

## **Young Adult Applicants**

This questionnaire is for young adults who are thinking about applying for a Youth Peer Provider job. Youth Peers exist in all sorts of systems, like mental health, child welfare, or juvenile justice. This questionnaire is for young adults considering a youth peer provider job in the mental health field. The position may be called: Youth Peer Specialist, Peer Mentor, or use words like “advocate” in the title. The main point of the job, though, is the same: to share your own lived experience with, and inspire hope in, youth receiving mental health or behavioral health services.

Youth MOVE National describes lived experience as, “having received services as a child, youth, or young adult (including but not limited to mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, and/or special education services); or currently or previously living with a mental health or substance use disorder diagnosis.”

Basically, it means you’ve been through mental health experiences, challenges, or programs! To learn more about what Youth Peer Support is, check out this [Monthly Minute](#) on YouTube!

*This tool is intended to be used as a guided self-reflection practice.* This questionnaire won’t tell you if Youth Peer Support is a perfect job for you, or if you’ll get a job you apply for. Rather, it will help you consider what being a Youth Peer Provider may mean, before you jump into the role! Just remember, these self-reflection questions are to give you a sense of what the Youth Peer Provider role looks like- you do not need to have experience or expertise in all of the areas listed below!

### **Lived Experience**

- What part of your life story includes lived experience in mental health care or other youth system services?
- How have you spoken about or shared with your peers or network this lived experience? How do you feel when you share these experiences?

*Consider if you would be interested in a job where sharing your lived experience is a regular part of your day.*

- Is the lived experience you are willing to share with young people relevant to the experiences of the youth and young adults you would be serving?

***Consider if you would be interested in connecting/finding similarities in your lived experience to the experiences of the young people navigating the behavioral and mental health care systems.***

- When you share your lived experience, are there moments or parts of your story that bring you discomfort to share? Do you feel anxious or nervous to share parts of your story? Can you tell, before you share something about yourself, if it would make you feel anxious or nervous?

***Consider that you would need to practice your sharing skills frequently while offering peer support and frequently choose parts of your story to share or not to share so that what you are offering in the peer relationship is relevant and helpful. Youth peer support is not about sharing your full life experiences over and over, rather it's about sharing a point in time to reflect and build trust and empathy in your relationship.***

- What education and training have you completed prior to the application process? What additional education and training might you want or need if you were hired?

***Consider the questions above - would additional training or education help you feel more confident in practicing peer support skills in your job? Don't forget to think about skills or hobbies that would enhance your work - like event planning, poetry, gaming, or music! Also consider reviewing the rest of this reflection tool and returning to this question.***

