



Counselling Workroom – Social life during Pandemic



▲Picture from Japanese drama “ We married as a job” SP

Entering 2021, our new school term has also begun. Probably you are hoping that we can go back to normal, we yet still need to do virtual learning. You might have once imagined we could see our classmates again, gather at campus and chat at cafeteria. However, the pandemic seems never ending and reluctantly all our social plans need to be cancelled. Everyday we are suffocated between walls and limited space, feeling lonely and frustrated. How can we go beyond these walls to get back our social life? Here are some tips for you to break through the obstacles and learn the new social normal!

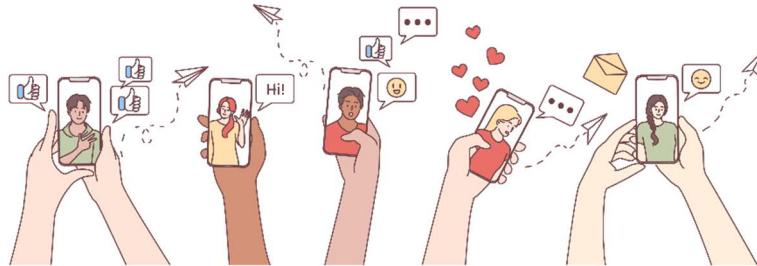
1. Being Positive

If we only blame the current situation, we could never be motivated to do anything. Avoiding reality cannot solve any of our problems. Thinking about the positive side of the pandemic, such as saving us commute time as well as allowing us to have a more flexible schedule so we can arrange our social activities at our convenience.



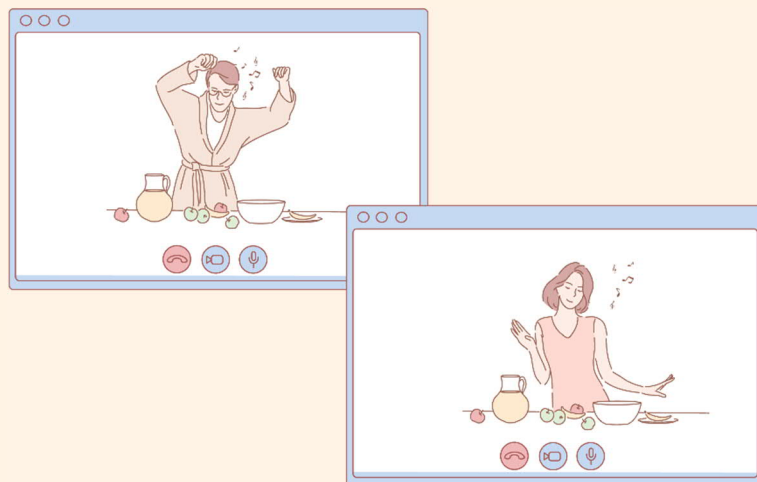
2. Being Active

The coronavirus definitely cannot prevent us from contacting others. If we keep waiting others to make the first move, connection will never happen. The initial factor of social connection is being the one who initiates to connect. It's the perfect time to reconnect with those who have lost contact and those who are close to us but yet needs our care and support. Do spare a word of concern or a warm reminder "It's getting cool, do wear more clothes", or perhaps just a simple "Hi, how are you?", or a greeting "Happy New Year" with a sticker, it would definitely spark the conversation.



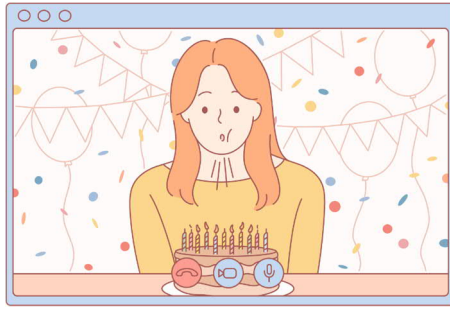
3. Being Creative

Nowadays there are so many apps that can keep us communicating with others. Sometimes just by using our little creativity, we can "gather" with lots of fun through these virtual tools, like watching movies or TV series together on zoom, doing exercise through FaceTime, making DIY craft, cooking a new dish by watching YouTube together, and the list can go on and on. Many software companies have launched fun and magnificent online group games such as "Among Us," "Kahoot," and "Pictionary." By organizing a fun-filled virtual game night or party, distance would no longer be an obstacle to our sharing of happiness and joy.



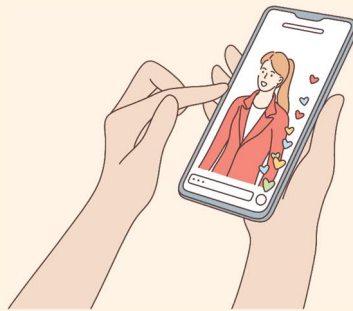
4. Being Persistent

Beside fun activities, being persistent is also important. Don't let the enthusiasm subside. Make arrangement with your friends or family to have regular virtual gatherings. Mark your calendar so you have something to look forward weekly or monthly. In addition to that, remembering special occasions or holidays (like Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day) and celebrating virtually together with special ones will be a fantastic way to create fond memory during this difficult time.



5. Being New

Do you remember your very first time going to school, watching a movie, dating with someone? The mixed feelings of anxiety and excitement were so strong that we would never forget. This pandemic also has given us a lot of “first time” experience, like first time learning online, first time ordering food delivery etc. Why not grabbing this once in a lifetime opportunity to learn the new social style? Join an online social platform and find a social group with common interest, thus reach out to make some new friends as well as share and exchange ideas with them. You may discover a whole new world that you never experienced before.



6. Being Social

Due to lack of social interactions this year, you may find yourself so nervous when you reach out to others. Regardless virtual or physical, we all need basic social skills to build a long-lasting and healthy relationship. Even small steps like a smile, a simple greeting, an authentic sharing or just a simple “thank you” can strengthen a relationship. After all, the most important social skill is mutual respect, which is accepting those who have different views and needs from you. We may dislike people who insist to change our thinking so do others. When you start to treat others with an open heart, you may gain new insight and learn more from human differences than those in the books.



7. Being Outdoor

Do you have a private space at home to do the online activity? If you don't, maybe you need to find some time to get out. How about meeting up with a friend at our spaced-out campus library or school common area to study and do homework? It is also a good idea to go outdoor occasionally, such as hiking or going to a park. As long as everyone keeps a social distance and wears masks, limited face-to-face social gatherings are still essential when the pandemic is relatively stable. This can definitely relax your stress, build up your body, keep your relationships and most importantly maintain your physical and mental wellness.



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