

How to Have a More Meaningful Virtual Conversation

Just because we aren't together physically, that doesn't mean we aren't connected.

When sisters are engaged, our Sorority only gets stronger and each of our hearts gets fuller. Virtually, we can continue to build these connections by engaging in meaningful conversations.

See below for six tips to strike up a more meaningful conversation with your sisters!

1. Create a list of people you want to reach out to

The list might include a new member, a sister you haven't talked to in a while, your big or little sister, an executive council member, your old roommates from college, or someone outside of Sigma Kappa. This could include a Panhellenic sister, a fraternal friend, a professor or family members. Either make a physical list or use your phone to keep track of it!

2. Make time

Getting into a deep conversation isn't something you can do quickly. It takes time. Most people have at least a little more time on their hands than usual right now (and some have a lot). An idea is to set aside the same amount of time each day that you would've been getting to campus or work and use it to connect with people on your list.

3. Make the call

Studies suggest that the human voice can trigger the body to release the feel-good hormone oxytocin and reduce the stress-inducing hormone cortisol. With the coronavirus pandemic, the old phone call has been making a comeback. Video calls allow you to see each other's facial expressions, body language and surroundings. It provides more immediacy and the conversation feels more intimate.

4. Get the conversation started

What you say first is not so important, but what you say second is. Listen to what the other person says back to you and then respond in a way that not only shows you're listening but that steers the conversation in a meaningful direction. It can be

as simple as saying, "That's interesting, tell me more about that." If what they talk about isn't very interesting, suggest some other things to talk about. Ask them questions to dig deeper. Ask them about an experience they learned something from that they weren't expecting to learn.

5. Get creative

If the conversation gets stuck, tell them something you appreciate about them, or why you're proud of them, or simply thank them for being in your life, or remind them you love them. Ask them about a favorite Sigma Kappa memory or a moment that made them feel proud. This can work when talking with a sister or someone outside of Sigma Kappa. If you're video chatting, ask about something you see in the background. Then follow that up with a question about where it came from, why they were attracted to it, what it means to them. Find out what they're doing to keep their minds busy, if they've taken up a new hobby, if they're reading a good book, listening to an interesting podcast or binge-watching a fun show. Ask them to tell you something about themselves that most people don't know (or would be surprised to know). Be prepared ahead of time!

6. Really listen

The act of listening and truly feeling that you're being listened to can be transformational. When someone feels the same way we do, it helps us feel less lonely. Even if you don't normally have a lot in common with the person you're talking to, we're all going through similar shared experiences. Ask about how being stuck at home makes them feel, what they miss about being "out in the world", what they miss about Sigma Kappa or bring up a story you saw in the news that moved or inspired you.