

Project report-out & lessons learned document guidelines

Team name & members

Provide your team name and team members

Team A

- Octavio Zenil Lopez
- Nyabijek Gatdet
- Shaikh Chand Muhammad Shami
- Aldan Henry

Project sponsor

Dr. Tim Maciag (ENSE 271 Professor)

Business need/opportunity

We were offered by Operational Stress Injury Canada (OSI-CAN) to redesign their website such that it is user-friendly and can help people who may be in a crisis situation, while also organizing all of the content in a way that isn't overwhelming to a new user. The primary demographic was people suffering from PTS, so the homepage should reflect that, providing people with help immediately should they require it. It should also be easy to assist the organization for people who like to help. Things like volunteering and donations should be front-and-center so anyone can help if they would like.

Reflections on project planning, execution, & closing

Customer Segments

- **North Star Customers:** Frontline/service workers suffering from post-traumatic stress or operational stress injuries.
- **Carryover Customers:** Donors, volunteers, and sponsors (people who want to support OSI-CAN).

Assumptions

- We would be redesigning OSI-CAN's current website and working with existing content.

- All information needed to remain accessible in the final product.
- Users may be in crisis, so emotional safety and clarity were essential to the design.

Constraints

- The project sponsor (Julius) did not want any content removed.
 - The homepage needed visible helplines and suicide-prevention resources.
 - The site must feel welcoming, supportive, and psychologically safe.
 - WordPress and free plugins limited our technical execution.
-

Affinity Diagramming & Empathy Mapping: Key Findings

Our affinity diagram and empathy maps revealed several consistent user needs:

Emotional Needs

- Users may arrive in a state of anxiety, confusion, or crisis.
- They require immediate access to help without excessive navigation.

Functional Needs

- Clear pathways to programs, crisis resources, and community support.
- Simple, non-overwhelming navigation with predictable structure.

Barriers Identified

- Too much text/content on the existing site created cognitive overload.
- Lack of visual hierarchy made it difficult to find essential resources.
- Donor/volunteer information was hidden and not action-oriented.

Insights from these activities directly informed our homepage layout, crisis button ideas, donation pathway improvements, and content restructuring.

USM / MVP: Initial and Evolving Concept

Initial MVP Concept

Our initial MVP focused on:

- A clear, simplified homepage with crisis resources displayed immediately.
- A reorganized menu with intuitive grouping of programs, events, and support.
- A streamlined donation and volunteer section.

Evolution of the MVP

As we gathered feedback and tested prototypes, the MVP evolved to include:

- A stronger emphasis on emotional safety (imagery, color choices, tone).
- A more intuitive grid-based layout for programs and resources.
- A dedicated crisis-help callout box at the top of every page.

Why Our Final Product is an MVP

- It prioritizes the essential value to the primary user: access to *help quickly*.
 - It includes core navigation, resource organization, and donation pathways.
 - It demonstrates the design principles and structure OSI-CAN needs, even if WordPress limitations prevented full fidelity to the prototype.
-

Prototyping & Usability Evaluation Summary

Prototyping Activities

We completed:

- **Low-fidelity paper sketches**
- **Mid-fidelity digital wireframes**
- **High-fidelity interactive prototypes**

Usability Feedback

Feedback from peers and the client highlighted:

- The need for stronger visibility for crisis support.
- Confusion around the navigation structure on early drafts.
- A desire for clearer separation between “Resources,” “Programs,” and “Get Help.”
- Positive responses to clean layouts, wide spacing, and calming color choices.

How Feedback Informed Our Final Design

- We added a persistent crisis-support module.
- We simplified and renamed navigation items.
- We reorganized resource pages using Gestalt principles like grouping and proximity.
- We emphasized call-to-action visibility for volunteering and donations.

Connections to Course Concepts

We intentionally applied at least three people-centred design concepts:

1. Affordances & Signifiers

- Buttons, icons, and call-to-action elements clearly communicate what actions users can take (e.g., “Call Now,” “Donate,” “Find Support”).

