

Okay. So I'm Deseree. Hi everyone. I'm a counseling intern at the UCA Counseling Center and I'm here with Maggie. You want to introduce yourself? Yeah. Hi, everybody. I am Maggie. I'm also a counseling intern at the UCA counseling center. Yes. So we're here today to talk about ways to improve your social game. So before we get started, I did want to ask if you guys could turn on your cameras just so we can get a feel for who's here. And also ask that you do participate. You know, nothing to, You know just a word here, statement there. Lets see. If people are willing to do that. Okay. Hi. Thank you, for turning on your cameras, hopefully more will turn on later on, but yeah. So we're going to go through this talk and then towards the end, probably we'll have time for question and answers. But if any questions come up along the way, you can put them in the chat and we'll try to remember to look at it, if not, just remind us. Yes. Okay. So jumping right in. Before I talk about this, social skills... Well, people tend to believe that it's one of those things where you either have it or you don't. And if you don't have it well, you're just out of luck. But honestly that's not true you know, just think of it like any other skill you're learning in your life, like learning how to draw or play the guitar, you can do it is just that it's something that takes intention, practice, and commitment over time. And it's the same thing with this particular skill set. And the great thing about it is you don't have to change yourself, not the core of yourself. Your personality, your interests, your values, all of that remains the same. If anything, it's what adds value to this particular skill set. So all we're doing here is just taking those values and we're just expanding on them. So right off the bat, certain aspects of your personality are going to influence the way you socialize. If you're more of an introvert, you may find that you like to spend time alone, maybe with your thoughts, and your ideas. You also enjoy spending time with other people, having meaningful conversations with them, any of that. But after a while you may start to get a little drained, a little tired. So one way to kinda replenish yourself, and gain your energy is to spend time alone again. And a big misconception here is that some people believe if you're introverted, that automatically means you're shy. And that's not true, you know, there are introverts who have tons and tons of friends or they like to be the center of attention. And if they do experience some anxiety or discomfort, that's normal. Everyone experiences it. But if the anxiety is so significant that it holds you back, that's when we may start to think there's some shyness. Now, if you're more of an extrovert, you love spending time with other people, you thrive on it. And if you spend too much time alone, that's when you start to feel a little drained. And a misconception here is that some people believe if you're extroverted, you're outgoing. Nope, still not always true. There are some extroverts who are so chill so laid back that you probably wouldn't have guessed that they were extroverted. And you have extroverts who are shy, who are socially anxious. You know, they really want to be with people but being with people is what brings on anxiety. So there's a big conflict there. And so with that being said, there's no set way to be an introvert or extrovert. We all come in many shapes and forms. And I'm curious, where do you think you all fall? Are you more of an introvert, extrovert, maybe in-between. Tell me. I can break the ice so it's a little less awkward. So for me, I am definitely an, I think I'm an introverted extrovert or an extroverted introvert. It really depends on the day, honestly, I'm kinda right there in the middle. Like sometimes all I want is to be around people, especially people that I'm comfortable with. Kind of be the center of attention. I'm very outgoing. But other days it's definitely like I need some time to recharge and be by myself. And I definitely think a lot before I speak and I'm not as talkative, so definitely both for me. Yeah, yeah. That sounds like a classic introvert extrovert. Anyone else? You can just throw it out there. Introvert, Extrovert. If you want to just say one word. Yeah, I think I'm a little bit of both. I love hanging around with friends, but sometimes I just wanna be alone and read a book or something. Yeah. Not that outgoing, but again, now that that, I don't like to stay inside as much, so it's a little bit of both. Deseree,

