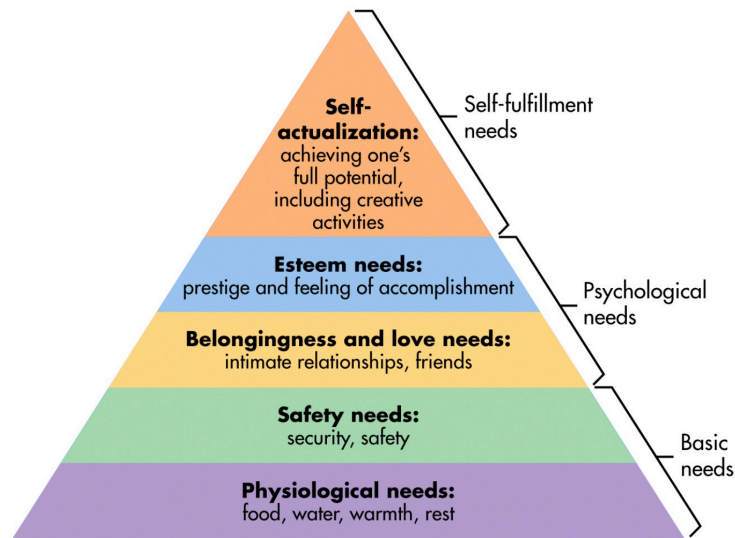


# Caring for our families during the COVID Pandemic: Self Care for Parents and Signs of Concern for Our Children

## WARNING SIGNS YOUR CHILD IS IN DISTRESS AND RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

**Main Thesis: “To care for someone, you must understand them”**

### Pt.1 The Human Design: Understanding ourselves and our families



What are the 5 Needs in order?

P-S-L-E-SA

2 Categories of Needs: Tangible vs. Perceived

Side tips:

Each of the 5 categories pertain to a specific part of the brain

Everyone has different needs at different times

As you grow older, the need “cup” gets bigger

### **3 A's of Intrinsic Satisfaction:**

- Awareness of healthy needs
- Accomplishing those needs in a healthy way
- Amplify those needs into an important part of your day

**PAIR: Reasons for bad behavior: Power/Attention/Inadequacy/Revenge**

Pertains to a need not being met

*Mistake #1: Calling a perceived need a tangible need*

Healthy vs. unhealthy methods for each of the 5 categories

*FAQ:*

*Can you meet more than 1 need at a time?*

*What happens if 2 needs clash? (Anxiety about initiating new social interactions)*

*How does advertising distract us from healthy needs? Fame, fortune, status, etc.*

**The importance of earning our needs:**

**We are designed to “EARN our good feelings”**

- Eating healthy foods
- Good Sleep (no blue light 30 min before bed)
- Love and intimacy with a partner
- Respectful and enjoyable socializing
- Learning new things (to be present in the moment)
- Working toward a meaningful goal
- Maintain Safety / Escape danger

*All have “Survival Value” and Happiness Value*

- Example: Caveman starting with nothing vs. modern child who already has needs met
- Caveman has a goal and a purpose / modern child does not
- Caveman learns how to deal with adversity / modern child does not

**We are not designed for:**

- Artificial happiness
- Meaningless encounters
- Clout
- Success without effort

*We crave meaning through effort*

**Depression = helpless detachment**

**Societal Programming vs. Pyramid of needs:**

- Artificial accomplishments without the effort (300 likes) (artificial esteem need)
- Money and fame will make you happy (artificial esteem need)
- Inner purpose is alienating and irrelevant (artificial self actualization need)
- Fear through advertising (artificial safety need)
- External validation is 100% what matters (artificial love need)

*Putting effort into something intrinsically meaningful = long-term fulfillment*

*Pro Tip: If our environment does not match what we are designed for, there is increased likelihood of depression, and anxiety BUT this does not constitute a clinical diagnosis!*

*A tea pot isn't designed to catch a baseball.*

PEPSI Model - Nurture each of these 4 areas each day for 10 days and re-check your mood and engagement level

P=

Emotional

Physical

Social

Intellectual

### **Modern Biology: The great loophole:**

There are over 100 neurotransmitters in the brain:

Classifications:

Inhibitory - Serotonin, sleep, eat, mood regulation

Excitatory - Adrenaline and Dopamine - pleasurable "Remember this and do it more"

- We've outsmarted our reward center
- When we run a mile, it feels great and dopamine says "Remember this and do it more"!
- When we don't feel like running a mile, we post something on instagram and get 300 likes, and our dopamine says "remember this and do it more"
- Less effort, same result

### **Examples of ways to trick your brain with a good feeling:**

- Overeating or poor diet heavy on sugar
- Abusing sex and intimacy
- Creating a dangerous scenario that is unrealistic
- Drugs
- Social Media
- Video Games
- Tanning Beds - Artificial Blue Light with 0 Vitamin D

### **Why is it bad to trick your brain into a good feeling?**

- Less effort = less meaning = lack of commitment
- Decreases the ability to choose what is important and what is "Worth working toward"

