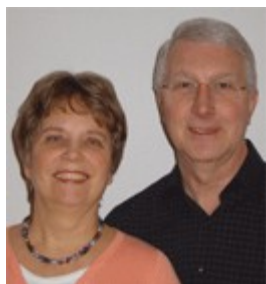


Socializing & Dancing During Social Distancing



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These are trying times for all of us, as we wonder when they will end, and we try somehow to bring normalcy to our lives. What is normal now? What can we do to keep our friendships going? How can we keep some sort of normal communication with our family? How can we keep doing the things we love best for recreation? These are all questions that are being asked by numerous people, of all stations of life, all over the world.

Mankind is a social animal. We usually function best when we have contact with each other: social contact, verbal contact and physical contact. When one or more of these are disturbed, it makes the rest of our life difficult, to say the least. And now we are asked to minimize two of these, social contact and physical contact. How can we best function when all we have left is verbal contact?

Well, out of necessity, that is what we must do – increase our meaningful verbal contact. Fortunately, and there is a fortunately, this is an age where there has never been so many opportunities for verbal contact, and I think that we are familiar with most of them: the common telephone today has more possibilities than our first home computer had! So what a time to start to familiarize ourselves with all the possibilities. We can just call and talk, on most of the telephones these days we can even video chat – you don't even have to have an iPhone – you can download the app "Whatsapp" on an android, and it has video chat.

With this app you can call and video chat with anyone all over the world without any extra cost – they just have to download the app also. So, keep in touch with friends and family with the telephone more often than you did, calling Grandma's and Grandpa's just to say "hi". This will make not only them, but you, feel more connected. Call your friends (after all that is what all the teenagers do all day ☐) and just talk with them – or arrange a "verbal brunch", put your phone on speaker and talk as if you were at a restaurant next to them. This is really fun with a video chat; you can even show what is on your table & discuss recipes. This is the start of your social contact.

But still, how do we keep on doing our favorite recreation, round dancing? If we are not a cuer or someone that reads cuesheets, this almost seems impossible. But again, these days there are so many videos of dances, with cues, that we can almost put together our own dance program to practice in the living room. And we can even see how the figures should be done by watching the video. We can dance our favorite dances, or even learn a new dance.

One of the best YouTube channels, I think, with many videos from all levels is www.youtube.com/DanceDemos (and you can read more about this on this website: <http://www.cuedballroomdance.com/>)

This YouTube channel has videos both with and without cues. (Sometimes it is enjoyable just to watch someone dancing without the cues.) And if you go to YouTube and search for Round Dance Videos you will find many videos to enjoy and to practice. Can you do this with friends? Of course, you can. You can arrange for instance, a day, a time and a dance that you both, or all, will watch & practice. Give yourselves about 15-20 and then video chat with the other person about what they thought, what questions you both had, can you help each other out?

So you see that while it takes a bit more work and sometimes creative thinking, we can keep ourselves going even when we have to keep our distance physically.

For a round world,