

NEWSLETTER

April 27th, 2020

Week 5

As we go into week 8 of isolation, most people are finding this situation progressively more difficult as it has been weeks since we saw our friends and family, and experienced our normal lives. Today's addition of *Catching Faith* is focused on how to support your children and family when they are experiencing the range of emotions that are coming up right now.

Coping Skills by a Child Therapist (posted by CopingSkillsforkids.com)

What a strange time, huh? Things are changing day-to-day, and there's a lot we don't know and can't control. For me, this means interacting with my clients and their families via email, phone, and video calls. And trying to support the people coming to my websites by providing resources to help. So, I wanted to offer some suggestions for kids and adults to help deal with the stress and anxiety that is happening right now

Coping Skills to Try

LABEL YOUR FEELINGS

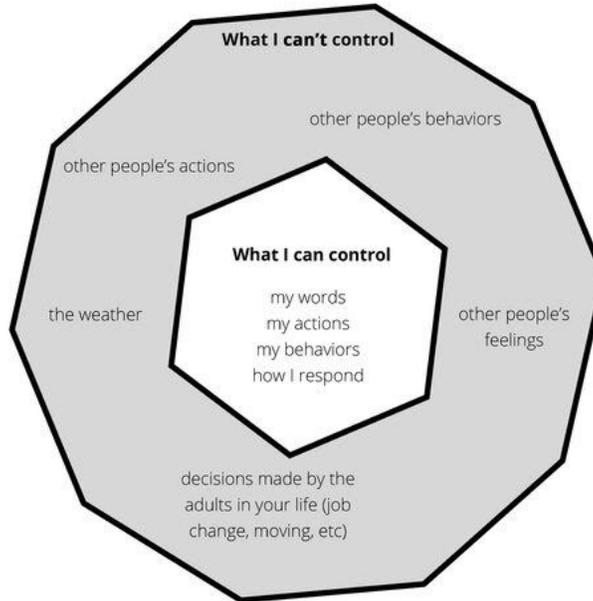
First, recognize what you are feeling. Some days will be better than others. Some days, you'll feel scared. Others days you'll feel better. It may change throughout the day. That's completely understandable at this time. And different people will have different feelings and reactions to the same information.

Why should we bother labeling our feelings? Clinical research has demonstrated that one way to help regulate your emotions is to identify them. In other words, once you can identify your feelings, it becomes easier to manage them. As Dr. Dan Siegel says, "When you name it, you can tame it."

ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT YOU CAN AND CAN'T CONTROL

There are some things you can control and some things you can't. And situations like this one can highlight for us how many of the things we can't control. Here's a visual to help you understand the things you do have control over and the things you don't have control over in your life.

What would you add to this?



Instead of focusing on those things you have no control over, you can focus on what you CAN control, and that is YOU. You can control how you act, what you say, what you do, how you behave, how you respond to someone.

Think about the sentence: ***How can I make this better?***

MAKE A PLAN

Now that you are focused on what you can control, let's make a plan. You can use the problem-solving steps to make a plan to solve problems.

IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

For example, I miss my friends.

GENERATE IDEAS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

The next step is to generate several ideas for solving an issue. Not all of them will work, but you're not trying to pick out ones that will and won't work during this step. Right now, it's just about generating ideas.

- Send them a card
- FaceTime my friends
- Email them
- Call Them
- Play a game online together
- Watch the same TV show and call each other to talk about it

PICK OUT A FEW IDEAS FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEM AND USE THEM!

Perhaps your friend doesn't have a phone, so you can't FaceTime. But maybe you can email or play a game online together, or call them to talk.

DO SOMETHING FUN

Play is a natural stress reliever for kids. I would encourage everyone to use their favorite distraction coping skills right now. Why? First, it helps your brain. When you are in fight, flight, or freeze mode, your emotional brain is in charge. By doing something distracting, you're giving your brain a chance to switch back so that the thinking part of your brain can come back online.

There are going to be times in your life when you have gone over things in your mind, you've identified all the things to explain how you are feeling, but you STILL can't get it off of your mind. That could be happening to you right now. You may find yourself perseverating on these issues, and unable to focus on anything else - at that point, it makes sense to use a distraction skill. In my house, here are some of my favorite distraction skills:

- Puzzles
- Sewing
- Knitting
- Reading
- Watching TV
- Listening to Audiobooks
- Coloring

Calming Tips

Tip #1: Get some colored feathers and pick one feather to use. It could be a color that You love or one that makes you feel calm. Breathe in and hold your breath for a count of 3, then breathe out going up on one side of the feather and down the other side.

