





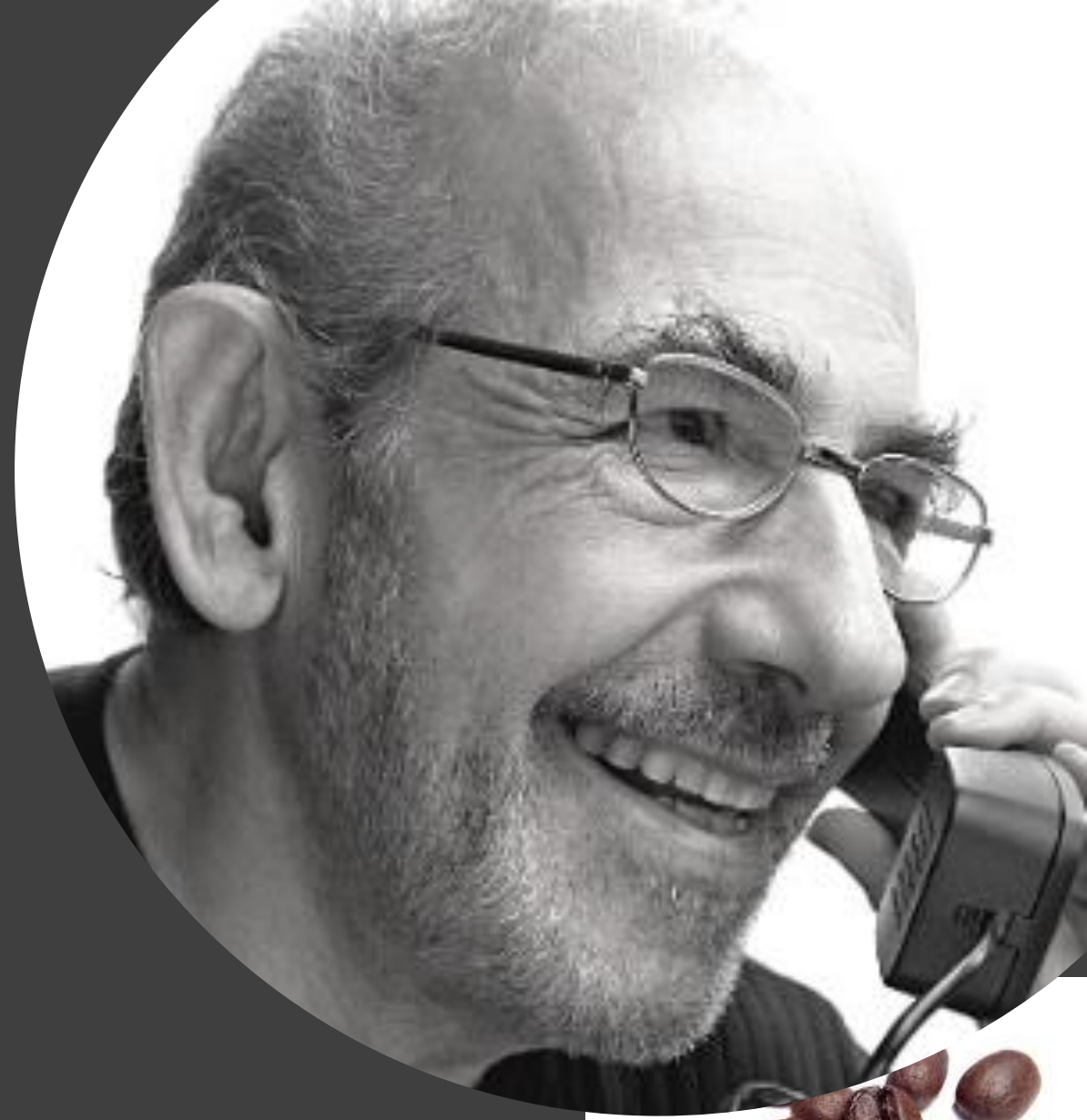
## **WELCOME**

We are happy to have you on the Coffee Talk team! Get ready for a fun and fulfilling experience...

Coffee Talk is here to offer a friendly voice and listening ear to those who need it.

