



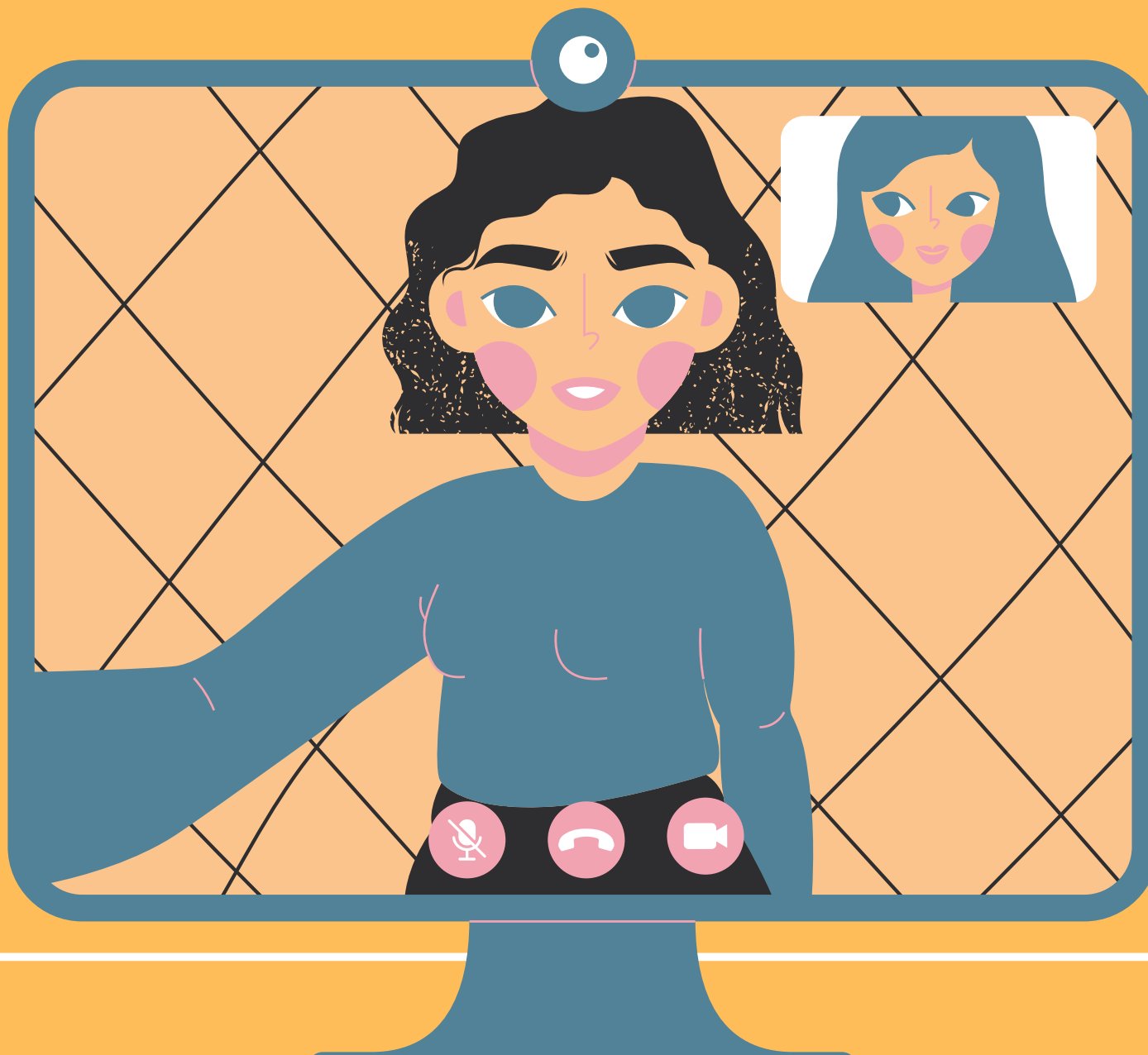
Changi  
General Hospital  
SingHealth

# TEAM

# CARE

REACHING OUT WHILE  
OUT OF SIGHT

#SGUNITED #COPINGWITHCOVID19



# ABOUT US

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Department of TRaCS is committed to:

- Provide consultation, training and counselling services to build human resilience, enhance emotional support during crisis and improve mental health literacy at the workplace.
- Conduct research on human resilience to develop practice-informed training for organisations.
- Collaborate with industries, both local and overseas, to customise and equip them with sustainable solutions to build organisational resilience.

