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Isolation and Social Distancing in Times of Coronavirus: Between Attachment and Alienation

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Social Distancing

- "remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible"

  (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020)

- Potential Consequences:
- Mental health disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression)

- Alienation

Alienation

- "feeling, and fact, of disconnectedness from people and activities"

<div align="right">(Bronfenbrenner, 1974; p. 53)</div>

- 6 dimensions: (Seeman, 1975)
- Powerlessness
- Meaninglessness
- Normlessness
- Self-estrangement
- Cultural estrangement
- Social isolation

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Social Isolation

- Two components:
- Objective: Social connectedness
- Subjective: perceived isolation

(Cornwell & Waite, 2009; Steptoe et al., 2013)

- Consequences of social isolation and loneliness:
- Depressive symptoms

(Cacioppo et al., 2006; Chou et al., 2011; Ge et al., 2017)

- Mortality

(Steptoe et al., 2013)

- **Causes of social isolation:**
- technology: world closer, families apart

(Banerjee & Rai, 2020)

- Reliance on text-based interactions: limited access to nonverbal cues

(Lieberman & Schroeder, 2020)

- Avoiding interpersonal touch

(Cohen et al., 2015; Iyer, 2020

- Restrictions on collective events- loss of "collective effervescence" (Durkheim, 1912)

(Iyer, 2020)

Reducing Social Isolation/ Fostering Social Connectedness during COVID-19 times

- Prosocial behavior

- Staying connected with family members, close friends and relatives

- Express gratitude   (Liao & Weng, 2018)

- Active listening

- Use of symbolic social ties   (Gabriel, 2020; Paravati et al., 2020)
  i.   Comfort foods   (Troisi & Gabriel, 2011)
  ii.   Reading books   (Gabriel & Young, 2011)
  iii. Parasocial connections   (Hartmann, 2017)

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