do you want me to read the chat? Yeah. So Marvin's an extrovert. Darrian is an extrovert. So is, or Kamara is an introvert. Breck is an introvert and extrovert. And Robert says he is an introvert. Okay. Okay, I got some combinations in there. I will say I'm definitely introverted. There's no doubt about it. I can spend hours and days alone. But I do you enjoy my social time. So like I said before, there's no set way to be an introvert, extrovert we all have unique qualities and a specific personality type and shyness or social anxiety can be linked to either one. And so with that being said, let's look at what might be some signs of shyness. So probably might be self conscious. There's a fear of being judged by others. Also maybe worried about being rejected. There's definitely discomfort in social settings and you find that you might try to soothe yourself by fishing or limiting your eye contact. You may have the classic physical symptoms like the butterfly feelings in your stomach you got the shaky voice, shaky hands, you know. So this is just a general list of all those experiences and there are more out there really. But there are also ranges to shyness. I you're more on the mild side, you may find that you have some hesitation, you have some fear. But it's not really noticeable to other people, you know. And if you're more on the moderate side, then there's definitely anxiety. There's definitely some doubt. But once again, you're still able to really put yourself out there and interact with people when you are more on the severe end, then the anxiety, the doubt, insecurity, it holds you back and you may find that you have limited interactions. You're very withdrawn. Now when you find yourself kind of in the middle between moderate to severe shyness, you may start to wonder if there's some social anxiety going on. And honestly those two are kind of hard to distinguish. Some things you may look at are you know, how intense is anxiety whenever you're interacting with people, how frequently does it occur when you're talking to people and how much does it impact your life? Is it holding you back? Is it debilitating? Whatever the case is whether there's shyness or it's anxiety, you can always reach out for help. You know, talk to friends utilize the counseling services that are offered to you on campus and it's already paid your tuition, so it's right there. This is something that you don't have to go through alone. And so if you are having problems improving your social skills, one of the biggest things holding you back, may be your own mind. And honestly if you think about it? There are probably times when you are more socially capable and it was probably around people you're more comfortable with, like your family or your friends. You know, you can crack jokes. You can talk about anything and everything. You may feel a little bit more free to be yourself. But when you're in the company of other people, like strangers or maybe suddenly you're kind of worried about their opinion of you. Then the social skills may get thrown out the window. And like I mentioned before, feeling anxiety, feeling discomfort in social settings is totally normal. But when it's so much so that it's holding you back, okay, let's look at some relaxation skills. And there are a lot out there. Lift them up, find which one works best for you. But one that seems to be a little bit more universal are breathing exercises, in particular deep breathing. And so this is one where you just take slow deep breaths in through your nose into your belly and then out through your mouth. And you can do this about three or ten times or however it, however many times you need it. And what you find is that it takes you out of your head and it puts you in the present moment. And something you can do at home, you can do it while you're actually interacting with the person. And they won't notice cause you're like, you're just breathing like you always do. But it helps you to kind of write out the anxiety symptoms, you know. Because if you, when you first get into the interaction, sometimes your anxiety is at its peak. And if you actually stay in that feeling and you don't run away from it, you may find that it starts to lessen after a few minutes. And doing this also helps you to stay in the present moment. Because once we recognize that we're afraid or we're fearing rejection, we mainly go to our thoughts and is not pretty up there, you know, it's a lot of wild negative things going on. So it just helps us to

come back down, stay in the present moment and actually focus on what the person is saying to us. And if you find that, sometimes you do go to your head if you experience a lot of negative thinking. One of the things that may help you is to, after you're out of that interaction, take a moment to kind of process the entire thing. Ask yourself a few questions like, how do you think it went? And actually look at some of the negative thoughts you were having. Is, this is something you can do it with friends, you can do it in a journal, you can do it in your counseling sessions. It's something that it will take time if you continuously do it, but you won't notice the changes overnight. But after a while you will start to see that it does kind of change the way you experience life. So let's look at a few examples. One of the thoughts you may be having, if you got out of an interaction, feel like you kind of embarrassed yourself, I feel like that's something that all of us kinda, can kind of feel like we have similar experiences to that. Maybe we embarrass ourselves and then probably months later, a year later we will, we are still thinking about it as if the other person remembers. The thought maybe if I do something wrong, people will care about it. And think negatively of you for a long time. Okay? You know, this is something that's a little subtle, but it's still something that really takes a toll on us. So an alternative thought might be most people won't care about my embarrassing moments or other people are too preoccupied with their lives to put so much effort into remembering, remembering everything I do. And that's true, you know, think about it. Just as you're so worried and preoccupied with yourself, other people are doing the exact same thing. They're not going to always remember every little detail. And if you were to actually go back and ask that person, they probably don't remember. They probably don't remember seeing you that day. So moving on into some actual general approaches, if you were wanting to get up, put yourself out there and interact with people, there are many approaches you can look up and on the Internet in books. But it never fails that a simple hello goes a long way. You can get, this is one of those things where you can like put yourself out there and practice doing it. Maybe at the grocery stores, maybe while you're on campus and can just as you're passing by say, hey, how are you or hello, you know, maybe do this for about an hour, a week, 30 minutes a week, you know, make sure you don't have your headphones in. Make sure that you're actually looking up and paying attention to your surroundings and we're about to pass by. I'm wondering, Maggie do you Is this something you do when you're out there you might just randomly speak to somebody as they're walking by? Yeah. Sometimes I do. Especially if I've made eye contact with someone even if it's just like awkwardly, I'm just like, hi, how are you? And usually it's just in passing, but sometimes it like has formed friendships that have been really great. So yeah. It feel like I've had a similar experience just a day before while I was sitting outside by myself doing homework and someone came up to me and they spoke to me. And at first they left with then they came back and we actually introduced themselves and they asked if we could exchange numbers actually Hangout. So sometimes it does work. But if you are interested in actually approaching someone, whether that is just to say, hey, make small talk or to have a conversation, become friends with them. There are a few things you could do. A process seems to work well for everybody is to look for something interesting about the person and be curious about them. Look at the clothes that they're wearing, the things like the buttons on their book bag or anything. You know, maybe they have a particular artist on their shirt. Let them know that you know who that artist is and ask them, what's your favorite album by them, your favorite song? Well, see the buttons, Ask them what they are, where they got them. A lot of our interactions are pretty much virtual. You can still do the same thing. It might be awkward it depends on how you feel about it. But if someone has their camera on and you like their hair or you like the posters in the background, message them privately and told them that, you know. And if you are putting yourself out there and you're interacting with people, one of the things to really be aware of is to not put so much intention on trying

to get a specific response. The point is you're actually putting yourself out there. You're engaging with people. If they respond, that's great. If they don't, that's okay too. You're still trying. And one of the reasons why this approach tends to work very well is because some people, they are okay with talking about themselves is pretty easy to share information, to find connections. Other than that, sometimes they also like the idea that people are taking interest in them and makes them feel good. Another approach would be to just actually sit and think about some topics that you are comfortable discussing. Maybe that's pop culture, maybe it's movies, maybe it's music, and trying to tailor the conversation in that direction. Now when you're doing this approach, you have to be a little careful because you have to be in tune with how the person is responding. If they are engaging, they're probably nodding their head. They're probably asking questions, responding. If they're not, you know, they look a little bored they're probably looking off to the side. Not really there with you. If that's the case, then try to throw some questions at them to get their attention or to possibly think about changing the topic of conversation. And as far as making the conversations deeper, this actually, isn't that hard? Sometimes it can be because you feel like, you know, everything is so slow moving when you don't know what to ask and you feel awkward, but honestly it's not that hard to make a conversation deeper. One of the basic ways to do it is to ask questions and to be particular about the questions you're asking. Open ended ones are key. So say you ask someone, What do you think of your major? That typically pushes them to give you a more detailed elaborate response depending on how much of a talker they are. More or less that's opening the floor for the person to tell you what they think their major, if you ask them, a more close ended one like do you like your major and they're not a talker, they'll probably give you the bare minimum, like yeah. No, it's ok. So it's okay if you do ask close ended ones. A lot of times we do this out of habit. But just be prepared for the short response or follow up with another question like, okay. Do you like your major? Yes. Okay. That's cool. So what do you think about it? So it still opens up the floor for them to elaborate a little bit more. And another thing you can do to actually deepen the conversation is to also be particularly with the statements that you're making, the responses you give your opinions, the details you're sharing about yourself. You also don't want to give short ended responses because it puts too much pressure on the other person to keep the conversation going. You can do this every once in a while, but if it's like back to back to back it's hard for the other person. So try to give some details yourself. So if someone asked you about a movie you watched recently, you know, instead of just simply saying you liked it, didn't like it, give it a few reasons why. And moving further. Some of the things that you'll also take in, you have to take into consideration when you are interacting are nonverbals. Now there are a lot out there like facial expressions, your body posture, your mannerisms, but one that I think is really important is eye contact. And that seems to be kind of a struggle for a lot of people. Honestly, it just depends on your culture. You know, there are other cultures where if you make too much eye contact, you're too intense. It might be a sign of disrespect or it's just not the norm of their family. And then it can also depend on how comfortable you feel with it, whether you're self conscious or not. But since we do live in a Western culture, eye contact is value. It is seen that you have confidence and that you are interested in the person. So that's something that you may benefit from working on. At least while the person is talking, you know, try to make some eye contact. And if it's too intense, you can look at the spot in-between their eyes. They won't really notice. And while you're talking, there's not too much pressure on you to keep making eye contact. Sometimes it's hard because you can't keep your thoughts together. So you can look off to the side or look down, but at least while the person is talking makes some eye contact. I notice with you Maggie, you're really great at making eye contact all the time. Now for me, that's something that I've had to work on because within

my family, we don't really make too much eye contact, And I didn't know that it was an issue for other people. And so I got to college and I started interacting with people outside of my circle and I'm like oh okay, let me work on this. Yeah, I definitely use the in-between the eye trick or like look at their forehead because sometimes it can be two intense for me. So another thing to kind of look at, are the annoying, awkward silences. This can make you feel so uncomfortable, especially if you feel like you don't have social skills and then there's so much silence and you're like, I don't know what to say, I know what I'm doing. And of course it'll put you in your head, and you'll start thinking a lot of negative things. But just know that if the silence does fall on you or you're in a conversation with a person, it's OK it's totally normal, it happens. And maybe because somebody got distracted. Maybe somebody said something super random. You don't know what to say. And it's okay to tell them too that I don't really know how to respond to that. It'll be fine. It may also be a way for you to change the topic of the conversation if you just have nothing more to say about it, or if you have nothing more to say at all, it could be a natural way to end the conversation. And so with that being said, ending the conversation can be a struggle for some people to, and to be honest, it doesn't have to be this big whole thing. It can be something that's really quick and casual. Something like, well, I want to go, or I'll catch up with you later. Okay. And maybe if you run into somebody on campus and you see that they were headed somewhere or doing something you can tell them I'll let you get back to what you're doing. I'll talk to you later. Anything like that. And a lot of times just going to be a struggle for people because they don't want to be rude with cutting off the conversation. If it is something that is a little abrupt sometimes you can't help it you got somewhere to go and people just keep talking. And if you are in a conversation where you're trying to end it and someone keeps talking. That's when you go back to the nonverbal cues and you try to use that to quickly wrap up the conversation. Say you're sitting down and want the conversation to end and they keep going. You'll probably stand up and using this, it sends a signal to them that okay, it's time for me to like, end the conversation. Or maybe you have your stuff laid out, you could start grabbing your keys putting your things in your book bag. That also lets them know it's time to