Loneliness during COVID

So many people have been struggling with similar problems of feeling lonely lately due to the pandemic. Recently, we decided to write what we would respond to a hypothetical message of someone feeling lonely and upset from what has been happening all around us. Although this is a hypothetical message, feeling lonely because of COVID is something we believe most people can get behind. If you want to talk to us about feeling lonely (or anything else) feel free to message or call us.

"Ever since COVID, I have been feeling alone. I used to have friends, but we obviously haven't been able to hang out and now we don't talk anymore."

Hi there, I deeply understand how you're feeling right now. Ever since COVID shut down schools and everything, I've been very lonely. The clubs I lead have gone downhill, friendships that would've lasted began to fall apart, where I'm only able to visit one of my friends, I could go on. It has been a serious struggle and I cannot express how much I feel how you're feeling. One thing I can say is that this is not permanent. At this rate it does feel permanent, but trust me it won't be. I've personally been struggling a lot, but I do want to share with you a few ways I've been able to cope and I feel this may help you! A few weeks after COVID shut down schools, I decided to go searching for a server that would spark my interest in Minecraft. Luckily I was able to find one that sparks my interest and had very good connections. Around July, I applied and got accepted for a staff position. Finding this server and being able to communicate with others has deeply helped me feel less lonely. Another thing I've done is writing to my friends via letters! I've started this little thing with my friends to keep in touch via letters, kind of like a penpal system. Is it just that we know each other well? It's definitely helped me stay in touch with my close friends. :) I hope these suggestions help you stay in touch with others. You're amazing, don't forget that! Stay strong hun, you're not alone in this battle <3 ~Tara

I completely understand how you feel. It's normal to feel this way, the pandemic has been a huge stress for all of us, I'm sorry you have to go through this. I know it's hard not seeing your friends. Earlier this week i talked to my friends about my worries of them not wanting to talk anymore. Once i brought this up, i found out they felt the same way and now we've been calling more often! We also play Minecraft and Among Us together, and it's really fun and a good way to keep in touch with them. I'm so proud of you, this is a really hard situation! Try to check up on the people you know, and maybe even talk to them about how you feel like i did. They're probably feeling the same way you are! Thank you for staying strong, we can get through this together! -Monika

Loneliness is a very normal thing that everyone will experience at least once in their life, even if they're surrounded by people that love them and care about them. It is still easy to feel unwanted, ignored, and invisible. With this pandemic going on and the social isolation it has become even more difficult because the lack of interaction with others has been cut down so much with school, work, extracurriculars, etc. It's important for you to keep connections with the people you care about, even if you're just checking up on them because I would want to be checked on too :). It's easy to think of ourselves right now, but make sure that you're taking care of yourself as well by doing things that used to bring you joy. Even if it's something small like baking cookies in the middle of the night just because you can. Of course not everyone enjoys the same things so make sure to do something you

want to do. Keep your head up, we're all dealing with similar things. It would be nice if we all came out of this together, stronger than before :) - Lacy.

It's normal to have a lot of these complex thoughts right now. You are so brave for everything you have already accomplished during this time. It's important to remember that physical distancing doesn't have to mean social isolation. You can schedule time with friends by video chatting, streaming movies or shows, and playing games! I personally love Among Us, and you can also play Kahoot! Sometimes it can help to lean on family and friends that you do talk to as a support system. Sometimes, it can be nice to pursue your own personal hobbies. Create goals, pursue passions, hobbies, and continue to shine in all of your brilliance. You have a lot of support here at TeenTalk, and we would love to talk to you at any time!! ~Scarlett

