

Co-reflection Summary
IPS Class, August-October 2025

The following is a summary and paraphrase of the co-reflections over our 10-week course.

What worked well:

- We couldn't choose our breakout groups, which forced us to sit in discomfort and get to know new people. We were put in different breakout groups each time, and got to know people better when in pairs or small groups.
- Individual introductions in the first session were brief and didn't include lists of credentials, comparisons, or judgments.
- We were "eased in" to topics in the first session, recognizing different persons with different levels of experience.
- Participants had diverse backgrounds.
- A discussion about letting go of assumptions decreased anxiety and nervousness.
- Class structure contributed to us gelling as a group.
- Role-playing exercises were helpful.
- The "Easy" and "Hard" continuum exercise was revealing and nonjudgmental.
- We learned about how to be supportive with a nonjudgmental approach.
- The "Don't ask a question" and validation exercise was surprising and helpful.
- We liked starting off with inspirations/quotes/stories.
- Instructor technical skills improved over the weeks.
- Using polling as a participation tool; it was nice to have variety in activities.
- Communication and interaction between participants increased over the course.
- Watching short videos and discussing how they apply to peer support was helpful. We got to watch people modeling what we're trying to achieve.
- We liked check-ins and hearing how world events were affecting participants.
- Learning vulnerability and silence was a challenge but we recognized that they are needed skills.

- The videos showed that there is no single right answer to what we do.
- We were able to be active listeners to the topics.
- The material felt well laid out.
- It was really helpful hearing others talk about their observations.
- Adding veteran scenarios was a positive addition.
- The sharing of personal experiences that expanded upon scenarios or situations made the information seem more real.
- Opening up casual “get-to-know-you” conversations helped the group be more connected.
- People began “putting themselves out there” more.
- The video example of healthy boundary negotiation and discussion regarding how not all boundaries have to be rigid was valuable.
- Group activities and group work continued to be helpful.
- Check ins to see how people are doing before and after videos with difficult topics felt supportive.
- Getting an early example of a student presentation was good.
- Hearing key points repeated and referred to often helped learning.
- We enjoyed the creativity and different perspectives that were revealed in the student presentations.
- The large group peer support practice added in session 9 was impactful and gave an idea of what might happen in a peer support group.
- Hearing perspectives that we don’t know ourselves really helps.
- The freedom in creating our presentations, both in topic and format, made presenting feel less intimidating.
- The group work and getting to know other people was one of the best parts of the course.
- Seeing some people cry and being OK with that and learning to sit with discomfort were growth areas for us.
- We were able to increase our tolerance of sitting in silence.

- Having a course schedule that didn't require taking off time from work made it possible for some to take part.
- The instructors were flexible and available to participants.

Other Possibilities:

- Instructor tech skills needed improvement at first.
- Google docs sharing might be another useful tool.
- Consider adding a Q&A at the end of each session.
- Reiterate that our class is a safe, confidential place for what we are listening to and talking about amongst ourselves.
- Wi-Fi was unstable at one point, caused some temporary issues.
- More examples of the presentations early on would be helpful.
- More joint brainstorming.
- We would like to meet each other in person if possible at some point. Consider a "reunion".