



This year, many of you may feel that Ramadan as you know it has changed because of the #COVID19 pandemic. Many countries are experiencing lockdowns and you are being advised to stay away from large social and religious gatherings, and from people you care about to protect yourself and them against #COVID19. This may cause you and them to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry. We are here to tell you that it is normal to feel a mix of emotions during times like these. Even though Ramadan may feel different this year, it is still the month where we all practice self-restraint, reflect, pray, meditate, share and sacrifice, and seek God's blessings.

So here is our first of a series of messages to you this Ramadan: stay physically distant but socially connected. Over the next few weeks and through to Eid, we will share messages on caring, sharing, reflection, meditation, self-actualization; self-restraint, putting a stop to rumours, gratitude and hope. So stay tuned!

### **Stay physically distant but socially connected this Ramadan**

Physical distancing measures and lockdowns may be changing some of the traditions that bring

you and your loved ones together this Ramadan. You can still maintain social and family ties throughout the month. Staying connected to your loved ones, no matter where they are, will help all of you cope better with any stressors you may be feeling. Here are some tips to help you stay physically distant but socially connected this Ramadan.

Check-in by phone or video. Regularly check in on family and friends by phone or video calls to help each other cope and lift one another's spirits. This is especially important for the elderly, who may be feeling lonely and isolated this month, and need follow-up to make sure they are eating well, staying active and adhering to any medications they might be on.

Organize virtual Iftars. Bring your loved ones to your table by phone or video calls. This is a great way to have them over and maintain your yearly traditions without putting them or yourself at risk of #COVID19.

Support your children. If you are a parent or guardian, remember that your children may need some extra support this Ramadan as well. They are also dealing with stress and changes but in their own way such as being more clingy, anxious, withdrawing, angry or agitated. Support them, listen to their concerns and give them extra love and attention this Ramadan.

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