

COMPREHENDING COVID

A TRI-BETA PANDEMIC NEWSLETTER



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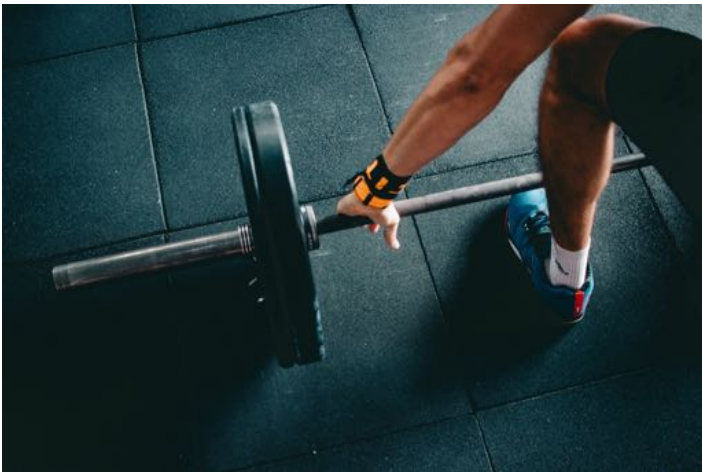
Social Distance Does Not Mean Disconnected from Family and Friends

During such unexpected, uncertain times, it may seem like we are controlled by the pandemic, and cannot be involved in as many of the activities that we had previously participated in. Luckily, we have so many technological platforms that now allow us to continue our involvement in different activities, but now through the internet. It is important to remember that our mental and physical health come first, especially in this pandemic, when we are confined to our walls and limited in our interactions with people. It is now more important than ever to make a conscious effort to not lie in our beds or sit in front of our screens all day.

Although we may not be able or feel comfortable going to public gyms, we can certainly start our own workout sessions with a friend or a group of friends on platforms like Messenger or Zoom. It's more exciting to workout with other people and although this is a virtual experience, putting some music on and doing workout routines together is a good way to not only get your heart pumping, but also a healthy way to bond with your friends as well.



*TRY RELAXING
ACTIVITIES—LIKE
CATCHING UP AND
HAVING COFFEE WITH
A FRIEND VIRTUALLY.*



If workouts may not be your cup of tea, this is also the perfect time to take some strolls in your neighborhood, in a nearby park, or take a hike with some nice fall foliage.



Before the pandemic, we may have taken the outdoors for granted, but by taking in the fresh air, we can take a deep breath and appreciate what we have in a time that is certainly abnormal.



Whether we are taking online classes or working from home, everyone needs a mental break and to move around in order to keep ourselves sane and refreshed.

Moreover, staying connected with family members, and especially the elderly, is a great way to avoid social isolation . The elderly members in our family are limited to fewer interactions due to a higher risk of fatality if infected with the coronavirus. We should remember to give them a call and keep them updated with what we have been doing.



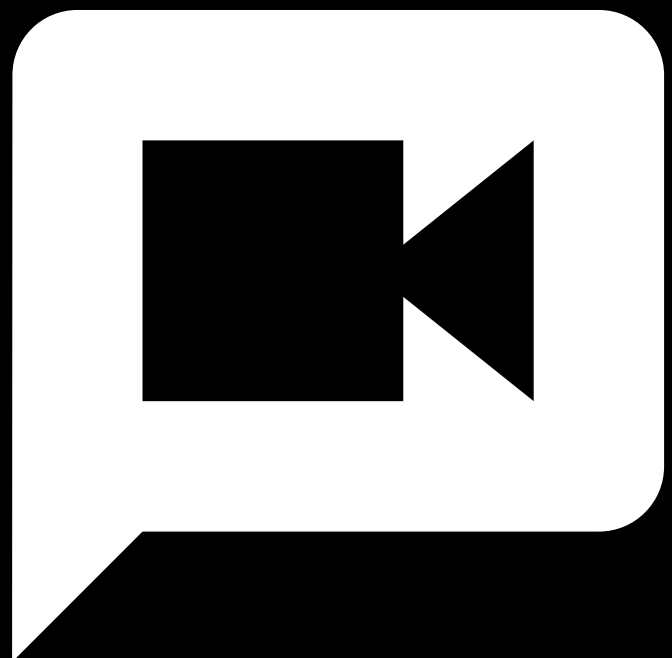
It is important to take the time to appreciate our family members and keep them company when we can. There are multiple ways to stay connected with our friends, family, and community even during the pandemic. Don't forget about your own well-being during this time by staying physically active with friends, taking a walk or run outside, and continuing communication with family and friends!

Virtual Platforms to Connect with Friends and Family

Technology has allowed us to connect with our friends and family ever more closely as compared to decades ago, when calling someone and old-fashioned letter writing were the only options for long-distance communication.



Even though we are very accustomed to Zoom, there are other ways to communicate with friends and family online. Video calling software, like Skype, Google Hangouts, or Facetime, may come to mind, but more and more social media platforms are also adopting video calling functionality: Messenger, Snapchat, Whatsapp, and much more.