2. Gestalt Principles (Proximity, Similarity, Figure/Ground)

- Grouped related content to reduce cognitive load.
- Used color and spacing to prioritize crisis content visually.

3. Constraints

- Limited user options on crisis pages to avoid overwhelming users under stress.
 - Simplified layouts to prevent navigation overload.
-

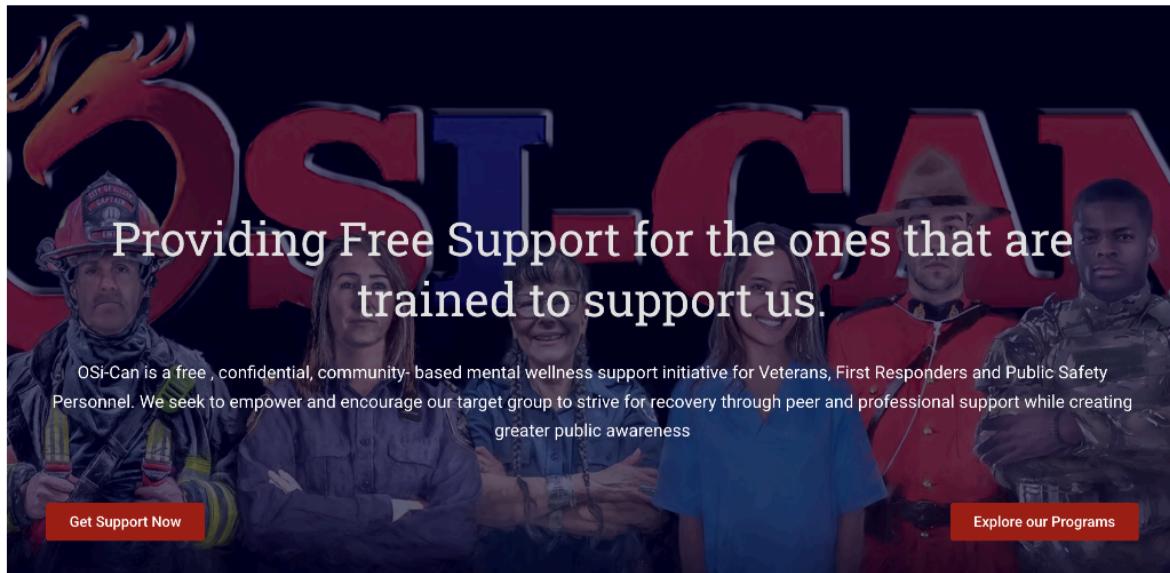
Final WordPress Solution Summary

Our final WordPress version includes:

- A redesigned homepage with helpline visibility at the top.
- A reorganized menu and structured content layout.
- Donation and volunteer pathways created using the **Give** plugin and **WPForms**.
- A responsive layout developed using **Astra Theme** and **Elementor**.

WordPress limitations—especially plugin paywalls—prevented some advanced features from being implemented, but the final site still captured the structure, tone, and core functionality of our prototype.

Insert image here



Who Can Benefit From OSI-CAN

- Former and serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces
- Allied Armed Forces
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Frontline Protectors
- Municipal Police Services
- CN Police Services
- Victim Services Personnel
- Emergency Communications Specialist
- Crisis Management Workers (such as Mobile Crisis, etc.)
- Corrections Officers
- Youth Workers and Youth Corrections Workers
- "Volunteer" First Responders
- Conservation Officers
- Tow Truck drivers
- Social Workers
- Animal Control Officers
- Coroners
- Indigenous Emergency Management
- Fire Protection Services
- Emergency Medical Services
- Wildland Firefighters
- Hospital Trauma personnel
- Nurses
- Healthcare Workers
- Crown Prosecutors



We also provide supports to the **spouses** and **significant others** of those exposed to such trauma. This demographic was chosen due to the commonality of experiences they share through the service they provide to the country and community. We have a special interest and support volunteer first responders as they may not have proper access to support.



