

# Buddy Care



## Peer-to-Peer is...

A form of peer support used to engage individuals during times of stress in which they sometimes need the support of a friend or a peer. They provide an early, pre-clinical intervention strategy normalizing the process of seeking help for distress.

## Peer-to-Peer is NOT:

A therapy session

Being a "counselor"

A means of gossip

A way to unveil private or damaging information

Pressuring someone to seek treatment

## Peer-to-Peer Interaction

- ★ Can come from a casual encounter or a formal request
- ★ Categorizes member's stress based on the Expanded Stress Continuum Model to identify, engage, and intervene
- ★ Identify immediate needs and any dangerous warning signs, using the Combat & Operational Stress First Aid (COSFA) model
- ★ Apply and utilize the Core Leader Functions to manage stress and develop resilience
- ★ Emphasizes terms of confidential communication
- ★ Use effective communication styles to find solutions (O-S-C-A-R Communication model)
  - ★ Ask open-ended questions
  - ★ Apply empathic listening
  - ★ Reinforce member's strengths
- ★ Consider adding additional services / team members (verbal consent required by individual)
- ★ Identify areas of support and connect them to resources
- ★ Develop a plan to address current problem or crisis
- ★ Always get permission from individual before disclosing information to Chain of Command (COC)
- ★ Follow-up —NOT a one-time thing, but an ongoing process

## O-S-C-A-R Communication

Helps you ask, care, and decide if support is needed.

### Observe

Actively observe behaviors; look for patterns.

### State observations

Address behaviors only, just the facts without interpretations or judgments.

### Clarify Role

Stating why you are concerned about the behavior, validates why you are addressing the issue.

### Ask Why

Seek clarification; try to understand the other person's perception of the behavior.

### Respond

Clarify concern if indicated. Discuss desired behaviors. State options in behavioral terms.

## Empathic Listening

This involves not only hearing words but also putting yourself in another person's "shoes" to understand their perception of a situation. Empathic listening is not about "fixing" the problem. If it's real to them, then it needs to be real to us.

- ★ Perspective taking — Appreciate another person's reality
- ★ No judgment — Listen in an (active) and nonjudgmental way
- ★ Recognize emotion — Be sensitive to the other person's feelings
- ★ "Reflect" your understanding — Communicate (verbally and non-verbally) your understanding of what is being said

**Connection** to people and resources (warm hand off) and **Follow-up** are key aspects of Buddy Care. Individuals may be unable to accept help the first time and some may fall back into old patterns. **Follow-up** to ensure they have followed through with the resources, **Connections**, and recommendations to alleviate stress.