Tip #2: This calming technique will take you through your five senses to help remind you of the present. This is a calming technique that can help you get through tough or stressful situations. Take a deep belly breath to begin

. 5 – LOOK: Look around for 5 things that you can see and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I see the computer, I see the cup, I see the picture frame.

4 – FEEL: Pay attention to your body and think of 4 things that you can feel and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I feel my feet warm in my socks, I feel the hair on the back of my neck, or I feel the pillow I am sitting on.

3 – LISTEN: Listen for 3 sounds. It could be the sound of traffic outside, the sound of typing or the sound of your tummy rumbling. Say the three things out loud.

2 – SMELL: Say two things you can smell. If you're allowed to, it's okay to move to another spot and sniff something. If you can't smell anything or you can't move, then name your 2 favorite smells.

1 – TASTE: Say one thing you can taste. It may be the toothpaste from brushing your teeth, or a mint from after lunch. If you can't taste anything, then say your favorite thing to taste. Take another deep breath to end!

Tip #3: Some children and adults absolutely love to relax by taking a bath. Add bubbles, Epsom salt, essential oils ... play soothing music, light candles or listen to an audiobook.

Creating a Sensory Kit

One way to support your child who is feeling anxious, sad, angry or overwhelmed is to create a sensory kit. Take some time to set one up with your child, asking them what they feel might help them when they are having emotions that they are not sure how to deal with. Decide on a spot that the kit will be kept that your child considers to be a space safe for them. You may want to have some comfortable blankets and pillows set up here.

- Fidget toys
- Playdough
- Books/audio books
- Puzzles
- Weighted vest/lap pad
- Photo album
- Pipe cleaners
- Magic sand
- Stress ball
- Rubix cube
- Elastics
- Glitter bottle

Calm Harm App

There has been a lot of research to suggest that the pandemic is especially hard of teens from the age of 11 to 14. There is an app available to help support teens during this difficult time, specifically ones that may be self harming. I have added this app as a recommendation for a number of reasons:

- a) Although you or your loved one is not self-harming, a number of the activities are good mental health activities. You can go through the activities and pick (bookmark) favorites
- b) Maybe someone in your social circle is self-harming and right now social services are limited....so share this app

Calm Harm - Manages Self Harm is a free app that provides teens with dozens of ways to derail self-harm impulses. Five- and 15-minute activities and an in-app timer help users turn their attention to healthier ways to handle emotions and manage impulses to hurt themselves. Created in the UK.

- Devices: iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad, Android
- Skills: Self-Direction: goal-setting, personal growth, self-reflection, Responsibility & Ethics: making

World Health Organization

Coping with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak

It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis. Talking to people you trust can help. Contact your friends and family.

If you must stay at home, maintain a healthy lifestyle - including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contacts with loved ones at home and by email and phone with other family and friends.

Don't use smoking, alcohol or other drugs to deal with your emotions. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor. Have a plan, where to go to and how to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

Get the facts. Gather information that will help you accurately determine your risk so that you can take reasonable precautions. Find a credible source you can trust such as WHO website or, a local or state public health agency.

Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage that you perceive as upsetting.

Draw on skills you have used in the past that have helped you to manage previous life's adversities and use those skills to help you manage your emotions during the challenging time of this outbreak.

Mind, Body and Spirit

Last weeks edition of Catching Faith focused on Mind, Body and Spirit. During this next week you are challenged to continue completing things on your BINGO card. At the end of this week, or whenever you would like, we would love it if you would share your bingo card successes with us on our Knox Presbyterian Church Facebook page. Try and see if you can get a line, four corners or even the whole card! **Note any words in blue and underlined are links**

K	N	O	X
Paint a rainbow or message of hope on a piece of paper and stick it in your window, and then go for a walk and see how many others you can find.	Create a gratitude box .	Bake muffins or cookies and drop it off at a friend or families house to brighten their day.	Colour a prayer colouring sheet .
Make a mindfulness jar .	Listen to a meditation .	Check out a new trail around the city and go for a hike.	Do a devotional as a family.
Participate in the Kindness Rock Project by painting messages of hope on rocks and leaving them around your neighbourhood.	Video chat with a friend.	Create some laundry art !	Play a board game with your family.
Do some yoga !	Have a dance party !	Go outside, lie on the grass or on a towel and see what animals or objects you can see in the clouds.	Listen to a reading of Little Mole Finds Hope .