

Covid 19 Double Duty: Working and Parenting at Home During the Pandemic

Working from home and parenting during this unique time has the potential to create conflict and stress in both our professional and family lives. In this webinar we will explore tips for how parents can support their family's needs and how supervisors can support staffs' needs.

The New Normal of the New Normal

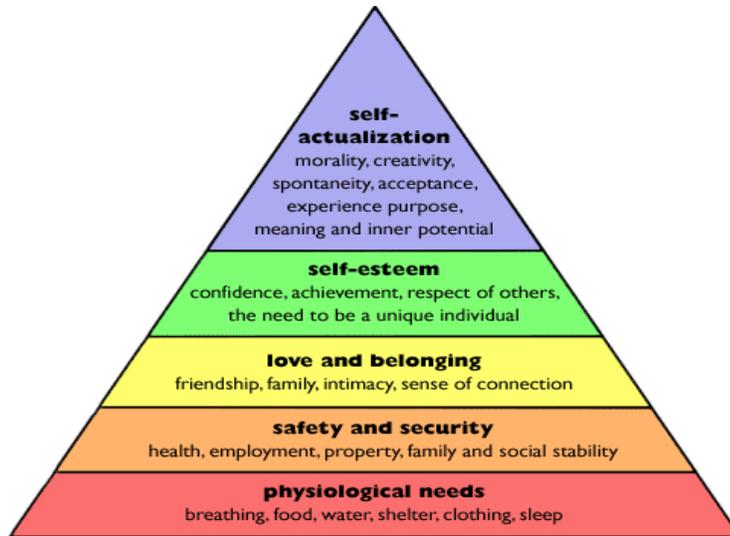
- In the beginning we may have been running on adrenaline in a way
- About 5-6 months into the pandemic and quarantine living the toll is showing
 - Quarantine Fatigue Burnout
 - Mental Fatigue Depression
 - Anxiety Behavioral Challenges
 - Survival Mode Traumatized
- Not having control of the external vs. being out of control
 - What do you not have control over?

- We are trying to sit in 2 seats at 1 time
 - What chairs are you sitting in simultaneously?

- Is that possible?
- Picking the chair to sit in

Keys to Creating Connection, Productivity, and Peace

- Realistic Expectations
 - Check where you are in the hierarchy of needs being met



- Meeting my child where he/she is
 - How is your child handling the quarantine?

- Age vs. Developmental Level
- Average Attention Span by Age
 - 2 years old: 5 minutes
 - 4 years old: 10 minutes
 - 6 years old: 15 minutes
 - 8 years old: 20 minutes
 - 10 years old: 25 minutes
 - 12 years old: 30 minutes
 - 14 years old: 45 minutes
 - 16 years old: 1 hour
 - Ways to increase attention
 - Break into small chunks
 - Identify obstacles at onset
 - Insert creativity into tasks
 - Provide check ins and encouragement
- “I’m Bored”
- Family Team
 - Players with unique skills, talents, and qualities
 - Roles you play
 - Captain Cheerleader
 - Referee Manager
 - Coach
- Children and Challenging Behaviors

- Reasons Children Misbehave
 - For Attention
 - Children may feel we are always “busy”
 - Even 10-15 minutes 1 on 1 time fills a child up
 - Makes them feel secure and loved
 - Perhaps before a Zoom?
 - For Power/Control
 - Children may feel a loss of control at this time
 - When possible offer children choices
 - Makes them feel empowered, calm, and confident
 - An unlearned skill (Patience, Sharing, Frustration, etc.)

- How may your child be struggling?

- Ways to meet these needs
 - How/when/where can you give your child undivided attention?

- How/when/where can you give your child control/power

- What unlearned skills may your child have?

- Meeting work demands
 - Working 24-7 and feeling like not getting it all done
 - Ask yourself: Are your expectations placed on you by yourself or others?
 - We often expect much more from ourselves
 - Planning and prioritizing tasks and time
 - What can I control regarding work?

- Communication

- Boundaries

- It is important to establish and communicate boundaries

- With family

- Workspace
- Worktime
- What about when you are needed during work time?
- How to signal you need quiet work time

- With co-workers/supervisors

- Workspace
- Worktime

- What are some boundaries you may consider establishing?

- Team work is the dream work!

- Communicate with family

- Honesty is the best policy

- Be vulnerable, share fears and what you are grateful for
- Ask (regularly) what each teammate's needs are

- Morning meeting

- Check in

- Provide encouragement and praise

- When they express a behavior you want to see more of
 - Example: "Thank you for playing quietly while I was on the phone. I appreciate your respectfulness."
- When we talk out challenges
- How we are handling quarantine life

- Communicate with supervisors and co-workers

- Again, honesty is the best policy

- Discuss needs, expectations, productivity

- As the employee, what are your realistic expectations?
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- What is your quarantine productivity (best times, tips, etc.)?
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- What are your needs from your supervisor/employer?

