During this challenging time, Seniors may especially struggle with the problem of social isolation which can put them at a higher risk for various conditions. As we respond to COVID-19, establishing new daily habits can be a challenging but rewarding opportunity to create and maintain connection with others while staying safe at home. Maintaining social distance does not mean you can’t be social!

Here are 7 ways to Be Social at a Distance:

- **Email**: Rekindle old friendships or check in regularly with your friends & neighbors.
- **Read aloud**: Whether over the phone or video chat, share a beloved book or interesting article with a grandchild or family friend.
- **Take a stroll down Memory Lane**: Clean out your closet, look at old photos or scrapbooks and reach out to the people who shared those great times with you to relive them together.
- **Find an Online Workout Buddy**: There are thousands of fitness routines available online and on public TV. Share with friends and find exercise buddies to work out "with" separately in your own homes.
- **Play Together Online**: Online games are a great way to exercise your mind, sites like Tabletopia offer virtual boardgames where you can invite friends or connect with other players worldwide.
- **Volunteer Online**: Do something good right from your couch- virtual volunteering projects are available through organizations like the Smithsonian, the United Nations, and the Crisis Text Line.
- **Host a Virtual Party**: Meet up for coffee, lunch, birthdays and other gatherings online. There are free chat services available through sites like Zoom and Facebook. You can also contact your local Senior Center to see if they are hosting any online activities or events.
- **Teach Others Online**: If you have talents, skills or lessons you'd like to share, you can use devices like your phone or computer to record and post these online for others to learn.

Despite the negative effects of physical isolation, you can make the choice to connect and maintain a support system to protect your health and well-being while staying safe at home.

Source: National Council On Aging

If you are having feelings of overwhelming loneliness, here are some local resources that can help:

- **1-800-640-5432** Advocates – Emergency psychiatric services, and mental health counseling
- **1-508-532-2255** Crisis Support- Call or Text to Talk (Text C2T 741741)

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