



COPING THROUGH COVID: SOCIAL IMPACT

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We are human

- You may have noticed an increase in:
 - *Anxiety*
 - *Worry*
 - *Difficulty concentrating*
 - *Loss of motivation*
 - *Lack of discipline*
- You are trying to survive in an uncertain time
 - *Avoidance and distraction are coping strategies*
 - *Our brain needs to be distracted from time to time. Just like you need a break while studying*
 - *Take Time to check in with yourself to see if it is helpful for you or unhelpful to be distracting*
 - *Give time to feel your emotions even ones that might feel more unpleasant like sadness and anger*
- You may not have noticed any changes in yourself and that's fine too

The need of social distancing

- CDC guidelines recommendation to reduce the spread as much as possible
 - *Avoid close contact with those that may be sick*
 - *Stay at home as much as possible*
 - *If you must go out, put distance between yourself and others*
- Some people seem to be taking that to mean socially isolating themselves
 - *Humans are social creatures and we do have social needs*
- What is being recommended is physical distance and being responsible if you have to leave your space

Social Distancing vs Physical Distancing

- Limiting social connection has negative consequences on mental wellness
 - *Human beings are made to be social and isolation can increase depression symptoms and physical health problems*
 - *Focus, instead, on keeping physical distancing not isolation*
 - *Current technology , if available for you, is a great way to maintain social contact while practicing safe physical distancing*
 - *It's okay to be frustrated that this connection looks different and feels different over technology.*
 - *it's important to keep connection where you can.*

How to build connection during uncertain times

- Find Ways To Maintain Connection during uncertain times
 - *Face Time/Video chat*
 - *Discord*
 - Routine is changed whether you are living with your family again or your friends have moved away
 - We're trying to create a new community wherever we are socially distanced
 - *Find Activities you would do with friends and have them virtually*
 - Create art or crafts (knitting, crocheting)
 - Complete the same exercise videos together on video chat
 - Watch television or movie together
 - Create Study Sessions Together
 - Play video games or do trivia together (Animal Crossing, Minecraft etc)

How to build connection during uncertain times continued

- Create a schedule and plans
 - *Be willing to reach out to your supports*
 - Create check ins or activities to look forward to each week
 - *Create a routine that fits with where you are*
 - Try to wake up at the same time
 - Keeping a routine can help us have a sense of control and stability

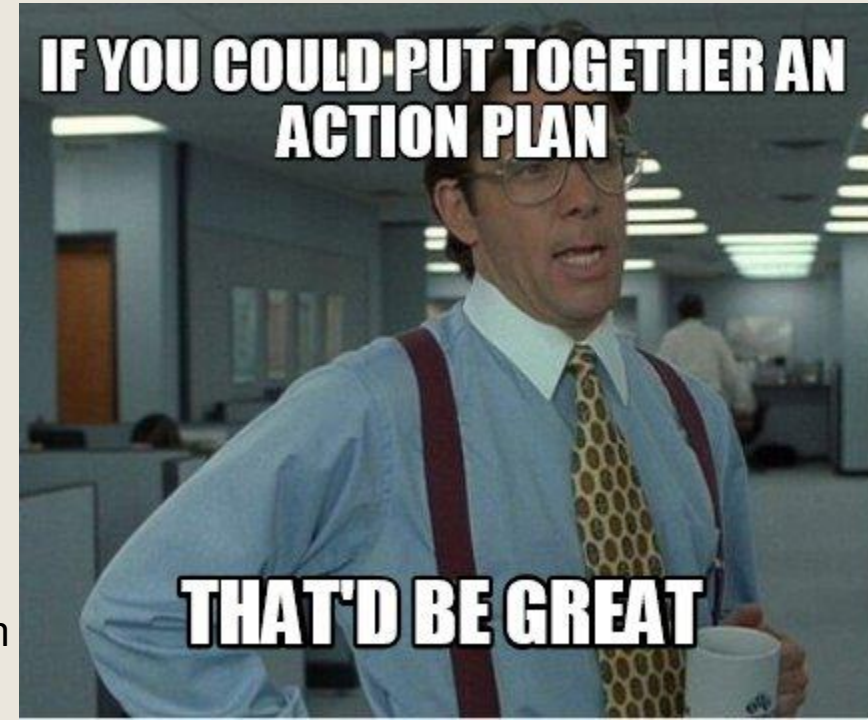
Balancing social connection and social media

- Social media is a great way to stay connected
 - *Touch base with friends or receive ideas of connection*
- Great way to be overwhelmed with information
 - *Real and fake*
 - *Limit exposure to news if it is impacting you negatively*
 - *Stay informed but also take care of yourself*
- Limit social media if it is leading to unhealthy comparison
 - *You do not have to be productive and learning new skills during this time*
 - *If you are feeling guilt or shame when looking at others posts, consider limiting exposure.*

Social Connection Plan

- Take the time to create a social connection plan
 - *3 people you can call*
 - *3 online activities*
 - *Set times to complete these activities*

<https://www.mememaker.net/meme/if-you-could-put-together-an-action-plan-thatd-be-great/>



At the end of the day, be kind to yourself and to others.



<https://visitindiana.com/blog/index.php/2017/10/02/southeast-indiana-state-parks/>

Resources

- Apps for coping: Welltrack, Headspace, Calm, Slumber, and many more. Share your favorite apps with friends.
- Information on COVID-19: World Health Organization (Who.int), Center for Disease Control (Cdc.gov), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Samhsa.gov)
- Psychology Today Provider Database to find a local therapist (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>)