



Starting Healthy Conversations When You Feel Isolated



Since March, when the world turned upside down, many of us have come to understand how much we truly need one another.

In the midst of baking our umpteenth batch of sourdough and doing countless at-home workouts, we were also reminded just how important it really was to connect with friends and check-in our family members.



As humans, we're deeply social creatures and even if you're feeling okay day-to-day, knowing how to start healthy conversations with your friends and loved ones during these unprecedented times shouldn't be overlooked.

Many of us might be feeling pretty isolated right now. So, it makes sense that you're looking for deeper connections, now more than ever.

Especially if you're worried about your bestie who lives alone in a big city overseas or you're hoping to reconnect with your auntie who lives across the country, starting these healthy conversations can boost both your mood and theirs and can truly make all the difference.

So, if you're hoping to have more "D and Ms" -- you know, deep and meaningful conversations -- instead of surface-level catch-ups with your mates and relatives during these weird times, we're here to help.



Healthy Conversation Starters



The start of any healthy conversation is one that's based on honesty and openness. After all, we can't go deep if we're not willing to be vulnerable. So, before you catch up, you might want to think about what's been actually been going on with you.

You might also think about the other person and the things you've noticed about their behaviour lately. Here are some questions to try.

You haven't been active on social media this month. What's been going on with you?

I've noticed that you seem a bit stressed. Would you like to talk about what you're feeling?



As things get going, it might start to feel a little intense. But, intensity isn't necessarily a bad thing. By making the other person feel heard and like you truly want to hear their thoughts, it can help you both have a healthy conversation about real thoughts and feelings.

I can tell that this has all be really hard for you. Keep going, I want to listen.

I know it can be difficult to talk about the scary parts of what's been happening. Please tell me more so that I can understand.



Then, if the conversation trails off, try using some simple questions and statements to help expand on a certain train of thought, especially if you feel like the other person is just being polite or modest.

What happened next?

How did that make you feel?

What could make that situation better for you?

I understand



Tips for Better Quarantine Conversations



- ✓ Make a list of who you want to re-connect with. It's ok if it's a long list.
- ✓ Make the time. After all, it can take a while to get to the deep stuff.
- ✓ Opt to call versus have the conversation via text.
- ✓ Practise active listening instead of focusing on what you'll say next.
- ✓ Ask more questions.
- ✓ Give and take. If you have something relevant to share, go ahead!
- ✓ Honesty is the best policy. Aim for openness as it'll help build trust and connection.
- ✓ Lower your expectations. Not everyone will be ready to have those deep (and sometimes scary) conversations. Respect that.



Overall well-being goes far deeper than nutrition and physical fitness. Mental health is so important and with all the uncertainty lately, it makes sense that you might want to have more serious conversations with friends and family who might be struggling. Or, if you might be struggling yourself.

If you need extra help, please reach out to a mental health professional or check out more Australia-wide mental health resources from organisations like **Beyond Blue**.

Starting healthy conversations when you feel isolated might be just what you need to feel less anxious, more in control, and more connected to your community. Once you do, you'll likely be ready for your next batch of sourdough.





Feel stronger.
Move better.
Think clearer.
**Live a life
with less limits.**