

Building Your Own Resilience

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Adapted from the Powerful Tools for Caregivers curriculum
(powerfultoolsforcaregivers.org)



Welcome to our virtual training!

Housekeeping

How will this “virtual” session work?

- Participant’s video functions are turned off by host.
- Microphones are muted until the end of the presentation.
- If you are joining by video, please enter your questions via the chat box or use the “wave” function to alert the host that you have a question to ask with your microphone.
- If you are joining by phone, please email Jennifer.walsh@cchmc.org your questions for the presenter. Thank you!

Building Your Own Resilience Agenda

- Challenges – Acute vs. Chronic
- Managing Stress
- Identifying Signs and Sources
- Taking Action: Stress-Reducers
- Communication Issues/Strategies
- When Stress Becomes Something More
- Making an Action Plan
- Relaxation / Closing

For Whom Are You a Caregiver?

- Children
- Spouse/Partner
- Parents
- Siblings



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Types of Conditions

Acute

Cures available

Short-term

Return to normal

Dealing with certainty

Chronic

No cures

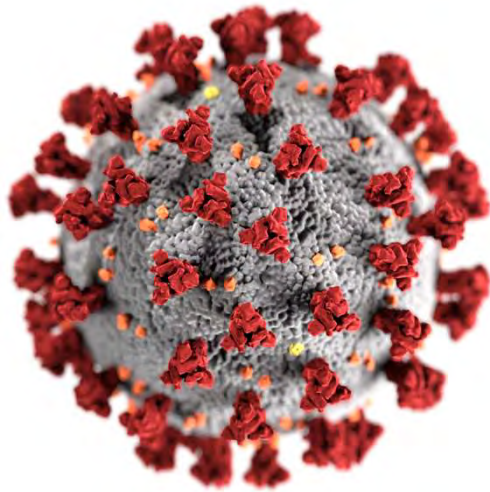
Long-lasting

“Normal” changes

Uncertainty

An Added Layer of Complication

COVID-19 has added a lot of extra items to already full plates... what are some new challenges you are experiencing?



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Tools Learned Now Can Help Later, Too

- COVID-19 might cause changes in numerous ways, even after the pandemic is over.
- What are we learning now that can be used in the future?



Why This Is Important



Every time we fly, we hear flight attendants sharing some variation of the Oxygen Mask Rule:

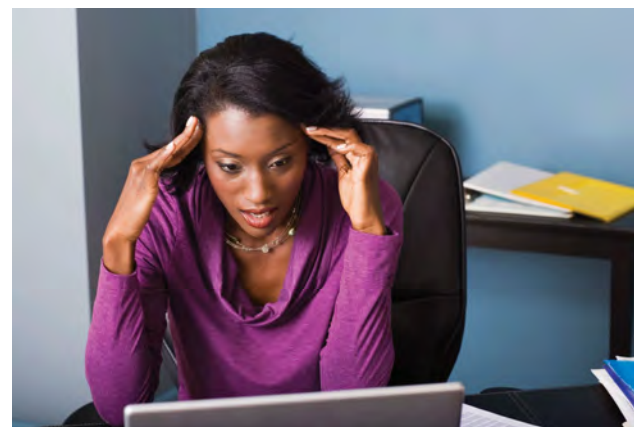
“Should the cabin lose pressure, oxygen masks will drop from the overhead area. Please place the mask over your own mouth and nose before assisting others.”

Why do they say that? What could possibly be wrong with helping others first?

Warning Signs

Warning signs that I am stressed can include:

- Elevated heart rate/blood pressure
- Tense muscles
- Tension headaches
- Elevated cortisol levels
- Knots/butterflies in the stomach



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Steps to Managing Stress

- Recognize warning signs EARLY.
- Identify sources of stress.
- Identify what **YOU** can and cannot change.
- Take action.



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General Sources of Stress

Some of my triggers are:

C



Extra COVID-based stressors

- Too much “togetherness”
- Having to wear even more hats than usual
- Sheer boredom
- Fear of the unknown – when will it be over?
- Financial concerns
- Job insecurity
- Managing family stressors
- Adapting to a new and changing normal
- Uncertainty about school for next year

Results of Neglecting Stress

- Increased health problems
- Disrupted relationships
- “Burnout”
- Depression
- Decreased quality of care
- Increased isolation



The Stress-Loss-Grief Road

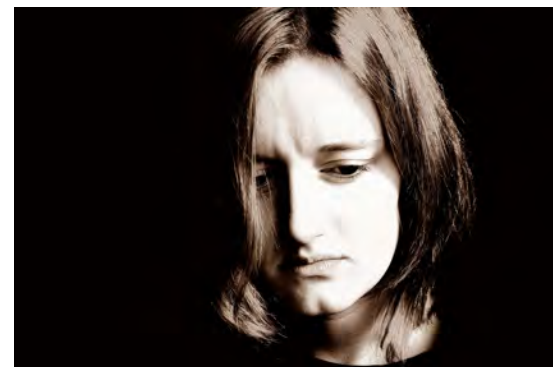
“That discomfort you are feeling is grief.”

—Sue Badeau

Sometimes extreme stress can be coupled with feelings of loss and grief, especially in this current pandemic situation.