wrap it up. But with all that being said, I do want to just give you some reminders really. If you are someone who is trying to work on your social skills, it doesn't have to be a big thing. Start small baby steps. And you have goals in mind. You don't have to achieve all of them at once. Just take your time and it's okay. And even while when you are working on your social skills, don't overwhelm yourself. Trying to be perfect. It's okay, no one's perfect. We all have our flaws. We all have things we're working on. Sometimes it feels like other people are so great at socializing. You know, most of us are pretty average. We, we all have things we can work on. People make seem like they can just go out and talk to any and everybody. Sometimes they talk too much and they don't let the other person get a word in, or maybe they're too blunt and they offend other people. You know, we all have something that we could work on. So don't think that anyone is better than you, we're all pretty average when it comes to social skills, you can always improve on it. But don't let that discourage you if you feel like you're so far behind. And if you are doing things to push yourself out of your comfort zone and you're achieving goals. Celebrate your accomplishments. No matter how big or how small they are all part of the journey and they deserved to be acknowledged. And if you are achieving some of your goals, reward yourself. So, you know, I did a good job socializing all week. I really put myself out there. On Friday night. I'm going to watch a movie with a couple of friends we're gonna eat our favorite snacks, just make it a big thing because it is a big thing. And as you're going through this journey, track your emotional growth. You know, keep a physical documentation of all the things you've done. The ways you push yourself out of your comfort zone, how you felt about doing it. Because sometimes when things get hard, we will kind

of discredit ourselves, validate all the things we've done, all the progress we've made. So we have something that's an actual physical reminder of all the ways we've pushed ourselves, then that would encouraged us to keep going. And so Maggie, I was wondering if you had anything else you had to add to that? So definitely yes to all of the things. And really practice does not make perfect, but makes comfortable. And then that makes sense. The more you do this, the easier it's going to be to small talk with people. Even just like observing other people having small talk, whether that's, you know, people watching and listening in on a conversation. Not in a creepy way, but just in a learning way. Or like looking at the way people on TV do it too. That can be a really good way to observe and kind of practice in your mind and how that goes. Also have grace with yourself. Again, like reward yourself when you do good and don't beat yourself up when you do bad. like Deseree said, we're all pretty average in this. Nobody's perfect. So Improvements for you are awesome and setbacks are okay too. Yeah. Yeah. What she said was really important. We do need to be aware of how we're, we are talking to ourselves because we could be doing things to achieve our goals. We will be trying to work on, the way we think, you know, whether it's negatively or positively. But if the way we're talking to ourselves, is as if we're demeaning a child is not going to help us out. We're still going to struggle to like ourselves, struggle to recognize all the progress we've made. So definitely extend some kindness to ourselves, be compassionate, do as we would to someone else. I guess I want to ask, you know, how do you all feel about your social skills? Someone kinda poked their head in. How do you feel about your social skills in terms of interacting with people. Do you feel comfortable in the company of other people? Do you feel nervous? What has been your experience? So we've got some could use work and could be way better. Okay. Also, Taylor said that Covid and online classes are difficult. They are difficult. Yeah. That has been a challenge trying to navigate, you know, privately messaging people, through zoom, that does work, but depends on how comfortable you feel, you know, kind of worry about it that might be creepy or not. A lot of times people aren't going to see it as creepy, but if you worry about that, that can hold you back. Honestly. You know, if you are wanting to work on your social skills, you know, just get the practice in with just greeting people on campus, you know, no pressure commitments actually stop and have a conversation with them. Just say, hey, in passing goal, tell them you like their pants, something like that. And you'll find people are way more friendly nowadays because of Covid, because we have limited interactions with other people. So I feel like this is the best opportunity to actually put yourself out there because people are going to respond more positively. Yes, I agree 100%. Also online classes and Covid like look at it as an opportunity to, you know, we're all kind of navigating what, you know, social interaction looks like right now. So it's a way to not only practice your social