***TELL Lifeline***

***Support Worker Training Program***

***Application Process***

**Selection Criteria:**

We are seeking people 18 years or older of any nationality with fluent English-speaking ability. It is important that you be able to speak and understand English without difficulty, particularly on the telephone. The selection criteria are centered more on personal awareness and development than educational or employment background. The course is designed to give you the skills you will need as a Lifeline support worker, so you do not need to have a background in psychology or counselling. It is more your personal style and approach that we look at when determining suitability for the role.

In September 2017, TELL expanded our services to include TELL Chat. This has allowed us to move closer to our goal of providing 24-hour coverage and support, and also means that volunteers can work on the Lifeline no matter where they are located in Japan. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our service hours are split across our phone and chat services, and support workers are able to decide whether to take their shift via phone or chat. TELL Chat is always available at night on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

**Counseling Model and Style:**

The Lifeline utilizes a client-centered method of counseling based on that developed by Carl Rogers. This means that a crisis support worker is someone who has been trained in empathic listening, **not** in advice-giving. TELL Lifeline’s support workers are trained when to use silence and give space and when to be more active. They have been taught how to phrase questions that assist someone in talking about their situation, how to help clarify a user’s confusion, and how to support someone in pain.

The support workers are non-directive and do not give advice, but instead assist the user in making their own decisions. This style of counseling is often used on crisis lines. Certainly, we are aware that it is not a style of counseling which suits everyone. However, in order to offer high-quality, consistent service to our users, it is a style of counseling we require all our support workers to follow.

Therefore, we are seeking applicants who can show that they can respect others’ views and can refrain from imposing their own personal values, beliefs, and ideas on others. TELL Lifeline is looking for volunteers with sound interpersonal skills, the capacity to understand and assist people from a wide range of backgrounds, and the ability to reflect on and learn from their own life experience.

We do not expect applicants to have any counseling skills at this point, but we do expect them to indicate a potential and openness to learning client centred counseling skills. After we receive a completed application, the next step is for suitable applicants to complete an interview, either face-to-face or online, after which applicants will be selected to join the training program. Please note that there are limits on the numbers of trainees we can accept on to each course, and previous courses have filled up early.

**Training Program:**

Successful applicants are asked to attend a basic training program of 69 hours. There are 3 mandatory 4-hour online seminars during the course; and then for each week of the program, required elements (watching presentations; completing reading; journaling; counselling practice through role play; and interactive online seminars). Trainees will also complete an apprenticeship on the Lifeline. This consists of at least 24 hours of supervised work (broken down into six shifts). These shifts will be both on the telephone and through chat. If you are successful in completing the training program and the apprenticeship, you will be invited to join TELL Lifeline as a volunteer Lifeline Support Worker.

This training is of a similar standard to that conducted by crisis lines in major centers around the world. A certificate is awarded upon satisfactory completion of the course.

The training program covers a wide range of essential skills and topics so **it is essential to maintain regular and punctual attendance** at the training sessions. The training takes place online in the spring and autumn each year. Undertaking the training is a big commitment in terms of time and energy, but we have worked hard to allow as much flexibility as possible with the required elements. It is imperative that volunteers are able to keep up with the program consistently throughout the course.

The standard cost of training is 35,000 yen (this is approximately what it costs us to train each person). This amount can be adjusted in cases of special need; payment can also be made in installments.

We understand that we are charging a fee to train for volunteer work, and that this may seem strange. We do this because we are a non-profit organization, and we must meet all costs incurred while running the training. The training does not generate any profits; it only meets part of its own associated costs. There are many volunteering opportunities that people can participate in instantly or with minimal training, but a crisis line support worker is not one of these roles. The safety of our service users is paramount and so we are asking volunteers to pay for the course to equip them with the skills they need to take shifts effectively.

We also feel confident that the quality of the training is high and that it can provide participants with important personal learning and skills development. This fee is also quite reasonable compared to prices for similar educational or skills courses that could be taken, either here in Japan or in other countries.

Naturally, however, we do not want this cost to be a deterrent to you joining us. If paying this fee represents a significant problem for you, please contact the Lifeline Training Coordinator and discuss your situation. We are very understanding and do not want to miss out on a good trainee!

