



Stress BUSTERS

Staying Connected

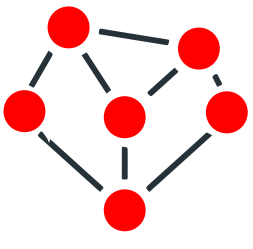
Connecting



As humans, we thrive on social contact. It helps us develop useful bonds which allow us to have a range of individuals we can trust, talk to, socialise with and who can help support us when the road ahead seems challenging. With the advent of COVID-19, our lives and the world we live in has dramatically changed. Our social lives have had to adapt to preventative measures like social distancing and the 'lockdown' which have made it difficult to see friends and family. This can be very isolating and lonely, resulting in elevated stress levels. Whilst it's not realistic to have someone close by all the time, the need for supportive networks cannot be overstated. Building and maintaining such a network will certainly improve your personal resilience to life's stressors.

Here are some ideas of how to remain connected during this period.

Feeling connected



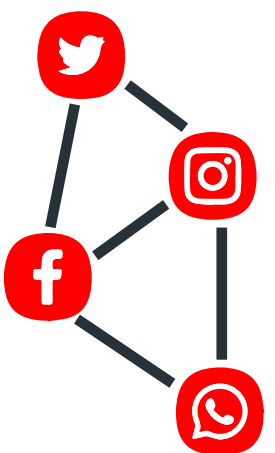
- Relationships and staying connected are often linked to the thoughts we have
- Spend time thinking about the people you love
- Look through old pictures and remember the good times
- Make a scrapbook about the people you love

Emotionally and spiritually connected



- Speak to your spiritual advisor, mentor or someone with whom you feel emotionally or spiritually connected
- Pray, meditate, or participate in an activity that helps you to feel grounded and inspired, etc.
- Join online therapy or support groups
- Read religious or inspirational books
- Listen to uplifting music

Socially connected - online



- Virtual book clubs - read newspapers or books & discuss these with others
- Virtual movie days - even though you are watching separately; text questions and comments throughout the movie
- Virtual dates - schedule "face-to-face" video chats with friends and family
- Share playlists - listen & comment
- Take an online workout video call with a friend. This can help keep you connected while also exercising.

Communication



- Checking-in through texts. Saying "hi" and asking how individuals are doing can start simple conversations. This can help develop a culture of check-ins; where they too are checking-in with you and others. Sending pictures can also help brighten each other's day.
- Speaking to neighbours from a safe social distancing parameter (such as across the fence or from the balcony).
- If sharing the same household, take this time to improve these relationships by making meaningful and stronger connections. Cooking, doing chores or playing games together can help.

University resources



- Make use of online library and CCDU resources
- Try to always read your Wits email communications to stay informed
- Use emails and Wits e-learning tools to connect with teachers, tutors, and classmates

On reaching out

When things seem a bit tough, it's ok to ask for assistance or reach out to others around you.

Sometimes the task might seem as trivial as doing a chore or perhaps it's just the need to talk to someone; maybe it's just the need for a friendly shoulder to lean on. Reach out to a lecturer, tutor, course mate, a family member or friend. They could assist or direct you to other sources of help.

If you need to talk to a therapist, you can get in touch with the CCDU



visit our website or email: info.ccd@wits.ac.za

or call the 24-hour Wits Student Crisis Line – **0800 111 331**