Studies show that socially isolated older adults are at a 30% greater risk of heart disease, stroke and premature death, and a 40% increased risk of dementia. Loneliness is also linked to a greater risk of anxiety and depression.

Conversation can be a gateway for isolated, older adults to move into meaningful connection with others



# Roles and Responsibilities

## Your responsibilities:

- At the beginning of each shift, text 612-746-0728 to let us know you are ready
- Answer incoming calls
- Offer warm conversation and support
- Make referrals to other resources or Friends & Co services as needed
- Submit a call report after each call (located at the bottom of the resources page) <https://friendsco.org/coffee-talk-volunteer-training>

## You are NOT responsible for:

- Giving medical, legal or professional advice
- Solving every problem
- Talking to belligerent callers
- Giving out your personal information (full name, number, address, etc.)
- First names and personal anecdotes are OK



# Answering Calls

## Example:

- Hello and thanks so much for calling Coffee Talk. My name is (your name).
- May I ask your name?
- Hi (their name). What's on your mind today?

**If possible, try to inquire if they are a first time or repeat caller**

## Example:

- (their name), is this your first-time calling Coffee Talk?
- They answer “yes”: It's wonderful to have you! What's on your mind today?
- They answer “no”: That's great. Wonderful to have you back! What's on your mind today?



# Active Listening Skills

Practicing active listening over the phone is a challenge as the non-verbal cues which convey meaning, are absent. However, there are still ways to demonstrate to the caller that they have your full attention.

## 1. Be Attentive

- Put aside distracting thoughts and environmental factors, such as side conversations
- Listen to understand rather than to reply

## 2. Show That you're Listening

- Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like, “yes” and "uh huh"

## 3. Provide Feedback

- Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. Your role is to understand what is being said, reflect on it and to ask questions.
- You might use phrases like, "Sounds like you are saying..." Ask questions to clarify certain points: "What do you mean when you say..."
- Summarize the speaker's comments periodically



# Active Listening Skills

## 4. Defer Judgment

- Interrupting is frustrating and limits full understanding of the message
- Allow the speaker to finish each point before asking questions. Jot notes if helpful.

## 5. Respond Appropriately

- Active listening encourages respect and understanding. Be candid, open, empathetic and honest in your response
- Share your opinions respectfully

**Active listening ideas:** [www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening.htm)



# People are the experts on their own experiences. Show you are listening to them, not trying to change them.

Practice PACE:

**P - Partnership:** Avoid advice. You are there to listen

**A - Acceptance:** No judgment, no confrontation

**C - Compassion:** Not sympathy

**E – Evocation:** Evoke talk of change and encourage them to find the solution

Practice OAR:

**O- Open Ended Questions:** Ask questions that require more than a yes or no answer

**A - Affirmations:** Acknowledge and validate problems, issues or feelings

**R - Reflections:** Check for accurate understanding of what they are saying

**S - Summaries:** Bring together information shared over the course of your conversation

Note: This is not the time to share your own political, religious, or other opinions on the caller



# Responding Appropriately

Scenario	Possible volunteer solution
<b>Repetition</b>	Patience and reframing, inquisitive inquiry
<b>Complaints</b>	An empathetic, patient ear and possible redirection
<b>Despair</b>	Kindness, optimism and questions directed toward solution-seeking
<b>Seeking advice</b>	Instead of advising, encourage them to problem-solve
<b>Silence</b>	Doesn't need to be filled right away! They may just need a moment to gather their thoughts. Wait before trying to fill it



# Tips for Success

- Listen attentively
- Put a warm welcome in your voice
- Practice patience
- Ask open-ended questions
- Encourage gently
- Express interest in and curiosity about the caller's life and their history
- Share with empathy
- Be positive



# Conversation Starters

## **Childhood**

- What did you want to be when you grew up?

## **Friends and family**

- Who makes you smile?

## **Hobbies or pastimes**

- What do you enjoy doing?

## **Personal fun facts**

- What is one fun fact about yourself that no one would ever guess?

## **Favorite musicians or movie stars or influential people**

- What is your favorite band/musician?

