

# DukeLine: A Peer to Peer Support Program



BASS CONNECTIONS

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Bass Connections in Education & Human Development

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## Background



25% of American adults are living with a diagnosable mental illness



75% of adult-onset mental illnesses are present by age 25



Yet, 40% of individuals who may benefit from mental health services do not seek treatment

There are many barriers to seeking mental health support including feelings of personal shame and skepticism about treatment effectiveness. Traditional therapeutic models assume that talking to someone in an office on a weekly basis will lead to generalization of new skills; however, people often need coaching and support in the precise moment that something challenging is unfolding to augment the success of therapeutic interventions.

There are also significant barriers to implementation of in-the-moment support: cost, therapist availability, ethical and legal issues, and potential for therapist burnout. Our team of trained peer coaches, DukeLine, has the potential to overcome these barriers and provide much-needed support to students.

### About DukeLine

DukeLine is a group of your peers. We are a resource for support and referral. We come from all walks of life and diverse experiences. We are trained by experts in empowering those experiencing emotional dysregulation, sexual violence, financial insecurity, and more.

## Aims and Hypotheses

This Bass Connections project will develop and pilot an innovative way to improve the mental health of college students. We aim to test whether mental health support delivered through an online platform via peer health coaches is a viable supplement to traditional services. We will test this claim by understanding how users and peer health coaches' mental states are affected throughout the course of their engagement with the service. For peer coaches, specifically, we also aim to understand how undergoing training affects peer coaches' levels of stress, burnout, and sense of meaning and purpose.

### Hypotheses

**H1:** Peer health coaches will experience the following changes from the training semester to the coaching semester: less stress, less burnout, and an increased sense of meaning and purpose.

**H2:** Decreases in burnout will be predicted by less stress and increased sense of meaning and purpose.

## Curriculum

### 2 Courses

PSY 319 Peer Mental Health Coaching (1 Credit)  
PSY 203 Practicum (.5 Credit)  
Student Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses (Fred Newton & Steven Ender 2010)

- What is a Peer Coach?
- Sexual Victimization T01
- Empowerment Model
- Suicide
- Active Listening
- Understanding Trauma
- Working with Diverse Populations
- Heterosexism and Cissexism
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Substance Abuse

### 48+ Hours

Student presentations, discussions, and interviews

From community resource collection to skill practice, students spent over 40 hours training in and out of class.

- Addiction
- Anxiety Disorders
- Bipolar I and II
- Body Image/ Body Dysmorphia
- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Discrimination at Duke
- Disordered Eating
- Financial Issues
- OCD/OCPTD
- Parents and Family Issues
- Sleep Procrastination/ Insomnia
- Traumatic Memories/ Dissociation

### 7 Guests

4 Duke Leaders  
3 Community Leaders

Guest speakers presented on a range of topics to cover additional information on specific skills, resources, and disorders.

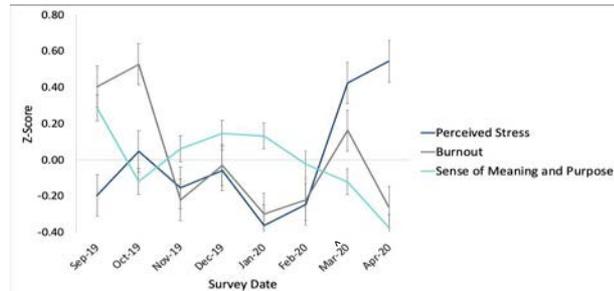
- Orange County Rape Crisis Center
- David Goldston (Suicide)
- Duke Center for Eating Disorders
- Duke Health Nutrition Services
- DukeReach
- DuWell
- Dean Sue Wasiolek (Student Affairs)

## Data Collection and Methods

Participants (N = 14) completed Qualtrics surveys every 4 weeks during the Training Semester (PSY 319; Fall 2019) and during the Practicum Semester (PSY 203; Spring 2020). Surveys included measures assessing coaches' perceived stress level, experience of burnout, and sense of meaning and purpose:

Domain 1	Perceived Stress	NIH PROMIS Perceived Stress Scale
Domain 2	Burnout	Maslach Burnout Inventory, Section A
Domain 3	Sense of Meaning and Purpose	NIH PROMIS Meaning and Purpose, Short Form

## Preliminary Results



**H1:** There were no significant differences on any of the measures between the Training and Practicum semesters.  
**H2:** Perceived Stress and Sense of Meaning and Purpose were significantly negatively correlated ( $r = -.554, p < .05$ ), highlighting the potential protective role of elevated meaning. Burnout was not significantly correlated with either Perceived Stress or Sense of Meaning and Purpose.

\*Duke announced suspension of on-campus events due to COVID-19 prior to the March 2020 survey.

## Summary & Future Directions

Due to unforeseen delays in launching the coaching service, this cohort of coaches did not have an opportunity to provide coaching to students during the Practicum (Spring 2020) semester. In preparation for the launch of this service, our team put together a resource library for our coaches to use to support students in need.

### Fall 2020



Veteran coaches will pilot the coaching service in one dorm; 15 new coaches will be trained in PSY 319; active coaches, coaches in training, and users will be surveyed every 4 weeks to track mental health

### Spring 2021



We will expand the coaching service to a second dorm. Mental health of both coaches and users will be assessed every 4 weeks.

Resources compiled by research team on a range of topics college students experience:

