

Making the Most of Online Interactions

Did you know...

Over 100 participants at Pathways are participating in virtual events!

Look inside the boxes for tips on how to make the most of online interactions. Below each box is a way to practice new skills.

Stay Focused

- Remove Distractions
 - Limit distractions in your environment by turning off TVs, radios, and cell phones
 - Find a private place to chat
- “Virtual Eye Contact”
 - Try to look at others when they are talking

Skills Practice: Tape a few pictures to a mirror. Practice standing in front of the mirror and looking at those pictures for a few seconds at a time. Try not to look at your own reflection.

Why: It is tempting to look at ourselves during a video. “Virtual Eye Contact” requires us to look at something else for up to 2-3 seconds.

Be Patient with Technology

- Give People Extra Time to Speak
 - You or others may have some delays (sound or video).
 - Give people a few extra seconds to make sure they are finished speaking.
- Don't Call it Out
 - Everyone can see when someone is having a tech troubles, you do not need to announce it to the group.
 - Instead, try to be the person that keeps the conversation going! .

Skills Practice: Sit down with a friend or family member. Tell them you are going to practice giving someone extra time to speak. After the person finishes speaking, wait 2 full seconds (1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi) to respond.

Use Your Body to Communicate

- Let People Know you are Listening
 - Use head nods or facial expressions to let someone know when you agree or disagree.
- Raise Your Hand
 - Breaks in conversation are harder to identify in video chats.
 - Raise your hand when you have something to say to avoid interruptions.

Skills Practice: Sit down with a friend or family member. Tell them you are going to practice giving someone extra time to speak. After the person finishes speaking, wait 2 full seconds (1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi) before responding.

Participate!

- Prepare Questions for the Group
 - Come prepared with questions related to the event topic.
 - Come prepared with questions that help you learn about others.
- Respond
 - Try to make comment or answer questions with more than one-word answers.

Take the Lead

- Ask the Group a Question
 - Example: What is everyone doing this weekend?
- Get Others Opinions
 - Example: John, what do you think?
- Share Event Ideas
 - Tell Pathways staff what virtual events you would like to see on the calendar.

Skills Practice: Identify 2 questions that you will use in all social interactions this week. As you use your questions, practice giving longer responses or using follow-up questions after the person responds.

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____