



City of Albuquerque

EAP Newsletter

“The City of Albuquerque’s most valuable asset is its employees!”

May 1st, 2020

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Helpful Links for you and your family:

Stress Management and Emotional Wellness Resources:

My Stress Tools

Click the link to register for this free online stress-reduction program!

Free Webinars from the Solutions Group

Click here to sign up for a variety of free Webinars offered by the Solutions Group

Mindfulness For Sleep FREE Online Class

Mindfulness Expert Michelle Duval is hosting two sessions online from 10-11am on May 8th. Click here to register!

Quality vs. Quantity: Making the Most of Your Relationship During Quarantine

By Michele Heyman, LPCC, EAP Therapist



Right now many people are experiencing extreme isolation and aloneness during the COVID quarantine. The focus has been so much on isolation and social distancing and the stressors that come with it that we have overlooked the flipside.... what happens when there is too much “together” time? You may be in a brand new relationship or one that has been years in the making. It can be a good solid relationship or one that has been on the brink for a while.

Now with the quarantine, the differences between us are staring at us all day, the good things and the bad, are magnified by the amount of time we are spending together. (Did he always breathe that loud? Is she looking in the fridge again??) It’s all intensified right now, but not because it has gotten worse. It may be because we have lost some of our own independence, the separation that we used to have in our relationships, and now we have more time together, **quantity time**. We used to have time alone, time at work and time with friends, and we used to spend social time with other couples. The time we spent as a couple was less, but that improved our **quality time** together. More is not always better. Even sunshine burns if you get too much. So how do we get that quality time back? How do we begin to create quality time for our relationships?

First start with yourself. The better you are alone the better you’ll be together. So there’s no going to work or the gym or happy hour? Then find time at home to carve out time apart. Maybe create a personal quarantine to do your own thing, exercise, read a book, listen to your favorite podcast or music, take a bath, or connect with friends. Be supportive of your partner while they do their own thing, too. Take note of how it feels to be alone. Self-care isn’t selfish; it’s doing something good for you. Then you can take that good feeling back into the together time.

Create quality together time. It’s easy to fall into patterns of complacency when there isn’t much to do outside of home. Things could quickly get stale or boring, tensions and frustrations could increase. So it’s up to you to change things up. You can take turns planning a “date” night; you could order in and share a dressed up dinner for two, pack a picnic lunch and head to the park, take a long drive with the windows down and the stereo on. It can be anything that you feel like your relationship needs. You can stay home and build a pillow fort in the living room, play cards, pop some popcorn and share your favorite movies. Remember there is no wrong way to create a space for your relationship.

Schedule your arguments. Being together all day doesn’t make it ok to fire away at your partner every time they come into the room. But we still need to communicate our needs and concerns. If you need to talk about an issue that has come up, try taking it outside of the house. Invite your

[Resources for Staying Busy During Quarantine: 100+ Things to Do Online](#)

The Los Angeles Times has created this guide to the internet to help you stay busy during quarantine

[25 Mother's Day Crafts for Kids](#)

Mother's Day is right around the corner! See these fun craft ideas that will keep your kids busy and mom will love

[DIY Network](#)

The DIY Network has tons of resources and ideas for Do-It-Yourself home improvements

[Best Recipes and Cooking Tips for Quarantine](#)

This NY Times compilation of articles, recipes, and tips are perfect to use during quarantine

[Physical Activity Resources \(Please consult your physician before starting any exercise program\):](#)

[Move More Together](#)
Free Workouts and resources from the American Heart Association

[Fight the 'Quarantine 15'](#)

Free exercises from Peloton, Nike, and others during quarantine

[Full Body Workout Using Household Items](#)

Exercises you can do using things you already have at home

partner for a walk or drive away from home and try to be in a calm mindful place when you talk about what's going on for each of you. Or schedule a 10-minute daily check in with each other where you take turns talking and listening to each other. This gives time and space to really think about what you need and how you can ask for it without creating defensiveness.

Celebrate the positives. We are all in this together, and none of us have ever done this before. We didn't plan for this. But somewhere in there is the person you fell for. Find the good things, the things that make your unique relationship work. Show gratitude for each other in words and little things. Let them know when they have done something that makes your heart happy. And find little things to do in return. Right now the simplest gesture can say more than words. And at the end of each day share one thing with your partner that you appreciate. Tell them what you are grateful for and allow them to do the same. Let their words of gratitude for you be the last thing you hear before you sleep.

And when this is all over, and we return to less time together, maybe you'll keep connecting by continuing some of these healthy relationship habits. Sharing gratitude at bedtime, a date night, or small gestures of kindness are all things that can be easily done if you make the time. Create your own unique ways to share quality time without the quantity. Your relationship will thank you for it.

