

Physical Distancing while Connecting Socially

Sir,

Everyone has been jumping on the proverbial bandwagon of “social distancing” since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. The term “social distancing” is misleading as it blurs the distinction between social and physical proximity.¹ Promoting social distancing implies promoting emotional distancing, and it carries an erroneous notion, as during these difficult times, it is intended for people to reach out to each other socially. People are encouraged to reach out to each other through social media or phone while maintaining physical distancing. The misnomer “social distancing” should be replaced by “physical distancing” in all government correspondences while promoting social connectivity and interdependence.² Guidelines issued by the government using this misnomer are sending the wrong message of social isolation rather than physical separation. We need to be socially connected now more than ever to overcome psychological stress.³ Due to the economic crisis as a result of this pandemic, increased participation in social activities should be encouraged while maintaining physical separation. Social connections will help contact tracing, quarantining, and vaccine distribution.⁴ Government should pay heed by using the right words so that the right message is conveyed.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION:

SJAZ: Conception, design, and critically revising the manuscript.

MT: Proofreading, literature review, and critically revising the manuscript.

Both the authors gave final approval and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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