

Small Group Discussion Centering Strengths



Panelist Bios - Geoff Moser, BS, PWS

Program Manager at the Mental Health and Addiction Association of Oregon (MHA AO)

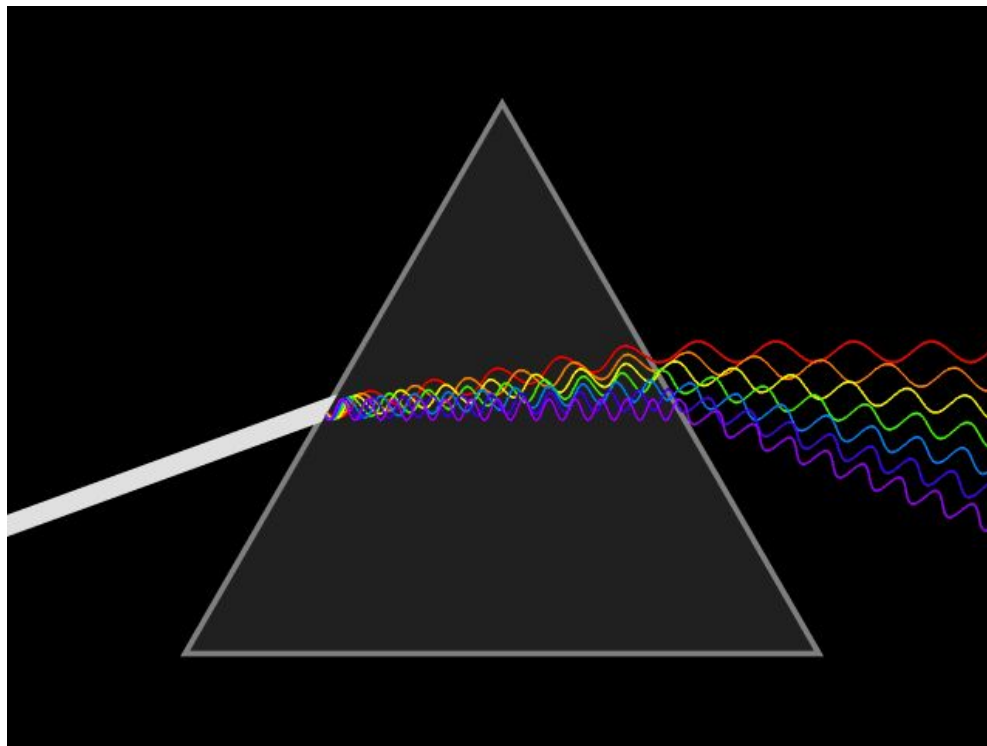
Geoff (he/him) identifies as a person in long-term recovery from both misuse and mental health challenges. For two decades, Geoff and other substances to cope with long-term mental health many of us, this behavior led to a pattern of negative consequences and near-death experiences. Geoff considers June 25 th , 2015, as the day he decided to live his life without alcohol and other drugs, and to proactively deal with his mental health challenges using a combination of healthy coping skills, medications, therapy, healthy diet, and regular exercise.

Geoff has been working in the Peer Delivered services field for 8+ years now and absolutely loves supporting others as they find their way to becoming healthier versions of themselves. He is someone who believes that recovery is an open-minded process that is unique to each individual pursuing it.





Scene-Setting





Shared Language/Helpful Terms

Neurodiversity: A framework that views neurological differences (like ADHD, Autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, Tourette's, etc.) as natural variations in the human brain rather than deficits to be cured. Coined by sociologist Judy Singer.

Neurodivergent: A person whose brain functions in ways that diverge from the dominant neurotypical standards.

Neurotypical/Neuroconforming: A term used to describe individuals whose neurological development and functioning align with societal norms and expectations.

Masking: The process of concealing one's neurodivergent traits to appear more "acceptable" in neurotypical environments. Often leads to burnout and mental health issues.



Shared Language/Helpful Terms Continued

Sensory Sensitivities: Heightened or decreased sensitivity to sensory inputs (light, sound, texture, etc.), often common among neurodivergent people.

Executive Functioning: Cognitive processes related to planning, organizing, working memory, time management, and emotional regulation. Many neurodivergent folks may experience challenges in these areas.

Universal Design: Designing environments, systems, and practices to be accessible to all people, regardless of neurotype or ability, without requiring adaptation or retrofitting.



Purpose

Reflect on how we can better recognize and support the contributions of neurodivergent staff and individuals with lived experience.



Instructions

- Form groups of 4–6 people
- Choose a facilitator and a note-taker
- Use the prompts below to guide discussion (30 min)
- Be ready to share 1 takeaway or insight (10 min)



Discussion Prompts

1. Share a story: When did a staff member with lived experience or neurodivergence make a meaningful impact? What made it possible?
2. What systems or norms might unintentionally block these contributions?
3. What support strategies have worked in your organization?
4. How could we invite these voices into leadership or culture-building roles?
5. If you could change one thing tomorrow to better support these staff, what would it be?



Report-Out Prompts (share one)

- Strength-centered shift you'd like to try
- New insight from your group
- Question you're still exploring