## **Favorite foods/cuisines**

- If you had to eat one food for the rest of your life what would it be?

**Visit <https://friendsco.org/resources/> for more ideas**

Potential Situation	Possible Response
<p>Caller is sad/crying. Her family is taking her grandchild to college but didn't tell her what time they were leaving until 5 min before. They left her at home, and she says they often don't bring her places. She wants to move to Chicago where more family members live. Her church friends no longer call, and she is very lonely.</p>	<p>Remember: OARS Open Ended Questions, Affirmations, Reflections, Summaries</p> <p>Share information about the Friends &amp; Co phone companion program. If the caller is interested in being matched with an ongoing phone companion, you may help them sign-up during the call <a href="#">HERE</a></p>
<p>The caller might mistake the phone line for a dating service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the purpose of Coffee Talk</li> <li>• Remain respectful</li> <li>• Redirect conversation</li> <li>• Share information about the Friends &amp; Co phone companion program if appropriate</li> <li>• End the call if necessary</li> </ul>
<p>A caller enjoys your conversation and asks you to call them back later since they have no one else to talk to and they like you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coffee Talk is an inbound drop-in phone line only. We do not make outgoing calls</li> <li>• Remind them they can always call the Coffee Talk line back and remind them of the days/hours of operation</li> <li>• Share information about the Friends &amp; Co phone companion program. If the caller is interested in being</li> </ul>

Potential Situation Cont.	Possible Response Cont.
Caller is irate, swearing, speaking in derogatory terms re: race, religion, sexual preference, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let them know their language and tone are unacceptable</li> <li>• Ask them to stop using that language and to change their tone because you would like to talk with them</li> <li>• Redirect the conversation</li> <li>• Hang up if necessary</li> </ul>
Caller is lonely and wants to talk about anything and everything. May be rambling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen</li> <li>• Be patient</li> <li>• Reframe and redirect if necessary</li> <li>• Share information about the Friends &amp; Co phone companion program. If the caller is interested in being matched with an ongoing phone companion, you may help them sign-up during the call <a href="#">HERE</a></li> </ul>
Caller is worried because they are running low on groceries and are not sure how to get to the store or if they will have enough money to pay for things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask how they have handled this situation in the past</li> <li>• Ask if they have any ideas for a solution</li> <li>• Using the guide for resources in their geographic area, make appropriate referrals to <a href="#">other organizations</a>.</li> </ul>

# When to Make A Referral

- Caller shares they have called the phone line multiple times and enjoys having someone to talk to regularly. This is a good opportunity to offer the Phone Companions Program. <https://friendsco.org/phone-companions/>
- Caller requests something specific. (“I’m looking for a place in my area to socialize”)
- Caller requests legal or financial help or Medicare assistance. Refer them to the Senior Linkage Line <https://mn.gov/senior-linkage-line/> or (800) 333-2433
- Caller is seeking food or transportation assistance. Provide options from the [Resource Guide](#) and also refer them to the Senior Linkage Line <https://mn.gov/senior-linkage-line/> or (800) 333-2433



# Helpful Resources

- **National Suicide Hotline:** 1-800-273-8255.
- **Mental Health Chat lines**
  - **Minnesota Warmline:** 877-404-3190 <https://mentalhealthmn.org/support/minnesota-warmline/>
  - **HERE4MN:** 833-HERE4MN
- **Additional Mental health resources:** [www.mentalhealthmn.org](http://www.mentalhealthmn.org) and [www.namimn.org](http://www.namimn.org)
- **Depression Information for Older Adults:** <https://namimn.org/education-public-awareness/older-adults/>
- **For help locating mental health resources:** [www.fasttrackermn.org](http://www.fasttrackermn.org)
- **For any information for senior related issues or care call the Senior Linkage Line:**  
1-800-333-2433 <https://mn.gov/senior-linkage-line/>
- **LBFE Resource Guide:** [Resource Guide](#)



# Wrapping Things Up

Ending a phone call can be difficult, particularly when the caller is extra chatty! Here are some tips that may help:

- “It’s been so nice to hear all that you have been up to lately” or “you are a fascinating person, (their name), it’s been so great talking to you.” Please call back again!”
- Tell them how much fun you had talking with them and remind them they can call back any time Coffee Talk operates (remind of days/times, M-F 8am-12pm). Tell them you look forward to them calling back
- If all else fails, explain you are asked to keep phone calls to a limit to allow other callers a chance to call and talk with someone, too. Remind them they can call again and remind them of the hours.