- Diminishes the ability to overcome adversity (Instead of working out everyday, working with a team to win a championship over the course of 9 months, I'll smoke marijuana and get a source of quick satisfaction)
- Promotes lack of commitment = less intrinsic meaning = depression / anxiety
- "Hypofunctioning reward system" - harder and harder to please - a greater tolerance to pleasure called "satiation" = / depression / anxiety
- It teaches you to think in terms of short term quick solutions when all of the best things in life take time and development - school, career, fitness, friendships, romantic relationships and personal growth
- It artificially changes the natural levels of excitatory neurotransmitters without the conscious effort to work at it
- The brain does not care if that good feeling was stemmed from a "positive" behavior. It feels good, end of story

Example: Running a mile vs. Getting 1000 likes on instagram

### **How does environment influence Behavior?**

Positive Reinforcement: Increases a chosen behavior

Negative Reinforcement: Decreases a chosen behavior

Positive Punishment: increases a chosen behavior

Negative Punishment: decreases a chosen behavior

Perspective check:

What is more reinforcing? Posting on instagram and getting 300 likes or cleaning my room?

*Pro Tip #2: The best way to care for yourself and your family is to not trick your brain that you met real needs.*

### **FAQ:**

**What are the positives & negatives of living through a pandemic?**

#### **Positive Elements of living in a Pandemic:**

More home and family time

More cooking which is healthy

More predictable

#### **Negative Elements of living in a Pandemic:**

Isolation

Less creative outlets

Less socializing

Monotonous daily routines

Less exercise

Virtual School is challenging

## **What are key warning signs of distress during a pandemic?**

### **Key Warning Signs of Distress During a Pandemic:**

- Environment: Does day to day life fundamentally clash with the human design?
- Biology: Is there indication of emotional instability despite a sound environment?
- Fear of abandonment
- Lack of Engagement with things once enjoyed
- Lack of engagement with future
- Irrational worries
- Irritable
- Low appetite, low sleep
- Self medicating

### **How can I tell if it is a serious mental health concern vs a “Normal Teen Issue”**

- Adaptive vs. Maladaptive traits

### **When should I be concerned enough to reach out for help?**

- If your child or teen has a history of impulsivity
- Apparent off mood for 2+ weeks
- Others are worried
- Less engagement
- Less productivity
- Rude, irritable or defiant
- Noticeable avoidance
- Self Harm

### **How can I care for myself?**

- PEPSI
- Earn your good feelings
- Tune into what YOUR needs and make it apart of the day
- Self-Talk
- Massages
- Psychotherapy

### **How can I care for my family during a turbulent time?**

#### **Recommendations for parents to care for their families:**

1. **CREDIBILITY:** Care for yourself and model healthy behavior. When you say you're going to do something, you do it
2. **COMMUNICATION:** Model honest yet respectful communication
3. **CONSISTENCY:** Day to day predictable routines have been proven to be effective in family dynamics

4. CENSORSHIP: Monitor the daily routine to ensure it fits what your child is designed for
5. COMPASSION: Show understanding of needs, and build rapport rather than a distant dictator
6. COMPARTMENTALIZE: Understand the different areas of life and act accordingly
7. COMPREHENSION: Understand what they are going through. Make a space for non-judgmental sharing. Listen to understand, not respond.
8. COMPROMISE: A team effort leads to healthier relationships
9. CHOOSE: Pick and choose your battles on a daily basis - Mental Flexibility vs. Unwavering Standards
10. CONNECT: Listen, share, and be present with your family

### **How do we manage devices and social media time?**

- Devices in general are not a bad thing. Games and youtube videos should be monitored but the real issue is social media
- The golden psychological rule of social media: Maintain control by TURNING OFF ALL NOTIFICATIONS
- Social Media Algorithm is designed to maximize time spent
- Walk through the mall and don't buy everything - Get on social media but don't buy everything
- Recognize what needs you are or are not meeting

### **What are alternatives to medication?**

#### *Naturopathic supplements*

- B12 - Energy and immune support (Water Soluble)
- D3 - Vitamin D during indoor times
- Omega 3 Fatty acids - Brain Health
- Magnesium - Sleep issues and Awareness
- Probiotics - Gut health helps with anxiety and depression

### **Resources:**

- Parental Rapport & Communication - Allow them to talk about it
- "You're not the first to go through, you're not the last that will go through it. You are not alone."

#### Outpatient Counseling:

Adam - Community Mental Health Associates: 410.756.0035 ([adam@cmhahelps.com](mailto:adam@cmhahelps.com))

#### Outpatient Psychiatric Referrals:

- Dr. Caroline Poblete - child and adolescent psychiatry 410.461.3760
- Dr. Taylor Scott - child and adolescent psychiatry 443.494.9696
- Dr. Michael Labellarte - all ages 410.979.2326

Inpatient Hospitalization  
Home and Hospital - arranged through school  
Mobile Crisis Intervention  
Emergency Room  
Police