



## Public Safety Psychological Services

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### Staying Sane In Insane Times - Issue #8

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**”

- 1 **Stretch.** *This week, our focus is on stretching.* Many people are noting sleep difficulties and an overall sense of heaviness. Chronic stress can cause muscles to tense and tighten even while we are sleeping. *I recommend you add at least five minutes of stretching to your morning routine.* There are multiple websites and apps that have suggestions for basic daily stretches. Or just move your body any way that feels good and hold that position for 30 seconds.
- 2 **Card Deck Workout.** *If you are in a rut this week, try a deck of cards workout.* Hearts – Air Squats; Diamonds – Sit Ups; Clubs – Push Ups; Spades – Jumping Jacks. Draw a card, do the number of reps for the designated exercise. Go through the whole deck. It’s easy, fun, and takes about 25 minutes.  
**Goal: Spend 10 minutes every day stretching.**

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

1. **Seek variety.** *With nearly all of us in a limited routine, boredom and frustration can set in.* Our brains do better with novelty and variety. **Even in these times, we can seek out small things to break up the routine.** Drive a different route to work or to the store. Try a new take-out/curbside restaurant or recipe. Play a card game you haven’t played before.  
**Challenge: Find one new thing to do, see or experience every day.**

#### Emotional Health – the “**E**”

1. **Find a new creative outlet.** If you love to draw, try writing this week. If you love to walk, try yoga or dance this week instead (or in addition to). Other ideas: gardening, painting a wall in your house, buying flowers and arranging them into a bouquet for someone (this is a good one for kids to help with). *The idea is to engage your creative energy into something you haven’t tried before.*
2. **Connect with friends.** This week, **plan at least 2 phone calls**, socially distant meet-ups, or video conference calls with friends.  
**Goal: This week, I will try \_\_\_\_\_ and I will connect with \_\_\_\_\_.**

#### Spiritual Health – the “**S**”

- 1 **Enjoy Nature.** We are entering a new season and our outside options have expanded. The Japanese have a practice called “Forest Bathing” where you spend quiet time in a forest. Being surrounded by trees has been shown to reduce blood pressure, anxiety and perceived levels of stress. <https://time.com/5259602/japanese-forest-bathing/>
- 2 **Get up and watch the sunrise.** For some of you, this is easy, I get it – you may still be on shift. But for others, make it a point to set an alarm, grab a cup of coffee **and actually go somewhere to watch the sun rise.** This time of year, sunrise comes early and it’s usually a peaceful time of day. Watching and appreciating the sunrise can give a renewed sense of hope in these challenging times.  
**Challenge: Watch the sun rise this week or take a walk in the forest (BONUS points for combining these two!)**

*“Believe that life is worth living and your believe will help create the fact” – William James*



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## Staying Sane In Insane Times –“PIES” for Kids and Teens #7

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”

- **Make a family goal of at least 30 minutes of exercise a day.** Many kids have become locked to their screens and this can lead to irritability, tears and overall grumpiness. *Humans were meant to move.* Make sure your little humans, especially your teenagers, *are doing something to break a sweat DAILY.*
- **Set boundaries around sugar.** The added sugar in almost everything is leading to our country’s skyrocketing rates of obesity, diabetes and many other chronic diseases. *Teach your kids to read labels (or better yet, eat things that don’t have labels – whole foods that have one ingredient, like an apple.).* There are even some fun live one classes that aren’t expensive to help your child make wise food choices. Try Outschool.com.

### Intellectual Health – “I

- **With school being at home, many kids are struggling with staying engaged.** *Remind yourself (and them) that down time is ok.* Break school work into small chunks. Some days, playing Scrabble or even Minecraft might be better than fighting them to do worksheets. Kids learn in many ways. Have a schedule but offer some flexibility as well.
- **Start talking to your child about ways to stay safe and to help protect others.** *It seems likely that masks and/or social distancing will be part of their school life when schools are on site again.* Explain to your child that most people with COVID-19 don’t get very sick, but that some people can get very sick. Some kids may have health problems that make it easier for them to get sick. Talk to you kids about washing their hands and show them how to do so properly. Teach them how to properly put on and take off a mask. **Letting children know this information can help them feel like they have some control and worry less.**

### Emotional Health – “E”

- **Read or listen to books or kids podcasts about famous people in history who endured struggles.** Kids learn by example and reading or listening to stories or people came before us can be a subtle way to remind them that people get through hard things and we will to. Some ideas: Helen Keller, Nelson Mandela. Harriet Tubman, etc.

### Spiritual Health – “S”

- **Help your child feel comfortable with spending some time alone.** Obviously, this needs to be done in an age appropriate manner. But helping your child feel comfortable with being alone, and having some quiet unstructured time without any agenda can allow them the space to connect with something outside themselves. If they pray, suggest that as an option for their quiet time. *Children can greatly benefit from learning to rely on themselves even for a few minutes.*

*The sun was rising behind her now; she could feel the heat on her back, and it gave her courage."  
~ The Princess Bride*