

# How to stay connected, whether you live near or far

Having strong social connections is one of the keys to healthy aging. Spending time with loved ones can help you stay physically and mentally strong. It can even help you live longer. But staying social as you get older is not always easy. Luckily, you can use these strategies to help an older loved one find ways to stay connected.

## If your loved one lives **nearby**...

### **Join a fitness class together.**

Older adults who exercise regularly report feeling less lonely than those who don't exercise much. Indoor cycling and yoga are great low-impact options to try.

### **Find a shared hobby.**

It's harder to feel lonely when you're with like-minded people. Whether it's crafting or gardening, there's a hobby you and your loved one can share.

### **Schedule a standing lunch date or game night.**

Having weekly plans on the calendar means your loved one will always have something to look forward to.

### **Rely on local resources.**

Many libraries and community centers offer classes and other resources that can help your loved one connect with other local older adults.

## If your loved one lives **far away**...

### **Call them just to say hi.**

It can be reassuring for your loved one to know they're never far from your thoughts, even if they live far away from you.

### **Set up a weekly video chat.**

You can see each other's facial expressions, so it's more intimate than a phone call. You can teach them to use the video chat feature on their device.

### **Start your own long-distance, virtual book club.**

Reading may be a solitary activity, but discussing the book you're reading with others is a great way to meet people.

### **Encourage them to make new friends.**

You can help your loved one find local clubs, religious services, or other groups where they can meet new friends.