This material is intended to be viewed only <u>after</u> watching: Safe Re-Entry During COVID-19 for Employees



Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic Green Chimneys has remained steadfast in our commitment to fostering an inherent confidence in our children, families and colleagues, as well as facilitating the development of positive expectations for the future. The impact of COVID-19 has had a varied and dynamic effect on us all, as well as the children and families we work with.

We can navigate the challenges

COVID-19 has brought us through a

trauma-informed lens.



Trauma can result from a single incident, repeated and prolonged stress, or from varied and multiple traumatic events which can have lasting adverse effects on one's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

Trauma is not the story of something that happened back then. It's the current imprint of that pain, horror, and fear living inside people.



An inescapable event that overwhelms an individual's coping mechanisms.

Bessel Van Der Kolk; psychiatrist, author, researcher and educator

Trauma can occur at the individual level...



...Or collectively, within a community.

Collective trauma affects communities and threatens the structure of society.

An event experienced as negative or uncontrollable

Unexpected

Unpreventable

Physical or Emotional

Experienced or Observed

Trauma Can Be COVID-19 has Been

An event experienced as negative or uncontrollable

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Unpreventable

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Experienced or Observed



Life "as usual" has become unusual

Many of us have experienced:

Social Isolation

Individual and global loss

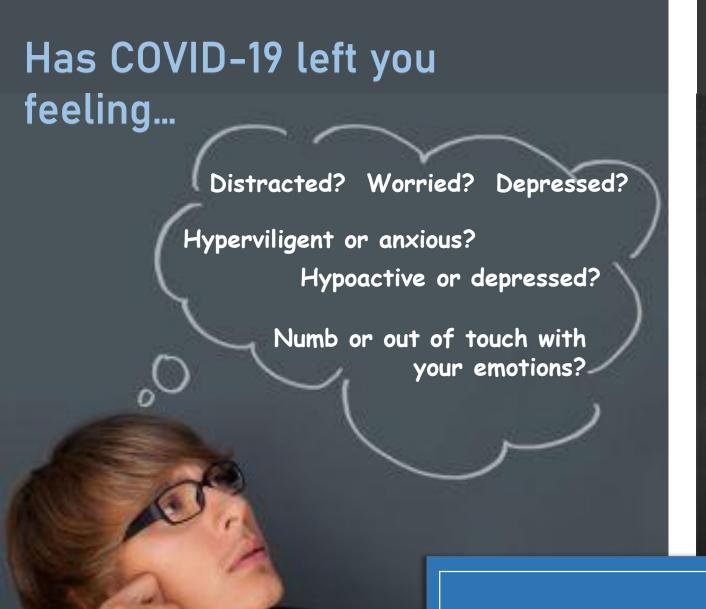
A lack of things to look forward to

Economic and financial instability

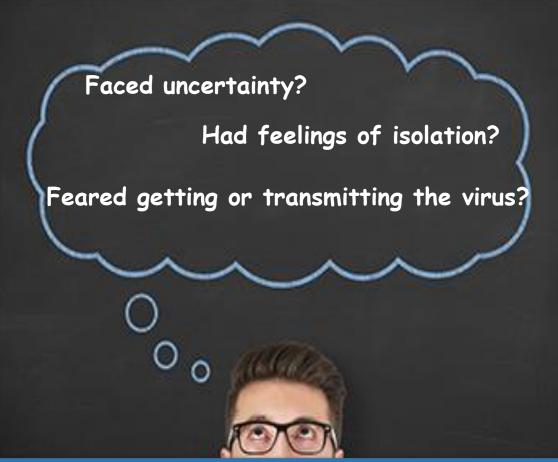
We also may have:

Limited access to personal protective equipment (PPEs) or cleaning supplies Constant access to the news and other media sources

Serious threat to our safety and well-being



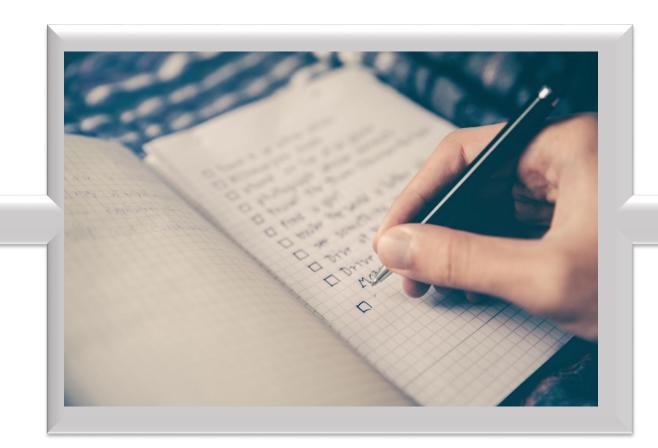
Have you....



