

Supporting a friend during quarantine or isolation

Pandemics are stressful. We have all experienced the ripple effects of COVID-19 during this unprecedented time, and this stress can increase when we are unsure how to support a friend or loved one who is directly impacted. Here are a few tips to consider if you know someone who is in quarantine or isolation and you would like to help.

Initiate connection

Reach out and start a conversation by phone, videoconference, or other virtual means. Make sure they know they are not alone. When possible, use verbal communication – hearing your voice and seeing your face can go a long way for someone who is feeling cut off from the world.

Avoid assumptions

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations, so don't assume you know what they need without asking. On the other hand, it can help to avoid vague offers (ex. "let me know if there's anything I can do") and instead get practical (ex. "can I drop your favorite snack off at your door? or "is there anything you're really missing right now that I could pick up for you?").

Listen well

Listen more than you speak, reflecting back the emotions you hear expressed (ex. "it sounds like you're feeling pretty frustrated"). Show compassion and validate their experiences. Stay in a listening role – be curious about their perspective. And when you share your own experience, make it authentic. The goal is to connect and empathize, not to fix.

Be creative

Your go-to activities might not be available when someone is in quarantine or isolation, so try something new! In this day and age, being apart physically does not mean you can't have fun together. Try watching movies, exercising, or sharing a meal virtually. Go Old School and exchange handwritten letters. Organize theme days in honor of your quarantined friend & send photos. Even quiet, virtual study sessions can help reduce loneliness.

Offer encouragement

Highlight any healthy behaviors your friend or loved one is using to promote physical and/or emotional well-being. Are they taking time to exercise, connect with friends, or manage their study time well during quarantine/isolation? If so, point it out! Help them identify additional support systems on or off campus that can strengthen their sense of belonging and connection during this time.

Take care of you too

Give yourself the same kind of care that you are providing for others – this will minimize your risk of burning out or getting resentful. Here are some tips specific to you as the caregiver:

- Nurture routines that promote your physical and mental wellbeing (sleeping, eating, praying, getting stuff done, having fun...).
- Don't go it alone – work with a supportive team to support your friend or loved one. Recognize your limits and say "no" as needed. Actively utilize the list of campus wellness supports on the next page.
- Stay connected to your community. Lean on your own support system to process feelings, share experiences, get help, and relax together.
- Maintain a safe environment by following Calvin guidelines regarding social distance, mask wearing, etc.

On-Campus Wellness Resources

Campus Involvement and Leadership

calvin.edu/offices-services/campus-involvement-leadership

- Healthy Minds & other student organizations
- Student activities & programming
- Leadership Development Program

Campus Ministries

calvin.edu/offices-services/campus-ministries

- Pastoral care and counseling
- Resources for prayer, worship & discipleship
- Bible study groups
- Faith & Sexuality group (LGBTQ+ support)

Campus Safety

calvin.edu/offices-services/campus-safety

- Safety assistance
- Women's self-defense training (R.A.D.)

Career Center

calvin.edu/offices-services/career-center

- Career planning & choice of major
- Calvin LifeWork Program
- Student employment

Center for Intercultural Student Development

calvin.edu/offices-services/intercultural-student-development

- Peer mentoring (AHANA & Intn'l students)
- Fellowship & affinity groups
- Intercultural lounge

Center for Student Success

calvin.edu/offices-services/center-for-student-success

- Academic coaching (time management, study skills, etc.)
- Choice of major & academic advising
- Tutoring
- Academic accommodations
- Intn'l & AHANA student support

Center for Counseling & Wellness

calvin.edu/go/counseling

- Feelings Workshop
- Online tools & coping skills training
- Calvin Unmasked peer listener app
- Counseling (group & individual)
- Light box lending

Ecosystem Preserve & Native Gardens

calvin.edu/ecosystem-preserve

- Nature, gardens, trails & solitude

Financial Aid

calvin.edu/offices-services/financial-aid

- Financial aid resources & consultation

Health Services

calvin.edu/offices-services/health-services

- Medication management for physical & mental health
- Nutritional & sleep counseling
- Preventative wellness planning

Kinesiology

calvin.edu/athletics

- Group fitness: free exercise/yoga classes
- Intramurals: team sports & events

Mentoring Program

calvin.edu/offices-services/mentoring/peer/get-a-mentor

- Adult mentoring

Nexus Peer Financial Coaching

calvin.edu/offices-services/nexus

- Financial coaching & accountability

Office of Student Conduct

calvin.edu/offices-services/student-conduct

- People-to-people problems
- Alcohol education workshop

Residence Life

calvin.edu/offices-services/residence-life

- Roommate relationships
- Community living

Safer Spaces

calvin.edu/offices-services/safer-spaces

- Safer Spaces & Title IX coordination
- Sexual assault reporting

SAGA

calvin.edu/offices-services/student-organizations/sexuality-and-gender-awareness

- LGBTQ+ support & peer education

For emergencies, please contact Campus Safety at 616-526-3333. To submit a non-emergency concern about a student's wellbeing for follow-up by Calvin staff, visit calvin.edu/care.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
○ Call 1-800-273-8255 or
○ Text HOME to 741741