



Public Safety Psychological Services

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Staying Sane In Insane Times - Issue #3

This weekly tip sheet is to support you and your families during this public health emergency. During our annual wellness visits, using the acronym **PIES**, we discuss ideas for staying healthy and resilient. We welcome your ideas – email us at cvablais@psspc.net As always, if you or a loved one are feeling suicidal, please call “911”, Code4 Northwest or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

Physical Health – the “P”

1. **Exercise: Keep on keeping on.** For this week, make a workout schedule and put it in your phone. Aim for 30 minutes of exercise every day. Remember, too, this might not be the time to be aiming for PRs. Your body is stressed from your job and all the chaos in the world. *It's ok to be in maintenance mode.*
2. **Eye Health:** Many of us are spending much more time staring at our screens. ***I highly recommend blue lights glasses which you can get online for less than \$20.*** And make sure every 20 minutes you take a break from the screen and look at something at least 20 feet away for 30-60 seconds. Make it a habit to blink frequently to keep your eyes lubricated and to prevent eye strain and headaches.
GOAL: Prep healthy snacks for your patrol car or office. (Nuts, beef jerky, fresh fruit and vegetables). Cut back on the energy drinks, yes, including coffee

Intellectual Health – the “I”

1. Listen to a podcast or watch a show or documentary on something that you know nothing about. It can be educational, funny or mindless. *Recommendations:* Order from Chaos (funny) and Dolly Parton’s America (Very interesting listening for history and music buffs).
2. **Challenge: Learn 5 things you never knew about something or someone.**

Emotional Health – the “E”

1. ***Make some time to “ground” yourself.*** Really. Even if you don’t think you need it. Find some quiet space and do the following: Breathe for 20 seconds, slowly. Use a timer if you need to. After 20 seconds, make a mental note or say out loud the following: ***5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.*** This is a simple grounding exercise that can re-orient you to the present moment, slow your breathing and calm your nervous system.
Goal: I will take time for myself on _____ by doing _____.

Spiritual Health – the “S”

1. **Take a moment to notice something new in your world.** Is there anything in the “new normal” that you appreciate? That you like? Can you see anything positive? ***Write it down.*** If not, try again until you find something. ☺ Then write that down. [If you truly can’t think of anything, just write down “less traffic.”]
2. **If you are just feeling “off”, do a quick body scan and consider the acronym HALT (Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired).** These four feelings can make us feel very “off” and generally if we can address them in the moment, our mental state can start heading the right direction. Even if we can’t immediately change our situation, understanding the basis of our feeling can allow us to know that *it will pass.*
Challenge: Check in with yourself at least once a day to notice something you like and to assesses yourself using “HALT”. Address what you can in the moment.

Perseverance and spirit have done wonders in all ages – George Washington



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Staying Sane In Insane Times –“PIES” for Kids and Teens #1

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Physical Health – “P”

1. *Physical Environment*: - **The Three Es**. Use these to start the day. Every day: 30 minutes of Education, 30 mins of Exercise and do ONE thing for the home Environment (meaning cleaning up an area, mowing the yard, planting flowers, removing clutter, etc.) **We use the 11 minute clean-up. Start a timer, turn on some music and everyone cleans up some area of the house for 11 minutes.**
2. *Card Deck Workout*. Find a deck of cards. Diamonds are jumping jacks, Spades are squats, Hearts are situps and Clubs are push-ups. Each child pulls a card and the group has to do the exercise. So, the King of Hearts is 13 situps the 2 or spades is 2 squats, etc.. To go through a whole deck takes about 20-25 minutes and there will be lots of giggles with people rooting for low numbers (*Adults: You can play along!*)

Intellectual Health – “I

- **Share one meal together a day if possible AND make dinner conversation COVID19/virus free.** If anyone starts talking about the current situation, you might impose a penalty (perhaps monetary, or dish/clean up duty). **For a family dinner at the end of the week, have each family member create a slide show or paper presentation for ANOTHER family member to present.** You can make yours on whatever you think is interesting or funny. The presenting family member gets 30 seconds to review the presentation and then has to present to the rest. Prizes can be awarded if you like.
- **Make an “I’m BORED” jar.** (Isn’t it awesome that the schools also just happen to throw “spring break” into the mix). Find a Mason jar, shoe box or container. Have your child decorate the jar. Cut up 25 slips of paper and have your child write down ideas for when they come to you claiming “boredom.” When the time comes, pull

Emotional Health – “E”

- We are settling into a new, surreal, “normal.” This week, focus on helping **your child pick one thing daily** to look forward to. A video call with a friend, making cookies, playing outside with a sibling or you.
- *Sleep*: It’s normal to be having some difficulties sleeping right now. **A few ideas to help with sleep:** No screens/blue lights 60 minutes before bed time. Take a warm bath and drink some chamomile tea. Even young children might appreciate tea especially if served in a fancy cup. (You can water it down for the little ones).

Spiritual Health – “S”

- Children can be experiencing a lot of fear right now and it may help them to have a concrete mechanism for dealing with fear. One fun project is to create a “God Box” where they can write down or draw out their fears. **They put their paper in the box, and then they can let God worry about it for them.** (If this idea doesn’t work within your family’s spiritual ideology, you can also have your child bury the paper or with your supervision, burn it and “let it go” out to the universe to handle.)
- *Food comforts!* Cook a meal with your child and make a “tablescape”. Create a beautiful table with whatever you collect from inside and outside. Children can also make “placemats” with their drawings or an entire paper table cloth. Great website for cooks of all ages: <http://globaltableadventure.com/> This cool site has information about every country in the world along with a suggested menu.

You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem and smarter than you think – Christopher Robin

It's all about perspective! Right now, the only thing that we can control is our attitude!

