The measures to contain the coronavirus enacted by the Federal Council are important and right. This extraordinary situation is challenging for everyone. Being restricted in our freedom of movement and social contacts can trigger fear, stress and pressure for individuals, couples or families and lead to overchallenge and conflict situations. This can ultimately end in aggression and violence. Approved behavior tips and advice from practice and research in psychology might help master such situations in the best possible way. You can find a selection of those helpful tips in this information leaflet. It is also appropriate, however, to get help when we are stuck ourselves. It is a sign of strength and responsible behavior to tackle problems. On the last page, you can find xx listed. As a general rule: Everyone is different and should respond to recommendations in a way most fitting to them.

How to handle challenges better

**Keep a daily routine!**
Routine helps avoiding chaos, provides security and strength in stressful situations. Keeping a daily routine is like practicing a ritual. So don’t stay in your pajamas all day, get up and get dressed as usual. Stick to your usual mealtimes, bedtime, work or study time. You may need to adapt your routine to the current situation.

**Schedule your day with as much detail as possible!**
If you actively shape a situation, you can reduce the feeling of being helpless at the mercy of circumstances.

**Be selective and intentional about your media consumption!**
Reliable and clear information provide orientation and security, but avoid non-stop media consumption.

**Remember your inner resources!**
What does «inner resources» mean? All positive experiences you have had in your life, problems you have already solved, your strengths and your talents. Activate and use them.

**Work out!**
Exercise works wonders in your head and has positive effects on your mind. Working out is possible, even in confined spaces: There are plenty of tips and workout programs on the Internet. Every sore muscle is a success!

**Uses all available channels to connect socially!**
Connectedness with our circle of friends and family keeps us grounded. Connect with a phone call and video chats. Share the things you were pleased about today.

**Pick up shelved projects or start new ones!**
Get big and small tasks done. Seize the time and dedicate yourself to personal projects.

**Plan at least one highlight per day to look forward to!**
In challenging times like these, it is particularly important to have an activity to look forward to, such as a video call with your best friend.

How to limit stress when parents and children are at home together

Under exceptional situations, the ultimate objective is to handle the time with as little stress as possible. Discipline should not be the main focus during that time.

- Explain the situation to your children in ways they can understand at their age.
- Stick to your daily routine and plan study and leisure times.
- Define time slots in which they will keep themselves busy on their own.
How to handle fear and sorrow

Exceptional circumstances can sometimes trigger strong fear and sorrow. Here are some tips which will help you handle it better.

**Separate yourself from negativity and alarmists!**
Reduce your media consumption in regards to coronavirus. Being constantly confronted with certain images and narratives weighs us down. Refrain from constantly reading texts, e-mails and WhatsApp messages about corona virus, or watching videos about it.

**Know your feelings and take them seriously!**
When you have «too many» feelings inside of you or even repress certain emotions such as fear, you might suddenly get «swamped» by them. This is why you should take time regularly to evaluate and express what you feel. Some find it easy to write down their feelings, others become creative and paint, play music or meditate.

**Speak about your thoughts and feelings!**
It’s important to speak about unpleasant or even frightening thoughts and feelings. People who have confided in someone report feeling better afterwards, so talk to someone helpful who you can trust. If there is no such person in your immediate environment or if you should experience strong fear or feel weary of life, get in touch with a help center.

**Drink mindfully!**
Alcohol comes in the disguise of a good friend helping to get a grip on frustration, worries and fear. The truth is: Alcohol has a grip on you. Too much alcohol is often paired with aggression. Sit down with someone helpful you can trust or a professional and think about what really helps you deal with your worries.

**Limit rumination!**
Ruminating is one of our strategies in handling stressful situations. However, too much of it is counterproductive as it causes stress («endless loop in our heads»). Find a strategy ahead of time that helps you distract yourself during the next rumination attack, for example by listening to music or reading.

**Focus on positive things and use your humor!**
Focusing on positive content calms and stabilizes. In stressful times it is all the more important to use humor as a resource. Laughter reduces stress, strengthens your immune system, releases «feel good» hormones and connects you with other people. It makes you more relaxed and creative. Smile and laugh about big and small things.

**Perform simple relaxation exercises!**
Fear and relaxation will not co-exist. So if you do relaxation exercises you therefore reduce your fear. There are plenty of instructions on the internet.