OSI-CAN is a free, confidential, community-based mental wellness support initiative for Veterans, First Responders and Public Safety Personnel.

We seek to empower and encourage our target group to strive for recovery through peer

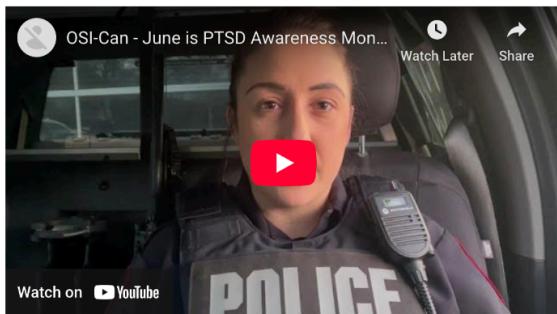
How we Support You

Indigenous Hope for Wellness Free confidential and culturally safe counselling services for all indigenous people across Canada HelpLine 1-855242-3310 Chat online at hopeforwellness.ca	OSI-CAN Support Groups Healing is faster when in groups. Osi-can offers support groups that are meant to strengthen you and make you better. Book a one on one session with a trained peer support professional	OSI-CAN Upcoming events Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut elit tellus, luctus nec ullamcorper mattis, pulvinar dapibus leo.
Discord Community If you like to play video games in your free time then you should join the OSI-CAN discord server and play with people in a similar line of work!	Programs We offer a variety of programs available to any looking to OSI for help, so you will never be without options!	OSI-Can Family Support We also provide supports to the spouses and significant others of those exposed to trauma.

OSI-Can Demographic

The target demographic of OSI-CAN are but are not limited to: former and serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces, Allied Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Frontline Protectors – Municipal Police Services, CN Police Services, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Protection Services, Wildland Firefighters, Hospital Trauma personnel, Nurses, Healthcare Workers, Crown Prosecutors, Social Workers, Animal Control Officers, Coroners, Indigenous Emergency Management, Victim Services Personnel, Emergency Communications Specialist, Crisis Management Workers (such as Mobile Crisis, etc), Corrections Officers, "Volunteer" First Responders, Conservation Officers, Tow Truck drivers, and private sector First Responders. Persons who in the performance of their jobs are exposed to criminal acts of Trauma. We also provide supports to the spouses and significant others of those exposed to such trauma. This demographic was chosen due to the commonality of experiences they share through the service they provide to the country and community. We have a special interest and support volunteer first responders as they may not have proper access to support.

Testimonial Videos



Share your Testimony

Thousands of people have been blessed by the programs offered by Osi-can Canada, if you are one of them please feel free to reach out and share your testimony

HelpLine

Crisis/Suicide Hotline 24/7: 1-833-456-4566

Mobile Crisis: call 306-757-0127

Mental Health Crisis: call 811 and ask for the Mental Health line

Or Consult <https://sk.211.ca/> to find other help lines

If you would like an OSI-CAN support group or a Spouse of OSI group in your community, contact Julius Brown at 306-552-3801 or 1-888-495-6068

Chat with us live

Province selection

British Columbia

Alberta

New Brunswick

Manitoba

Osi-can Partners



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Saskatchewan
Mental health for all



HIGH NOON
OPTIMIST CLUB
OF REGINA
Friend of Youth



OSI-Can- social Links



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About Us

Supporting those living with Operational and Occupational Stress Injuries across Canada."

Our Mission

OSI-CAN is dedicated to providing peer support, resources, and recovery assistance to Public Safety Personnel, Veterans, and their families living with Operational or Occupational Stress Injuries. Our mission is to ensure no one faces their struggles alone.

Who we serve

Public Safety Personnel

- Police, Fire, EMS, Corrections, and more.
-

Veterans & Military Members

- Individuals dealing with trauma or OSIs.
-

Families & Supporters

- Loved ones affected by OSIs available for assistance

Communities

Organizations seeking education or training on stress injuries.

