

# Connect Authentically



Relationships are a profound source of meaning in our lives, and no amount of social distancing can alter that reality. Despite the circumstances, there are a lot of ways to foster connection and belonging right now.

## Compassionately communicate your needs with others

Being back in the same space as your family can easily lead to friction. Practicing [compassionate communication](#) can help strengthen relationships. Try putting yourself in others' shoes before reacting. This is an adjustment for everyone. Be upfront with your [needs](#) and requests, but keep in mind the challenges they may be facing as well and leave space for them to share too.

## Be nurtured by nature

Finding ways to be in [the natural world](#), or even viewing scenes of nature, can improve your mood, boost your creativity, and provide a deep sense of calm & restoration. If you are able to maintain social distancing [guidelines](#) outdoors, try getting outside for some movement or explore what's right in your "backyard"; notice what is growing, listen for bird calls, feel the different textures of tree bark. If getting out is not an option, bring nature indoors with these [ideas](#)!

## Connect through technology

[Zoom up](#) with friends and colleagues or Facetime with family near and far. If your schedules or time zones don't match up find a "video" pen-pal to send short clips/updates to each other.

## Resurrect classic communication methods

Letter writing or telephone calls can help you connect with folks who aren't as technologically savvy. Don't forget about your grandparents or older neighbors who may feel even more cut off and lonely during this time.

## Take the opportunity to reach out to past friends or far away family

Think of people you don't typically see in your day-to-day life or have not connected with in a while and reach out. They may welcome a surprise call.

## Actively support others in taking care of themselves

Affirm people's choices that enhance their wellbeing and the health of the community. Applaud them for practicing strict social distancing, exchange healthy meal ideas, ask a friend to be a virtual bedtime buddy or an early morning yoga partner and text each other with updates about your healthy practices.

**Need more ideas?** Here are some [general tips and tools](#) for communication when living apart from others, [innovative ideas](#) that you can try with family and friends to reinforce your connectedness with each other and for [making your interactions more meaningful](#), even from a distance.