

Staying Connected & Grounded While Apart
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Every day, therapists across the country are supporting clients and communities as we all navigate the COVID-19 pandemic together. Individuals are all being affected differently, and social distancing presents unique challenges, as we have had to quickly engineer ways to stay connected while staying apart.

While social media may present the illusion that everyone you know is “living their best quarantine life,” therapists are hearing more to this story. Here are a few themes from the virtual therapy couch, shared by clients and community members, and a handful of innovative ways people are staying connected. This list is not meant to be comprehensive by any means, but rather, a glimpse into some of what we may not see on social media.

Hopefully this inspires a sense of ease and understanding that we are all doing our best with what we have, and we are all individually facing our own shared challenges as we contribute to the safety and health of our communities.

- Missing Milestones
 - The challenges: Whether it’s a graduation, a wedding, or the birth of a child, individuals are missing important rituals and milestones with loved ones. This may bring up feelings of [grief, loss, or sadness](#).
 - The upside: We are all getting very creative about our rituals! Friends have thrown each other [Zoom birthday parties](#), a [NYC couple was married](#) on the sidewalk with their officiant several flights above, and [birthday parades](#) are on the rise.
- Relationship Bootcamp
 - The challenges: Families are spending every waking moment together, couples are struggling to communicate, and long-distance partners are in isolation limbo.
 - The upside: We’re in the middle of a massive immersion lesson on fostering helpful and supportive communication practices. Whether it’s [practicing within the context of a partnership](#) in close quarters or [living with uncertainty](#) of when you’ll see each other again, we are learning how to be direct and loving in our communication. Folks have also recommended Brene Brown’s newest podcast, [Unlocking Us](#), for help on this.
- Feeling isolated
 - The challenges: We are social beings, and even the most introverted of us are noting how difficult social distancing can feel. If you’re feeling lonely, sad, or like you’re having major FOMO, you’re not alone.
 - The upside: Everyone is getting innovative about “hanging out.” Over video chat, friends are hosting [virtual parties](#), Zoom [book clubs](#), community [dance parties](#), and are sharing recipes and cooking meals together/apart.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or isolated, talking to a counselor may provide relief and insight. Leeward Counseling is here to help you from afar, with Telehealth and phone sessions offered during the week with flexible hours. Let us know how you’re staying connected, and reach out today if you want to start virtually connecting with a counselor who is ready to listen and provide support.