Our History

Founded in January 2016 as a partnership between the Canadian Mental Health Association (Saskatchewan) and The Royal Canadian Legion (Saskatchewan Command), OSI-CAN was created to provide **peer support** for individuals living with **Operational and Occupational Stress Injuries (OSIs)**.

Originally serving **first responders and veterans in Saskatchewan**, OSI-CAN expanded to **Alberta, Manitoba, and British Columbia**, growing into a **multi-provincial network** offering:

- Peer support groups for those living with OSIs
- Family and loved-one support programs
- Resource navigation and referrals to specialized programs

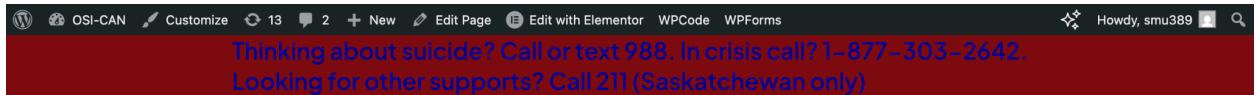
OSI-CAN's approach is **peer-led, confidential, and non-judgmental**, giving individuals the support they need from people with **lived experience**. Its mission is to ensure that **no one facing an OSI faces it alone**.

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Donate Now

How much would you like to donate today?

All donations directly impact our organization and help us further our mission.

Donation Amount *

CAD CA\$

CA\$10.00 CA\$25.00 CA\$50.00
CA\$100.00 CA\$250.00 CA\$500.00
Enter custom amount

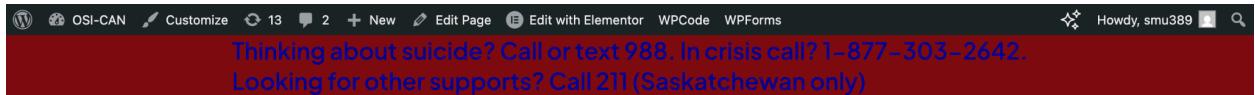
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CAD CA\$

CA\$10.00 CA\$25.00 CA\$50.00
CA\$100.00 CA\$250.00 CA\$500.00
Enter custom amount

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Events



Laughter Begins Recovery
Comedy Night 2025

Details



Healing with Horses

Details



Mini Indy Race for Recovery

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Programs

OSI-CAN Peer Support Groups

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Adult Family & Friends of OSI

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Indigenous Land-Based Healing

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Counselling and Meditation Support

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Equine Assisted Learning/Therapy

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Healing with Horses Reset Event

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Service Dog Acquisition Assistance

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OSI-CAN community discord

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Resources – Meditation PDFs

Topics

PDF

Video

Website

Help Lines

Abusive Behavior	2
Addictions & Recovery	0
Meditation, PTSD, Trauma	1

What Resets Our Nervous System After Trauma?

with Peter Levine, PhD
and Béatrice Bourassa, PhD

Apps for meditation

PDF

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What We Do

Providing compassionate, peer-driven support to those living with Operational Stress Injuries.

Our Purpose

OSI-CAN is committed to helping individuals living with Operational and Occupational Stress Injuries find hope, healing, and community. Our programs provide accessible peer support, educational resources, crisis assistance, and pathways to wellness.

Core Programs

Peer Support Groups

- Weekly or bi-weekly meetings
- Confidential, safe spaces
- Facilitated by trained peers with lived experience

Crisis Assistance / Navigation

- Help connecting to mental health resources
- Guidance during episodes of high stress
- Provincial coordinators available for assistance

Family Support

- Support for spouses, children, and loved ones
- Group options and individual resources
- Helps families understand OSIs and coping strategies

Additional Services

- Resources
- Specialized programs
- Educational Workshops

How we make Impact

OSI-CAN empowers individuals living with Operational and Occupational Stress Injuries by providing peer-led support, fostering resilience, and building communities where no one faces their challenges alone. Through our programs, families, first responders, and veterans gain access to hope, healing, and connection across Canada.