# Rare Situations

Coffee Talk is **NOT** a crisis hotline. However, there is a small chance you may run into a situation that you are not comfortable handling alone or that falls outside Coffee Talk's purpose of providing a friendly listening ear.

## **If a caller shares a mental health issue and wants to address it:**

- Explain that Coffee Talk is a friendly, drop-in chat not a crisis line and that you are serving as a volunteer, not a trained professional
- Provide information about other services in the area that may be a better fit for them at this time
- **National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255.**
- **Mental Health Chat lines**
  - **Minnesota Warmline:** 877-404-3190 <https://mentalhealthmn.org/support/minnesota-warmline/>
  - HERE4MN: 833-HERE4MN
- **Additional Mental health resources:** [www.mentalhealthmn.org](http://www.mentalhealthmn.org) and [www.namimn.org](http://www.namimn.org)
- Offer to facilitate a 3-way call with them and do a warm transfer to another service

## **In the case of a potential health crisis indicated by complaints of concerning symptoms:**

- Encourage them to hang up and call 911 or another health professional
- Offer a 3-way call, ask for their address and remain on the line until emergency workers arrive



# Self-Care is Important, Too!

As a person who cares for others and is so giving of your time and energy, you may sometimes forget that it's important to fill your cup, too!

## **Some physical signs of stress are:**

- Headaches
- Low energy
- Upset stomach
- Aches, pains
- Tense muscles
- Insomnia


## **Suggestions for relieving stress:**

- Factor in down time/rest for yourself
- Make time for your interests and hobbies
- Know the power of saying “no.” No one can do it all
- Spend time with people you enjoy
- Spend time in nature or with animals (or both)
- Try yoga, meditation or another form of relaxation technique
- Seek support from a friend, family member or trusted professional
- Enjoy a cup of your favorite brew



