When you get in the pool the water is freezing but after a few minutes, it feels fine. The pool didn’t change, we adapted to it.

**Just a reminder** that as lockdown lifts, and places open up, and our lives start getting busier again, it’s ok if you’re anxious, or overwhelmed, or exhausted, or feeling like you’ve forgotten how to be around people. If you’re frightened to be going back to work, if a message inviting you to a social thing makes your stomach flip, if you turn up somewhere and want to leave immediately, if you turn up somewhere and do leave immediately, if your friends go in for a hug and you don’t want them to touch you yet even though you miss them, if you feel confused about what you want or feel comfortable with right now. **It’s ok.** It might feel like everyone is excited and desperate to ‘get back to normal’ but you are not the only one freaking out. You go as slowly as you need to. You say “no” as much as you need to. And don’t let anyone pressure you. Listen to your body.

And if you’re one of the excited and relieved people, that’s ok too, but remember that not everyone else is feeling the same. Ask for consent around touch and distance. Respect people’s boundaries, and don’t take it personally if they don’t want the same physical intimacy that you do, or the same intimacy that you shared before lockdown.

Extra love to all those who are still shielding, who are watching a world open up that you can’t be part of yet. I hope you’ve got people you can ask for connection and support in ways that feel safe.

Love if you haven’t had the luxury of lockdown, if you’ve had to keep going to work anyway, or not had your own space through all this weirdness and that’s been hard, and if it’s scarier now as more people leave their homes.

Just remember that we’ve all had a really big traumatic thing happen and none of us can really be sure we understand it. We’ve all had different experiences of it and different ways of coping with it. And it’s not over, we’re still in it. Our nervous systems have been going through the wrangler for a while and now that things are changing again, that’s yet more stress and upheaval to be gentle with ourselves through.

**Plan A**

**Plan B**

**Plan C**

Now, more than ever, we need awareness of our own feelings and needs, compassion for those of others even if they’re different from our own, good communication between us all and kindness, respect, and generosity towards each other and ourselves.
BB4K - Self-Care and Sleep

Can’t Sleep?

At night when we lay in bed trying to fall asleep our thoughts pick up momentum. This is because there isn’t anything actively distracting the mind. Have you tried distracting yourself by thinking of something else?

Well, unfortunately, it doesn’t work because other thoughts aren’t an anchor. To stop ourselves from over thinking we must anchor ourselves to our senses. This will bring our focus into our body, instead of our thoughts. In order to achieve this, we can try breath work or simply focusing on different parts of our body and noticing different sensations.

Sleep Self-Care

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time
- Turn off all electronics 2 hours before bedtime
- Avoid Caffeine, Alcohol, & Nicotine at night
- Relax before bed & set your room to cool temp (60-70°F)
- Eat only light snacks & limit your fluid intake
- Use earplugs or listen to soothing music. Block light or use an eye mask.

Visualisation Grounding Techniques

1. Imagine a golden light shield is protecting you. Imagine all the negativity you feel leaving your body and bad energy bouncing of the shield.

2. Choose one thing to concentrate on. It can be a candle, a fan, or even the window and in your mind imagine the sound of rain as you focus on the object.

3. Imagine your stressful emotions as a monster. Then visualise yourself having a sword fight with that monster and winning.

HOW TO FIX 9 COMMON SLEEP PROBLEMS

- CAN’T FALL ASLEEP
  - Avoid caffeine several hours before bedtime. Sometimes the evening or afternoon and put your phone away at least an hour before bedtime

- SNORING
  - Try sleeping on your side or prop up your head 10 to 20 inches. You can also clear out your nose with saline before bed and avoid alcohol.

- ACID REFLUX
  - Talk to your doctor about medications options, and try sleeping on a wedge pillow or an inclined plane.

- SHOULDER PAIN
  - Don’t lie on your side if you are a side-sleeper, and the pain only it is in the shoulder, try propping a pillow under your neck.

- CAN’T STAY ASLEEP
  - Avoid alcohol before bed, since it can decrease the ability of your body to fall asleep. Don’t drink alcohol 3 hours before bedtime.

- BACK PAIN
  - Add a pillow under your pillow or use a wedge pillow to elevate your bed.

- CAN’T WAKE UP
  - Try to wake up around the same time every day to train your body to wake up naturally.

