

Minding the Gap in Long Distance Relationships

A long-distance relationship can be one of the toughest journeys a couple can take. There are many instances where you can go from feeling invincible to wanting to curl up into the fetal position. An emotional roller coaster for sure. With major challenges like trust, communication, intimacy, and lack of support, it is no wonder long-distance relationships can be challenging. Below are some suggestions for overcoming these gaps and building stronger connections.

✚ **Talk about it** - Communicate openly about what you are thinking and feeling. Leave all topics open for discussion and expect the same in return. Actively listen instead of waiting for your turn to speak. Acknowledging and validating each other's feelings will help strengthen your bond.



✚ **Create Routines** - Commit to scheduling regular time to communicate. This will create consistency and help with any separation anxiety.

✚ **Set Goals** - Setting SMART goals as a couple and individually can be beneficial. Working towards a common goal will help to build on your relationship. It also helps to have something to look forward to. Additionally, setting individual goals will help pass the time you spend apart and keep you focused on life going on around you.

✚ **Stay Involved** - Staying socially active is important. We are social creatures, so if we are used to spending a lot of time with our significant other it can be easy to become withdrawn in their absence. Social connections are good for our mental health and a great support resource to lean on during time apart.

✚ **Get Creative** - Don't be afraid to think outside the box. Plan a virtual date night, go old school and send letters or cards, plan a TV night together, play online games, read a book together, create and share a playlist, share recipes, send a care package, keep a joint journal, play 20 questions, or something new together...there are a lot of great ways to thrive in a long-distance relationship.

✚ **Support each other** - Nothing can make up for time spent apart, so it is important to remain supportive and reassure one another when you are going through the difficult times that will inevitably come. Think of this gap as an opportunity to love your special someone in a new way!