

Social Distancing: How You Can Survive the Isolation

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By Lisa Mildon

With US government officials and scientists recommending our population to self-isolate to slow the spread of COVID-19, many people may be feeling the effects of social distancing very negatively. While the US has a large sector of remote workers, social distancing may be a very foreign activity. If you find yourself struggling with the isolation and solitude, below are some suggestions and advice to help you get through these chaotic times.

Meditate



Prasanth Inturi/Pexels

Whether you're worrying over getting Coronavirus, the crashing stock market, or getting some cabin fever, some meditation can help calm the nerves, and even lower blood pressure. ¹ Meditating doesn't have to be complicated. Try doing some slow breaths. Breathe in 4 seconds and hold, then breathe out for 4 seconds and hold. Repeat this several times as needed. While doing focus on breathing, try to imagine a blank sheet of paper, or a calm stream flowing by. Use imagery that calms and soothes.

Exercise



theformfitness/Pexels

If you're fortunate enough to have some exercise equipment in your home, put them to good use. Exercise doesn't have to be a complicated routine. Get on that exercise bike, stream your favorite yoga video, or even stroll outside for a few minutes (no visiting neighbors). Physical activity not only helps distract you, but the release of endorphins will help ease stress, pain, and just give you a mental boost. ²

Visit Mother Nature



Lisa Fotios/Pexels

Research has revealed that being out in nature can be beneficial. Studies have shown that communing with the outdoors not only reduces stress but fear and anger as well. It has even been found to increase those feel-good hormones within our brain. ³ With social distancing, that stroll out in nature can help you feel connected and grounded. It can also help ease that cabin fever by changing your scenery, if for only a little while. Plus, the sunshine and fresh air can also uplift and invigorate your physical wellbeing.

Revisit Some Hobbies



Rahul Shah/Pexels

While some of your favorite pastimes may be out of the question with the new social distancing norm (baseball, soccer, football, concerts, etc.), there are still plenty of hobbies or activities to keep you from getting too bored and lonely. Perhaps one of the more old-fashioned ones is reading a book. True, you may have nothing handy to read, but e-books are easily accessible. If you don't have a Kindle or Nook, your local library may have an [electronic book check out](#) that you can read on your phone, tablet, or mobile device. If reading isn't your thing, try some arts and crafts. There are plenty of [sites online](#) to help you make some cool art with stuff lying around your house.

Technology



Andrea Piacquadio/Pexels

Nerds and geeks alike know how much technology can help quell the boredom and anxiety. Related to hobbies, gaming on your PC, Mac, or mobile device is a great way to spend countless hours relaxing and actually having some fun. With the popularity of MMO's (Massively Multiplayer Online games), you can also "hang out" with friends and family while gaming.

If gaming isn't your thing, apps like FaceTime, Hangouts, and even Discord can help you maintain your connections with the outside world with video, audio, or text chats. There are plenty of easy to use programs that only require an internet connection.

Hopefully, some of these suggestions will make your time in self-isolation less dreary. But knowing that we each have a part to play by social distancing, let's all embrace the vital role we have in lessening the impact on our nation.

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