



PARADIGM
TREATMENT

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS



HOW TEENS, PARENTS, AND MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAN THRIVE IN A

POST-C VID WORLD

INTRODUCTION

There is **no** health without mental health. Statistics share that 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime, and more specifically one in five teens between the ages of twelve and eighteen suffer from at least one diagnosable mental health disorder. It's important to acknowledge that nearly everyone will face challenges that will impact their mental health.

Paradigm Treatment would like to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month by providing teens, parents, clinicians, and teachers with information and resources designed to help them cope with mental health concerns in healthy ways - including how to move past the mental health struggles of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This Download includes:

- *An interactive guidebook for teens, parents, and mental health professionals as well as important mental health statistics. You'll find practical tips and tools that everyone can use to boost their mental health wellness during this time.*

DEALING WITH TRAUMA IN LIFE

Throughout our lives, we are forced to endure hardships. We all face trauma one way or another. It just may be different than what you assume. When people think of trauma, they often think of catastrophic events (big 'T' trauma). Trauma can also be caused by events that may be less obvious but can still overwhelm your capacity to cope, like frequent arguing at home or getting bad grades (little 't' trauma).

We've all collectively gone through our unique trauma dealing with COVID-19. In one household, there can be a variety of traumas being experienced - from parents having to juggle their home lives to teenagers having to face a new, virtual reality. Trauma of any kind can be hard on your mental health but when you learn to be resilient, you develop the tools necessary to be strong in the wake of traumatic events.

FACT:

People who have been through trauma are 3 times more likely to experience depression

THE 4 TRAUMA RESPONSES

During and after experiencing trauma, it's common to go into survival mode. When our brains perceive a threat in our environment, we automatically go into one of these stress response modes. From an evolutionary standpoint, these responses have served us well by allowing us to respond quickly to threats and get to safety. But for folks who have lived through prolonged exposure to abuse or trauma (often referred to as complex trauma), the threat never feels like it went away, leaving many individuals "stuck" in different stress response modes. Read below to understand The 4 #Trauma Responses in-depth.

FIGHT

This may mean confronting a threat with rage, intimidation, outbursts, physical aggression.

FLIGHT

This may entail panic, over-achieving, restlessness, overplanning, avoiding.

We're all familiar with "fight or flight" but are you aware of the other two trauma responses?

FREEZE

This may include spacing out, isolating, disassociating, going silent, sleeping to cope.

FAWN

This may entail people-pleasing.

It may feel safest to bury painful feelings and avoid confronting them, but acknowledging what happened and how it has impacted you is an important part of healing. When you feel ready, take time to think about how you've been affected (and be proud of yourself for pushing through).

The pain of trauma can lead to isolation, but after the last year of extreme isolation, we've learned that having a support system is a crucial part of wellbeing. Emotional support helps us feel less alone or overwhelmed by what's going on and allows us to deal in healthy ways with people who make us feel secure. Talking to someone who has gone through a similar experience or someone who cares about you can be validating - and help you feel more able to overcome the challenges you're facing.

— BEING RESILIENT DURING CHANGE

Change is happening all the time and is simply a guaranteed part of life. It's something everyone experiences at one point or another — good or bad. Sometimes that change happens in big ways when we aren't expecting it or aren't prepared for it (like in 2020 when the pandemic first hit). These types of situations can make navigating your path difficult because it may force you to change directions and expectations. By providing yourself with tools for processing change, you can adapt more easily.

At some point, you'll probably have to accept the change that you're experiencing and then focus on what you can control within that. For example, you can control how you react to situations, how you start each day, or how kind you are to yourself and others. It can be comforting to know that there are still things that you have control over, even when other things are changing.

FACT:

Strong social support from family members following significant life events can significantly lessen depression symptoms in teens and has a lasting positive effect in dealing with life changes.

TRY IT YOURSELF:

If you're going through big, overwhelming changes, write down your feelings on paper. When you're processing big changes, your brain may have a hard time processing exactly how you feel. Instead of holding it all in your mind, allow yourself to release it. Writing things down is one of the best ways to do that. Start a journal—jot down a quick list of your thoughts and feelings or write a letter to yourself or someone else. Getting your thoughts onto paper is a great starting point for understanding yourSELF.



— SELF-CARE FOR BETTER MENTAL HEALTH

There are always a handful of roles that each of us are juggling. If you are a parent, a student, an employee, a caretaker, someone struggling with a mental health concern, or are just feeling overwhelmed with the responsibilities of day-to-day life, the idea of taking time for yourself may seem unimaginable. Sometimes it can be difficult to even take basic care of ourselves - but there are small things that can be done to make self-care and taking time for ourselves a little bit easier.

Self-care is proven to reduce stress and anxiety levels while increasing self-compassion.

Self-care isn't all about facials and working out. Self-care can also take the form of setting boundaries, saying "no", building your resiliency, and self-acceptance.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

In 2020, parents were faced with one of the most harrowing tasks of their lives - to endure a global pandemic while trying to work, tend to their children, and operate the household while being stuck inside. Everyone rose to the occasion and took it day by day, but now we've reached a point where the burnout from operating in that capacity is starting to catch up with us. As we move into a new, more promising chapter of our lives, there may be some new and never-before experienced anxieties that pop up.

Here are some important things that parents can do for themselves and their teens to ensure mental health wellness during this unique time.

