



Guidelines

Brain Injury - Peer-Mentors

The Brain Injury Support Network (BISN) of the Brain Injury Association of Iowa (BIAIA) is beginning the process of identifying qualified people (survivors and/or family members) who might be interested in becoming a peer-mentor. Interested applicants will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire and, if selected, will be asked to participate in a one (1) day training. Guidelines to consider when recruiting possible peer-mentors are:

- Ability to volunteer time and energy needed to provide support to others
- Motivation to support others – “give something back”
- Successful personal adjustment to life challenges such as living with brain injury (BI)
- Insight into personal limitations and strengths
- Absence of current serious psychiatric or personal problems
- Ability to listen and communicate
- Ability to empathize and relate
- Ability to inhibit personal responses, views or opinions when necessary
- An awareness of personal boundaries
- An understanding of the importance of maintaining confidentiality
- The ability to be non-judgmental
- A willingness to ask for help if the partnership runs into trouble
- Willingness and ability to record contacts as required by the program
- Willingness to attend a training workshop

Issues that may indicate that the volunteer would have difficulty in the peer-mentor role:

- Judgmental views towards specific groups (e.g., religion, ethnicity, disability)
- Judgmental views on specific issues, such as physicians, hospitals and/or rehabilitation facilities and therapies
- Limited ability to understand the program and the role of a peer-mentor
- A tendency to become “too involved” with helping
- Potential difficulties in setting limits and maintaining boundaries
- Somebody who is looking for a "friend" rather than looking to support someone