

THE COMPASSIONATE PRESENCE MODEL

Grounded in G·R·A·C·E • Practical Application, Role-Plays & Logic Model Toolkit

A NEW APPROACH UNIQUELY SHAPED FOR THE INDEPENDENT LIVING MOVEMENT

A Landmark Approach for Our Movement: The Compassionate Presence Model represents an exciting, innovative development built from the ground up to embody the true heart of the Independent Living movement. By seamlessly blending core IL values—consumer control, self-determination, and *"Nothing About Us Without Us"*—with peer, mental health, and recovery engagement methodologies, this framework offers a fresh, actionable way to facilitate deep trust, honor autonomy, and embody presence without fixing or pathologizing.

1. Full-Scale G·R·A·C·E Logic Model

This logic model outlines how inputs and core principles translate into direct peer engagement practices and long-term community impacts:

Inputs & Foundations	Core Engagement Principles	Direct Activities & Practices	Immediate Outcomes	Long-Term IL Impact
- IL Core Values - eCPR Grounding - WHAM Whole Health Action - Evidence-based peer & recovery frameworks	- Ground in yourself & moment - Regard with high unconditional regard - Autonomy & self-direction - Connect via presence - Emerge together	- Somatic check-ins & sensory grounding "No Fixing" holding space - Choice-mapping & agency exploration - Peer accountability pairing (WHAM)	- Increased psychological safety - Reconnection to personal power - Reduced emotional crisis isolation - Clear, self-directed wellness goals	- Authentic consumer control - Sustained community living - Culture of mutual respect & trust - True operationalizing of "Nothing About Us Without Us"

2. Grounding & Centering Practices (G Pillar)

Practice A: 3-Breath Somatic Centering (eCPR Style)

Use when transitions occur or when emotional intensity rises in individual or group spaces:

- Breath 1 (Ground in Body):** Feel feet flat on the floor or body supported by your seat. Acknowledge physical presence.
- Breath 2 (Ground in Room):** Notice 3 sensory anchors around you (a color, a soft sound, the temperature of the air).
- Breath 3 (Ground in Intention):** Release the urgency to solve or fix. Shift focus purely to compassionate presence.

Practice B: Unconditional Positive High Regard Re-centering

A silent 10-second mental reset for facilitators prior to responding:

"I set aside my own agenda, my desire to give advice, and my judgments. I view this person as the complete expert on their own life, possessing innate wisdom and agency."

3. Practical Application: Role-Plays & Real-Plays

These scenarios illustrate the transition from traditional, advice-giving approaches to the G-R-A-C-E Compassionate Presence technique.

Scenario 1: Navigating Overwhelm & Choice (Focus: Autonomy & High Regard)

Context: A cohort participant expresses extreme frustration with system barriers and feels like giving up on their independent living goal.

Traditional Response (Fixing/Advice): "Have you called your caseworker yet? You really should write down a checklist and make those calls today before things get worse."

G-R-A-C-E Engagement Technique:

Facilitator [Ground & Regard]: *(Takes a grounding breath, holds quiet space)* "I hear how exhausting and overwhelming it has been to hit wall after wall. Your frustration makes complete sense."

Facilitator [Autonomy]: "I trust your ability to navigate your life. Right now, what feels most important for you? Do you want space to vent, or would you like to explore what choices you have on your terms?"

✓ **Core Principle In Action:** Honors self-direction and consumer control. Shifts power back to the individual without imposing an external agenda.

Scenario 2: Real-Play Dialogue — Power of Presence in Emotional Distress (Focus: Connect & Emerge)

Context: During a peer wellness group, a participant shares feeling isolated and anxious about an upcoming transition.

Peer Specialist [Ground]: "Thank you for bringing that into the room. Let's take a collective pause together."

Peer Specialist [Connect]: "When you talked about the fear of losing your routine, that resonated deeply with me. The power of being in this room is that you don't have to carry that weight alone."

Peer Specialist [Emerge / WHAM]: "As you look ahead to this week, what is one small thing—completely defined by you—that brings you comfort or grounding? How can this group support your direction?"

✓ **Core Principle In Action:** Leverages the power of presence and mutual connection. Integrates WHAM self-management without pathologizing the emotional experience.

"Rooted in Independent Living Values • Powered by Peer Compassion"

4. Takeaway Participant Resource Tool

A printable self-directed worksheet for cohort members to ground, reflect, and take action between sessions.

MY G·R·A·C·E DAILY WELLNESS & AGENCY PLANNER

Grounded in Compassionate Presence & Independent Living Values

[G] GROUND — How am I centering myself today?

What sensory anchor, breath practice, or quiet moment brings me back to present awareness?

[R] REGARD — Honoring my whole self

What boundary, lived wisdom, or personal strength am I recognizing in myself today?

[A] AUTONOMY — Exercising my agency & choices

Where do I hold decision-making power today? What step reflects my self-direction?

[C] CONNECT — Building compassionate presence

Who in my peer network or community can I connect with for authentic, mutual support?

[E] EMERGE — My WHAM Whole Health Action Step

What is ONE self-chosen, realistic action step I am taking this week toward my wellness goals?