skills, but may redefine what you want them to be. Okay, well, since it is hard to kinda socialize during these times, what do you all like to do? To try to make things more normal? It could be anything, like watching movies, you know, FaceTiming others. What all do you like to do to try to make things normal at times like these. Maggie you're probably going to have to keep tabs on that chat. Can you see the chat chat Deseree? So Taylor just sad that she's from Ohio. So being here and meeting all new people is really difficult. There was a sweet girl in one of her classes and she said that she was new too. So Taylor was like, we should learn Arkansas together. But then it never went anywhere and it was like, Did I do something wrong? Taylor was like. She thinks it's just hard seeing someone over a screen all the time versus if we saw them face-to-face frequently. And I totally agree with that. It can be difficult. And even with the person where you're kind of connecting with and then they kind of just disappeared you know, it's definitely easier when you are handling virtual communication, so on, for the other person to kind of disappear, you know, even though you feel like you did something wrong? You probably didn't, you know? People have

their own things going on in their lives. They got distracted, they feel awkward showing themselves, anything could be the reason. Now one thing that really helps me, I kind of take a critical eye to the way people react to me and see like if it really was some thing I did, or it's more of a reflection on them and things they've got going on because usually it's the latter, right? Okay. Yes. Taking a critical eye to that's definitely like you're rationalizing your thoughts and the situation. Because it is easy to kind of turn inward and see all the faults within you, like what did I do wrong? I have horrible social skills like I suck at talking to people, just all of the things on the list. But there could be so many things at play. And it helps if we just take a step back and actually look at everything because it doesn't always have to be extreme. And as far as I know, it's kind of hard to socialize because everything is so virtual. Now that's just been my experience because I do lead a few groups at the counseling center. And it's not the same. Even though that is the way to actually connect with people because they're not getting that elsewhere is not quite the same. And they are craving to actually see everyone. And we kinda gave that to them where we all met up, and we're all six feet apart. We spread out on blankets outside with our mask on and we just sat and talked. And they feel like it was just so it's just something they have been missing for the past few months. Just that one little thing. Yeah, that's like a lot of what I'm doing too, to make things seem a little more normal is like allowing myself a couple of like socially distant mask wearing interactions with people actually in-person. And that's been helpful. And so for those of you who do feel a little awkward, or a little anxious in social interactions. What do you think holds you back? Kimara said being judged. Taylor said fear of feeling that they won't like me. Fear of being judged and feeling like they won't like you. Yeah, that is very common. Of course, it's always one of those things where whenever we fear those things from other people is because we kind of wonder if we have anything for other people to actually like and accept about us. And so in turn, we're kind of projecting onto other people, and it's one of those that's just working on recognizing your worth and being positive to yourself, and knowing what you actually love about yourself and know that you, you are worth somebody's time, You are worthy to become friends with. And Tori and Earl said fear of rejection and Ini, am I saying that correctly? Ini? Correct me if I'm wrong. But they said, I always wonder whether the person is in the mood to talk or not. Taylor said or sometimes sounding stupid and like I can't get the right words out LOL, okay. Yeah. In situations like that where you're you're wondering if the person wants to talk to you, if they're in the mood, if it's someone you actually feel comfortable asking, You could ask them, how are they feeling, you know, are they busy right now? Ask, maybe even ask how they feel about you, or you can go into it by telling them what you enjoy about their company being their friend. And it kind of opens the door for them to say the same things about you. Maybe give you a little bit of validation you're looking for. One thing I like to ask is like, do you have space for this right now? Yeah. Yeah. That's a good question too. Like space, what are you talking about. Taylor, the sounding stupid is definitely one of mine too. But I have, Oh Hassan, again correct me if I'm saying that wrong. But they said like maybe you try to be funny and open, but that person is the stone yikes. Yes, for sure. A big fear of mine. One thing that I've done to help with that is like I laugh at myself so much. Like even if I if that is happening and I do feel like I'm sounding stupid or trying to be funny and no one's getting it. It's really helpful for me to feel like, haha, I'm so silly. Oh, well. Don't take yourself too seriously in the moment. Yeah. It takes the pressure off for you to be perfect, to get everything right, to get their Laugh. That's another situation to where if you do feel like you look stupid you know, other people aren't going to be thinking about that. Because the next two or three days, couple of weeks. They're not thinking about this situation. Ooh. Yeah, the thought that goes through my head is like, well, I think I'm funny and that's really all that matters. So. A little of that self-affirmation. I am nice, so that

