

## **Susan L. Brooks—One-Word Check-In/Check-Out**

A very simple wellbeing-promoting practice I've found especially useful in an on-line environment, and one that I plan on continuing into the future, is the one-word or phrase (or sound or gesture) check-in and check-out. I have used this little exercise on a regular basis this past year in my classes and in professional meetings. Someone begins (usually me if I'm leading the session) and then 'passes' it to a student or colleague, and we go around until everyone has had a chance to offer something. The check-in allows everyone to take a moment to arrive more fully, and the check-out helps create an ending and some closure for the session or meeting. The exercise, like everything I teach interactively, is always invitational, meaning anyone can simply pass. Nevertheless, perhaps because of the simplicity and 'low stakes,' my experience is that everyone will generally offer a word or phrase. This exercise is a very simple yet effective tool for inviting self-awareness and promoting wellbeing by allowing everyone to be seen and heard. I also offer the options of posting an emoji (on Zoom) or posting a word or phrase in the chat box. These options are especially useful with large groups where it would probably take too long to do a full go-round. The feedback I have received is that students and colleagues appreciate the check-ins and check-outs because they get to share how they are doing and see the range of emotions among their classmates. The experience of seeing and hearing how others are doing helps to normalize whatever each person may be experiencing and contributes to community-building among students and colleagues.