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Reflections on project results

The final result of our project was acceptable overall, but WordPress became a significant bottleneck. Our initial idea and the prototype were strong, yet our lack of experience with WordPress—along with the need for premium plugin features—limited how closely we could match the prototype. Even though the final product wasn't exactly what we envisioned, the design thinking process and the execution phases were exciting and meaningful.

As a team, we worked very well together. We didn't experience disagreements during the design phase or while making adjustments, which made the workflow smooth and efficient.

However, one of the most challenging aspects was building the dynamic content pages. None of the free plugins offered the functionality we needed, and learning the WordPress interface took more time than expected. Switching to Elementor helped simplify certain tasks, but again, many essential features required a paid plan. Translating our prototype into a functioning WordPress site was tough due to these constraints, the learning curve, and our limited familiarity with the platform. Still, by the end we were able to produce results that more closely resembled our prototype. I would say the translation went *well enough*, but having access to premium features would have improved the outcome significantly.

The people-centred design ideas from lectures helped us a lot while shaping the interface—especially concepts such as the 10 common usability errors, Gestalt principles, constraints, affordances, and signifiers. These frameworks guided many of our design decisions and ensured the interface aligned with user needs, particularly considering OSI-CAN's audience of individuals who may be in crisis situations.

For future projects, we would definitely keep the low-fidelity prototyping approach. It allowed us to gather feedback quickly and adjust our ideas before investing too much time in high-fidelity work.

If we could do something differently, it would be choosing a technology we were more experienced with (even though the project required WordPress). Designing while simultaneously learning the tool was difficult because we didn't yet understand WordPress's limitations or how far we could push the platform.

After the whole experience, some ideas that we could have developed or that we could develop if we get to design a similar product again:

- Implement a dedicated crisis-mode interface or “panic button” that immediately shows essential help resources with simplified navigation.
- Build a structured content management system to allow OSI-CAN staff to easily update resources, events, and programs without relying on plugins.

- Conduct user testing with individuals affected by PTS to validate accessibility, readability, and emotional comfort.
- Improve the donation and volunteer pathways by adding guided flows or storytelling elements showing the impact of contributions.
- Explore replacing plugin dependence with custom code or a more flexible CMS if allowed in the future.
- Add a multilingual experience to support non-English speakers who may also seek help from OSI-CAN.

Appendix: WordPress themes and plugins

- Document the WordPress theme(s) and plugin(s) selected in your proposed WordPress instance. Ensure to include the following in your summary:

Theme/plugin name

- **Theme:** Astra Theme
- **Plugins:** Elementor, Wpforms and Give

The user rating (and the number of users who rated the theme/plugin)

- **Astra Theme**
- User Ratings: 5 stars
- Number of people who Rated: 6074 people
- **Elementor Plugin**
- User Ratings: 5 stars rating
- Number of people who Rated : average rating is 7146 people
- **Wpforms**
- User Ratings: 5 stars rating
- Number of people who Rated : 14,237 people
- **Give**
- User Ratings: 5 star ratings
- Number of people who Rated : 684 average rating people
-

When was the theme/plugin last updated?

Astra Theme: last Updated on december 2

Elementor plugin Last Updated 21 hours ago

Give plugin last Update 3 weeks ago

Wpforms: last Updated 4 weeks ago

How many active installations are there for the theme/plugin?

Astra Theme: 1+ million active installations

Elementor plugin: 10+ million active installations

Give plugin: 100,000 + active installations

Wpforms 6 + million active installations

What, generally, does the theme/plugin do?

Astra theme: For website customization

Elementor plugin: The Elementor Website Builder has it all: drag and drop page builder, pixel perfect design, mobile responsive

Give plugin: to customize and design a donate page or accept donations on wordpress.

Wpforms plugin: Beginner friendly WordPress contact form plugin.