Your feelings may have to do with the direct or indirect emotional strain of COVID-19.



Modify your activities to meet the current reality of the situation and focus on what you can accomplish. Shift your priorities to focus more on what gives you meaning, purpose, and fulfillment.



Work Smarter, not harder! These tips from **Wework.com** encourage you to make the most of your day. Honing your time management skills will lead to better outcomes and reduced stress-and home AND work.



Try it!

- Focus on one thing at a time. Committing to focusing on just one thing for a predetermined period of time is a good way to break this habit. Putting your phone in your drawer, or muting your email might help you get there.
- > Set time limits for each task. One time management tip to avoid procrastination is to add more immediate time pressure; create artificial, but reasonable deadlines.
- ➤ **Prioritize wisely.** Ask yourself, "What are the most important things I can accomplish today? What tasks will have the biggest impact on achieving my ultimate goal?
- Learn to say "no" or delegate more often. If you're trying to do too much, stress will increase and productivity will fall.
- > **Don't let the details drag you down.** Sweating minor details can lead to unwanted stopping points.
- ➤ **Understand your work rhythm.** What time of day do you do your best work?
- > **Stop and switch off.** Switching off at the end of your week is a way to avoid burnout.
- Turn time management tips into habits. Remain diligent for the first few weeks, but don't berate yourself if you miss a day- it won't undo the progress you've already made.



Exercise your mind and body

Physical activity can help you feel and function better. It can also help you sleep better, reduces anxiety.

Activities that are beneficial to your body are good for your brain too! Participating in any activity that challenges your mind and requires you to learn new information or skills is exercise for your brain.

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) reports that physical activity reduces blood pressure and anxiety.

Physical activity can improve your mood and energy level, and can help you sleep better.



Try it!

- > Try going outside. Go for a run, take a hike, or go for a bike ride. Exercising outside can give you the space you need to practice social distancing.
- ➤ Catch up on chores. Vacuuming or cleaning out closets counts as physical activity.
- Many gyms and fitness programs have been offering free classes online, give them a try!
- > Try these riddles from Parade.com:
 - I left my campsite and hiked south for 3 miles. Then I turned east and hiked for 3 miles. I then turned north and hiked for 3 miles, at which time I came upon a bear inside my tent eating my food! What color was the bear?
 - O What is harder to catch the faster you run?
 - What has cities, but no houses; forests, but no trees; and water, but no fish?

Control what you can.

Don't expend all your energy trying to change things that are out of your control.



Take time to check in with yourself to gain insight into any area where you may be struggling. Once you identify the issues, create plan to address the issues you can control and work on letting go of the ones you cannot.

Try it!

Before going to work:

- Remove your watch and jewelry
- Wear your personal clothing to work, but bring your "work" clothes in a washable bag, along with a pair of shoes that can be easily cleaned and left at work or in your car.
- Bring lunch in a disposable bag.
- Practice proper hand hygiene.

During work:

- Disinfect your phone, name tag or ID badge, eyewear, and any work supplies regularly.
- Perform hand hygiene after touching frequently used objects and surfaces.
- Avoid handshakes or high-fives.
- Disinfect your lunch space before and after eating.
- Practice physical distancing
- Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) like gloves or a mask as directed.

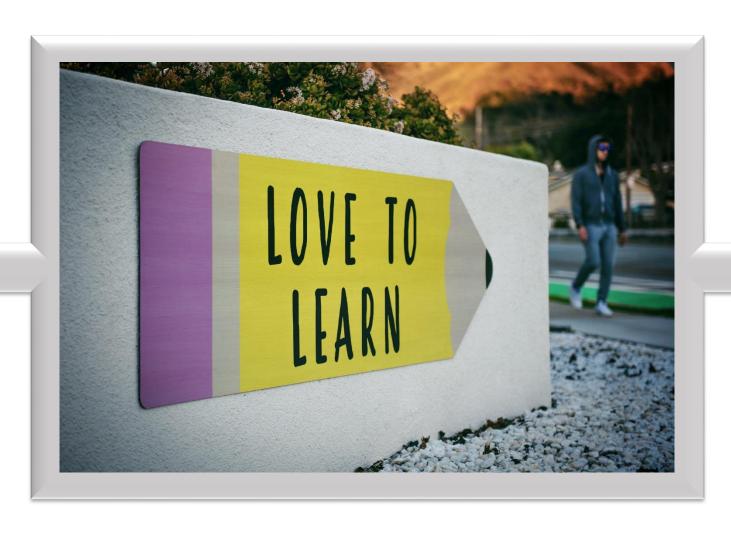
OPTIONAL

Here are some
FACTORS YOU CAN
CONTROL

After work:

