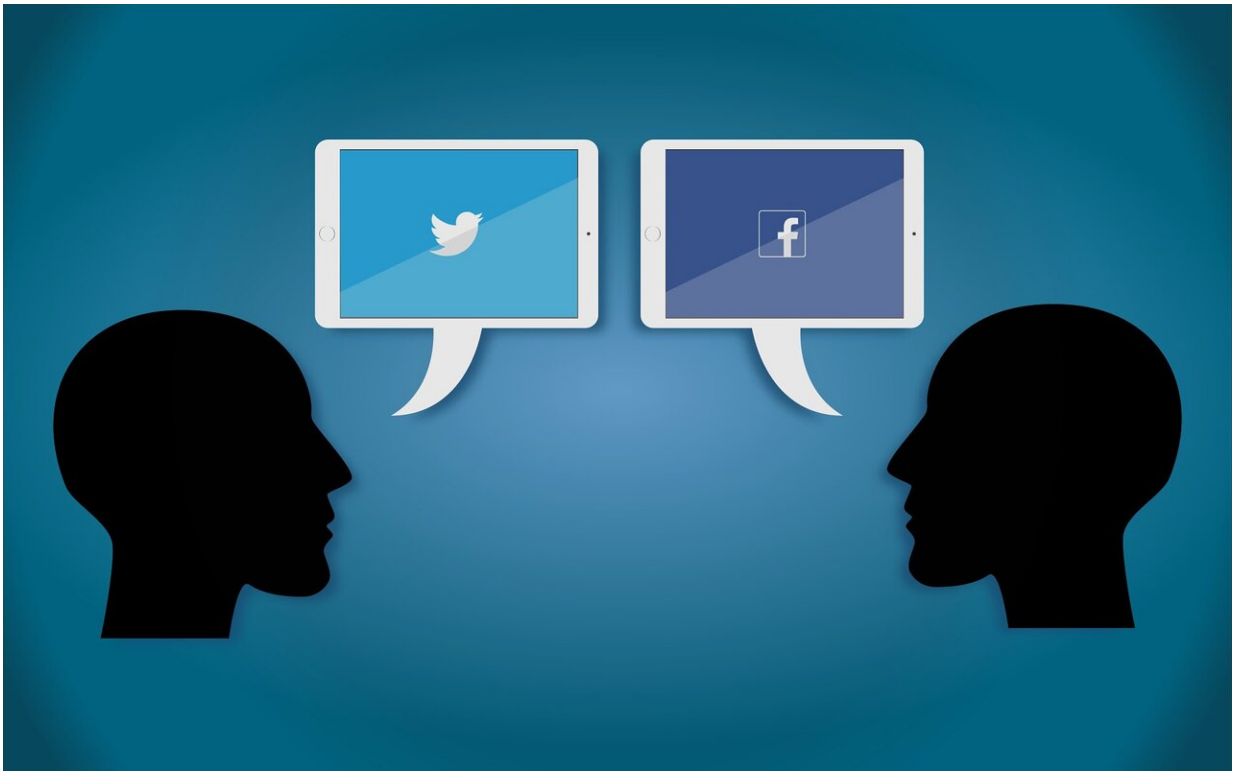


Looking at how people adapt to social isolation during COVID-19

April 29 2020



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Led by Forrest Postdoctoral Fellow Dr. Julie Ji, working with Dr. Julian Basanovic and Professor Colin MacLeod, the study is seeking volunteers to share their daily experiences of mandatory or voluntary self-isolation and physical distancing by completing online daily surveys over a 14-day

period. Volunteers can sign up at www.thecarestudy.com

Dr. Ji said that the entire country had undergone huge, instantaneous changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has caused mass uncertainty.

"Under these anxiety-provoking conditions, our levels of social interaction have been drastically reduced overnight," Dr. Ji said.

"While physical distancing does not mean [social isolation](#) given the abundance of technology to connect with others, many people are at risk of becoming increasingly isolated, with rising levels of loneliness and depression over time."

Dr. Ji said it was critical that scientists studied how isolation and distancing was affecting people.

"We need people to start sharing their first-hand experiences of physical isolation as soon as possible, because we are likely to be in this for many more months, and we urgently need [scientific evidence](#) to understand what people can do to stay socially connected and resilient during this pandemic and help inform government and policy-makers," she said.

"Results will also help us look at targeted interventions that can promote resilience-building behaviour."

Nicola Forrest AO, Co-Founder and Governor of Forrest Research Foundation and Co-Founder of Minderoo Foundation, said COVID-19 was an unprecedented global crisis.

"Now more than ever, we need our best and brightest minds working on solutions for the challenges our society is facing," Mrs Forrest said.

"Our Forrest Research Foundation fellows have moved quickly to get their research out of the lab and into the community where it's needed most. This research will help us to understand the impacts of COVID-19 and develop solutions for our future. For those self-isolating or social distancing, I encourage you to take part and share your experience."

Provided by University of Western Australia

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