# Download/Access the Required App

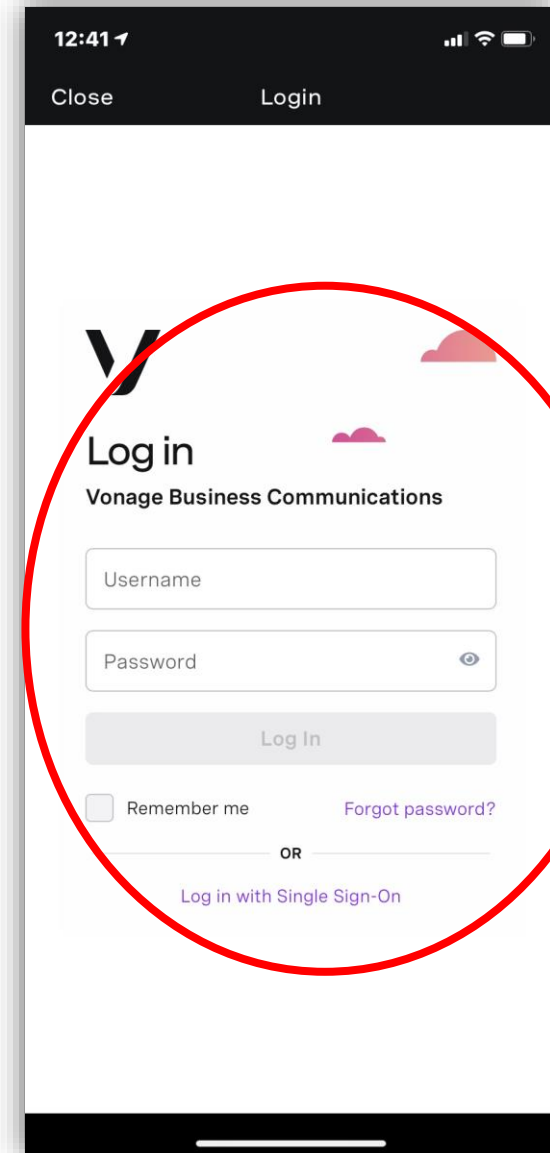
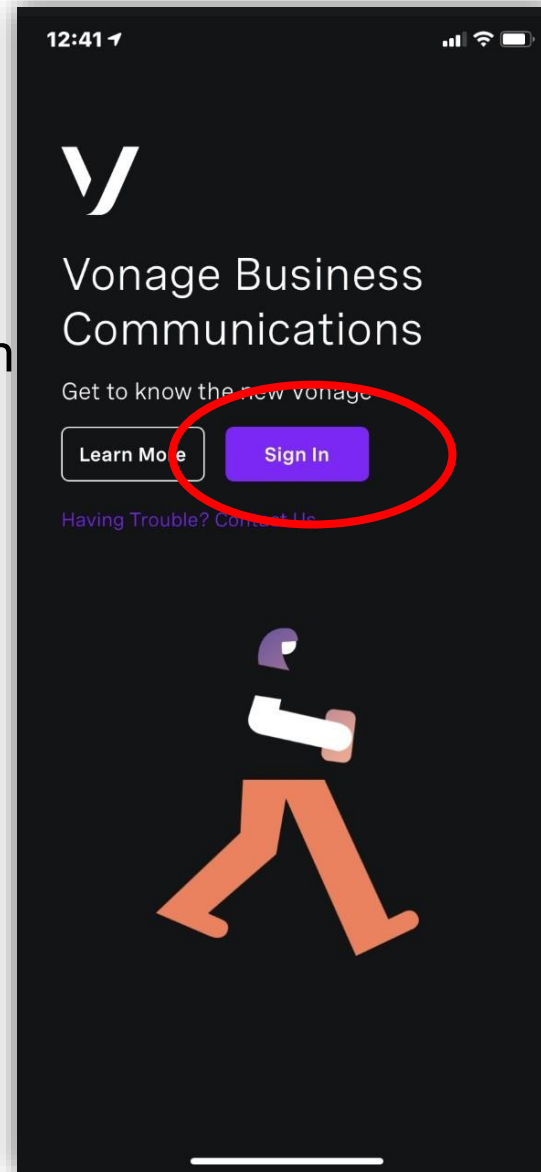
Step one: Download the Vonage Business Communications App from your mobile device app store

<b>Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• iPhone iOS 10 or higher</li><li>• Android 5.5 (Lollipop) or higher</li></ul> <p>App Icon looks like this </p>
<b>Download</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Go to the <a href="#">App Store (iOS and iPadOS)</a> or <a href="#">Google Play Store (Android)</a>.</li><li>2. Download the <b>Vonage Business Communications</b> app.</li><li>3. Open the app, enter your Vonage Business user credentials and then tap <b>LOGIN</b>.</li></ol>



