

# 19

## WAYS TO COMBAT LONELINESS



### 1 Start conversations with friends or family

This might seem obvious, but can be hard when we feel lonely, sometimes because we might be depressed, and sometimes because we wait for others to reach out to us first. But ask yourself this: is the most important thing that someone else initiates, or that we build the relationship? If it's building the relationship, pick up the phone and call.

### 2 Go on a walk

Even in this season when we can't do all of our normal activities, it's helpful to go outside and get some sunshine, and if you can invite someone to go on a (socially-distanced) walk, bike ride, or gardening adventure with you, this will double as a great time for social connection.



### 3 Express appreciation for someone

Call, text, or write a note to someone who has helped you feel special over the years. You'll get max benefit if you do four actions of appreciation within a day, once per week. This is something you can do every day with minimal effort, but usually means a lot to the people you encourage, and can be a great way to build connections with meaningful folks in your life.

### 4 Use (limited) social media

Social media can be a great way to connect with some of your favorite people and see how they're managing life during coronavirus; it can also be a great place to discover new ideas or interests to help you make the most of your time indoors! Be careful to put limits on your time in social media, though, so you use it well. Left unchecked, it can become a tool for comparison and depression.



### 5 Play games!

Apps like Words with Friends and Trivia Crack are great ways to connect with people online; or you could play a physical board game either with those in your home or online with people around the world!

### 6 Make space for therapy

Mental hygiene is like any other type of hygiene; you can avoid it for a while without noticing; but if you go too long, it's noticeable both to you and those around you. Engage in good emotional hygiene by finding a trusted local therapist who can conduct an e-session (message us for recommendations used by our staff and friends) or even finding online help through places like "TalkSpace."

## 7 Online Book Club

Survey your friends for books they would be interested in reading; buy them online, and meet digitally once a week to discuss the book of your choice! (tip: come with questions ready to ask others--it always makes the conversation better)



## 8 Cook with people

Ask a friend, neighbor, or family member for a favorite recipe of theirs; see if you can FaceTime them and cook the recipe with them. If not, send them a picture of the finished product to show them you used their suggestion.

## 9 Attend church online

As in-person gatherings are prohibited, it's still so helpful to have a space on your calendar set aside to meet with God, "see" others in your community of faith, and engage in practices that center you in the heart of God. Our services are live Sunday at 9:15 and 10:45, with live prayer available online.

## 10 Organize support for frontline workers

Consider organizing with others to write notes for essential workers on the front lines during this pandemic. Maybe create a list of addresses and people who live nearby, and organize a crew to send each worker a letter per day.



## 11 Do a Zoom Family or Family Reunion

Get your family (or friends who are like family) together for an online reunion. This can be as quick as a half-hour, or much longer, if you'd like. Consider having each member come with a few updates about the top 3 things they'd love for everybody to know about their life right now.

## 12 Learn or teach something online

If there's a hobby, language, or skill you've always wanted to learn, join a class with other people online; this can be helpful both for connection and a feeling of productivity during a time of upheaval. Plus, even if you just watched the class (without doing all the homework), you'd gain some fun knowledge about the subject you're studying. Or if you have a hobby, demonstrate it on an online video for others to learn from!



## 13 Create a schedule (and build in self-care)

Take a shower early, get dressed in something that helps you feel confident, determine your “main 3 tasks of the day,” take some time to focus on God, do a chore that offers you the chance to see results (e.g. lawn, laundry, cleaning dishes), and have a scheduled time of connection--whether a phone call or video chat--to look forward to sometime throughout the day.

## 14 Do a driving scavenger hunt with friends

Create (with friends online, if you can) a series of quests that could lead people to explore fun locations around Grant County; have a small prize for the most interesting, the quickest completed, or the funniest.



## 15 Journal about what you've gotten through

Write down--on your computer, in a notebook, or on a piece of paper--a few of the things you've overcome during this coronavirus. Where has God been in all of this for you? What have you been learning? How are your priorities changing as you endure COVID-19?

## 16 Have a Trivia Night!

Facilitate an online trivia night based on some of your favorite topics; there are online formats for this; just search up “Trivia Night over Zoom,” and you'll find some options!



## 17 Do a parking-lot meal with friends

Staying in your cars, meet up with some friends and drive to a local business; get yourself a special treat, and share them in your cars over conversations (or even a Zoom call when you're all in the same parking lot).

## 18 Pray

The Spirit is nearer than we might expect, and is good company. Create either a prayer group or a prayer journal to specifically lift to God those people, places, and feelings near to your heart.

## 19 Join a group

CWC has small groups based around applying Christ's teaching to everyday life that meet almost every night online. (click here to see the options) Whatever kind of group you join--or make--you'll likely find people interested to have nourishing conversations.

