

# Connecting While Physically Apart

Social isolation and loneliness can affect one's overall health and mental well-being. Being socially isolated and being lonely are different, though. Social isolation is the "objective lack of social contact, while loneliness is the subjective feeling of being lonely; you can be alone without feeling lonely." (Clay, 2020).

Both isolation and loneliness are concerns as we continue to shelter in place during this time of COVID-19. In our desire to keep our most vulnerable population of older adults safe and healthy, we are subjecting them to increased isolation. Residents at our Homes continue to have contact with others who care for them as well as connect with loved ones, if able.



Clay, R. (2020, March). COVID-19 isn't just a danger to older people's physical health. *American Psychological Association.*

**If you have questions, please contact your Social Worker or**  
**[MVHCaregiverSupport@state.mn.us](mailto:MVHCaregiverSupport@state.mn.us)**

If you are living alone in your home, we encourage you to reach out to someone with whom you can talk or video chat. Other ways to stay connected include:

- Write a letter to friends and family.



- See if your place of worship has a televised or video link to services.
- Engage in limited positive social media to connect with friends and family.

If you enjoy games and puzzles, you can play online. Websites like [Arkadium.com](http://Arkadium.com), [Games.aarp.org](http://Games.aarp.org), [TheJigsawPuzzles.com](http://TheJigsawPuzzles.com), [Chess.com](http://Chess.com), and others offer a variety of card games, board games, and word games – even jigsaw puzzles, that you can play with others or on your own.

For those of you who know older adults living alone or who might be feeling lonely or isolated, reach out to them with a phone call or deliver a care package to their door. It is helpful just to let them know you are thinking of them.

