



Maintaining Connections While Social Distancing

Connecting with other people is a part of our biological programming. We seek out human interaction when we are stressed or challenged. Our instinct is to gather in groups to shield us from mental and physical harm.

Now, we are faced with the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing is recommended for the health and safety of ourselves and others. This challenges us to be creative in how we maintain our social connections and manage our mental and physical health.

Social distancing does not mean withdrawing from society. Everyone needs a varying amount of social contact. View this as an opportunity to connect in other ways.

Examples of safe connections include:

- Use electronic devices to keep in contact with friends and loved ones. This could include videoconferencing or making phone calls instead of texting.

- Spend quality time with the people you live with by cooking together, playing board games or participating in outdoor activities.
- Make a favorite meal or dessert that reminds you of family or friends that you are not able to visit. Then call them and/or share pictures of your meal on social media.
- Write about your experiences in a journal. This will not only help you sort out your feelings, but can be shared for future generations to connect to the past.

It is important to recognize that we do not live in isolation. Realize that you are protecting others by protecting the people close to you. Inspire and encourage others to follow protective strategies at home, work and through electronic means, such as social media, phone calls and videoconferencing.

If you are concerned about your mental health, don't hesitate to seek advice. BHS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 800-245-1150.



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