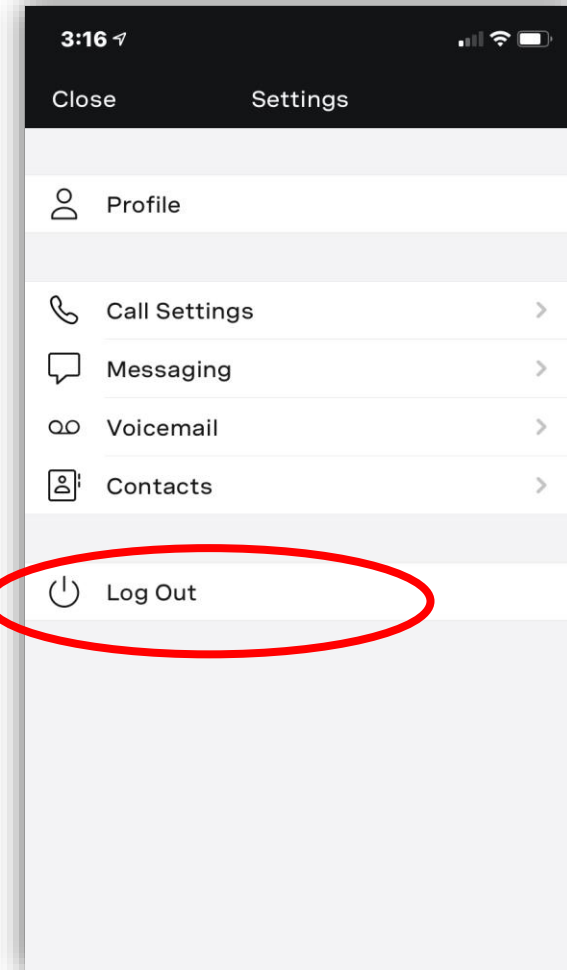
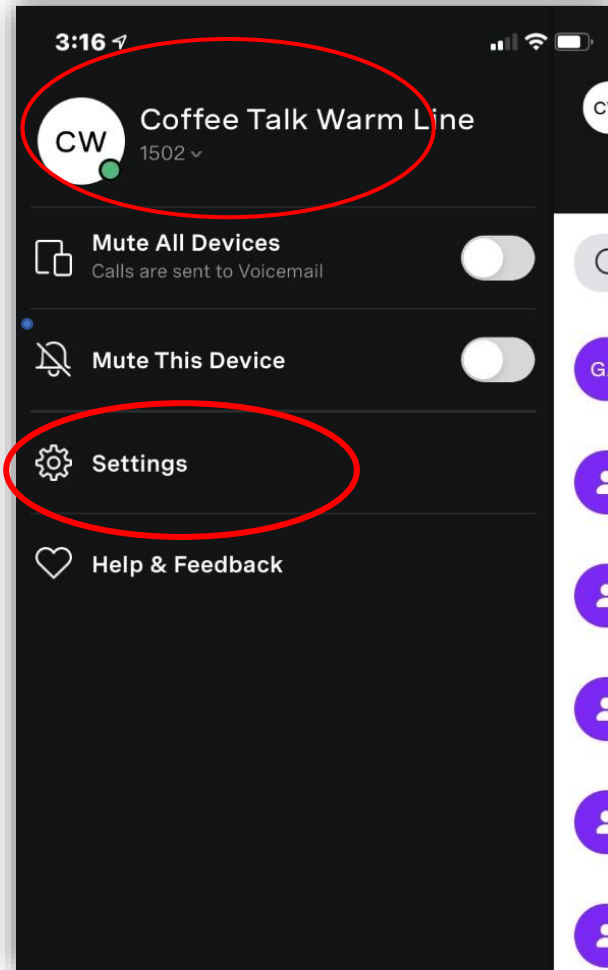
# Sign in

- Click “Sign in” on the black screen
- Next enter username and password on the white screen that comes up after clicking “sign in”
- **Username:** 6127460728
- **Password:** LBFEEvolunteer!



