

Overcoming disorientation: Coping with the sudden deprivation of sociality in everyday commercial and public places during the Covid-19 lockdown

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## **Abstract**

Everyday commercial and public places (e.g., supermarkets, cafés, parks) in urban environments constitute important settings, in which many of the interactions that contribute to people's social life happen. The early months of Covid-19 lockdown constitute a 'revelatory period' propitious to the study of how everyday places are relevant for people's social life and individual well-being, since the physical distancing rules made people more acutely aware of these places' sociality. Findings derived from the thematic analysis of 39 semi-structured, depth interviews in French and German cities reveal three main forms of social disorientation caused by the Covid-19 lockdown (sociality is disrupted, dis-emplaced, and disconcerting) and two main coping strategies (reconstructing new forms of sociality and developing new foci of attention). The study highlights the role of places as 'containers' for valuable and provides insights into how they can be designed for safe social interactions.

**Keywords:** *Sociality; Everyday places; Covid-19*

**Track:** Consumer Behaviour