I think that a lot of people feel that way right now. Sometimes I feel like a coping mechanism for a lot of people is to just try to only communicate with people in their circle who they see in person so they can pretend like things aren't as different as they really are. I've talked to a lot of people who are struggling with screen time fatigue and that can be really hard for people, especially ones who already struggle with headaches or vision difficulties to begin with. It has been really difficult for me as well, but I try to remember that even if we don't talk, it doesn't mean we aren't still friends, it just means that right now they are struggling with the pandemic in their own way and doing their best to cope however they can. For me, I've started writing handwritten cards and sending it to my friends so that they know I am thinking of them and it is a genuine way to try and connect with them. I try to keep my expectations down, because while I really love online games and movie watch parties and zoom hangouts, not everyone does well with it. There are a lot of people who get their energy from being around others, and I've noticed a lot of them don't do well with online settings because they don't get that same energy, but other people expect them to be the same as normal. Maybe finding people who are interested in the same online activities as yourself, or finding things you can do at home to pass the time might help. I've picked up a lot of hobbies and that has really helped me, whether it is art or cooking or walking new areas, there are so many possibilities. Don't give up, things won't always be like this, and in the meantime, it is a great time to practice leaning into the silence. - Bri

COVID has been really difficult for everyone. It's been taking a massive toll on everyone's mental health not being able to see people besides family, and has made it even harder to get along with the family you live with. It feels like forever but at least we know COVID WILL END. It's not going to last forever, and making plans for when it isn't a thing anymore would be a fun activity to do while FaceTiming friends. You could make a journal and record your days during lockdown, and read it in the future! This is a historic event and later in life it would be so fun to read how you felt. The main thing I do is either make plans with friends outside to eat something at a park or I call/text them daily. -Jessi

Hey! I get it, really I do. We are all in the same boat and you feeling lonely and wishing there was someone there to hug you does not make you weak!! You're strong enough for just being present and going through this pandemic with all of us makes you so strong. It's okay to feel lonely in times of uncertainty and times where we can't be with our loved ones or feel them in person. Some ways that could help you feel more close to your friends and family are trying - Vanessa

Okay, yes. COVID is making life really dang hard recently and personally, I've been feeling really lonely and it's hard to keep up with friendships when you can't hangout with them in person. And

yes, I probably sound lame but things will get better, this pandemic won't last forever, and it gives us a chance to grow as people and be able to say ¨ hey I actually made it through this, I just lived through history.¨ I know when we were in school, the day we got out I remember my teacher saying ¨we will have a break from school for 2 weeks¨ then 2 weeks turned into 2 months turned into however many months we have been out of school. But life will go on, things get bad sometimes, you can't have a rainbow without the rain you know. And after this, who knows, maybe you'll be able to see the positivity in the things that you didn't see as positive before COVID. Maybe you'll enjoy that math class, or don't get angry at that kid you don't like. Everything just depends on how you look at it. Keep your head up! -Ruthy

I am in the same boat as you guys to be honest, I am extremely lonely and a lot of the people around me aren't taking COVID as seriously as my family is so they leave when I can't and I can see them out having fun from their stories and posts but I have to stay alone inside. I don't have much advice but just know that you are not alone. I've learned small ways to cope like listening to music or doing art. - Tobias

A couple months into quarantine, my friends and I were feeling pretty lonely and missing social interaction. We were part of a club before our school closed, to solve this issue we decided to create a discord group to still be able to talk and interact with each other. We created a schedule where we met every week on Wednesday's when we could, it really helped improve our connection as friends and honestly made us closer without even being close physically. So, to me I found at least one good thing in this hard time and it was nice to have a way to still connect with the people we are isolated from. - Tyler

During COVID lots of things have changed in many ways for different people. Currently something that I think everyone is struggling with is the feeling of loneliness. Even before COVID some people had a hard time struggling with socializing but now it's harder than ever not being able to even go to school and or work. Before most of us were always surrounded by people, especially work and school. Now with the guidelines of social distancing it's hard to get any socialization in. For me socializing is what keeps me going. These past months have been extremely hard. I am on social media more than ever now just to stay in touch with people. I also enrolled into some volunteer activities to just get some in person interaction. My everyday life has changed tremendously. I'm outdoors more now just so i'm not on my phone 24/7. I miss the way it used to be but I have definitely changed my life to find more ways to entertain myself. -Faith

