

Making Friends Behind Closed Doors

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I remember clearly the last night I spent out with friends before COVID-19 started to hit other countries. Allow me to regale you with my personal tale.

It was late february, the winter wind still bit through the air, nipping upon bare skin. The haunt of past christmas cheer creeping up the spine of party goers, and the leftover new years fireworks splitting the silence in unpredictable waves. This night was important to me, as we had made a decision deemed wise in the long run of things: We were celebrating my best friend's birthday early. We went out for the night, shopping for his birthday presents and enjoying one another's company for the last time in a very long time.

After dinner, purchasing gifts, and barrelling through the mall at a rate any young adult is capable of, we decided to return to my friend's house to watch movies until our eventual departure. I ended up giving my friend early "just in case I don't see you on your birthday" I told him, little did we know that come my friend's birthday: March 15th, the country would be on high alert of a pandemic that was swiftly infecting the world.

And with the situation upon us, I was growing lonelier as the days passed. This continued for a few months until I made a very cautious decision. I was familiar with Discord, an app used to bring people with similar interests together, and I wanted to meet new people. After hopping from group to group, not taking to any specific clique, I stumbled into a group that was open and warm. I quickly lept into chatting with various people, getting to know them and before I knew it I was adding a considerable amount of people to my friend group. Some I grew closer to than others, and I still continue to meet new people everyday.

Joining different chat groups and meeting new people really allowed an extrovert like myself to not feel so lonely when locked away from the world out of safety and caution for those in my family who are immuno-compromised. I hope this story inspires people to find new ways to connect with others, as we do not have to ever be truly alone in the age of the internet. I wish you all well, and I hope you find peace in our new normal.