

COVID-19: Staying Connected With Friends and Family

An infectious illness outbreak such as this one can be stressful to you, your loved ones, and your friends. While it is important to stay home while physically distancing, it does not mean that you need to be alone. In fact, staying connected can help you cope with anxiety, reduce stress, and stay positive.

Stay in touch with others through:

- Phone
- Text
- Video chat
- Email
- Social media

Adapt your daily routines to involve friends and family virtually:

- Share meals virtually. Use video chat to exchange your favorite recipes, then prepare and enjoy together, in your separate homes.
- Try a virtual game night.
- Tune in to the same streaming concert, Broadway performance, or comedy show.
- Join a friend for the same online workout class.
- Sign up for an online class on a new or beloved hobby (such as baking, crafts, or photography).
- Go on a walk or jog with your friend while you're both on the phone.
- Start watching a TV show or movie at the same time, then exchange critiques afterwards.
- Swap your favorite book titles with your friends, then set up time to share what you thought on the phone or by video chat.
- Instead of going out with friends, have a virtual dance party.
- Race a friend to finish the same puzzle.
- Meet a new group of people through online groups that are forming on Facebook, Slack, Meetup and WhatsApp, or through neighborhood mutual aid groups. For some examples, visit citylimits.org/nyc-coronavirus-crisis-resources-for-you/#11.
- Find an online worship service, or schedule a live prayer session with your fellow service-goers.

Reach out to those who need support

- Reach out to an elderly neighbor or relative for a chat or, if you are not sick and do not have any symptoms, offer to help them shop for essentials.
- If you are not sick and do not have any symptoms, hang a sign in your building offering to shop for essentials for those who need help.
- Post a positive review for a local business.
- Contact your local nursing home and ask if you can send letters to their residents.
- Reach out to those with small children, and offer to read or entertain them virtually.

NYC Well

NYC Well offers a number of well-being and emotional support applications (apps), and information on community resources. Visit nyc.gov/nycwell. If your symptoms of stress become overwhelming, reach out for support and help. Trained counselors are available 24/7 to provide brief counseling and referrals to care in over 200 languages. Call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), text “WELL” to 65173, or chat at nyc.gov/nycwell.

The New York State (NYS) COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline at 844-863-9314 is staffed 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. The phone line is staffed with specially trained volunteer professionals who are there to listen, support and refer if needed.

For more information about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), including how to guard against stigma, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and cdc.gov/covid19. For real-time updates, text “COVID” to 692-692. Message and data rates may apply.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

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