- LEG CRAMPS
  - You can try massaging the area, applying heat to the area, and rubbing the calf to relieve the pain.

- NECK PAIN
  - Reduce your pillows at least every two years. People reported that taking pictures and the most comfortable is a study.

Emergency Care Wall

- For sadness: best friend's phone, a list of reasons why you can
- For loneliness: your crush's phone, a list of reasons why you can
- For self-doubt: a list of reasons why you can
- For anger: comfort food, calming music
- For worry: your mom's phone, drawings
- For other: your best friend's phone, books

Pandas don’t have specific spots for sleeping, they simply fall asleep wherever they happen to be.
Will my child be traumatised by the coronavirus crisis?

There's no easy way to predict if a particular child will be traumatised. For a lot of people, the pandemic is certainly a significant stressor but not necessarily a trauma.

Children who have gone through the death or hospitalisation of a loved one due to COVID, or who have been very sick themselves, may experience those events as traumatic. Kids who have been quarantined in a violent or abusive situation are also at high risk for trauma right now.

If your child hasn't gone through any of those especially stressful experiences during the crisis, they're less likely to show signs of trauma. That said, the stress that children have been experiencing over the past few months might have other significant consequences that don't meet the clinical definition of trauma. This is where the idea of adjustment comes in.

What can I do to help my child bounce back from the stress of the coronavirus crisis?

As parents, we can't completely protect our children from the stress of this situation, but there are strategies we can use to support their mental health - now and as the challenges continue.

Adjust your expectations. It's normal to not be yourself when so much is taken away from you, a lot of kids won’t bounce back entirely until the crisis has passed.

Empathise with their feelings. Clearly validating your child’s emotions can make a big difference, even when you can’t solve the problem. Give your child space to talk about what’s upsetting them, and don’t rush to fix their difficult emotions.

Take a step back. Identify a couple of big developmental milestones that are really important for your child right now. For example, this could be completing tasks independently or being more respectful of siblings - anything that your child needs to master as they continue growing and learning.

Find opportunities for practice. Once you know what areas of growth to prioritise, see if you can find small ways for your child to work on these skills. Maybe it’s rewarding cooperative play between siblings, working up to 20 minutes of reading independently or practicing doing chores without help.

Don’t sweat the rest. Right now, keeping up with these major skills is plenty for most kids and families to deal with. Resilience means putting one foot in front of the other and meeting your developmental milestones, it doesn’t mean learning new languages and reorganising your whole house, and it doesn’t mean that your kids need to be doing everything you might have expected before the coronavirus crisis. Letting go of the idea that everyone should be on their best behaviour can make things a little easier on you and your kids alike.
“Helpful attention”

One of the ways we meet our teenager’s needs as parents is by giving them attention. This is as true of teenagers as it is of children. What teenagers need, even more than children, is helpful attention. Giving our children helpful attention helps us to develop close and co-operative relationships with them and builds their confidence and self-esteem. It’s a way of showing that we care and that they matter.

Helpful attention means enjoying and being interested in who they are and what they’re doing.

Being responsive – listening to them when they want to talk, even when it might be inconvenient.

Being guided by the young person rather than always taking charge and imposing our will on them (although sometimes this is necessary, for instance in situations involving safety).

A key element in dealing with teenagers is to enjoy them. This can sometimes be hard if they seem to spend a lot of their time defying you, arguing with you and ignoring you. However, from the teenager’s perspective, they sometimes get the impression that all parents want to do is criticise and control. Both of you can be on a negative default setting. You can often tackle their defiance, argumentativeness and disregard by switching to positive setting. So, look at what they do like. Take an interest in who they are at this moment, which will not be the child they were some time ago not the adult they will be in a few years time. Don’t quiz or interrogate them but ask open questions about their interests and enthusiasms, and accept them without judgement.
BB4K consultation by telephone:

If a parent OR young person requires a telephone consultation with BB4K Worker:
Email [BB4K@pactcharity.org](mailto:BB4K@pactcharity.org) with name, time availability, concerns, and contact details.
BB4K Worker will email reply with a time slot for this consultation to support 121.

Referral forms will need to be completed for consultations.

Please send in any pictures of what you have been doing and any ideas to help with the next newsletter!