Even when separated by physical distance, you can maintain and grow connections with family and friends. Here are a few ideas.

1. Look through a photo album or pictures stored on your phone or computer and send a copy of a photo to family or friends who are pictured there. Then, spend time reminiscing together.

2. Think of someone who has helped you or who has been an inspiration to you. Record a short video or voice recording of yourself to share the memory with that special individual, or send a hand-written letter to thank that person for the positive impact on your life.

3. Schedule a phone or video call with friends to talk while playing a virtual card or board game together online – some sites are free. Or, play a guess-the-drawing game using dry erase boards on a video call. Virtual escape rooms are available online. Movies can be viewed simultaneously in different homes while friends and family text each other comments about the movie. Stand-up comedy routines are available through streaming services and on DVD through the library. If you are on a phone call while watching the comedians together, you can share in some laughs at the same time. For a quick laugh, send a link to a funny song parody you find online or try your hand at changing a few lyrics on your own or through collaboration.

4. Use colorful chalk to write a positive message or to draw an emoji on the sidewalk outside someone’s home.

5. You can engage in conversations to support each other by sharing your concerns, sadness, and frustration while empathizing with each other’s challenges. You can also choose uplifting conversation starters such as, “Tell me something you’re proud of. What is a challenge you’ve successfully faced and how? What brought a smile to your face today? Tell me about a time that you laughed out loud.”