



Parenting during pandemic

Day 27: Exhausted! How to cope with feeling exhausted while parenting during the pandemic.

You may have seen articles and discussions about how video calls have increased during the pandemic but also about how they are exhausting. This is because our brains are used to interacting in other ways with people where we usually get to see more of them and interpret the non-verbal as well as verbal aspects of their communication. Video calls mean we have to interpret other things around communication and learning this new way of doing things is exhausting. But for parents, learning to do new things and adapting to the new situation during the pandemic and lockdown is on overdrive! This is not just about video calls. This is learning to home school, which teachers spend years doing; this is about constant communication and probably conflict resolution; this is about trying to interpret behaviour; this is about juggling work, home schooling, play, rest etc of everyone at home while worrying about coronavirus and the wellbeing of everyone in our lives and wider society. It's exhausting!

Parents are doing lots of new things during the pandemic and lockdown but they are also thinking about, worrying about and processing lots of new things. This means we are feeling the emotional toll of all of this and yesterday we talked about the issue of 'overwhelmed' feeling like the new normal but that this is not sustainable. Just around the pandemic alone, we are overthinking, trying to protect everyone, trying to predict the future, making assumptions, jumping to conclusions. Some of these thoughts will turn out to be true and others will not leading to processing of this, which also takes a toll. Overall, it's not surprising that we are exhausted.

If exhaustion is the main theme of lockdown for you while you are parenting during the pandemic then the best thing to do is to give yourself permission to stop and go back to basics. We have written these blogs five days per week and we are in the sixth week of lockdown so there has been a lot of advice and lots to think about. Today we are saying stop. Don't worry about all the advice and tips and striving to do everything. Don't worry about the home schooling. The teachers are all well aware of what's happening for people right now and they will support catching up with anything and everything after we know that we have gotten as many people as possible through this time. Teachers have specialist training and

years of experience in supporting children to learn and develop within their own levels of ability and they are used to times when children have to be off school for medical reasons. While the scale of this is different with everyone off at the same time, the teachers know what to do.

The main advice for today is go back to basics. Eat some healthy food, try to get some sleep, try to get a bit of exercise and do something you enjoy during the day like play or watch a funny family movie. Essentially, rest and recharge. If we continually push to do everything all of the time, we can find that nothing is done as well as we would want. Whereas if we rest and recharge then our efficiency and effectiveness improve. Be a little bit gentle with yourself and you may find that things seem better quicker than expected.

We hope these tips are helpful. Well done on managing another day off school and we hope you will join us again tomorrow.

Tomorrow's topic: Rainbows, unicorns, dinosaurs and magic! Keeping the magic of childhood even in lockdown

Please contact us with questions, comments or topics you'd like to see covered. We'd love to hear your feedback.

Wishing you a safe and healthy path through this pandemic.