More recently, another social media platform has grown in popularity this year: Discord. Discord differs from your usual group chat apps, like GroupMe or Messenger, as it's most useful in larger groups (ex: your student organizations or departments). Discord uses "servers" to organize a large group of people into more organized group chats. On top of that, a server can have multiple "voice channels" that allow for voice calls and video calling. This allows for simultaneous voice or video calls all at once for various groups of people.



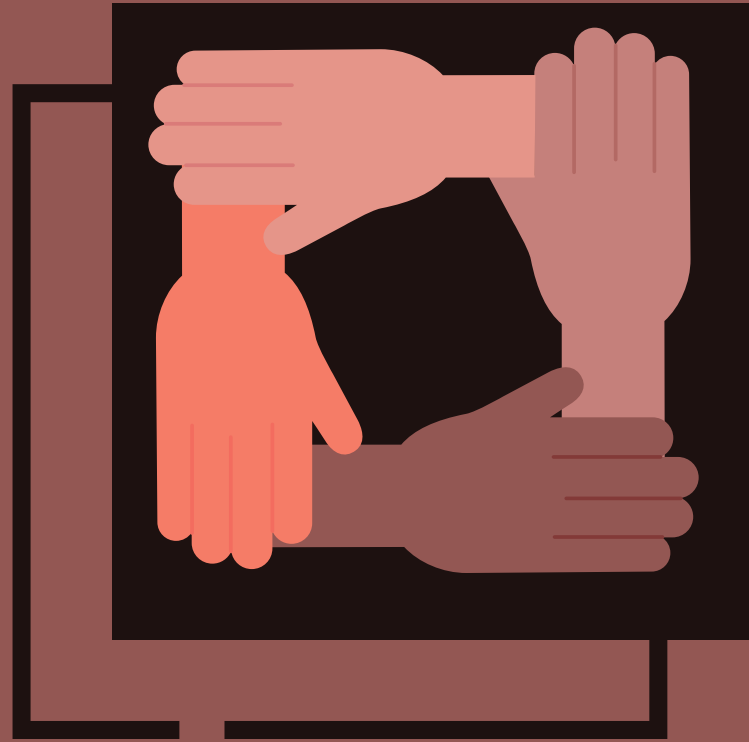
DISCORD

The TCNJ Biology department has their own Discord server created by the TCNJ Tri-Beta Biology Honor Society if you would like to communicate with fellow biology students or enthusiasts:

[TRI-BETA DISCORD](#)

Volunteering and Supporting Your Community

Although many programs shut down during the pandemic, many are slowly opening back up again. There are so many opportunities to stay connected with society through virtual or socially distant and safe community service initiatives.



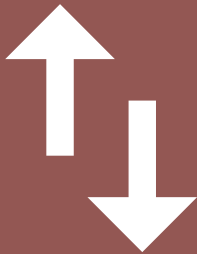
Stay
Positive!



Many organizations, such as the Red Cross, have been lacking heavily in volunteers for blood drives and natural disasters. During a critical time like the pandemic, when patients need blood donations more than ever, the blood drives have many people willing to volunteer, but not enough staff to compensate for the work required for a blood drive.



The Red Cross does not only offer volunteer work in blood drives, but also in natural disaster training. There are also options to take on virtual volunteer work with the Red Cross. To learn more about the in-person and remote volunteer opportunities offered by the Red Cross, visit: [RED CROSS VOLUNTEER](#).



TCNJ's Tri-Beta has put together a comprehensive list of various in-person and remote community service activities available with organizations like Translators Without Borders and Meals on Wheels. These programs offer a variety of ways to get involved in our local and national community. You can find this list of service opportunities at [OUR WEBSITE](#).

Activities and Hobbies to do Online

More and more people have found creative ways to find new hobbies or interests that translate well into an online environment. If you have a specific interest in mind, you can first look at TCNJ's student organizations! Many organizations have made their events and meetings online and have been successful in retaining their energy and membership, as if we were still back on campus.



The TCNJ Roar app helps students find current events and a list of active organizations. Most importantly, make sure to reach out to the organization through email or social media; not all of them advertise on the Roar app. Additionally, some may have taken a “break” for the fall semester in preparation for the spring semester.

If you just want to connect with your friends and loved ones, there's countless ways to have fun from a distance. With winter coming soon, we'll soon have to put our outdoor activities to the side and pick up some indoor hobbies to pass the time.



Many people are picking up multiplayer party games (Jackbox Games, Among Us, etc.) in conjunction with group calls these past months. Others have made their tabletop games “virtual,” such as Dungeons and Dragons. If you just want to relax, you can also watch Netflix together using the “Netflix Party” browser extension. This allows you to watch Netflix in real time with others who have Netflix. More information on how to use it is [HERE](#).

All in all, just like in the “real world,” it's best to keep a schedule of when you want to talk to your loved ones.

Something as simple as a casual group call once a week at a specific time, perhaps during your lunch break or in the evening, makes all the difference in feeling less lonely during these difficult times.