- Take a minute to reflect on three things that went well today; be proud of the work you did.
- Disinfect your phone, name tag or ID badge, eyewear, and any work supplies; leave what you can at work.
- Handle possibly contaminated items (shoes, work bag, work clothes) with care.
- Place work clothes in your dirty clothes bag in the trunk of your car or directly into the washing machine when you get home.
- Wash your work clothes and dirty clothes bag with detergent.
- Leave your work shoes outside the home or in your dirty clothes bag.
- Keep your street clothes and shoes in a clean and washable bag, separate from your work clothes.
- Shower immediately after arriving home.

Attempt to learn something new and do things that are distracting and enjoyable to you.



Learning a new skill can be empowering and helpful!

Try it!

- > Stay up to date with employee resources and information by visiting: Employee Communications
- Check out a collection of over 25,000 webinars, expert articles, tools, tutorials, trainings, and video resources at: The EAP
- > Learn more about Trauma Informed Care from:

Trauma Responsive Educational Practices



Make Connections with positive role models and support systems.

Reach out to others who share your experience and can listen without judgment. Use this time as an opportunity to connect with someone you've lost touch with.



Being part of a community and making safe connections is important, especially as many people feel isolated.

Animals live in the hear and now, they do not focus on the past or future, or the stress of the current pandemic. At the farm, or in local parks or trails, you can be yourself.

For those seeking connections with people, Matador Network provides us with several, non-alcohol related ways to stay connected during the pandemic.



Try it!

- ➤ Watch the goats at Green Chimneys play among the rocks, or observe a chicken happily pecking for a worm. Remember that life's simple pleasures are often the best.
- > Attend a virtual concert
- > Join an online book club
- > Do an online language exchange
- > Organize a web-based game night
- > Host a digital dinner party

<u>Practice self-compassion</u>: Remember that it is best to take care of yourself (physically, mentally, and spiritually) before you try to take care of others. <u>Meditation</u> and <u>mindfulness</u> can help you stay centered.



Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us (mindful.org).

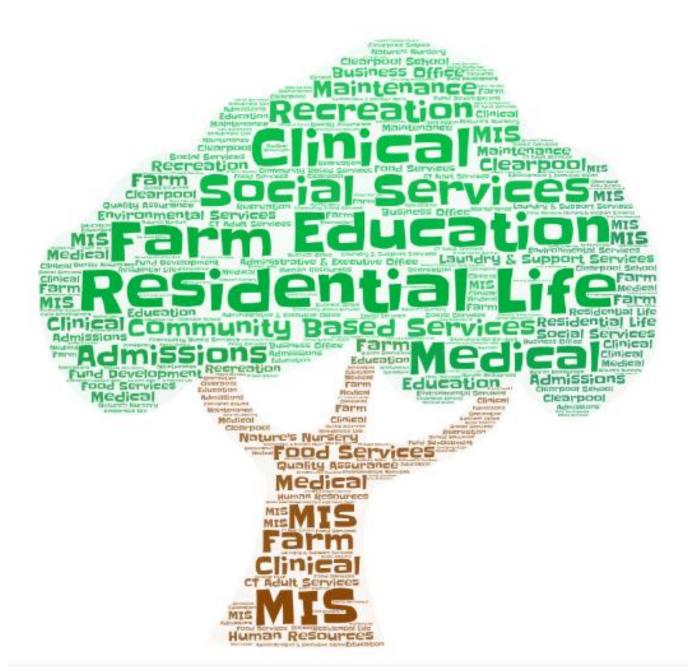
It helps you take a step back from intense feelings and has been shown to:

Increase emotional regulation
Decrease distraction and rumination
Increase activity in the brain region associated
with positive emotions
Decrease anger and emotional irritability
Decrease depression and anxiety
Increase immune function



Try it!

