

From the Grove

A MENTAL WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

by Dr. Wanda Hall-Myers

ISOLATE WITHOUT ISOLATING

As we distant ourselves physically, remember to stay emotionally connected. We are after all, social beings designed to live in community with one another.

It is during these times of physical separation that you realize how much you miss seeing others and how important a touch is. When restrictions are put into place, you tend to long more for that which has become off limits.

Even though you are not meeting in person, shaking hands, giving hugs, or placing a gentle hand on someone's shoulder, don't abandon your emotional connections.

There are a variety of ways to stay connected with family, church members, friends, and colleagues. Let's review some of them.

WEB CONFERENCE

Using a platform such as Zoom, Jitsi Meet, Google Hangouts, Skype, etc. gives you the option of meeting with people while seeing them through the camera of a smartphone or computer. The options named above are just a few of the many available software systems. Most of them even offer a free version. They also offer a plethora of features such as screen sharing and managing projects. They are great for connecting with groups of people whether work-related or for social purposes. Our church now uses software for [Virtual Bible Study](#), and it has been working out great.



VIDEO CHAT

How many of you thought ten years ago that we could use a cell phone to not only talk, but talk while looking at the person we're talking with? (Of course, smart phones do even more.) Especially during this era of social distancing, how nice is it to use a feature such as Face Time or Google Duo on our cell phones? These features add another layer of connection.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and the like offer other ways for maintaining connections. I'll also add texting to this group. Even though they may not allow the same level of connection as others, they serve a good purpose. Using these platforms to share can help you stay connected. I'll simply add...when you have opportunities to talk and/or see someone directly, take advantage of the opportunities.



TELEPHONE

I won't say, when all else fails, pick up the telephone and call. Just remember, there is still much value in a phone call. It's quick and easy and it is nice hearing a missed voice. Remember, even if we are technically savvy, all of our contacts may not be. Some of those we regularly visit may not have access to the technology mentioned previously. Believe it or not, there are those who still prefer a phone call.



MAIL

Although it may take a couple of days before it's received, mail still works. How often have you checked your mail to pleasantly find something other than bills, advertisements, or junk mail? Isn't it nice to receive a card (for whatever reason) or a hand-written letter from someone who was thinking about you? Why not think about someone else and send them mail?

Don't forget, it is important to stay connected. It's important for you and important for others. However, it's less important which of the methods you use to connect, just connect!

ACTION PLAN

Make a list of 3 people you will contact over the next week using methods 1-3 below.

1. Make a phone call, and
2. Send a card or letter, and
3. Choose your preferred method of contact.