other people don't always validate that for you, you still believe it internally. So I guess I'll ask you Maggie. When it comes to your social skills, do you feel like you've always been kind of decent with them or have you worked on them over time? So I definitely had to work on them over time. I was a very awkward, like elementary, junior high school kid. And around high school was when I was like, I want to feel a little more comfortable when I am talking to people. And so I definitely, my mother is actually someone who is very like outgoing and like friendly and talks to people a whole, whole lot. So I really watched her a lot. And saw how she interacted with people and tried to imitate that for a little bit, but then figured out how to make it my own. And I would I would literally practice in the mirror, like doing small talk. I really, so it's it's definitely something I've had to work with and give myself a lot of grace with especially like sounding stupid and not coming off as funny. Just, you know, coming to terms with what my own strengths are and then portraying that. It's definitely been a ride. No, thank you for sharing that people don't really talk about their experiences with social skills over time, especially if it's something that they worked on, and improved on. And you mentioned something important about small talk, that's something that comes up a lot, I wonder how you all feel about small talk. What do you think of it? Also, Jasmine asked if we could if we have time, could review everything we mentioned, cuz she missed the beginning. But anyway, small talk. Let us now put it in the chat. Talk to us. It makes Taylor nervous. Yes. Oh also Jasmine it is being recorded, so you'll be able to get it. And you said Taylor, it makes Taylor nervous. Yeah. Yeah. Taylor do you mind telling why it makes you nervous? She doesn't know if she's saying too much or too little. And Ini thinks. It's awkward. Small talk is one of those things where it can be, Yeah, hard or awkward for people. It's just so surface-level. You know, like a hey, how are you, how's the weather. how's your day? But it's one of those things where maybe changing the perspective on it, and know that it's this person's way of connecting with you, at least in the beginning. And if it does feel like maybe you're not saying enough, or you're saying too much, you know, small talk is just the gateway to actually having a conversation with someone. And depending on the context, depending on if you have time, you can always make the conversation a little deeper. You get past the hellos, how was your weekend? You can ask some questions, maybe using those open-ended questions, like, what did you do for the weekend, and actually going into details about their, you know, what they did, what they enjoyed about it maybe branch off and ask about music, movie, something like that. Kamara said, it makes them feel like they don't want to talk to them. Makes them feel like they don't want to talk, or the person? It makes Kamara feel like the person they're talking to you doesn't want to talk to her. I have a question to you, what makes you think that? I wish zoom did the thing where as the person's typing, it lets you know so and so is typing. That would be very nice. Earl said it makes him in the conversation. It makes them into the conversation. And Darrian feels the same as Kamara. Does anyone else ever feel like small talk is like forced? Taylor does. Yeah. Well, for those who don't quite like small talk or they feel like it's forced or awkward, What do you think you can do to try to make the conversation a little better? Ini said just to joke about something that's happening at the moment. I love that. Ask them questions about them is what Kamara said Take an interest in them. That's always a great go to, people do love to talk about themselves, me included. And there are others that are still typing we'll still acknowledge your response. I think my next question would be, how do you feel about actually approaching people in person, being that we are in a pandemic? It's kinda awkward sometimes now with the social distancing and trying to respect everyone's space. I ran into someone at the grocery store the other day and we both had on masks, but we hadn't seen each other in a while and I was like, hey, but it was like I didn't get too close. Of course I wasn't going to embrace or hug. But I felt like the person was just trying to hurry up and say what they were going to say and keep it going and keep it moving.