**Time Commitment:**

Once a trainee has successfully completed training and the apprenticeship, and has been invited to join TELL as a Lifeline Support Worker, we ask that you work at least two shifts a month, as well as attend one 2-hour supervisory meeting each month. Supervision meetings can be joined online. As the time commitment on the part of both TELL and you is quite extensive, *we require that applicants who are interested in volunteering as support workers are able to commit to at least* ***one******year of service*** *after completing their training.*

**Supervision:**

TELL Lifeline Support Workers are well-supported in their role, through comprehensive training, in-service workshops, and the availability of supervision. Each Support Worker is assigned to 2 supervisors, who are also volunteers. These supervisors have extensive experience on the line and are trained to take on this role. Support Workers participate in a 2-hour monthly supervisory group which generally has between 10-15 members. **It is necessary to attend these sessions to remain active on the Lifeline.** Supervision is offered through online conference calls.

Supervision is designed to assist you in your role by providing you with a forum to debrief and process your experience on the line, as well as enabling you to focus and improve on your counseling skills.

**Anonymity and Confidentiality:**

As the English-speaking community is very small, we ask all Lifeline Support Workers to remain anonymous and keep their role a secret from anyone who does not absolutely need to know. This is because we are concerned that people who are aware that you are on the line will feel inhibited about reaching out to TELL themselves, and will be denied access to the service.

**This extends also to your application:** we ask that you don’t share your intention to apply for the TELL training course with others, except your partner or someone who absolutely needs to know in order for you to be able to take the training.

We also have a very professional approach to confidentiality in all aspects of TELL: the calls/chats, the location of the phone room, and the identity of other volunteers. Before you begin the training, you will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement stating that you will respect this confidentiality.

**The Application Process:**

1. Please ensure that you have read all the enclosed material carefully before applying. If you have any questions that you would like to clarify before you apply, please feel free to call the **Lifeline Training Coordinator at 03-4550-1191 or e-mail:** [**training@telljp.com**](mailto:training@telljp.com)
2. Please send in completed application forms to the Lifeline Training Coordinator. You can do this by ***e-mail*** by filling out the forms below and then sending them as an attachment back to [training@telljp.com](mailto:training@telljp.com)
3. If your application is accepted, an interview will be arranged. To assist in making appointments, please let us know when you are generally available for an interview—i.e., mornings/afternoons/evenings/which days of the week.
4. Since we have limited spaces for each training session, we encourage you to respond early for the training session of your choice. **There is no strict deadline for the training, but typically places will be filled by either mid-September for the fall course or mid-February for the spring program.**

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| **TELL Lifeline**  **Support Worker Training Application** | | | | | |
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| **First Name** |  | | | **Surname** |  |
| **Gender** | Male/ Female/ prefer not to answer | | | **Date of Birth** | Month /  Day /  Year |
| **Nationality:** |  | | |  | |
| **Telephone** | Home: | | | Mobile: | |
| **E-mail** |  | | | | |
| **Your address in Japan** | |  | | | |
| **How long have you been in Japan?** | | |  | | |
| **How long will you stay?** | | |  | | |
| **How did you hear about training?** | | |  | | |
| Where are you working now? | | | | | |
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| How is your work schedule? What hours do you work? Days or nights? | | | | | |
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| Please tell us about your work experience. |
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| Please tell us about your qualifications or educational experience. |
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| Are you *currently* in counseling/psychotherapy/psychiatric care?  (If yes, please provide us with a note from your therapist, confirming that they know of your application and support you). |
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| Have you *ever been* in psychiatric care or counseling? If yes, can you tell us a little about it? |
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| Why do you want to become a TELL Lifeline Support worker at this time? |
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| What brought you to Japan and how do you feel about life here? |
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| Following the training period, your time commitment to TELL is a minimum of 10 hours a month. How do you see the time commitment of both the training program and the regular  shift time fitting into your personal/professional schedule? |
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| Describe yourself as a person. What do you see as your strengths? Your weaknesses? |
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| Discuss your life or a period of time in your life from the point of view of your personal  growth. What has been difficult or painful? What have you learned? How do you think this experience might affect you when working on the Lifeline? |
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| In your own experience, what are the principal causes of people’s problems? | | | |
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| If someone called you on the phone and said: “I’m feeling low today and I don’t know why”  – what would your response be? | | | |
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| What has led you to believe that sharing in our work at TELL would be fulfilling for you? How does working with us fit in with your life goals? | | | |
|  | | | |
| Signature: |  | Date: |  |