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HELPING OUR WOMEN

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## Helping Our Women Launches Free Peer Wellness Coaching Services

Provincetown & Eastham, MA, July 3, 2025 – Helping Our Women (HOW), the trusted health and wellness resource organization for women on the Outer Cape, will begin offering free, confidential wellness coaching for all HOW client members and volunteers. According to Executive Director, Gwynne Guzzeau, “This innovative wellness program has been in development for three years, so we are excited to get started!”

What Is Peer Wellness Coaching? Peer Wellness Coaching (PWC) is a supportive, one-on-one conversation where a woman's needs, goals, and values come first. Women meet with a trained PWC coach who listens with compassion, asks thoughtful questions, and helps each woman explore what's most important to her. Whether a woman is managing a health condition, facing a life transition, or simply seeking more balance in her life, coaching offers a space to:

- feel heard and understood;
- set personal goals and around health and well-being;
- discover practical next steps; receive encouragement and accountability; and
- enjoy the social connection of a focused conversation supporting each woman's unique concerns.

“It’s not therapy, consulting, or mentoring,” says Guzzeau. “We emphasize the peer point of view because coaching recognizes each woman’s integrity and intelligence about her life and her body. Our coaches are simply trained in communication techniques that facilitate self-discovery and discernment – and to hold back their own stories or advice in service of empowering their client. In this way, coaching conversations are no-pressure and judgement free. Your coach is there to listen, reflect, and support your decisions.”

When & Where Is PWC happening? Coaching sessions typically last 30-45 minutes and HOW is launching their pilot phase with coaching appointments on Tuesdays 1-5pm and Thursdays 10am-2pm. Women can schedule up to 6 sessions about a specific issue, then schedule a new series of sessions about a different issue.

While HOW’s Provincetown center is undergoing renovations, all summer coaching sessions will be in person at our Eastham center. Transportation to and from appointments is available.

Why Choose Coaching? Guzzeau explains that PWC might be a great thing to try if someone is:

- exploring how to improve their physical or emotional well-being;
- feeling stuck and wanting to take the next step;
- living with a chronic condition and seeking support;
- looking for help setting or reaching personal goals;
- hoping to build confidence, structure, or motivation.

And she noted again that coaching is not therapy or medical advice.

Who Are HOW's Peer Wellness Coaches? HOW's Peer Wellness Coaching Program trains volunteers in specific communication techniques:

- to empower other women to speak openly,
- take an appreciative stance about their life,
- to identify what matters most about a situation, and
- consider next steps to reach specific wellness goals or to address a personal issue.

Each coach completes a 20-hour experiential training program with additional homework and assessments. In May 2025, the first cohort of 13 women -- ten volunteers and three staff members -- completed the training program that was developed specifically for the HOW community.

[Individual bios to follow]

How Did PWC Get Started? Three years ago, Guzzeau acted on her vision for transforming the way Helping Our Women engages not only our client members, but their volunteers, and staff. A life-long learner with a deep belief in the promise of human growth and development across the lifespan, Gwynne understood the challenges facing HOW clients aren't only medical, they are the same challenges that we all face as adults in a changing world living in bodies that also change with age.

She knew coaching conversations can be critically important especially when trying or encountering something new because she'd hired a life coach during a career transition, worked with a business coach when she started her own law practice, and relied on a health coach thru her insurance company to support a new exercise routine. Gwynne received her own coach certification in a three-week accredited program and later ran a coach training center, where she learned first-hand how executives and managers from all industries utilize coaches for personal and professional growth.

HOW secured initial funding for the discovery phase of PWC with a capacity building grant from the Cape Cod Foundation and she hired Elise Phillips of Navigate Health Coaching who had created and run a peer health coaching program at Boston College and is and member of the International Coaching Federation and The Institute of Coaching. Phillips developed HOW's Peer Wellness Coach Training Curriculum in cooperation with HOW staff and community members and facilitated the free, online training program. Elise explains, "Peer Coaching is not therapy, but rather a way to support another's motivation and wellness with presence." [Insert additional quotes from Elise]

American Rescue Plan Act funding supported program development while Gwynne worked closely with Elise to outline the content of the 20-hour PWC training program that Elise created and facilitated for HOW. Other funding sources included two grants from the Kaiser Family Foundation's Special Projects fund.

Now, HOW can offer this training every year to build the number of volunteer coaches available to meet with clients and volunteers. The most recent funding for this program has come from the Bilezikian Family Foundation. HOW's vision in the coming years is to open PWC coaching services to all women on the Outer Cape and beyond, as well as to create a PWC program for teen-age girls.

To learn more about Helping Our Women and it's Peer Wellness Coaching services call Gwynne Guzzeau or visit [www.helpingourwomen.org](http://www.helpingourwomen.org).

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#### About Helping Our Women (HOW)

HOW is the trusted resource organization for women in the Outer Cape with a 30-year history of supporting health and wellness through personalized outreach by staff with support of community volunteers. HOW improves access to healthcare and well-being by educating, supporting, and empowering its client members, as well as connecting them to services, government benefits, community partners, and health and wellness education.

