

VIRTUAL CONNECTIVITY COVID-19

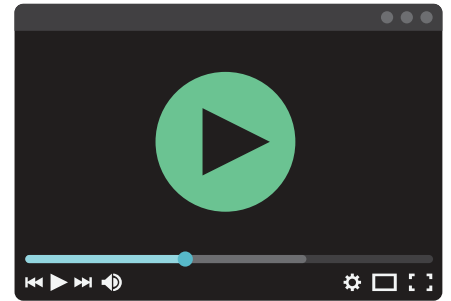


Staying connected during the outbreak - Social distancing doesn't have to mean social isolation.

Prioritize staying connected virtually

- **Schedule virtual coffee/tea.** Schedule to catch up with friends or co-workers over morning coffee, tea, or your hot beverage of choice. Send invitations for phone or video chats to catch up on what is going on in their lives. There are even filters for your video call that can make it look like you are in a coffee shop. This enhances your connection by making it feel like you are actually there.
- **Engage your kids or nieces and nephews.** There are so many ways to connect virtually with the younger members of your family.
 - o Organize virtual play dates or scavenger hunts over apps like Zoom.
 - o Schedule time for family members to video chat with your children each afternoon and give them clues as to who is calling thought the day.
 - o Call your nieces and nephews to read them a bedtime story or maybe they can read one to you!
 - o Have older nieces and nephews update you on their favorite artist, latest apps, dances, music, etc. It's a great time to expand your horizons and connect to their world.
 - o Send an inspirational text message about their talents and strengths, your wishes for their future and your plans to always support them and their dreams. Sincere, heartfelt messages go a long way in bridging the gap when you're not able to be physically present.
 - o One great way to connect is through games. You can play Words with Friends, or maybe you're feeling adventurous, and can try something like Minecraft.
- **Watch movies together ONLINE.** Try out the google chrome extension called Netflix Party. You will be able to watch movies and TV shows together. They even have a chat room where you can discuss important movie details. GREAT for teens!

- **Schedule a private lesson.** Employ the members of your support system, who you know have experience with a particular skill, to teach it to you in a video call. (Try grandparents, who can teach sewing, a baking lesson or creating a family tree)
- **Stick to your workout schedule.** Many gyms are offering virtual classes with options to record your workout online. You are also able to connect with your gym mates through chat rooms or Facebook Groups. If you don't have the proper equipment at home, reach out to your gym to see if you can rent or borrow it.
- **Take time to party.** Have a virtual dance party with friends and family. Apps like Zoom also allow you to have virtual karaoke. Do you have a favorite dance club? Check their website to see if they are offering "cloud clubbing", you can watch your favorite DJs and stay connected with the community in a chat that will be announced live during the performance. Many DJs and artists are also having free (or at times asking for donations) parties and concerts on Instagram.
- **Visit places virtually**
 - Get an adrenaline rush by riding virtual rollercoasters at Disneyworld
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYyJUETyV-ZW7BgjhP3UbTg>
 - See all the natural wonders of the world at the Smithsonian.
<https://naturalhistory.si.edu/visit/virtual-tour>
 - Explore art exhibits at the Louvre
<https://www.louvre.fr/en/visites-en-ligne>
 - Make sure to follow your local museums on Facebook and Twitter as many are uploading virtual tours, it's a great way to learn about your local history.
- **Take a break.** Taking time for yourself is also just as important as being social. Schedule time out of each day to take a break from social media and the news! Use this time to take inventory on your own feelings and emotions. Employ healthy self-care practices so you are able to also take care of others.



Connect on a deeper level

- **Help where you can.** Try to help out where you can. Look into local programs that are helping fill the needs that have been created. Reach out to your "high risk" neighbors and offer to go to the grocery store for them. Giving back and volunteering are great ways to feel close to others and release mood boosting neurotransmitters.
- **21 Questions.** Conduct an "interview" with members of your family. Take this opportunity to get a full picture of what their life looks like (past and present) to learn things you may otherwise never have known.
- **Support others.** Do you have family members that have jobs that were deemed "essential"? Call them to see what ways you can best support them. Take the time to write them a thank you note.

- **Look through the past** Have some fun looking through photos. You can do this virtually with friends & family members who are not in your household. Reminisce about past events, everyday moments and share desires for future celebrations when we are in healthier and safer times.
- **Get outside!** Take a walk around your neighborhood and greet everyone you walk by. A smile and a wave can go a long way in connecting us to others, but also tricks our brain to release endorphins that boost mood and decrease stress and anxiety levels.

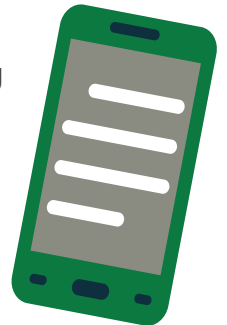
Take a positive approach

- **Take control.** Change, isolation, and the unknown are all things that can spark anxiety. Identifying what you can control will give you a sense of purpose and progress. Set a schedule for yourself and include a variety of activities in order to keep your attention. This also gives you the ability to identify your different moods throughout the day. Understanding what and why you are feeling a certain way will help gain control in your everyday life.
- **Put off your boredom.** Create a master list of things you would like to accomplish daily and weekly. Crossing off those tasks will help to increase your feelings of accomplishment and will leave you feeling better about each day.
- **Learn something new.** Do you have that 'How To' book stashed in the back of a closet somewhere? Break out cookbooks and that project you started but never finished. Take this opportunity to learn the thing you said you were going to learn. Share it with your social community.

Communication is key in managing anxiety and stress

It is important to take a self-inventory to try and identify things that may be causing you stress.

- **Everyone has experienced a change in their daily routine.** Try to create a new daily routine that will help you to maintain productivity and normalcy. If you are having trouble sticking to your routine send your daily schedule to a trusted person to help keep you accountable.
- **Talk to family and find out what they are doing to prevent the spread of the virus and to stay connected.** Brainstorm ideas to help manage this crisis together.
- **Listen and offer support.** It is important to hear the person you are talking to and not try to fix their problem. Active listening can make you feel more connected and relieve the stress you both are feeling.
- **Ask for help if you need it.** If you are feeling anxious or overwhelmed talk to a trusted person to help you manage those feelings. If you are feeling overwhelmed because of the constant news about the virus, ask that person to send you only relevant articles.
- **We're all in this together.** The best way to persevere, is (to do it?) together. This may last a long time, but will not last forever.



Know that each day may not be perfect and some chaos is bound to happen. Give yourself the time and space to decompress from each day and think about what would make the next day easier for you.