

“BUDDY UP” FOR PEER SUPPORT

Creating a buddy system is a good way to help support colleagues by monitoring stress and building resilience. Support from colleagues is crucial and yet not everyone has connections. We do not want to see anyone feeling alone in this time of uncertainty and heightened stress and anxiety.

How it works:

1. Pairs, trios or groups are asked to **formally identify** themselves as a “buddy system.”
2. **Establish the platform** you are going to use to make **daily** contact with each other, text, What’s app, email, phone.
3. **Check-in each day—maybe make it a habit first thing in the morning when you pick up your phone or at the end of the day putting it away, to check in with your buddy.** Leaders are asked to ensure everyone has a buddy.
4. **Asking each other questions / issues such as:**
 - a. Suggested questions/contact:
 - i. Some may want to use emoji check-ins like thumbs up or down
 - ii. How you are managing? How was your day on a scale of 1-5? What is the level of stress? What are the challenges at work or at home?
 - iii. Are you sleeping, eating, exercising? Are you taking time to relax and recharge?
 - iv. Are you feeling emotionally distressed, depressed or anxious?
 - v. What is working well right now to keep you healthy? Share coping tips, resources.
 - b. If you are feeling stress please make sure you reach out to your buddy - the buddy system is for supporting each other.
5. Remember that you are not alone. Individuals can obtain 1:1 help through: OMA Physician Health Program, Employee and Family Assistance Programs, PARO Help-Line, Faculty Wellness Program, Student Affairs Office (UG students). Here is a link to a list of physician [supports](#) from the Faculty Wellness Program.

References:

Acknowledgement to Princess Margaret Hospital Buddy up System materials (2020)

CDC National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Guide for Buddy System
<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/buddy-system.pdf>