The content in this resource is for general information and is provided on the understanding that no medical advice or recommendation is being rendered.

Please do not disregard the professional medical advice of your physician or local healthcare provider or delay in seeking advice from them because of any information herein.

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**"IF YOU CHANGE THE  
WAY YOU LOOK AT  
THINGS, THE THINGS YOU  
LOOK AT WILL CHANGE."**

**WAYNE DYER**

The need to adapt to our current circumstances continue to be a testament of our resilience. While we may be used to providing face to face support to a colleague in distress, we may now have to explore and be open to consider alternative forms of providing support.

This guide, filled with practical tips, hopes to better prepare you in your journey in providing emotional support to colleagues through video or phone calls. These tips may also be useful in supporting loved ones who may be physically distant as well.



# FIND CALM

It can be unnerving to initiate your first virtual session, either by video or phone call.

Think back to activities that help you to relax. For some, it can be a cup of tea or to take a short walk.

One of the ways to do so is to focus on your breathing before you provide emotional support to others or anytime you notice feelings of distress.



Count: 5 count

Repeat for  
5 minutes

Inhale:  
5 count

Exhale:  
5 count

# CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Your colleague may also be feeling anxious to be speaking to you in this new format. Consider the following to create a safe environment to share:

Adjust your lighting to be seen clearly for video calls

Find a blank wall to minimise distractions during video calls

Wearing headphone improves clarity of your audio, and may also assure the colleague that no one else is listening in

Switch off the fan or other ambient noises



# LIMIT YOUR DISTRACTIONS



Minimising your own face can help you to focus and not be distracted by your pose or appearance during video calls

Give your colleague your full attention by focusing on just the conversation, and put aside all other tasks

# OPEN DISCUSSION

Offering support through phone or video calls allows immediate benefits such as convenience and safety, but miscommunication may arise from being physically distant from each other.

Clarify often as humour & body language may be misinterpreted



Share own discomfort or anxieties about being new to the platform



Ask for feedback when appropriate as this is a new experience for both you and your colleague



# ACKNOWLEDGE OWN LIMITS

At times, the challenges or distress that is experienced by your colleague can be overwhelming and beyond our ability to provide support. It is okay to also seek help when that happens.

Be honest about your own limitations, and encourage expanding the social support available to your colleague by seeking assistance from:



Your organisation's Employee Assistance Programme (if available)



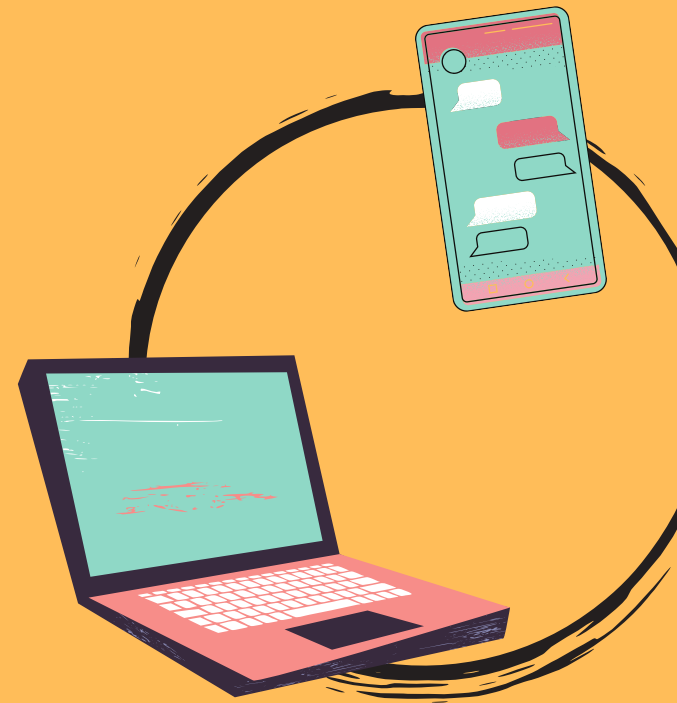
A mental health professional

You may wish to refer to the National Council of Social Service's Mental Health Resource Directory



# BACK-UP PLAN

Although we can try our best to find a location with strong WIFI, disruptions may happen. So discuss with your colleague about what you will do if the session is disconnected, e.g. phone call.



While we take pride in ensuring confidentiality in peer support, it would be helpful to identify a support person that is within your colleague's proximity to render immediate support, in case of an emergency, before the session.

# *For more information*

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