities
- Tips and tools to help combat stigma
- How to deal with difficult people
- How to face difficult questions
- Combat bullying
- How to help educate others

**Scribl aka Peace Love Expressive Arts**

**What will we do?**

This group emphasizes the creative process while using different kinds of expressive art and what it means to the person who is creating it. Often it is easier to create than it is to talk. It's not so much about what we create (although the result is pleasing) but how we get to the end result. During this group we will explore poetry, collages, safe spaces, colours and more as we create a journey that invites participants to consider each person's unique story. The expressive arts program is about sharing stories, finding your voice, making meaningful connections and discovering new tools for personal awareness and recovery.

**What will we learn?**

- active engagement in the process of creating art without fear or self-criticism
- how to demonstrate a personal connection between the artistic experience and emotions
- how to utilize creative expression to connect as a cohesive group and utilizing art to tell a personal story about self and/or recovery.

**Purposeful Living**

**What will we do?**

Challenges are something that we are bound to face in life but we can equip ourselves with strategies so they do not de-rail us from achieving our goals. In this group, we will engage in discussions and educational activities with our peers to develop coping strategies that we can use when experiencing mental distress and/or stressful situations.

**What will we learn?**

- To develop and apply personalized strategies for managing and coping with stressful situations

## Recovery College Facilitation Skills Training

### **What will we do?**

Would you like to facilitate a course in our Recovery College?

This course will teach participants the skills they need to successfully develop and implement Recovery College courses in a supportive and non-judgmental environment. We will explore a variety of topics including the scope and mission of Recovery College, adult learning principles, course planning, classroom management and group dynamics, as well as public speaking and presentation skills. Completion of this course is a prerequisite for facilitating a course within the Recovery College.

### **What will you learn?**

Class participants will have an opportunity to:

- Learn the scope and mission of Recovery College
- Learn about adult learning principles and practices
- Learn how to plan and write a course
- Learn classroom management skills
- Gain presentation skills
- Increase social confidence
- Practice active listening skills
- Develop leadership skills

## Reducing Stigma, Empowering People (RSEP)

### **What will we do?**

Stigma is when someone sees or treats another person in a negative way because of a particular characteristic or attribute. This is often rooted in ignorance or misunderstanding. In this group, we will develop a sense of self beyond our experiences with mental distress by engaging in conversations and activities with our peers about what stigma associated with mental health is, why it is harmful, and develop strategies for combatting this stigma. You will have the opportunity to self-reflect, highlight your strengths, instill hope, and create change through the collective sharing of lived experiences and knowledge.

### **What will we learn?**

About various forms of stigma and associated strategies for combating them

## Self-Compassion

### **What will we do?**

Self-compassion is the ability to turn understanding, acceptance, and love inward. The practice of having compassion and nurturing oneself can be often difficult for us to make time for. We tend to find it easier to have compassion for those we care about and not give ourselves the love and compassion we require to nurture ourselves. Through the use of creative expressive

arts interventions and journaling, you will learn the foundations of how practicing self-compassion can have a positive impact upon your mental health.

**What will you learn?**

- Participants will enhance creativity through self-expression
- Learn to foster resilience and boost self-esteem
- Learn to identify ways to practice self-compassion and self-love

### Self Care 101

**What will we do?**

This course will help participants learn ways to take time for themselves, build up self-esteem, practice self-compassion, and to maintain healthy boundaries in order to keep mentally and physically well.

**What will you learn?**

By committing even small amounts of time throughout our day to tuning in with the self and personal needs, we begin re-patterning our relationship with ourselves, and often find more grace and ease in accessing the higher self.

### Self-Esteem

**What will we do?**

Do you find it difficult to share your opinions and to speak up for yourself? This peer led course will explore what self-esteem is, why we struggle with it, the importance of positive self-esteem, and what causes low self-esteem. We will also take a look at strategies to challenge negative or inaccurate thinking.

**What will you learn?**

- What is Self-esteem and ways to build it
- Factors that shape and influence self-esteem
- How to communicate assertively
- Ways to set healthy boundaries

### Sit & Get Fit!

**What will we do?**

As requested by you – a chair exercise program that can be done by most. We will use the chair to sit in but also as a support while standing, so no wheeled chairs please. This program will combine discussion, demonstration and instruction to ensure that everyone gets more physically active while challenging their level of fitness. Each week we will complete a 50 to 60-

minute chair exercise program. This program will combine yoga, muscle strengthening using light weights, balance work as well as core and cardio exercises.

