

# Relax of alert?

MAY- JUNE 2020

Our natural tendency leads us to **seek proximity** to people we find agreeable. You're **close** to the people you like. You'll behave **intimately** with the ones you can trust.

You keep your distance from people you don't trust or those you find unpleasant. You'll want to flee, you'll be alert, or you'll be prepared to **defend yourself against the person who might physically or emotionally hurt you**. We have the expression "**letting your guard down**" for when you feel vulnerable, less alert, and more relaxed towards the other person because you feel safe.



*Take a measuring rod: 1.5 metres may be further than you think.*

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Now that the novel coronavirus sweeps through the world, it is **important, however, to stay alert to infection outside your family bubble** and to maintain a physical distance (1.5m). You'll notice that this is **hardest to do with people you like**, especially those colleagues who you were used to treating in a more confidential, familiar way.

The coronavirus makes **no distinction** and can affect anyone. If someone is infected, it can be up to 14 days before he/she shows symptoms of illness. This means you have no way of knowing whether it's safe for the other person to come closer.

**Even a wonderful colleague's intention** to avoid infecting you isn't **sufficient as a safety guarantee**. You can't assume that somebody outside your family bubble won't infect you with coronavirus, and that's pretty tough!

# How do you ask your colleague to keep their distance?

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By now you're convinced that it's important to keep distance.

Do you find it uncomfortable if your colleague enters your personal space despite the distance rules? Does it make you nervous to ask your supervisor to keep their distance? Are you worried about how a client would react?

## How do you ask to keep their distance?

1. Communicate clearly.
2. Make sure that you put into practice what you're asking of your colleagues.



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## Some expressions:

Your health is important to me. I'd feel guilty if I made somebody sick. Let's stand a little further apart.

I could give you a virus and make you ill, without knowing or wanting it. If we stay apart, that won't happen.

The government/our boss says we have to stay 1.5m apart. Let us both take a step back.

Let's stay safe and sit further apart.

We're less than 1.5m apart. I'd be more relaxed about my health if we stood further away from each other. Could you step back a little? Should we both step back a little?