- Yawn and stretch for 10 seconds every hour. Do a fake yawn if you have to. That will trigger real ones. Say "ahh" as you exhale. Notice how a yawn interrupts your thoughts and feelings. That brings you into the present. Stretch really, really slowly for at least 10 seconds. Notice any tightness and say "ease" to that place. Take another 20 seconds to notice and then get back to what you were doing.
- ➤ **Stroke your hands.** Lower or close your eyes. Take the index finger of your right hand and slowly move it up and down on the outside of your fingers. Once you have mindfully stroked your left hand, swap and do the same to your right.
- Take a raisin or a piece of chocolate and mindfully eat it. Slow down, sense it, savor it and smile between bites. Purposefully slow down. Use all your senses to see it, touch it, smell it, and sense it. Then gently pop it into your mouth and really savor it. Savor its texture, its taste, how it feels in your mouth. Let it linger and then swallow it. After you have swallowed it, let your lips turn up slightly and smile. Do the same thing for each raisin you eat or bite you take.



Remember, we are all experiencing COVID-19 in our own individual ways, and at our own individual pace.

Fart 2: Working With Youth



Students have been out of the classroom and many out of their dorms for more than 16 weeks. Before COVID, our longest break away from Green Chimneys was **two weeks** and the transition back after those breaks was challenging for students and staff alike.

Routines, structure and expectations following the return from breaks in the past needed to be retaught with flexibility, and many students needed extra support in the following weeks just get back to where they were.

Working at Green Chimneys, many of us have a strong understanding of the impact of trauma in the work that we do. Sadly, the great majority of our students and staff have been impacted with additional trauma over the last four months including but not limited to, losing family members, isolation, food insecurity, financial struggles from a lack of income and not getting basic needs met.

During this summer, many of our students are returning after being home for 16 weeks and leaving their families for the first time.

As staff members, we all need to meet students and one another where they are and be prepared to offer extra support, patience, understanding and emotional first aid while also doing this for ourselves.

During this transition back to campus, expect to see students who have regressed and need to work on skills they may have previously mastered and be prepared to reteach these skills without judgment.

In order to be an effective staff member, take care of yourself and ask for help when you need it.

While children at Green Chimneys face unique struggles and have individualized responses to stress, we can make several generalizations for their responses to Covid-19.

Younger Children May:

- Experience helplessness and uncertainty about the future
- Have difficulty describing in words what is bothering them or what they are emotionally experiencing.
- Regress in behavior and/ or skills
- Difficulty sleeping, or preparing for bed
- Have difficulty separating from parents or families

School Age Children May:

- Be concerned for their own safety and the safety of others
- Become preoccupied with their own actions or actions of others
- Be repetitive in their description of traumatic event
- Describe being overwhelmed by their feelings of fear or sadness
- Have difficulty concentrating or learning
- Complain of headaches or stomach aches with no obvious cause
- Engage in aggressive or impulsive behavior

Adolescent Children May:

- Feel more self conscious
- Withdraw from family or friends
- Experience a shift in the way they think about the world
- Engage in self-destructive behaviors.



You will probably see these:

(but with more colorful language)

Kids' Sadness About COVID-19 May Look Like:

Anger

"This stupid remote doesn't work!"

Resisting the "new order"

"I'm not doing four math problems! I'm only doing one!"

Tiredness

"I don't want to go for a walk. I'm too tired!"

Numbing Out

("Just 30 more minutes on the iPad!")

Displaced frustration

"I didn't want lasagna for dinner. I wanted tacos!"

Boredom

"I'm bored" = code for "I'm sad"

www.erinleyba.com

We've seen these before, and may see more:

Defiance Inability to Regulate Emotions

Impulsive Outbursts
Running Away
Self Injury

Aggression

Trauma Re-enactment

I miss my friends. I miss my staff.

When will things go back to normal?

I miss my family.

I didn't even get to say goodbye!!!

My vacation was canceled!

I hate wearing masks!

Will my grandma get it? Will she die? Will my dad die? Will I die? I want to celebrate my birthday!

We need to continue to support our students:

Physically, socially emotionally and academically.

