



Social Support



Defining Social Support:

Social support is defined as the available assistance or help individuals receive from others. Social support is an important factor in the prediction of successfully achieving your goals. Social support is also a strong motivator and can positively influence and help build your self-efficacy.

The Value of Social Support:

To lead a healthy life, two things you should definitely do are engage in regular exercise and hang out with friends. The best idea is to combine both things and work out with your buddies to have fun, get motivated and fast-track your goals. A significant body of research, both past and present, suggests that individuals who have a good support system in place are more likely to achieve their lifestyle change goals and sustain their performance than individuals that lack a support system.

Having a Workout Buddy:

If you're struggling with your motivation, or you simply want to get something out of every workout you do, then one of the smartest moves you can make is to get a workout buddy. In fact, having the right workout buddy can often be the difference between failure and success, mediocre results and incredible results. Here are five benefits of having a workout partner:

1. **Accountability:** Even the most dedicated of fitness fans have days when they simply don't want to go to the gym. You may have had a lousy day at work, and your couch is calling your name, but your partner is counting on you to be there so that you can crush your exercise goals together. In result, when you have a workout partner counting on you, most excuses go out the window.
2. **Motivation:** Despite your best intentions, sometimes you might lag a little in the motivation department. This may be because of various factors, be it dissatisfaction with your current routine or feeling like your success has plateaued. Having a workout partner can motivate you to overcome these current barriers.
3. **Friendly Competition:** Finding your fitness partner-in-crime is an ideal opportunity to indulge in some friendly competition. Neither of you would want to fall behind during your workout, so it might be the extra boost that will help you keep going and hit new heights. Track your habits and goals with your workout partner to help each other stay motivated and consistent. Check out EHW's [Habit Tracking Fitness Sheet](#) for an effective way to build new habits and goals.



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

**EMPLOYEE HEALTH
& WELLBEING**

4. **It's More Fun:** Although it's important to make sure you get a killer workout, it's just as vital to have fun. Exercising by yourself can get a little lonely, but with your partner, you'll be able to share both the positive and the bad times with a smile on your faces. Plus, combining preparation with a bit of chat and banter makes it even more fun!
5. **Regular Routine:** With most gyms having reactions or being closed, it can be incredibly easy to make excuses not to exercise. This is particularly true if you're on your own. However, you are much more likely to keep going if you have a workout buddy.

COVID-19 and Virtual Social Support:

As we are all stuck at home, our enthusiasm or desire for exercise may reduce. There is something about constantly working out by ourselves that may trigger some of us to hit pause on our workout routines and start turning towards less robust habits. However, similar to in-person workouts, making plans to sweat it out with one of your friends motivates you to show up and be your best self. Online fitness classes or programs are a great way to boost your motivation and commitment by offering engaging, enjoyable classes with others. To further enhance your wellness, Employee Health and Wellbeing offers a variety of [live virtual fitness classes](#) throughout the week. If you can't attend a class, there are [On-Demand Recordings](#) you can do at any time.

Sharing your fitness goals with an involved online community or with friends, family members, personal trainers, or work colleagues to provide you with a great support network. Actively sharing your progress will remind you that there are so many other people going through similar challenges as you, and you don't have to feel alone in reaching your fitness goals. Join [Employee Health and Wellbeing's Connect Virtual Fitness channel on Microsoft Teams](#) to be more involved with the UD fitness community and meet others who have similar interests!