



*Summer
of
Care*

Maintaining Healthy Relationship Boundaries

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Part II

LGBTQ RESOURCE CENTER
LoboRESPECT ADVOCACY CENTER
STUDENT HEALTH & COUNSELING
WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER



How do we keep our relationships healthy during quarantine when we're so far away from the ones that we love?

We are all used to having a community of friends, family, and/or romantic partner(s) that we get interact with in ways that we can't anymore—**without be able to be together and have physical closeness (think direct eye contact, gestures of care like hugs), it's easy to feel like communication is newly uncomfortable or awkward.** This can lead us to either stop talking about our needs, or do so in unhealthy ways, as digital communications have their limitations & challenges.



You might be recognize new boundaries & communication needs to fit this new environment with those that you're isolated from:



A limit on how much and on which formats you're communicating on?



What kind of expectations do you have about digital affection/ attention-giving & receiving?



Who gets to see media that you send privately? (Are those bathing suit pics for your partner's eyes only, or does everyone in the house get to see?)



How do you make each other feel heard and understood?



What do you need to feel safe and seen? Make a list and prioritize needs!

Things to keep in mind as you're separated from your loved ones:

- **Make sure that you're talking about communication expectations!** If you'd like to text with your BFF all day long, but they would rather have one long video chat at the end of the day, you both might be disappointed (or overwhelmed) when the one isn't delivering what the other expects.
- Keeping things feeling romantic with a partner (or crush) can feel daunting when you can't physically go on dates, **but there are lots of ways to express affection without physicality**—with streaming services you can watch a movie “together,” plan a date night where you both order to-go from a favorite restaurant, or work on an activity that you both have supplies for (collaging! Doodle competition!).
- **You may be worried about how your friends, family or partner(s) are following (or not following) shelter-in-place recommendations, and feel pressured to see them in person to “show them that you still care” about them**—if the burden is coming from you, please know that there are many ways to communicate care, empathy and love without physical interaction. If you're feeling pressured by someone else, it's important to set your boundaries firmly, but with empathy (i.e. “I really miss you too and can't wait until we get to hang out again once this is all over, but seeing you now would put you, me, and our whole community at risk.”).



Things to remember as you build and hold boundaries!

- **Don't assume people know what you're thinking**
Set-up a "check-in" time with your loved ones, (this could be daily, weekly, or whatever works for you!), to talk about stresses, needs, and wants so that you can work on supporting each other together.
- **Respect each other's time & space**
With many of us working and/or schooling from home, it's important that your loved ones know when you're available to engage with them and when you're not. Be clear and specific about your time boundaries (i.e. "From 8 to 9am, I'm going to be meditating or reading and so I'm not going to be available to chat")

In these stressful times, be gentle with yourself & those close to you

- Even if you aren't experiencing personal boundary shifts, recognize that your friends, family and romantic partners may have new needs—check in on how they're doing ask them how you can support
- While it may be tempting to create rigid boundaries to give yourself a feeling of control in a time where the world may seem like it's out of control, it's important to do self-check ins on those boundaries—it's okay to have your needs change! What served you best at the beginning of quarantine may not still be what's essential to feel **healthy and whole** in your relationships



**If you feel
like you
need
support
processing
or
planning,
please
reach out!**



**UNM and the greater Albuquerque community
has free and/or low-cost resources!**



**LoboRESPECT
Advocacy Center**

505.277.2911

Confidential advocacy &
academic accommodations



**Women's Resource
Center**

505.277.3716

Confidential advocacy &
counseling



**LGBTQ Resource
Center**

505.277.5428

Confidential advocacy



**Student Health &
Counseling (SHAC)**

505.277.3136

Counseling & medical care



**Domestic Violence
Resource Center**

505.248.3165

Safety planning, advocacy,
counseling, & prevention ed