



COUNTRY DAY CONNECTED

WHAT'S TRENDING



As we continue to navigate Remote Learning, your feedback is essential. Please share your thoughts. [Click here](#) to complete the survey.



<https://zoom.us/j/764638681>

Meeting ID: 764 638 681

Monday, April 6

8:00 pm

Please join me for a virtual check-in. Take off "ALL" your hats, grab a drink, and let's talk.

JENSEN'S JOURNAL

We find ourselves in a place we never expected, assuming jobs we hadn't anticipated. We have become round-the-clock caregivers, teachers, short-order cooks, dishwashers, entertainers, and home-based employees. Tackling a task in isolation is one thing but managing multiple tasks simultaneously can be daunting. This is new for all of us. Everyone is doing their best so let's

practice our patience and bear in mind what each of us is experiencing. Together, we will grow as a result of coping with these uncertain times.

Please take a few minutes to reflect on the tips (below) I compiled to help while you're at home with your children. Check mark the items that are going well. Circle the item numbers that need work. Star items you want to improve on in the coming days. Start with that, set a plan, and work to achieve. Before you know it, your list of starred items will grow.

Tips for Staying at Home with Children:

1. **Stick to a routine.** Go to sleep and wake up at a reasonable time; write a schedule that is varied and includes time for work as well as self-care.
2. **Dress for the day.** Wash your face, brush your teeth, and get dressed. Tip: Dress has an impact on your mood, so dress in bright colors.
3. **Go outside for at least 30 minutes each day.** Fresh air can lift your spirits.
4. **Find 30 minutes to move each day.** If you don't feel comfortable going outside, many apps offer free movement classes. If all else fails, turn on the music and have a dance party.
5. **Spend extra time playing.** Children will rarely communicate how they are feeling but will often make a bid for attention and/or communicate through play. Understand that play is cathartic and helpful to children—it's how they process their world and problem solve, and there's a lot they are seeing and experiencing in the now.
6. **Give everyone the benefit of the doubt and space.** Time spent cooped up can bring out the worst in us. We all have moments when we're not at our best. It's essential to move with grace through blowups, not show up to every argument and let go of grudges. Everybody is doing the best they can to navigate this new way of living.
7. **Identify a space to retreat when stressed.** Help children find a place where they can go when they feel stressed. Make that a cozy place using blankets, pillows, cushions, beanbags, tents, and "forts." It's helpful to have a place to escape to for alone time, particularly when we are on top of each other.
8. **Expect behavioral issues in children and respond gently.** We are all struggling with disruption, none more so than children, who rely on routines to feel safe. Expect increased anxiety, worries, fears, nightmares, difficulty separating or sleeping, testing limits, and meltdowns. Do not introduce major behavioral plans or consequences at this time—hold steady and focus on emotional connections.
9. **Focus on safety and attachment.** Remember it is an unpredictable time for children. Focus on strengthening connections through time spent following their lead, through physical touch, through play, through therapeutic books, and verbal reassurances that you're always there for them.
10. **Lower expectations and practice radical self-acceptance.** This idea is connected with #12. Give yourself what psychologists call "radical self-acceptance": accepting everything about yourself, your current situation and your life without question, blame, or pushback. You cannot fail at this—there is no road map, no precedent for this, and we are doing the best we can in an impossible situation. We are juggling many things while experiencing fear and stress.
11. **Limit social media and COVID-19 conversation, especially around children.** Keep news and difficult discussions out of earshot from children—they see and hear everything and can become frightened by what they hear. The amount of COVID-19 information is overwhelming and changes minute to minute. At times, the reports are sensationalized, negatively skewed, and alarmist. Find a few trusted sources you can check consistently, limit it to a few times a day, and set a time limit on how much you consume (again 30 minutes tops, 2-3 times daily).
12. **Notice the good in the world, the helpers.** There are ample stories of people sacrificing, donating, and supporting one another in wondrous ways. It is essential to counterbalance the heavy information with hopeful information.

13. **Help others.** Find ways, big and small, to give back. Support restaurants, offer to grocery shop, check in with elderly neighbors, write psychological wellness tips for others—helping others gives us a sense of purpose when things seem out of control.
14. **Find a long-term project.** Now is the time to learn how to play the keyboard, put together a jigsaw puzzle, read the Harry Potter series, binge watch a TV show, or develop a new town in Animal Crossing. Find something that will keep you busy, distracted, and engaged in taking breaks from what is going on in the outside world.
15. **Find lightness and humor in each day.** There is a lot to be worried about, and with good reason. Balance this heaviness with something funny each day: cat videos on YouTube, a comedy show on Netflix, a funny movie. We all need a little comedic relief in our day, every day.
16. **Ask for help - your team is there for you.** Your children's teachers and related service providers will do anything within their power to help. Seek support groups of parents, friends, and neighbors to feel connected. There is help and support out there, any time of the day—although we are physically distant, we can always connect virtually.
17. **Chunk your social distancing, take it moment by moment.** Since there is no road map for this situation, we don't know what this will look like in one day, one week, or one month from now. Whether it's five minutes, a day, or a week at a time—find what feels doable for you and set a timestamp for how far in the future you will let yourself worry. Take each chunk one at a time and move through stress in pieces.
18. **Remind yourself daily that this is temporary.** Please take the time to remind yourself that this is a season of life and it will pass. We will return to feeling free, safe, busy, and connected in the days ahead.
19. **Find the lesson.** When psychologists work with trauma, a key feature to helping individuals work through their trauma is to help them find their agency, the potential positive outcomes they can affect, the meaning and construction that result from upheaval. What can each of us learn, in big and small ways? What needs to change in ourselves, our homes, our communities, our nation, and our world?
20. **When all else fails, choose happiness.** Forget everything else and do what makes you happy. Read a book, go for a run, eat some chocolate, play with your child. Joy will keep us connected.

Tips were compiled from an unnamed doctoral-level psychologist in NYS with a Psy.D. in the specialties of School and Clinical Psychology.