Here are some strategies that can help:

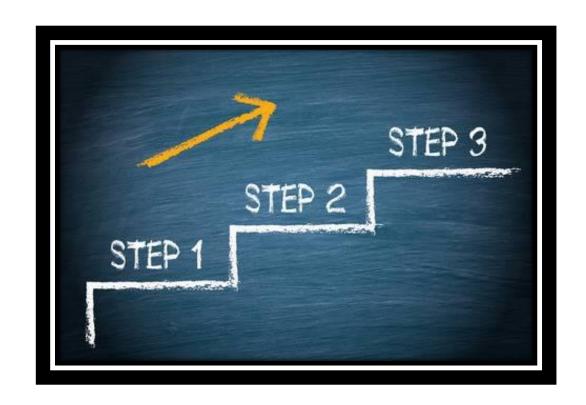


Establish a routine using verbal and nonverbal strategies (like schedules and expectations).

Remember to empathize with difficulties young people may have adjusting to routines and readjusting when routines change again.



Provide directions that are simple and easy to follow.



Returning to a routine or completing assignments can be overwhelming.

Encourage young people to ask for help, and check in with them to see if they need it.

Use your active listening skills such as:

Door openers: "I'd like to hear more," or "Tell me about,"

Open Questions: "How are you feeling about having to come back?"

Closed Questions can be useful for young people who are more resistant to talk: "Do you miss being with your family?"

Reflective Responses: "You're angry about your visit being cancelled. I'd be upset too.

Aim to clarify misinformation and connect students with other important adults who help them feel safe.

Remember, active listening:

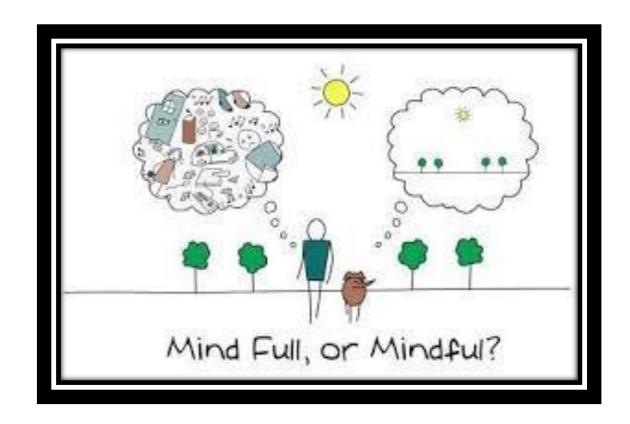
Identifies and validates feelings
Reduces defensiveness
Promotes change
Communicates that you care and understand
Is an effective co-regulation strategy
Helps young people "talk out rather than act out."





Show appreciation for the effort they put in!

Students need to feel valued, welcome, and important-even when they have a bad day.



Provide and participate in activities that promote social emotional learning and wellness.

Give students an opportunity to share their feelings, such as reflective circles.

For example, help students communicate how they are feeling by reviewing charts and examples. You can help them scale their behaviors, "How big is that feeling?"

Communicate the importance of connectedness, safety, and hope to colleagues, families, and young people.







Shift the question from

What's wRONG with you?!

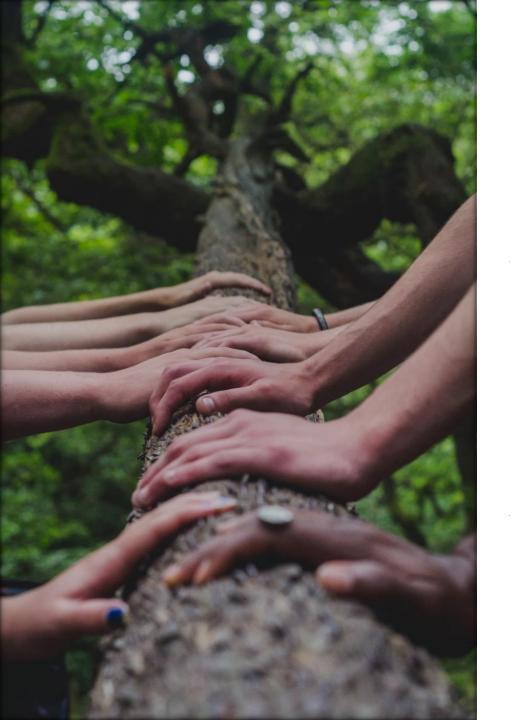


What's HAPPENED to you?

What's HAPPENING to you? Remember that, as adults we can be the best guides for how our students and children will do.

They are watching and listening to us, so when we take care of ourselves, we're modeling how they can take care of themselves, too.





We must do these strategies first with each other, before we see the impact on the young people we work with.

THANK YOU FOR REVIEWING THIS INFORMATION

Double click the Microsoft Word Document to sign your completion certificate!

