



# Buddy

a support tool

# Introduction to Buddy: a support tool

## Background

**Buddy** was co-designed by women and practitioners from the Glen Isla project, a women's criminal justice centre based in Arbroath, Scotland. It was developed based on evidence from across women's criminal justice services, including Glen Isla, that beginning the journey into the criminal justice system can be very challenging. However, we know that this is not an issue that is unique to women's criminal justice. New beginnings can be hard no matter the setting, so we hope that people from across health and social care services can benefit from using **Buddy**.

## What is Buddy?

**Buddy** is an activity based tool that aims to support people accessing services, at the start of their journey. It consists of 24 cards designed to be used by somebody with lived experience of the service (**Supporter**), and somebody entering the service (**Buddy**), to help alleviate fears and overcome barriers by sharing experiences and developing plans together. It promotes celebration of personal achievement as an incentive to continue on the journey.

## How do I use Buddy?

**Buddy** can be used at four key pressure points in the journey of a person accessing support within your service for the first time:

- Starting the service and deciding to access support
- Attending referrals/appointments
- Joining a group setting
- Leaving the service

cont.

Before using the tool, please consider what a buddy system means in your context, how you can support the interaction, and what safeguards can be put in place to nurture healthy relationships. Consider which of the cards are most useful in your own context and mix and match them accordingly. Some of the cards may need input from a practitioner, particularly at the start of the journey when **Supporters** and **Buddies** are matched up.

The tool can be used in both one-to-one and group settings. While activity based, some of the cards are reflective and motivational and look back on the journey to reflect on progress before moving on. **Remember:** the cards are flexible and can act as prompts for discussion rather than being written exercises.

### Playing your part

If you want to be a **Supporter**, make sure you feel ready to take the responsibility of the role. **Supporters** should be encouraged to share any concerns about their **Buddy's** wellbeing at any point in the process. If you already have a buddy system in place, we hope that this tool can complement existing activity.



**Top Tip:** We recommend that you use this tool in a quiet space to protect your Buddy's privacy.

# Card Descriptions



## Becoming a Buddy

You will need the support of a Practitioner for cards 1-3.

**Card 1:** Use this card to sign up to receive support from a **Supporter**. Make sure you understand what the buddy system really means in your context.

**Card 2:** Use this card to help you decide what you are looking for in a **Supporter**.

**Card 3:** Use this card to introduce yourself. Fill out information about yourself to be passed on to your new **Supporter** before you meet them.

## Becoming a Supporter

**Card 4:** Use this card to volunteer as a **Supporter**. Make sure you understand what the buddy system means in your context.

**Card 5:** Use this card to help you highlight what you can offer as a **Supporter** and need to avoid in a **Buddy**.

**Card 6:** Use this card to introduce yourself. Fill out information about yourself to be passed on to your new **Buddy** before you meet them.

## Attending Appointments

**Card 7:** This card should be used when your **Buddy** has an upcoming appointment with professionals (like a doctor, social worker or benefits advisor), to identify possible barriers and talk about what you can do to overcome these.

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**Card 8:** Use this card to celebrate the barriers you have overcome in attending appointments. Talk about what you might do differently next time.

**Card 9:** Use this card to highlight and recognise achievements. There's no success that's too small for you to celebrate.

### **Attending a Group**

**Card 10:** Use this card to understand how your **Buddy** is feeling prior to joining a group setting for the first time. Ask what support they need to get through this.

**Card 11:** Use this card to describe the best and worst case scenarios that could happen in a group, and plan for how to achieve or avoid them.

**Card 12:** This is a simple breathing exercise that the **Buddy** can use to relax. It can be used to relieve any anxiety.

**Card 13:** Use this card to share your experiences of joining a group and what it's like for you now.

**Card 14:** **Buddy**, you don't have to do this alone! Use this card to get further support from your **Supporter** when first joining the group by arranging to meet up before the group and go in together.

**Card 15:** **Supporter**, use this card to further support your **Buddy** when first joining the group by arranging to meet up before the group and go in together.

