

Taking the Time to Talk about Isolation - Blog

Within the Covid-19 pandemic we went through a lot as a country as well as our region. It caused us to be dispersed and we had to be alone at a time where we needed to be with one another the most. Dealing with this amount of isolation can cause anxiety in individuals and make the isolation harder to cope with. Even with the pandemic ending, while our region is finally rebuilding from hurricanes, the effects of isolation last longer. This blog from compiling and summarizing articles has been created to help give tips on dealing with isolation and fear within society to help make everyone's experience easier.

Practicing Mindfulness

One of the first steps to gaining the upper hand on fear and isolation is to focus on the present moment, to get a better grasp on yourself. Focusing on your breathing and noticing your simple thoughts can help to restore yourself back to a better place. A great practice of this is meditation. It does not cost anything to start, no extra gear is needed. There are six simple steps to start your journey into mindfulness and meditation. The first step is to take a seat and relax, on the floor or a pillow is a great space. Choose a set time limit to keep to yourself to focus on your meditation time, it can be between five or ten minutes. After setting yourself up, notice your body and how you are sitting to make sure that you are the most comfortable. You do not have to sit in an uncomfortable yoga pose to get your meditation in, it is all about your comfortability. After adjusting, feel your breathing and how you feel. Breath in through your nose and out through your mouth to relax and feel centered. Use your breathing to anchor yourself to keep your thoughts from wandering throughout the experience. If your mind does seem to be wandering let those thoughts and run with them to let your mind fully relax. Mindfulness is a great practice to keep up with during a series of isolation to help reduce anxiety and fear.

Checking in Regularly

Covid may have brought about the time of isolation but, now there are so many ways to stay connected with one another. Human connection is necessary for everyone, so communicating with loved ones is necessary to keep the connection. Checking with your family or friends over different platforms is a wonderful way to stay connected. Many people have used things like Zoom, Facetime, or for the business side Teams. Using different phone apps can also be a fun and safe way to stay connected by hosting a virtual book club, making a competition through games, or sharing new recipes that your family and friends can enjoy. While talking to your family and friends to stay connected, checking in with your neighbors and others can also help to keep social while making sure their time is also spent with others.

Practice Compassion

Finding compassion for yourself in these times is hard. Letting go of old norms is key to getting through the isolation. Acknowledging that we are all doing our absolute best during these times of isolation is the first step. The world is still dealing with the aftereffects of the Covid-19 pandemic. It has been a struggle to get back to regular life and reach out for help. With everyone still going through a lot, maintaining empathy throughout the interactions we have helps to maintain relationships and keep

communications easy. It is tough to continue to get through the aftereffects like social anxiety as well as the deaths that came about during the pandemic. We are still adjusting and it's okay to have the lingering effects after keeping up with others and social meditation keeps focus and maintains the strengths we need to go on.

References

- Loerzel, T. (2020, April 7). *4 ways to reduce anxiety and social isolation*. Journal of Accountancy. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.journalofaccountancy.com/news/2020/apr/reduce-anxiety-and-social-isolation-during-coronavirus-pandemic.html#:~:text=%204%20ways%20to%20reduce%20anxiety%20and%20social,the%20best%20weapons%20to%20promote%20acceptance...%20More%20>
- Understanding the effects of social isolation on Mental Health*. Online Public Health & Healthcare Administration Degrees. (n.d.). Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://publichealth.tulane.edu/blog/effects-of-social-isolation-on-mental-health/>
- Staff, M., Staff, M., Winston, D., Smookler, E., Fernandez, R., Whitney-Coulter, A., Naidoo, U., & Kira M. Newman and Janet Ho. (2021, November 2). *How to practice mindfulness*. Mindful. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from [https://www.mindful.org/how-to-practice-mindfulness/#:~:text=Here%E2%80%99s%20a%20short%20practice%20to%20get%20you%20star%20ted%3A,6%20Be%20kind%20to%20your%20wandering%20mind.%20](https://www.mindful.org/how-to-practice-mindfulness/#:~:text=Here%E2%80%99s%20a%20short%20practice%20to%20get%20you%20started%3A,6%20Be%20kind%20to%20your%20wandering%20mind.%20)
- Hope Kleine SDSU Extension Health Education Field Specialist. (2021, October 20). *Staying socially connected during COVID-19*. SDSU Extension. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://extension.sdstate.edu/staying-socially-connected-during-covid-19>

Summary of Articles and Blog written by Annemarie Ryan, McNeese State University Mass
Communication Internship student in Spring 2022

In conjunction with Business & Workforce Recovery Solutions