

# Supporting a Friend in Quarantine or Isolation

Navigating uncertain times can be challenging and stressful for all of us, but the added challenges of physical distancing, medical isolation, and quarantine can be especially difficult and lonely. If your friend or loved one finds themselves in isolation or quarantine, here are a few tips for supporting and connecting with that person. Asking “How can I help?” or “What do you need?” are always a great way to start.

## Stay Connected

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- Reach out to your friend or loved one regularly. Even a “thinking of you” text or phone call can be a welcome connection.
- Find creative ways to stay connected through FaceTime or Zoom.
- Keep your friend or loved one updated on social or personal news, but recognize the emotional impact missing out may have on that person.
- If allowed, and with minimal or no contact, mail or drop off hand-written cards or care packages. Be sure to arrange contactless delivery.

## Validate Their Experiences and Emotions

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- Validate and offer emotional support to your friend or loved one. They may be feeling many different kinds of emotions, from anxiety and fear, to boredom, loneliness, anger, or ambivalence. Normalize their reactions and let them know it's okay to feel any, all, or none of those things. Understand too that different people experience different levels of sickness. Try to avoid comparisons to others and be present to their needs on any given day.
- Avoid trying to problem solve, "fix" the situation, give unsolicited advice, or "should-ing" your friend or loved one. Remaining curious about their experience, offering support and validation, and simply listening to their challenges or complaints without judgment can go a long way in helping that person feel heard, understood, and connected rather than distant and lonely.

## Create Structure and Have Fun

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- With many "new normals" come many new routines and structures. Create structure or routines for yourself and your friend or loved one by setting times to connect or arranging virtual social get-togethers.
- Find and offer ways for your friend to have fun (if they are feeling well enough) in isolation or quarantine. Arrange a virtual dance party, movie watch, book club, or game to play.
- Chat with friends in advance about how to be inclusive, even if a friend must isolate. A scheduled virtual activity is easier to maintain than starting something new.

## Care for Self

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- Offer your friend or loved one support, but set boundaries for your own self care.
- Connect your friend or loved one with other people or resources so you are not the only source of support.
- Allow yourself to recognize and process your own experience as it relates to a friend or loved one being in isolation or quarantine.
- Educate yourself on the restrictions and challenges of isolation and quarantine.

# Reach Out

If you or your friend or loved one needs additional support, there are many on and off campus options to turn to:

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## Campus Support

[University Counseling Center](#)

[Rev. James E. McDonald, C.S.C., Center for Student Well-Being](#)

[Care and Wellness Consultants](#)

[Campus Ministry](#)

[Multicultural Student Programs and Services](#)

[Gender Relations Center](#)

[Office of Student Enrichment](#)

## National Support

**National Suicide Hotline:** 1-800-273-8255

**Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME to 741741

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin (SAMHSA) Helpline:** 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

**The Trevor Project:** 1-866-488-7386 or text TREVOR to 1-202-304-1200

**National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) Helpline:** 1-800-931-2237

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

**Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish), or text TalkWithUs for English or Hablanos for Spanish to 66746

If you are in a serious and imminent life-threatening crisis, call 911 immediately or go



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