Even though I was more than six feet away. But I just felt like people are stressed and they have they have anxiety just about everything that's going on right now. So sometimes the conversations do same. It's different. It's different and sometimes it's just is difficult approaching, and knowing who's going to feel what kind of way and how they're going to respond to you. That's been my experience just happened just this week. Hassan said in the chat that he feels like they may be uncomfortable. Earl says when they approach someone, they stay six feet apart. And then Taylor said, me? Approaching someone? Haha, just kidding. I actually forget that some people don't like to be close right now. And I agree with that, Taylor. Like I try to respect other people's boundaries and what they would like, but I'm also like not super sure what mine are when it comes to the pandemic stuff. And it's like different with different people. It's, it is weird. You know, my experience has been I'm definitely a more friendly person, I do the, hey how are you in passing. But I find that more people I speaking to meeting in passing. You will have some who will maintain their distance and you have some who'll come right up on you. Oh, okay. That's what we're doing. But yes, it has been awkward. Yeah. Kamara said It's hard hearing people, which I totally get. And then Hassan said, Yeah, like walking past someone who had their mask with them and I was, I wasn't wearing one, that person pulled up his t-shirt and I'm like, bro, I'm so sorry, I will go live in a cave at home. Yeah. I feel that especially when you feel like you've made someone else uncomfortable like, that's something that can make your anxiety kind of like Mm hmm. With that being said, what do you think are some ways you could try to push yourself out of your social comfort zone, it can be anything whether you're actually speaking to people in person, maybe reach out to someone through zoom. Do social social things, what are some ways you can try to push yourself out of your comfort zone? How does someone feel about actually speaking out and saying, I, I appreciate the chat responses. Let's see if you can push yourself by your comfort zone and actually say something I promise we're chilling, we're not judging you. Say, what was the question? What are some ways you think you can push yourself out of your comfort zone? Which you kind of did just now, cause you spoke. Yeah, true. And talking to people? Yeah. Maybe you'll push yourself with approaching people in person, maybe through zoom classes, on social media, anything. Just some sort of interaction. Well, I personally will just go do it without thinking because I tend to overthink and then not do it, during that. So I just don't think about it and I just do it. So I don't really think I just, I try not to expect anything. Probably, Like expecting that a person is not going to talk to you, because then you would think that, okay you're just like talking to no one. And it's kind of helpful that way for me. Yeah. Now that's a great approach. Just automatically, just pushing yourself to talk to the person just do it before you have time to think. Do it before you have time to get in your head, just automatically put yourself in that situation. . That's a great approach. Now what you were saying too seems like, you kind of try to take out your expectations. Not to put too much worth into whether or not the person responds it's more so that you just put yourself out there. Which is important because you know you don't, and if the person responds cool, and if they don't, that's okay too. It's not a reflection of their self-worth. You're still a great person. Darrian, I'm going to call you out. When you said in the chat that you're going for it, do you want to say anything or is that just like that's how you would get out of your comfort zone. It's going for it. Yeah. So the same thing as Ini, just going for it. Darrian said exposure therapy, I guess you could call it. That's exactly what it is. Yeah, it's one of those things where if you are trying to improve your social skills, if you push yourself out of your comfort zone once, that is great. Applaud yourselves, celebrate that accomplishment. Find another way to do it again, maybe the next week. Maybe we can't do that. When you keep putting yourself out there. It helps to lessen the fear you have to expose that interaction. So the exposure is high. I will definitely lessen the fears and anxieties that you have. I mean, I feel like, I

promise you it will. Well, we have about six minutes left. I wonder if anyone have any questions or last minute things they want to put out there. I'd say a lot more people coming in towards the end. Marvin said thank you. And Taylor said no question, y'all did so good. Marvin said this was great. Thank you. Thank you. It's all Deseree. Oh my goodness, too much pressure. Hassan said This was fun. I agree. It was very fun. Thank you. And thank you all for coming. And thank you for participating. Like I say, I appreciate the chat responses. I appreciate people actually speaking, all of it. Thank you.