- Ask for help

- From supervisor or co-workers
 - From family
 - Who are my go to people to just talk to?
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- Check in (regularly)

- Phone
- Email

- Routine

- Something done the same way at the same time
- Why is a routine important?
 - Teaches predictability
 - Helps us feel safe and secure
 - Allows kids to manage their behavior
 - Creates a positive, less stressful environment
- What does routine look like in your home?

- Are there any areas you would like to implement a routine?

- Tips for creating a routine

- Identify stressful times of the day (morning, work, dinner time, bedtime, etc.)
- Determine the tasks that need to be included in routine
- Set small goals, break big goals into smaller ones
- Consider time for flexibility to be built into the routine
- Write it out
 - Detail specific times for each task or goal
- Post the routine in a high traffic area
- Try it out
- Make note of obstacles and tweak

- Tips for maintaining routine at this time
 - Wake at the same time daily, ideally prior to children
 - Eat breakfast and morning meeting
 - Set goals for the day and discuss
 - Have everyone get dressed and ready for the day
 - Establish and maintain everyone’s work areas with needed supplies
 - Identify specific family time and separate work time
 - **Have some fun**
 - Make a plan to tackle chores as a team
 - Maintain a bedtime for the household
- Flexibility
 - Look how flexible you, your family, and your profession have been!
 - Accept there will be interruptions
 - Acknowledge challenges and obstacles
 - Saying “I don’t know” is awesome!
 - Stay positive, watch your self-talk
 - Reflect and reexamine priorities as needed
 - Build in time for needed flexibility
 - Plan and manage flexibility at home
 - Discuss boundaries
 - How can you handle interruptions?
 - What is an address now issue?
 - What is an address later issue?
 - How can you practice flexible thinking?
 - Mindfulness
 - Consider creative solutions to common situations
 - Frame concerns from different angles
 - How flexible do you think you are and what gets in the way of demonstrating a flexible mindset?

- What can you implement to exercise more flexibility?

- Self-Care
 - Most important at this time!
 - It is not a selfish indulgence, it is need!
 - Children and adults should engage in self-care
 - Decreases stress
 - Helps us maintain focus and feel energized

- Promotes overall health
- Tips for self care:
 - Celebrate small successes
 - Build in 10-15 minute breaks during your day
 - Build in time for fun
 - For yourself
 - For your family
 - Games
 - Movies
 - Art time
 - Cooking time
 - Outdoor activities
 - Get outside
 - Nature even in your yard, have stress busting benefits
 - Get moving
 - Walking, yoga, aerobics, swimming, dancing, anything you like
 - Boosts physical and mental health
 - Practice good eating and sleeping habits
 - Read
 - Journal
 - Breathing exercises
 - Take a bath
 - Connect with a friend
 - Meditate or pray
 - Express creativity
- How do you like to destress or practice self-care?

- How can you implement self-care into your quarantine lifestyle?

- How can you incorporate family fun time?

- “The Courage to be Imperfect” (Sophie Lazarsfeld, 1925)
 - Give yourself and others grace
 - Vulnerability and imperfection are so brave
 - Accept the things you cannot control

- This is temporary
- Connection is what counts

We cannot go around challenges; we must go through. It is about the getting through. Having the courage to be imperfect, communicating with ourselves and others, having a flexible mindset, maintaining some structure, recognizing what is within our control, and engaging in self-care are qualities of fortitude and grit. By practicing these skills, we can learn how to be more resilient. With resiliency comes the ability to adapt, learn about ourselves and the world around us; as well as, remain productive and positive during the challenging times.

Further Reading and Additional Resources

- The Child Mind Institute is a mental health organization that strives to help young people and those caring for them grow into mentally strong people ready to handle the challenges of life and celebrate the joys. They offer much COVID related information to support families.
<https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/>
- “10 Tips For Working Remotely During Coronavirus”
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolinecastrillon/2020/04/05/10-tips-for-working-remotely-during-coronavirus/#3bbbc99619cc>
- “7+7 Strategies for Working from Home During COVID-19:How to successfully juggle work and kids without dropping any balls”
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/biofeedback-and-mindfulness-in-everyday-life/202003/77-strategies-working-home-during-covid-19>
- “Wide Open School helps families and educators find trusted resources to enrich and support distance learning. More than 75 partners to meet the change in learning needs of students, teachers, and families due to the coronavirus pandemic.”
<https://wideopenschool.org/>
- A short video series on efficiently working remotely to increase success and productivity
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZzi9vsppao&feature=youtu.be>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTowT1mr-ZY&feature=youtu.be>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTowT1mr-ZY&feature=youtu.be>