**What will you learn?**

- New ways to exercise that do not involve going to the gym and that are safe to do.
- Develop a new exercise routine that can be done almost anywhere you have a chair.
- How to confidently become more physically active.

**Evaluation:**

A waiver will be sent to you prior to the start of the sessions regarding physical activity. On-going evaluation will take place by the facilitator to ensure the program is meeting the needs of the participants.

### TEACH – Training, Education and Assistance for Caregiving at Home

**What will we do?**

This program is designed to meet the needs for caregivers of patients diagnosed with dementia. The focus is enhancement of caregivers' knowledge, competence and skills over the course of 4, interactive, 90-minute sessions.

**What will we learn?**

- How to manage the emotional burden of caregiving
- Hands-on skills for dealing with current and evolving caregiving challenges
- Self-care training to promote engagement, resilience, confidence, and coping skills
- System navigation skills to enhance capacity to engage with services

### Understanding Anger

**What will we do?**

This peer-led course will explore the roots of anger and its many faces. The course is filled with practical wisdom and helpful tips and techniques that will assist individuals with their emotions.

**What will you learn?**

Participants will learn the tools to support the common struggles with anger issues and end the anger cycle, living up to their true potential.

### Understanding Burnout

**What will we do?**

Are you feeling overwhelmed and burnt out? The prolonged stress of burnout can leave us feeling physically and mentally exhausted and drained. In this course we will look at identifying the signs and symptoms of burnout and how to utilize different coping strategies to get your

wellness to a place where you want it to be. In this space we will have the opportunity to learn from each other and share strategies and experiences.

**What will you learn?**

In this course we hope to learn to recognize when we are experiencing burnout and learn strategies to help us get through it.

**Wellness Wednesday**

**What will we do?**

Creating holistic wellness involves developing a self-care routine. Part of self-care is taking time to explore our interests to develop a well-rounded leisure lifestyle. In this six-week group we will explore activities that tap into our physical, social, spiritual, emotional, cognitive, and creative domains of well-being. When we create balance within these domains we see the positive effects that it has on our day to day lives. Each week we will participate in fun activities that support our overall wellness.

**What will you learn?**

Identify activities within each domain that are enjoyable

Learn new ways to improve their overall wellness through leisure

To promote relaxation and healthy leisure experiences

**When Anxiety and Panic Attack**

**What will we do?**

This is a peer-led course for people living with panic and anxiety who want to share their experiences of what has worked for them, as well as to learn new tools from each other. We will talk about why anxiety and panic happen and how we can help ourselves live with the uncomfortable sensations they produce. We will also talk about building resiliency and lifestyle factors that can help or harm us when living with panic and anxiety.

**What will you learn?**

- We will speak generally about what happens in the body during anxiety and panic attacks, and why the unpleasant symptoms occur in order to decrease fear during an attack.
- We will also learn tools for dealing with anxiety in general.
- We will teach each other new techniques by sharing what has worked for us.

**Yoga**

**What will we do?**

Yoga helps to develop cognitive and physical techniques for maintaining and/or improving balance, flexibility and strength. This in turn assists with better managing, and/or reducing daily



stressors. This program will incorporate instruction, demonstration and practice to enhance the opportunity to make the mind and body connection to wellness. There is always potential injury and prevention includes education, warm up, and modifications if needed while teaching you to respect/listen to your body and following appropriate exercise guidelines. No yoga experience is required. The class will be approximately 50 minutes with the extra time for questions.

**What will you learn?**

- To develop, maintain and/or increase personal balance and flexibility through continuous participation in this program. Demonstration, instruction and modification are provided as needed.
- To demonstrate relaxation and stress management techniques through participation and practice during regularly scheduled sessions. Participant will be able to make the connection between mind and body. Participants will be able to utilize principles between sessions.

**Evaluation:**

A waiver will be sent to you prior to the start of the sessions regarding physical activity. On-going evaluation will take place by the facilitator to ensure the program is meeting the needs of the participants.