I've been struggling on and off with loneliness a lot too. I remember it was especially tough for me last April when I was still adjusting to the shift to online classes. Of course the problem hasn't been solved yet, but I've managed to have an easier time coping since then. Some of the strategies I've used are staying in touch with friends online, finding fun things to do with my family, and taking on personal endeavors that keep my attention.
Oftentimes, I know what I need to hear when I'm feeling at my lowest. If there's nobody around to give you the support that you need, it's incredibly helpful and important to be kind and gentle with yourself and acknowledge what thoughts are good for you. It could even help to imagine a loved one telling you positive things, to create a sense of comfort and support. They'd want what's best for you, even if you aren't in contact! - Ashley

It's very discouraging knowing loneliness is bound to come with the time's we are currently living in. Being on Zoom is not the same as being in person with the people we care about. One thing I do to

cope is remember that everything is temporary. No matter what today brings, tomorrow is a new day and we always have a chance to start fresh. During COVID, I've taken advantage of my alone time to work on myself and the things I find value in. My art, my music, my education, my spirituality etc. Finding time to connect with ourselves is important, and if you ever want to bounce ideas off of someone, feel free to reach out to TeenTalk. -Tessa

The way that you have been feeling is valid, and there are many people who are going through similar feelings during COVID. Sometimes it is difficult to address how alone we feel, so I would like to start by saying thank you for sharing that with us because it takes a lot of courage. It has been really hard to connect with others during COVID, we do not have the same opportunities to hangout with our friends or to meet new people. Although we may have the opportunity to connect over the internet/phone, it still is not the same as what we have been used to. Feelings of loneliness can be frustrating to avoid, but I think it is important to create time for things that can bring you joy despite the state of our world as of right now. Take time to find hobbies or to continue with hobbies you have done before, allow for space to feel all the things you are going through, and you can even come up with fun ideas to stay in contact with your friends! If you haven't talked much to your friends, try reaching out to them with a random call/text. There are also resources online you can look into and have a virtual game night with your friends! Your friends at TeenTalk will always be here to support you when you need. -Emma

The feeling of loneliness during COVID is a very common feeling from person to person, however, that doesn't make your situation any less important. Remember to take plenty of time out of your day to do what you want, you deserve it! Talk to friends, spend time with your pets, work on your hobby, do whatever makes you happy. TeenTalk is happy to help if you need it! - Abby

Here's what you need to know about feeling lonely: you are not alone! COVID has been isolating for everyone I know, including myself, my friends, and even my parents and teachers. The upside of this is that other people are looking for connection just as much as you are. Those friends you might have lost contact with? They would welcome any attempt you make to reach out to them. Whether or not you choose to reach out to people in your own life, TeenTalk is always here for you, and we love to hear from you. Remember, this won't last forever, and we will all get through this. Don't give up! -Hugs, Ari

I am so sorry you are feeling this way and are drifting from your friends. I have been going through that very same thing. What I've noticed about this pandemic is that it has given me the time I need to figure out who my real friends truly are. I would say try your best to reach out and see if they would want to hang out (virtually or socially distant of course), and see if that helps. If things are awkward or not the same as they were, likely things will change when the pandemic is over and you go back to school. And if it does not, don't worry. There will be plenty of friends to be made in your future. I am rooting for you! -Taylor

Life in the pandemic can be especially difficult because we've lost a lot of control. Not only are we missing out on a lot of things we would've been able to do otherwise, but as we're forced to stay at home, we aren't always able to control our environment or self expression. In an effort to simulate control over one's situation, it's unfortunately common to turn to destructive behaviors like self-harm. Once started, this can be a difficult habit to break, so I suggest practicing mindfulness and seeking ways to take back control of your life. This could involve staying connected with loved ones, rearranging your home environment as you're able, and expressing yourself through clothing, art,

writing, etc. I hope that this helps some and that you can find a method that works for your situation! - Ashley