



Live in the moment

Making social connections and friendships

Interacting with others and forming connections is an essential part of staying happy and upbeat. Many of us enjoy being in a busy environment or surrounded by friends and family. But even if you can't interact face to face, there are still ways to stay connected.

It's not exactly news that being alone can lead to loneliness. And loneliness can lead to depression and

anxiety. But you may not know that it's also associated with other serious conditions like heart disease. So it's no surprise that socializing and staying connected with others are recommended by mental health experts to help ward off these issues.

Read on for tips and ideas on how you can make connections that are important to your well-being.



Tips to keep you socially connected

Here are some ways to help you connect with others.



Arrange a virtual hangout

Go on virtual lunch and dinner dates. Lunch dates and romantic dinner plans can still happen with the help of a smartphone or laptop video call. Enjoy a meal and relaxing conversation with your friends or special someone right from your device.



Have a game night

Put away your devices and dust off the board games, trivia challenges, dominoes and cards. You can also virtually invite friends to the occasion and have them join in on the fun via webcam.



Take a virtual tour

Family vacation or tours postponed? No worries. Several museums offer online virtual tours you can enjoy with your family and friends from the comfort of your own home.



Get moving

Join a live workout session from home. You can stay socially connected and get a great workout from many different online exercise classes.



Adopt a pet

Pets can be comforting and may also lower stress and blood pressure. Adopting a pet is a great way to improve your mood and prevent you from being lonely.

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KFF/Economist Survey: One in Five Americans Report Always or Often Feeling Lonely or Socially Isolated, Frequently With Physical, Mental, and Financial Consequences