Grief can take various forms:

- Ambiguous/Disenfranchised Grief
- Complicated or Traumatic Grief
- Anticipatory Grief
- Collective Grief



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Lack of Communication as a Stressor

As caregivers, being able to communicate effectively is one of our most important tools. In fact, it's a necessity. The goal of good communication is to have both the **speaker** and **listener** feel comfortable with the conversation.



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Good Communication...

- Prevents misunderstandings
- Builds relationships
- Increases chances of being heard
- Reduces stress and frustration
- Enhances problem solving

Remember, good communication benefits both the listener and the speaker.

How to Best Express Yourself

- Use “I” messages
- Respect the rights and feelings of others
- Be clear and specific
- Speak directly to the person
- Be a good listener



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Changing “You” to “I”

“You” Messages

You never talk with me about...

You’re always late.

You have to decide.

“I” Messages

I need to talk with you about...

I like to be on time.
I don’t like to be late.

I want it to be your decision.
I can’t decide.

Impact of Messages

“You” Messages

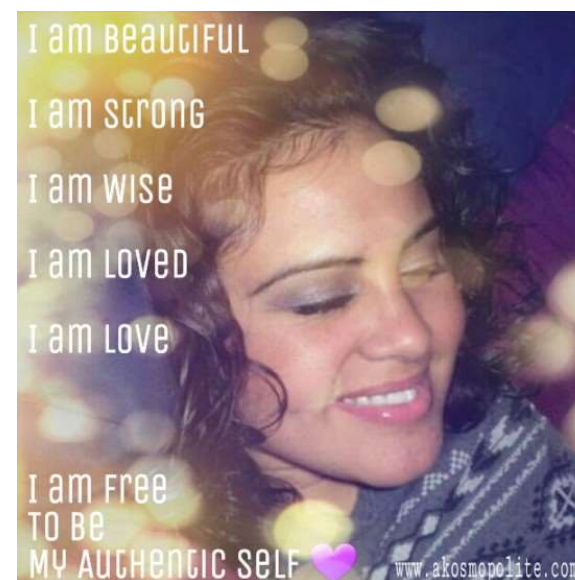
Irritation
Resentful
Bad attitude
Defensive
Blaming
Argument likely
Authoritarian
Negative tone
Discussion gets de-railed
Guilty
Angry

“I” Messages

Calmness
Creates cooperation
Sense of togetherness
Solutions possible
Not blaming
Feels better
Sense of understanding
Positive tone
Respectful
Invites generosity
Reduces anger

Focusing on Yourself

Many times it is easier to focus on others rather than yourself. Don't sell yourself short. You are worth it!



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Barriers to Taking Action

- Can't think of what to do
- Choosing a difficult activity
- Postponing stress reduction



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Stress Reducers during COVID-19

What I can do:

- Eat healthy/exercise
- Get enough sleep
- Time away from phones, email, internet
- Start a new hobby
- Give yourself pep talks
- Spend time in nature
- Volunteer
- Spend time with friends
- Allow others to do things for you



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Anatomy of an Action Plan

- Something **YOU** want to do
- Reachable
- Behavior specific
- Answer these questions:



- What?
- How much?
- When?
- How often?
- Confidence level?

Action Plan

ACTION PLAN

Every action plan should include:

1. What you are going to do.
2. How much you are going to do it.
3. When you are going to do it (e.g., what time of day).
4. How often you are going to do it.

Example: “This week I will read a favorite book (*what*) for a half hour (*how much*) in the mid-afternoon when my child naps (*when*), three times—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (*how often*).

This week I will _____ [what]
_____ [how much]
_____ [when]
_____ [how often]

Action Plan

ACTION PLAN continued

Potential barriers to this plan? _____

How can you get past these barriers? _____

How confident are you that you will complete your entire Action Plan during the coming week?

(Circle) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
not at all somewhat confident totally confident

Check off each day you accomplish your plan

Monday _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____
Friday _____ Saturday _____ Sunday _____

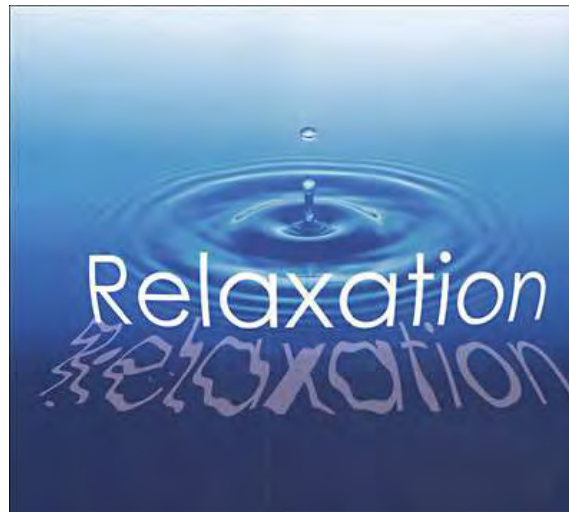
Is there someone with whom you can share this plan to help keep you accountable?

Name _____

Contact info: _____



Closing Relaxation



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Questions or Comments



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Thank you for taking this time
to invest in yourself.