**Card 16:** **Supporter**, use this card to introduce your **Buddy** to the new group so that they feel welcome. You should fill it out in advance with your **Buddy** so that they know what to expect.

cont.

**Card 17:** Use this card to help your **Buddy** reflect on progress made since joining the group.

**Card 18: Group,** use this card to reinforce the value of working together in a group.

## Leaving the Service



**Top Tip:** Some of the cards in this section focus on relationships. If your **Buddy** feels isolated and doesn't have many healthy relationships, cards 19 and 20 may not be for them. However, you can use them to imagine or plan future relationships.

**Card 19:** Use this card to highlight the significant people in your **Buddy's** life. Show what support they have, and help them understand appropriate ways to get in touch with these people.

**Card 20:** Use this card to visualise the people in your **Buddy's** life and explore how connected they are with them. Mark people down in the circles, with the closest people to your **Buddy** in the centre.

**Card 21:** Use this weekly planner to help your **Buddy** fill their time. Prompt your **Buddy** to include a good mix of everyday activities and errands, as well as things to look forward to.

**Card 22:** Use this card to map out short-, mid- and long-term goals. These should feel achievable to your **Buddy**.

**Card 23:** Use the 'picture me' card to ask your **Buddy** to visualise their future self in word, picture or collage form (whatever suits them).

**Card 24:** Certificate of appreciation. **Buddy**, use this card to personally thank your **Supporter** for all their help and support. You can personalise this to make sure you express what you appreciated most about their support.

# Becoming a Buddy



Would you like to sign up to be a **Buddy** in our buddy system?

Yes

No

Need more information

My name:

Date:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We will match you up with a new person as part of our buddy system. What four things would you be looking for in a **Supporter** ? (E.g. age range, background, experience, locality etc?)

1

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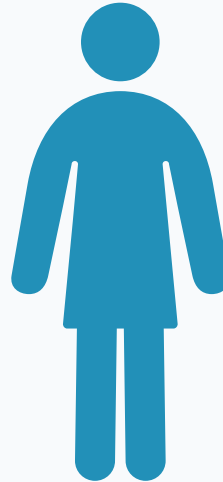
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3

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2

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4

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Anything you want to avoid? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Use this card to introduce yourself. Fill out information about yourself to be passed on to your new Supporter before you meet them.**

**Name:**

Draw a picture of yourself or something that represents you.

**Tell us five things about you that you would like your Supporter to know:**

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**Contact me by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(email, mobile no. etc)

# Becoming a **Supporter**



Would you like to sign up to be a  
**Supporter** in our buddy system?

Yes

No

Need more information

My name:

Date:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We will match you up with a new person as part of our Buddy system. In order to do this, what four things could you offer as a **Supporter**? (E.g. skills, experience, strengths etc.)

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2

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3

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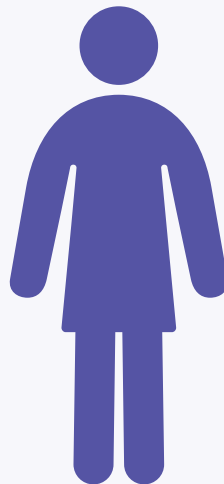
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Anything you want to avoid in a **Buddy**? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Use this card to introduce yourself. Fill out information about yourself to be passed on to your new Buddy before you meet them.**

**Name:**



Draw a picture of yourself/or something that represents you.

**Tell us five things about you that you would like your buddy to know:**

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**Contact me by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(email, mobile no. etc)

# Attending Appointments



Use this card for an upcoming appointment with professionals to identify possible barriers and talk about what your Buddy can do to overcome them.

Appointment:

Date/Time of appointment:

Likely to attend?



List your barriers/fears:

What could we do to make this easier:

Following this, what would you really want to get out of this appointment?

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Likely to attend now?







Use this card with your Buddy to celebrate the barriers they have overcome in attending appointments and talk about what they might do differently next time.

Appointment:

Date/Time of appointment:

Did you attend:  Yes (see below)  No (turn over)

If you replied Yes...

