

# UNC Wellness Centers

Talk to Me Tuesday

**You are Not Alone:  
Improve Health by Developing Strategies to Connect**



8/11/20

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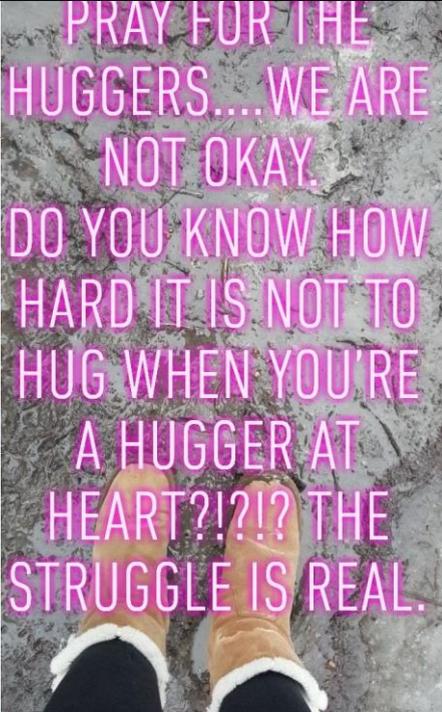
What is something that has made you feel connected during the past 5 months of social isolation and “safer at home”?

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Anybody else feel  
this way??



PRAY FOR THE  
HUGGERS...WE ARE  
NOT OKAY.  
DO YOU KNOW HOW  
HARD IT IS NOT TO  
HUG WHEN YOU'RE  
A HUGGER AT  
HEART?!?!? THE  
STRUGGLE IS REAL.

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*“When we are no longer able to  
change a situation, we are  
challenged to change ourselves.”*

***Viktor Frankl***

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## Two Pandemics Collide: Covid-19 and Loneliness

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We are social distancing to flatten the curve during Covid-19.

Research links social isolation and loneliness to poor mental and physical health.

**Question:** What should we do?

**Answer:** Honor the “3 W’s” (as we say in NC), but address the real dilemma

*How do we be alone without being lonely?*

**The *perception* of being lonely is the problem!!**

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## Why Worry about This?

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### Loneliness= Negative Health Outcomes!

Loneliness.....

- ✓ Increases the likelihood of **mortality by 26%**
- ✓ Comparable to the impact of well-known risk factors such as **obesity**, and has a similar influence as **cigarette smoking**
- ✓ Associated with an **increased risk of developing coronary heart disease and stroke**
- ✓ Increases the risk of **high blood pressure**
- ✓ Puts individuals at greater risk of **cognitive decline and dementia**
- ✓ More prone to **depression**
- ✓ Predictive of **suicide** in older age

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## Myths About Loneliness

**Myth #1: Loneliness and social isolation are the same\*\*\***

**Myth #2: Loneliness is always bad for you**

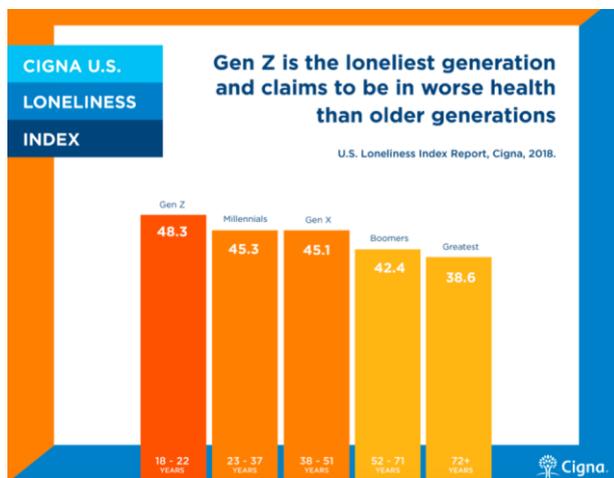
**Myth #3: Loneliness is an old person's problem**

**Myth #4: Loneliness is caused by technology**

**Myth #5: Loneliness means you need new friends**

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## How to Address the Loneliness of Social Isolation

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- ❖ **Maintain some sense of normalcy (regular routines)**
- ❖ **Distraction**
- ❖ **Connection**
- ❖ **Digital tools**
- ❖ **Serve/ Give/Volunteer**

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## Routines (Normalcy)

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- ❖ **Maintain a schedule**
- ❖ **Practice sleep hygiene**
- ❖ **Find ways to exercise and make small goals for the week.**
- ❖ **Try to eat a nutritious, real food diet most of the time.**
- ❖ **Silence speaks. Embrace solitude and try meditation, prayer, art, music, or time spent outdoors.**

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## Distraction

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- ❖ Read! (or write, or paint)
- ❖ Take a bath
- ❖ Focus on your pet
- ❖ Watch favorite TV shows and movies
- ❖ Meditate
- ❖ Dance, listen to music