**Remember, the situation will pass!**
Thoughts such as «I don’t want to be at home right now» enhance negative feelings. Accept the current situation knowing that this time will pass. Make the best of it. Plan activities that you would like to do after the situation is over.
How to diminish conflicts and quarreling

So-called «social density stress» occurs in confined spaces. The unusually high amount of time spent together can also lead to conflicts or arguments in the partnership and in family life.

- Avoid judging, be more lenient than usual towards yourself and others. It is a challenge for everyone.
- Give each other time to be alone. During this time the other person may not be disturbed.
- Allow all family members to retreat at set times, but also spontaneously.
- Hold a daily family conference: How is everyone doing, who needs what, what ideas and wishes do the individuals have?
- Address anger before the situation escalates.
- During discussion, stick to talking about yourself and your feelings. Criticize specific behavior, not the whole person. Instead of saying «you are untidy» for instance, say «I don't feel so good at home with things lying around everywhere».
- Present possible solutions and be mindful of the other person’s needs.
- Accept that maybe there is no perfect solution for the moment.
- Take advantage of fresh air and exercise to clear your head.
- If you feel like you’re going in circles, get support from someone outside the family.

How to prevent or end violence

Counteract the escalation of a situation actively and intentionally. In an emergency, quickly get support for yourself or others.

**Recognize and name violence. Even with yourself!**
Violence comes in many different shapes: Beating, shouting, depreciation, ignoring for a longer time. If you realize you’re unable to cope and become aggressive, be honest with yourself about it.

**You bear the responsibility for non-violent behavior!**
We all know negative emotions, tension and aggression. Those strong emotions are not a reason and no excuse to use violence. It is your responsibility to behave in a non-violent way.

**Communicate!**
Let others know that you need distance now and wish to continue the conversation later.

**Leave the situation!**
Go to another room. Take a deep breath.

**Make a phone call for your own relief!**
Talk to a friend on the phone. Contact a help center.

**If violence takes place: Talk!**
If you notice other adults becoming violent at home – in particular against children or youth – talk to them. You might be the only person in this situation who can protect the child now. However, do not put yourself in danger. In case of emergency call the police (117).

**Get help if you are affected by violence yourself!**
The same applies, of course, if you are affected by violence yourself! In this case it is important that you don’t stay alone. You are not alone, even if it looks that way during a period of isolation. Get help: from friends, neighbors or help centers. Carry your charged cell phone with you at all times. Call the Police (117) if you are threatened or beaten.
Reception centers

**Protection from violence**

In an emergency always call 117!

**Cantonal Police Zurich**
Protection against violence, Tel. 044 295 98 50, gewaltschutz@kapo.zh.ch
Youth Intervention, Tel. 044 247 30 30, jugendintervention@kapo.zh.ch

**Zurich Police Department**
Threat Management, Tel. 044 411 64 64, stp-bedrohungsmanagement@zuerich.ch

**Winterthur Police Department**
Protection against violence, Tel. 052 267 64 71, gewaltschutz@win.ch
Juvenile Police, Tel. 052 267 57 57, jugendpolizei@win.ch

**Counseling or mediation**

Victim Support Switzerland, www.opferhilfe-schweiz.ch
Intervention agency against domestic violence, www.ist.zh.ch
Umbrella Organization of Swiss Men & Father's Organizations, www.maenner.ch
Swiss Professional Association for Counseling against Violence, www.fvgs.ch

**Support with fears, worries and conflicts**

Pro Senectute, www.prosenectute.ch
Pro Juventute, Tel.147, www.147.ch
Die Dargebotene Hand (Carephone), Tel. 143. www.143.ch
Dureschnufe, www.dureschnufe.ch
Emergency Call for Parents, Tel. 0848 35 45 55, www.elternnotruf.ch

**Psychological-psychiatric support**

Cantonal Association of Zurich Psychologists (ZÜPP), www.zuepp.ch/psyfinder
Zurich Society for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy (ZGPP), https://www.psychiatrie-zuerich.chPsychiatric
University Hospital Zurich, www.pukzh.ch
Integrierte Psychiatrie Winterthur, www.ipw.zh.ch
Sanatorium Kilchberg, www.sanatorium-kilchberg.ch
Clenia Schlössli, www.cienia.ch

Kantonspolizei Zürich, Präventionsabteilung
Kantonale Opferhilfestelle Zürich
Psychiatrische Universitätsklinik Zürich
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COVID-19: Wie Sie häusliche Isolation und Quarantäne gut überstehen (How to survive domestic isolation and quarantine)