

Coping with COVID-19

Upper Island Counselling

2nd Edition, April 2nd, 2020

HOW HARD IS SOCIAL DISTANCING?

The physical distancing that we are all working hard at, in an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, is hard for most people, but particularly challenging for those who are more **extroverted** (outgoing and socially confident). These people feel energized by being around others. Losing that source of energy and connection can feel very difficult, and even depressing. This experience can extend beyond just “missing people” toward not even feeling like yourself. To help combat this, it’s important to still plan get-togethers with friends and family, but it’s going to be ... different.

Thankfully, we live in a time where our smart phones, laptops, tablets, computers and many apps make face to face conversations possible. Now is the time to check out these possibilities if you aren’t already in the know. If you have an iPhone, you can use FaceTime to see and talk with others. You can do the same with Facebook Messenger, Zoom, WhatsApp, Skype, and Telegram to name a few.

Get creative! Plan a meal with a few friends. Get dressed up. Set the table nicely, coordinate the menu so you’re all eating the same thing. Make a theme. This engages your mind and gives you something to plan and prepare for. It also helps you have things to look forward to which is important during a time like this when we don’t know how long the distancing will last.

Connection with others is very important for all of us. As time goes on, it won’t be just the extroverts needing to find ways to connect. Even people who lean more towards an **introverted** (more shy, withdrawn, or inward focused) personality will find the need to re-energize by meaningfully interacting with friends, colleagues, and family.

We are all in this together. If you are particularly challenged by the lack of social connection, let others know how you feel and invite them to join you in some creative online quality time! As you think about the people you care about, consider if their personality type will help them through this strange time, or if it will make it extra hard for them. Reach out to those who really need that connection, and remember to take care of your own needs too.

Here are some links that provide more ideas on this topic.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/23/health/extrovert-social-distancing-wellness/index.html>

<https://www.politico.eu/article/an-extroverts-guide-to-coronavirus-isolation/>

The team at Upper Island Counselling would like to send a big THANK YOU to all of the frontline and essential service employees that are working hard to ensure that we are all safe and have the supplies that we need to carry on. Your efforts and hard work are invaluable during this time. We are full of gratitude and appreciation for you and your families.

STAYING CONNECTED

Ideas to maintain connection while maintaining distance:

- Start an online group exercise challenge for friends and family. Help motivate each other and share your progress! Some free online options include:
 - www.hasfit.com Free home workout videos from beginner to advanced
 - www.yogawithadriene.com Free online y, with 30-day monthly challenges
- Play online group games together, like New Words with Friends or Quizup.
- Start a book club and meet online to discuss!
- Get your friends and family on the [#FormalFriday](https://twitter.com/FormalFriday) bandwagon. Share photos and enjoy dressing up while staying in.
- Volunteer to help community members in need. Many communities are looking for grocery shoppers, delivery drivers, or people that can call and check-in on isolated individuals.
- Remember the big picture – staying home and staying safe is a **collective** action. We're all in this together!



HOW TO STAY CONNECTED DURING PHYSICAL DISTANCING.

COVID-19: Preventing Loneliness During Intentional Isolation

 @EndSocIsolation
#isolatedNOTlonely
www.endsocialisolation.org/covid19

CONNECT VIRTUALLY

Making sure you stay connected with colleagues, family, and friends can ease feelings of loneliness. Social media, video chat platforms, and telephone calls can all be used to keep in-touch with others during physical distancing.



HELP A NEIGHBOR

Running an errand for a neighbor not only helps them, but will also make you feel more connected to your community. Make sure to take extra precautions when coming into contact with others.



MAINTAIN A WELL-BALANCED LIFESTYLE

Eating healthy, exercising, meditating, and maintaining a daily routine can all help reduce stress levels and help one cope with social isolation.



STAY POSITIVE

Focusing on the altruistic reasons for physical distancing can help mitigate anxiety or stress. By physical distancing yourself, you are preventing others from getting sick and stopping the spread of COVID-19 to vulnerable individuals.



WE ARE STILL OPEN

For appointments by phone, Zoom or Skype

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