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## Connection

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- ❖ Old-school – phone calls, letters, cards in the mail; pen-pals
- ❖ Face-to-face from afar – face time, window visits, driveway visits, parking lot parties, virtual meals, wine tastings, games, walks, streaming concerts
- ❖ One-minute kindnesses – respond to FB posts, tweets, snapchats ( just a few words or sentences)
- ❖ Cultivate your community – attend virtual Church services, take a class or webinar, book or puzzle swap
- ❖ Deepen or broaden existing relationships – reconnect to a long-lost friend
- ❖ New for Covid-19 – Quaranteams/ “pods”

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## Digital Tools

- ❖ [Zoom](#)
- ❖ [WhatsApp](#)
- ❖ [Skype](#)
- ❖ [Google Hangouts](#)
- ❖ [Netflix Party](#)
- ❖ [Steam](#)
- ❖ Collaborative [Spotify](#) playlists
- ❖ [Houseparty](#)
- ❖ [Ikarria](#), [Cocoon](#), [Monaru](#) and [Squad](#)
- ❖ [TableTopics](#) and
- ❖ [The And](#) to spark interesting dialogue during a video call
- ❖ [QuarantineChat](#), a service specifically set up to help people connect during quarantine

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## Support/Give

From:

[www.giveanhour.com](http://www.giveanhour.com)

### How To Support Others From A Distance



During this time when we are all practicing social distance in order to maintain our physical health, it's still important to stay mentally connected. Friends, family, colleagues, neighbors, and our local businesses and essential workers need our support as much as we need theirs. There are many reasons why we may need support a bit more now than before—some of us have lost jobs and are dealing with financial stress, some of us have gotten sick with COVID-19, some of us are single parents, working full time, homeschooling children, or are alone in our homes. Taking care of ourselves isn't always easy, reach out to those you know to let them know you care.



#### GIVE GIFTS

- Give a gift certificate to a local restaurant that can be used at a later date.
- Buy a gift card for a future self-care appointment.
- Send a book, puzzle, art, or cooking kit.
- Pay for a streaming or box-subscription service.



#### PROVIDE SERVICE

- Order groceries or pick them up yourself.
- Offer to do yard work.
- Order or drop off a meal to someone or offer to pick up necessities.
- Set goals for the future and support one another to achieve them.



#### SHARE TIME

- Pick up the phone and have a conversation. Listen instead of offering unsolicited advice.
- Schedule a virtual dinner date, happy hour, or group video chat.
- Start a virtual book club or give a parent a break and read a story to their children remotely.
- Make a virtual gratitude jar and share it with loved ones.



#### BE CREATIVE

- Draw a message of hope in the driveway to stay connected with neighbors.
- Send inspirational quotes via text or email.
- Send a handwritten letter, picture, or card.
- Make an online photo album and share fond memories.

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Our Mental Health is Just as Important as our Physical Health!

To learn more visit us at [www.giveanhour.org/coronavirus-resources/](http://www.giveanhour.org/coronavirus-resources/)

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## What's Worked For You?

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**What clever acts  
of kindness  
and/or connection  
have you seen or  
done?**



**Chat or verbally  
share!!**

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Although you may be more distant from others right now, you are not alone. Across the globe, this virus has disrupted people's lives. Keep in mind that your friends, colleagues, and millions of strangers all over the world are going through some of the same things you are. So try to give them some margin, too, if someone isn't their usual self. We truly are all in this together.

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## Resources

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<https://www.cigna.com/static/www-cigna-com/docs/about-us/newsroom/studies-and-reports/combating-loneliness/loneliness-survey-2018-infographic.pdf>

<https://medium.com/@KasleyKillam/the-growing-social-wellness-landscape-ea8f8fd11895>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/09/parenting/coronavirus-pod-family.html>

<https://www.houstonmethodist.org/blog/articles/2020/apr/10-tools-to-help-you-stay-connected-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/what-to-know-before-you-consider-quarant teaming>

<https://www.aarp.org/home-family/personal-technology/info-2020/video-chat-apps.html>

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## Coming Up Next!

### **August 18: No Session**

### **August 25: Get your Groove Back, Baby!**

Pregnancy and post-partum life can be tough, especially if you throw pelvic floor related issues into the mix. Join us for a talk with Ijeoma Nwankpa, a certified pelvic health physical therapist for UNC Health, to discuss how to get your groove back, baby! Mark your calendar for August 25 at 12:30 pm to learn more about preparing pelvic floor muscles before and after delivery, Kegels, back pain, proper body mechanics with baby care, c section scar, sexual healing and getting your belly back. [Click here](#) when it's time to join!

All sessions are held on Tuesdays at 12:30 pm using the same link you used to join today.

<https://unchealth.webex.com/meet/Julie>

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