Below are links for further reading on healthy relationships

- [How Not to Tank Your Relationship During Quarantine](#)
- [How to Keep Quarantine from Ruining Your Marriage](#)
- [The BEST Apps for Couples](#)
- [5 Steps to Fight Better \(If Your Relationship is Worth Fighting For\)](#)
- [10 Perfect Stay-at-Home Date Ideas](#)
- [The 5 Love Languages](#)

[Weekly Inspirational Quotes:](#)

"Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier." – **Mother Teresa**

"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." – **Jane Goodall**

[Dave's Fitness Blog: A Brief Pause](#)

By [Dave Pulliam](#), Health and Wellness Coordinator



All of our normal lives have been placed on hold during this health crisis. It has affected all of us to various degrees, and it will change our lives going forward. This may seem like a major negative experience, but there are positives in it. If you ever talk to someone who has survived major historical events, they will tell you ways they adapted, habits they changed, and how they grew because of the challenge. My parents grew up during the Great Depression, and my Dad was in the Navy during World War II. Their stories were never about the lives destroyed or the horrors people saw, but about ways people came together, ways they coped, and things that made them stronger. What stories will you tell future generations?

That doesn't mean you have to change everything or make great sacrifices, although some people will. But even little changes in habits can help you adapt, and give you skills to carry throughout

Crisis Management

Resources:

[AGORA CRISIS CENTER](#)

1-866-HELP-1-NM

[NEW MEXICO CRISIS](#)

[AND ACCESS LINE](#)

1-855-NMCRISIS

[SUICIDE PREVENTION](#)

[LIFELINE](#)

1-800-273-TALK

[NATIONAL DOMESTIC](#)

[VIOLENCE HOTLINE](#)

1-800-799-SAFE

[HOPELINE: CALL OR TEXT](#)

1-877-235-4525

We'd Love to Hear From you!

Please call or email us for more information on our program or to set up an appointment! Our contact info is below!

Phone (8am-5pm):

(505) 768-4613

Email:

lcampos@cabq.gov

After Hours Phone:

(505) 254-3335

[TalkSpace](#) is a text therapy platform free to CABQ Employees and family members 14 and older (must have Presbyterian Insurance thru CABQ)

your life. Today's topic is about little change that may seem insignificant, but can have a lifelong impact. I want to talk about a brief pause.

A brief pause is the act of taking a second or two to pause and reflect before an action or statement. An example would be if someone close to you asks how an outfit they have chosen looks on them. If you are wise you will take a brief pause before answering to think about what answer they want. Do they want a critique of their style choice, or do they want some affirmation before they face the world? A wrong answer may affect your social distancing.

A great time to use a brief pause is before eating. Staying home gives most of us more opportunities to snack during the day. Mindless snacking is not the best lifestyle choice, so take a brief pause before reaching for a snack. Are you snacking because you are nervous? If so, some physical activity will calm your nerves longer than a cookie. Use your nervous energy to make you healthier, not spike your blood sugar levels. Are you snacking because you are bored? Maybe try something that has a better long-term effect. If you do choose to snack just for that experience of taste, choose something you can experience slowly, like a piece of hard candy or gum, instead of a piece of cake.

Before you eat a meal, pause and look at what is on your plate. If you took a picture of it, would you want to share it with your mom to show how well you can cook? Would you share it with a dietician to show how healthy you are eating? Or would you share it with Joey Chestnut to show how much you can eat in two minutes? Fill your plate as if others will see it. Pause before eating to make sure it is a plate you can show with pride.

Pausing before other activities can be helpful also. Before turning on the TV, pause for a second to think if this is the best use of your time. If you have been productive and need to relax, enjoy some TV time. But if you are just going to plop down and flip through channels because you are bored, tackle something off your to-do list instead. Rewards are better when they are earned.

Taking a brief pause may not be the story you tell others or the wisdom you pass to future generations, but it is a good habit to carry throughout life. It may make you healthier, help you make better decisions, or at least keep your foot out of your mouth.

The NM Healthcare Worker and First Responder Support Line

The State of New Mexico has launched a support line specifically for healthcare workers and first responders. The line is available 24/7 to support those on the front lines of the state's pandemic response and to connect them to a professional counselor.

Reasons to call may include (but not limited to):

- Facing challenges at work or at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Experiencing stress, fear, anxiety, sadness, or depression about the essential work you are doing to support people
- The emotional impact of isolation due to social distancing
- Need to talk to someone about the experiences you are feeling, seeing, and hearing about due to the pandemic
- You can also call to talk about how to help a friend, colleague, or family member that you are concerned about

To access this free and confidential service, call **855-507-5509**.

Thank you for reading! Please stay safe and healthy out there!