Trauma-Informed Toolbox Strategy Session:
Coping With Isolation
(Remote Work & Physical Distancing)

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One of COVID-19’s harshest ironies: Just when we need each other more, we’re being forced apart.
COVID-19 and Loss of Connection

- Canceling Group Events
- Closing of Public Spaces
- Unable to Support Patients the Same Way
- Unable to See/Altered Experiences with Family/Friends
- Unable to See/Communicate with Colleagues the Same Way
Possible Responses to COVID-19 Isolation

- Loneliness
- Anxiety, worry or fear
- Uncertainty or ambivalence
- Anger of frustration
- Boredom
- Changes in appetite

- Sadness
- Difficulties sleeping
- Emotion dysregulation
- Desire for maladaptive coping strategies
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Reduced motivation or willpower

Research has shown that quarantine is associated with post-traumatic stress symptoms, particularly with longer quarantine duration.

(Brooks et al., 2020; NETRF, 2020; Stallard & Stallard, 2020)
Practical Actions to Boost Wellbeing in Times of Physical Distancing

- Cultivate a connection mindset
- Maintain an optimistic mindset
- Get creative on how you might engage in activities with others
- Take care of yourself
- Play music
- Set aside time each day for a quiet period
- Pause to be grateful
- Learn something new
- Don’t worry alone - when anxious or stressed, call a friend
- Go for walks
- Find ways to maintain some routine
- Cultivate practices that produce contentment

(Stallard & Stallard, 2020)
Trauma-Informed Responses to COVID-19 Isolation

Consider how your health center be strategic around:

• “Taking pause” and witness/acknowledge the challenges of isolation
• Providing regular space and time for connection with others
• Offering choice and being creative re: opportunities for connection
• Encouraging and providing structure and routine for an increased sense of normalcy
• Noticing what’s working, what is going well and what gives others hope/meaning
• Continuing to utilize the 5 guiding values/principles of TIC to ensure universal precaution

(Cuncic, 2020; Harris & Fallot, 2001; Holt-Lunstad, 2020)
How well are you coping with isolation?

Scaling: 1 = not well  5 = half-way there  10 = very well

What will it take to get just one point higher on the scale?
Additional Resources Re: Coping with Isolation

Good Grief – *Tips for Reducing Isolation*

Let There Be Health (video) – *Your Brain on Social Distancing*

Northwestern University - *Strategies for Coping with Isolation and Loneliness During the Coronavirus Pandemic*

Rebecca Dolgin – *How to Survive Social Distancing*