

HOW ABOUT YOU? Covid put my need for intimate relationships and friends into sharp focus

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During the first few weeks of the Covid 19 lockdown, my friend and I called each other daily. What a weird circumstance to be in â?? physically cut off from family and friends. It was unnatural, like a war zone, the virus being the enemy.

I also looked forward to 7 p.m., when neighbors would blow horns and clap for frontline medical workers. I was connecting with strangers expressing the strong emotion of gratitude.

I donâ??t remember how long the initial lockdown went on; most of us adjusted. But not those in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living and other places were Covid reigned. Nor those who couldnâ??t be with loved ones suffering and sometimes dying there.

But even people not in dire straits, like myself, were suffering, too, from the loneliness that only connecting in person can allay. â??I just want a hug,â?• I thought ever so regularly. Zoom helped but couldnâ??t replace meeting in person.



Cafes and restaurants have hung on to business with outdoor seating and parklets during Covid restrictions.(Photo courtesy of the San Francisco Planning Department.)

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Abraham Maslow, an American psychologist from Menlo Park, Calif., created a pyramid of five levels of human needs. After the biological needs for human survival and safety, the third most important is for interpersonal relationships.

With Covid lockdown, this need for intimate relationships and friends came into sharp focus and has stayed that way for me. As things open up, I am able to see my family, get lots of hugs and sit outdoors at cafes, sipping coffee and chatting with friends face-to-face. My â??happy hormonesâ?•- dopamine and oxytocin â?? are flowing again, and life is brighter.

Sharing helps build community. Weâ??d love to hear your story.

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