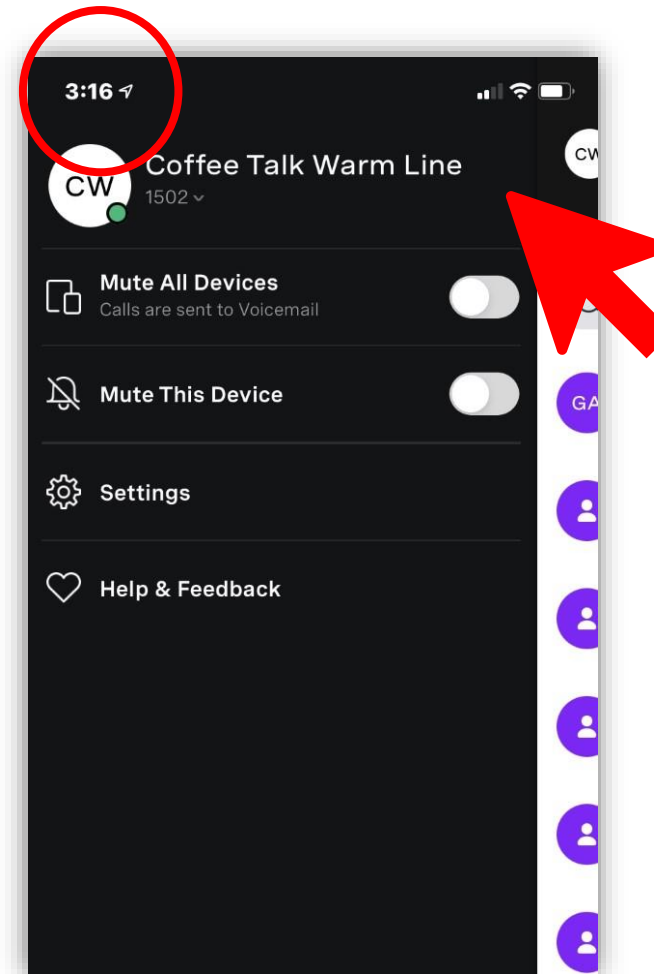
# Sign out

- Click the “CW” icon in the upper left-hand corner of the main screen
- Click “settings” on the black screen
- Click “Log out” on the white screen that comes up



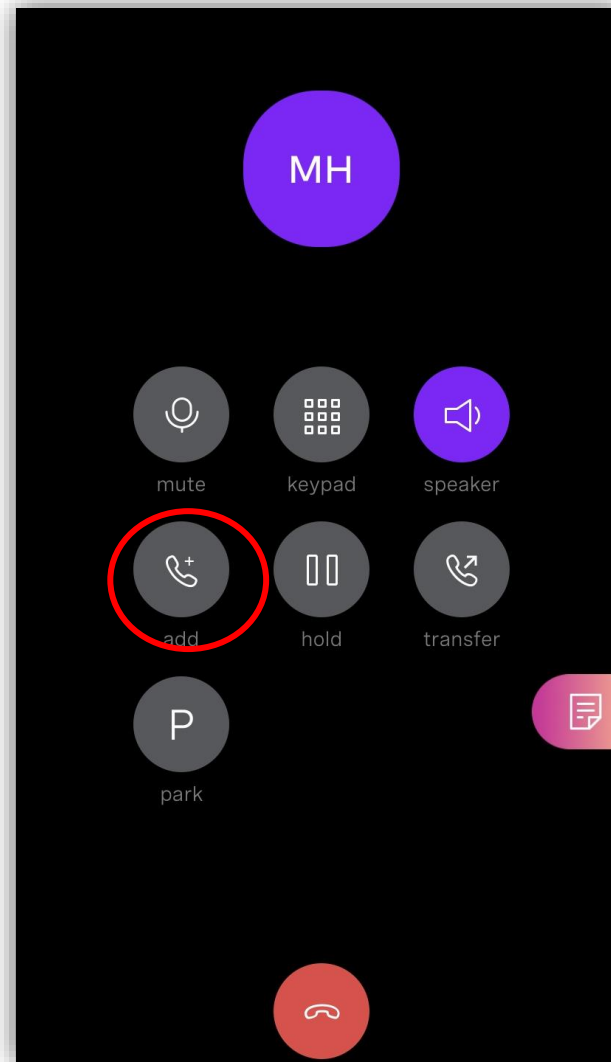
# Ensure the Line is Open

- If the dot in the lower right of the icon is green, then the line is good to go and ready to accept calls
- If the green dot is red, it will not accept calls
- If it is red, check to make sure the “mute all devices” button (arrow is pointing to it) is not on. If it is on, it will be purple and slid to the right. Simply click it and it will slide to the left and turn grey. Wait a minute or two and the icon should change back to green
- If it remains red, call staff to try other troubleshooting ideas



# Three Way Call

- While on the call you wish to connect a third party to, click the “add button” on your screen while in the middle of a call
- Type in the number you want to add to your current call



# Communicating with Your Co-Volunteer

- During your shift you may want to communicate with your co-volunteer via text. It's good to let them know if you need to slip away for a minute, if you want their feedback on something, or if you have some insight to share. A quick text should do the trick!
- When you are logged in you will see the text icon along the bottom of your screen.
- Friends & Co Contact info

Call: 612.721.1400 Visit: [www.friendsco.org](http://www.friendsco.org)



To help improve our training for future volunteers, please complete a short survey about your experience.

**Thank you!**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BPTM5XP>

