



Office of Human Resources

The Inclusion Council

Dear Colleague,

Our July Inclusion Council newsletter focuses on health and wellbeing. Many of us have been working remotely for 15 months and aren't sure what our work arrangements will look like in the coming months. All of this uncertainty can be unsettling, and we want to support one another as colleagues and peers. We hope this newsletter provides some resources that will be helpful as we prepare for *Work With Flexibility*.

Reconnect With Your Colleagues



Many of us haven't met in person since March 2020. We've held meetings over Zoom and communicated by email and IM. Now that the weather is nice, your team might consider planning some socializing events—for example, an outdoor get-together to reconnect. It could be as simple as meeting at a centrally located park to play some games or to socialize while eating your own picnic lunch

Focus on Your Resiliency



Think about all the obstacles you have conquered since March 16, 2020. Though there may be some changes on the horizon, focus on your strength and resilience as you continue to move forward. The [Employee Assistance Program](#), provided by Sand Creek, could be a great place to start if you need some help. Another resource is the [free coaching sessions](#) available through Virgin Pulse for anyone on the UPlan.

Resources When Helping Your Family



If you have children, you've had to be a little more fluid with your plans and juggle different responsibilities than normal. Shepherding our kids through these difficult times is hard, especially when we don't have all the answers either. Endless resources are available online, like this article, "[Here's How to Help Your Kids Break Out of Their Pandemic Bubble](#)." And remember that your spouse and dependent children are also eligible to use [Sand Creek](#).

Helping Your Fur Babies Transition If You Won't Be Home Full Time



If you have pets, one of the silver linings of working remotely has been spending more time with them. It will be an adjustment for both of you if you return to work on campus in some form. The article "[Here's How to Help Your Pet Cope](#)" offers simple suggestions for starting the process.

Final Thoughts

As we inch closer to our new normal, remember that not everyone will have the same work arrangements. Part of making everyone feel included is respecting differences. This is an opportunity to ground ourselves in compassion and provide grace to one another.

Links to More Resources

- U of M resources
 - The [Earl E Bakken Center for Spirituality & Healing](#) has a wide variety of helpful information. A couple of good places to start are [Wellbeing 101](#) and [COVID-19: Bakken Center Information and Resources](#).
 - Interested in creating healthy habits? Check out one of the [Health Coaching](#) options available through Boynton Health.
- "[The Stress-Free Way to Go Back to the Office After COVID](#)" (article, Verywell Mind)
- "[Prepare Your Kids Mentally for the Transition Back to School](#)" (article, CNN Health)
- "[Supporting Kids During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)" (article, Child Mind Institute)
- "[Prepare Your Dog for Your Return to the Office](#)" (article, Dogtopia)

Questions to Consider and Share on the OHR Inclusion Council Slack Channel

- Have you found useful tools on this topic that may help others?

- If comfortable, share your concerns about going back to normal. You may find others feeling the same way who could offer support and suggestions.
- Has your team already had an in-person gathering? Share what did and didn't work.

Sincerely,

Josh Iniguez and Sondang Cornelia
OHR Inclusion Council Co-Chairs

THE LAND

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities is built within the traditional homelands of the Dakota people. Minnesota comes from the Dakota name for this region, Mni Sota Maḵoḵe—the land where the waters reflect the skies. Each day, the students, faculty, staff, and community members who traverse this campus engage with Dakota territory and should reflect on the ongoing relationship that Dakota people have to this area.

—Adapted from a statement by Iyekiyaipiwiŋ Darlene St. Clair, Bdewakaŋtuŋwaŋ Dakota

This email was sent to OHR staff on behalf of Josh Iniguez and Sondang Cornelia on July 1, 2021, by the Office of Human Resources, 100 Donhowe Building, 319 15th Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN, 55455, USA. The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer. [Read our privacy statement.](#)

Document: 2399