



## Public Safety Psychological Services

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### Staying Sane In Insane Times - Issue #6

This weekly tip sheet is to support you and your families during this ongoing public health event. 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](mailto: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**”

- **Do LESS this week.** We are now several weeks into this ongoing situation *Most everyone I have talked to is expressing that they just feel “off” or “exhausted.” This week, do less.* I suggest only a 30 minute walk each day. No heavy lifting or setting PRs on your runs. If you practice yoga do a restorative class. If you don’t practice yoga, consider starting. Stretch, breathe, walk and just do a little bit less. **Remember, sometimes, doing nothing is doing something.**

**Goal:** This week, I will restore my body by \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Intellectual Health – the “**I**”

- **Consider the benefits of Optimism.** It is very easy right now to focus on ALL the negative things we are hearing. But, humans have survived through wars, natural disasters and other pandemics. We WILL get through this. Each day, take a minute to check in with your thoughts. **Be intentional about acknowledging that not all things are bad, that there are small things we can do to improve our daily situation and that things WILL get better.**

**Challenge:** When you catch yourself going into negative thinking and fear, stop, count to 10 while breathing slowly and say **“I am strong, healthy and safe in this moment. Things will get better and I am ok right now.”**

#### Emotional Health – the “**E**”

1. **Continuing to prepare for uncertainty.** Humans thrive with the ideas of timelines and control. Fact is that most of this situation is out of our hands. **Take a minute to acknowledge that we ARE ALL going through this. You are NOT alone.** Instead of worrying about Phase 1, Phase 2, end dates, etc. make your time frame **MUCH** shorter. What you want to do this week? Or just today? Be specific in these intentions. Planning and exercising control over the things we can control is very beneficial.

**GOAL:** Develop a one week plan for staying in the here and now. **Ideas:** I will plant flowers in the garden on Tuesday, I will do a 30 minute walk with my kids on Friday.

#### Spiritual Health – the “**S**”

1. **Fellowship with others.** What makes this situation SO hard is it makes it hard for us to be together in each other’s physical presence. During other world events, wars, natural disasters, people were able to congregate, hug, laugh together, cry together and share a meal. Our ability to do that is currently limited – at least in the physical sense. **I strongly recommend you set up at least 3 virtual meetings a week** to connect with friends, family, or to attend a religious service. It is not the same as being in person, but it will allow you to continue to stay connected.

**CHALLENGE:** This week I will connect with \_\_\_\_\_

**“We must accept finite disappointment but we must never lose infinite hope”. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**



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## Staying Sane In Insane Times –“PIES” for Kids and Teens #6

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](mailto: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 – “P”

1. **Prioritize Sleep.** As kids adjust to school and to talking to friends more online, their sleep may be disrupted. If you notice that your kids are more irritable than normal, consider their sleep patterns. ***I recommend no screens of any kind two hours before bedtime and investing in blue light blocking glasses for kids.*** Establish a firm bedtime for younger kids and encourage teens to be mindful of their bed time.
2. **Encourage kids to clean and perhaps redesign their space. “Reset” your kids’ space this week.** Most of us are heading into our second full month of shelter in place and we are using our spaces in different ways. Take inventory of your kids’ rooms and your shared spaces. Perhaps design a dedicated “home school” area or an “arts and crafts area.” And don’t worry, your house will be clean and orderly again. Someday. ***Just not right now. Give yourself and your kids the grace to treat your home as not just a home but a school, library, gym, retreat center and restaurant right now.*** (This goes for all of us right now, whether we live alone or with others.)

### Intellectual Health – “I”

- **Debate Society:** Siblings may be getting really fed up with being each other literally 24/7. ***Turn their arguments into an exercise in learning to argue effectively.*** Have them pick a topic and make them present one side of the argument. Then, make them present the opposite side. You can search “learning to debate” for guidelines and structure if needed. Examples: *Who should wash the dishes? Why should I put on day time clothes when I am just at home all day? Which Harry Potter House is the best and why?*
- **Family Book Club.** This month, I encourage you to start a family book club. I highly encourage reading physical (tangible) books to offset screen time. Libraries are still closed but some book stores are open for curbside pickup. Pick a book that can be read by your youngest family member or that an older sibling can read to their siblings. Pick a book club date toward the end of May and plan a special menu or snacks for your meeting. You can also extend this idea to teens and their friends with a “virtual” book club or you can invite remote family members to participate in reading and joining book club discussion at the end of the month.

### Emotional Health – “E”

- **Painting/Drawing:** ***Painting and coloring has been shown to reduce stress.*** Mandala coloring can be particularly calming. I also recommend paint by number or rock painting. Supplies and coloring books for all of available for under \$20. Some neighborhoods have social media groups where people are encouraged to paint and hide rocks around the neighborhood. ***Bonus: You can go on a walk and hide your rocks and look for others that have been left by others.***

### Spiritual Health – “S”

- **Make an affirmation jar.** ***This week challenge your child to write down at least 1-2 positive thoughts or affirmations every day.*** An example is “I am strong, I am brave, I am kind.” Or “All of my problems have solutions.” Find a jar or box (that they can decorate) to store their affirmations. After they have finished, let them pull one affirmation a day and encourage them to write a paragraph or two on the meaning of that affirmation for them.

*“The flower that blooms in adversity is the rarest and most beautiful of all.” ~Shiamin Kwa, [Mulan](#)*