

## Gathering Together Outside

Would you like to have your book group meet outside on a patio? Or how about a knitting group gathering under a large tree in someone's back yard? Or would you find it soothing to spend a half hour in a meditation experience that includes recorded Taizé chanting?

RI is still in Phase III of reopening. During this phase all vulnerable populations, including anyone age 65 or older are still strongly advised to stay home unless they must go to work, travel for medical treatment, or shop for groceries, gas, or medication.

However, after many months of relative isolation many of us are feeling the need to see others in person. The best way to combat the physical and mental downsides of isolation is to participate on some outdoor activities. This is relatively safe as long as precautions are taken.

There are ways we can currently socialize in a relatively safe manner.

- Plan to gather outside. (The risk of coronavirus transmission indoors is 19X higher inside than outside.)
- Keep the number of family members and/or friends expected to attend at 15 or less.
- Remind everyone to please stay home if they are experiencing 1 or more of the probable symptoms of Covid-19 or if they have been in contact with someone told to quarantine.
- Have each person bring their own chair and set it in the circle at least 6 feet apart. 10 feet apart is even better.
- If refreshments are desired each attendee should bring their own personal beverage and/or snack.
- Have hand sanitizer available for people to clean their hands as needed.
- At all times attendees will stay at least 6 feet away from people not of the same household.
- Have masks available if someone feels more comfortable if each person is wearing one.
- Discourage attendees from entering the home. If something is required go and get it for them. This way door knobs and other high touch areas don't have to be sanitized.
- Plan your gathering to last a maximum of two hours.
- Before ending your gathering plan when you might have your next time together.

Please be aware that failure to limit a social gathering to 15 or less not only increases the risk of transmission but can result in up to a \$500 fine for each participant present.

For any questions or clarification reach out to Peggy Matteson, [peggymatteson@cox.net](mailto:peggymatteson@cox.net).