What barriers/fears did you overcome?:

How did you overcome these?:

What have you learned from overcoming these barriers/fears?

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*Well done on your attendance!  
Keep it up!*



If you replied No, why did you not attend?

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What were your  
barriers/fears:

What should we do  
next time?:

Can we reschedule this appointment?

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Well done!  
We noticed....



# Attending a Group





**Use this card to understand how your Buddy is feeling prior to joining a group setting for the first time and ask what support they require to get through this.**

How do you feel?

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How intensely do you feel this?

1



5



10



Not at all

Extremely  
intense!

What could support you?

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**Use this card with your Buddy to describe the best and worst case scenarios that could happen in the group and plan for how to achieve or avoid these.**

Joining the group...

The worst case scenario...

The best case scenario...

How to avoid this...

How to achieve this...

## *A Simple Breathing Exercise to Calm Your Mind & Body*

### Step by step instructions:

- 1) To begin, sit still and upright somewhere comfortable. Close your eyes and begin breathing through your nose.
- 2) Inhale for a count of two...hold the breath in for a count of one...exhale gently, counting out for four... and finish by holding the exhale for a count of one. Keep your breathing even and smooth.
- 3) If the 2-4 count feels too short try increasing the breath lengths to 4 in and 6 out, or 6 in and 8 out, and so on. But if longer breaths create any anxiety there is no need to push yourself. The most important thing is that the exhale is longer than the inhale, not the absolute length of the breath.

*Set a timer and breathe this way for at least five minutes!  
You will see a difference in your mood.*



**Use this card to share your experience of joining a group in the past and what it's like for you now.**

When I first started, I used to think...

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But now I know...

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I'm still working on...





**Would you like to arrange to meet with your Supporter before the group session begins?**

Yes  No

**Date and time to attend with your Supporter :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date and time to attend with your Supporter :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date and time to attend with your Supporter :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting point:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Would you like to arrange to meet with your Buddy before the group session begins?**

Yes  No

Date and time to attend with Buddy: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting point: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time to attend with Buddy: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting point: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time to attend with Buddy: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting point: \_\_\_\_\_



**Use this to introduce the Buddy to the new group so that they feel welcome. Fill it out in advance with your Buddy so that they know what to expect.**

This is \_\_\_\_\_

Things they would like you to know are...

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Things they would like to know about you...

(i.e. names\*, interests, hobbies)

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Today we're going to... (describe today's activity)

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\* you may want to use name tags to help with the first session

Use this card to help your Buddy reflect on the progress they have made since joining the group.

What went well?

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What didn't go so well?

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I'm still working on...



**Use this card to reinforce the value of working together in a group.**

The aims of the group/activity/class:

We share ideas by...

We make decisions by...

We manage conflict/differences by...



We show respect by...

Housekeeping (start time/finish time, smoking, bathroom, absence etc.)

Dated:

Signed:

# Leaving the Service





**Use this card to highlight the significant people in your Buddy's life.**

Name:

I appreciate them because...

How can I contact them?

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Name:

I appreciate them because...

How can I contact them?

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Name:

I appreciate them because...

How can I contact them?

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Name:

