



SOCIAL DISTANCING AND CONNECTION CARE



Social connection is a key part of our well-being. In times of social distancing, it might seem like a good idea to create a lot of extra support to socially connect with people. However, right now, the best thing is to be intentional about social connection and ensure when you are connecting that it is high quality. In some ways you are now more connected to friends, family, and even coworkers than ever before.

Perhaps you're on more video calls, your family created a group chat, or your kids are on group chats and logged into virtual classrooms. In some ways, you have a lot more people virtually in your household than ever before. You may have a lot of social connection that can be overwhelming and still leave you feeling a little lonely. In other instances you might have a lot less connection and find yourself missing the people you normally surround yourself with.

Quality connection is really important for your emotional and mental health. Here are some strategies for focusing on quality connections:

- » **Check in on those you care about.** You may have elderly neighbors or relatives that are more exposed during this time. Give them a call to see if they need anything (perhaps grocery delivery) or if they just need somebody to chat with. They may be feeling alone and afraid, and knowing you care will help ease their minds.
- » **Avoid connection that amplifies your anxiety.** Some people connect through fear or what researcher and author Brene Brown calls "Common Enemy Connection" which is when people find all the things they dislike together. These types of connection aren't fully nourishing. Does this mean you can't talk about what scares you right now? No, in fact it can be very helpful to talk about what scares you or what you are feeling. Be sure that the connections you seek are positive overall and allow all parties to support each other during this time of uncertainty.
- » **Find someone to have the conversation with** who acknowledges your fears and reminds you that you are safe and loved. Conversely, some people hear your fear and pile on with more fear and anxiety. This is not helpful to either person.
- » **Prioritize connection that invites goodwill, kindness, joy, laughter, and peace.** Based on the science of human connection, the saying "misery loves company" is true, but so is the saying "joy loves company." People adopt the behaviors that others endorse. Find the right people to spend virtual social time with who will fill your bucket.

The [*Power of Social Connection*](#) is so strong that WELCOA has deemed 2020 the [*Year of Social Connection*](#). And now in the face of a global pandemic, see how [*WELCOA is helping you connect*](#).