

Impact on mental health: **Social isolation** is a lack of **social** connections. **Social isolation** can lead to loneliness in some people, while others can feel lonely without being **socially isolated**.

It is well studied that college students are especially prone to feelings of loneliness, and they experience higher rates of anxiety and depression compared to the general population. During this period of social isolation, uncertainty and abrupt transitions, you may experience worsening of these feelings. Removal from any academic or social support system and extracurricular activities can cause one to feel less connected with friends, organizations, and hobbies.

Tips to help cope:

1. Know that it is okay to feel how you are feeling.

It is normal during this crazy time to experience feelings of sadness, anger, frustration, anxiety, or all of the above. You are allowed to feel this way and to communicate with others how you are feeling. It is also okay to sit with these emotions. If these feelings worsen to the extent that you are no longer able to function like your normal self, reach out for assistance: [Counseling Services](#) or [for prevention help](#)

2. Maintain a routine.

Start your day at about the same time each day. Set a goal for coursework to be completed for each day. Maintain adequate nutrition by eating three healthy meals per day; now is a great time to try new recipes or your favorite local take-out! Try to get in at least one physical activity each day. It is very good for your mental health to get some fresh air – a simple walk outside can work wonders.

3. Practice good sleep hygiene

Maintain a consistent sleep schedule. The goal should be 7-9 hours per night. Limit screen time in the evening, and avoid caffeine starting in the afternoon.

4. Connect with others.

It is easy to quickly feel lonely and secluded from others during this distance-learning period. Make an effort to stay academically and socially connected by engaging in regular video or phone calls with instructors, advisers and classmates.

5. Take a break.

Take time for yourself each day. Step away from the news and from your coursework to do something you enjoy and that you find relaxing or rejuvenating.

One word emerges as a key to overcoming loneliness during a time of isolation: Brave. Being brave may mean messaging a classmate from a Zoom class in search of a mutual connection or bond, or just reaching out to [Counseling Services](#) or instructor for some support and guidance. That one act of bravery could be the first step toward realizing that this overwhelming feeling of loneliness? It's not just you. It's everyone. Be honest and tell people if you are having a hard time, because it almost guaranteed others are feeling the same way.