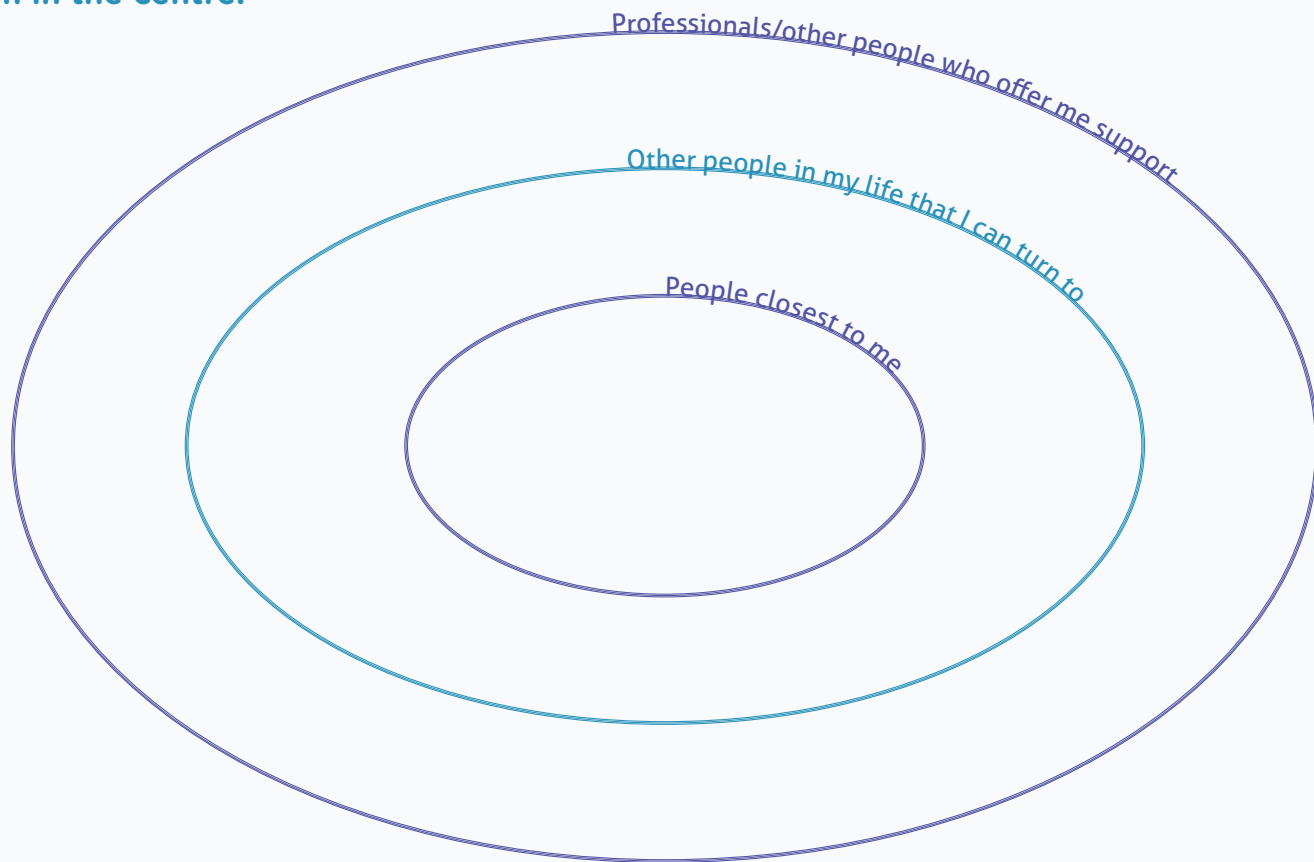
I appreciate them because...

How can I contact them?





Use this card with your Buddy to help them visualise the people in their life and how connected they are with them. Mark them down in the circles, with the closest people to them in the centre.



# Weekly planner

Use this weekly planner with your Buddy to show how they will fill their time. Put a star beside things they look forward to.

<i>Monday</i>	
<i>Tuesday</i>	
<i>Wednesday</i>	
<i>Thursday</i>	
<i>Friday</i>	
<i>Saturday</i>	
<i>Sunday</i>	



## Goals

Use the goals card with your Buddy to map out future short-, mid- and long-term goals.

<p><i>What I want to achieve...</i> (1 month)</p>	
<p><i>What I want to achieve...</i> (6 months)</p>	
<p><i>What I want to achieve...</i> (2 years)</p>	

**Use this card with your Buddy to visualise their future self in word, picture or collage form (whatever suits them).**

*I picture me... (draw, collage, write etc.)*

# Certificate of Appreciation

AWARDED TO

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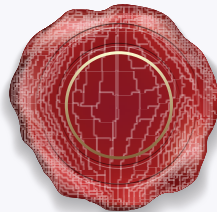
*For*

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DATE



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SIGNED