- *First, remember the position that teens and young adults are in right now. Many are still in a disruptive mix of virtual and in-person learning and remain isolated from friends and activities that bolstered their lives. This can take a toll on grades, mental health, and attitude.*
- *Anticipate challenges. The social adjustment is likely to be challenging for many kids. One way to help alleviate worries is to role-play situations in advance and provide a safe space for them to work out their anxieties or questions.*
- *Restart a consistent schedule. Teens may find it easier to get back into a structured routine if they start following the new schedule BEFORE the first day of in-person classes. Get back to setting the alarm each day and shutting off electronics in the evening before bed.*
- *Set expectations about others. Even with all the safety protocols in place, kids are likely to encounter situations where other kids aren't following the rules. Parents can help kids handle those situations by talking through potential scenarios and answering any questions along the way.*

- *Troubleshoot with open-ended questions. While some children are eager to share their feelings, others are less inclined to tell a parent what's going on. Skip the generic, "How was school?" question and get creative with your queries. In some cases, it may be easier to first ask your kids how a friend's day went, or ask the child to share one thing they liked or disliked about the day. Starting small and specific can open the door to conversations about bigger concerns.*
- *Remember, there are always mental health resources that would benefit your whole family. Seeking resources like teletherapy programs like Paradigm's TeleCARE, in-person therapy, or residential mental health treatment at a facility like Paradigm Treatment, could be a life-changing experience for your teen that will provide them with the tools necessary to cope with change, uncertainty, and mental health issues.*

HIGHLIGHT THEIR STRENGTHS

The next time your teen is worried about something, sit down with them and highlight the strengths that have helped them overcome challenges in the past. Remind them of their own resiliency.

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ASK THEM WHAT THEY NEED

Ask your kids point blank:

“What can I do to reduce your worries about this?”

or

“What do you need from me to help you right now?”

EXPLORE AND MODEL SELF-CARE HABITS AS A FAMILY

Your kids learn by watching you, so when your stress management techniques are healthy, it benefits the whole family! By incorporating and modeling consistent, healthy self-care habits, you encourage your teen to do the same. This will inspire lifelong wellness and positive decision making. Focus on habits such as being active, getting outside, making safe decisions, helping others, and having fun.

PARENT & TEEN MORNING & EVENING SELF CARE ROUTINE

Fill in the blank

MORNING ROUTINE

: _____

: _____

: _____

: _____

: _____

EVENING ROUTINE

: _____

: _____

: _____

: _____

: _____

CONSIDER MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT OR TELECARE PROGRAMS

If your children are having a hard time adjusting to their particular “new normal”, it may be a sign of an underlying mental health disorder that deserves professional help. By getting the right resources and treatment, your whole family can learn helpful methods to support one another. Paradigm Treatment has award-winning residential programs and a virtual telehealth program, TeleCARE, to help teens thrive through adversity. [Click here to visit our site](#) and learn more about what we treat and how we’ve helped teens and families for over 10 years.



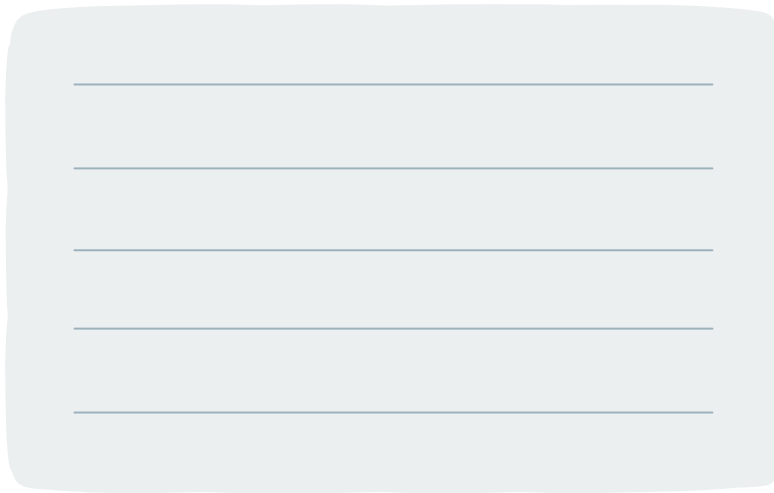
WHAT TEENS CAN DO

At some juncture, a large percentage of teenagers will meet the criteria for anxiety, depression or other mental conditions. With the added trauma of the global pandemic, it's no surprise that teens are one of the most affected groups. The pandemic has forced teens to be removed from normal social, physical, and educational interactions.

- *Take care of your body. Stress and trauma impact your physical health just as much as your mind. Listening to your body and giving it what it needs will help you heal. This includes eating a nutritious diet, getting enough sleep, staying hydrated, and exercising regularly. Moving your body is especially helpful in trauma healing – aim to do it every day, even if it's only a few minutes of stretching.*
- *Don't compare your experience to others. We often question our own thoughts or experiences, and you may convince yourself that what you experienced wasn't a big deal because "others have it worse." Everyone experiences trauma differently. If it hurt you, then it hurt you – and your feelings and experiences are valid.*
- *Remember your support systems and that help is always available. Don't feel ashamed to ask for help. It's easy to compare how you're feeling to how you assume others who have been through similar experiences are feeling, and you may get down on yourself because it seems like everyone else is doing just fine. What others experience and how they cope doesn't matter in your journey – if you feel like you need or want help, it's important to get that as soon as you can.*
- *Think of your strengths. Big changes tend to challenge and test you, but it's likely that you'll grow from all of the things that you're facing. Remind yourself as often as possible that you are strong and capable and can make it through whatever challenges you're facing (and that you've made it through some tough changes in the past). Maybe even say it out loud to yourself to really let it sink in. With each passing day, you're building resilience.*
- *Know it will take time. There is no set timeline for how you "should" heal or feel. Remove the pressure of needing to bounce back quickly and focus on taking it one step at a time. Remember: recovery isn't linear, and it's normal to have bad days and setbacks. It doesn't mean you're failing – it's just part of the process.*

RAISING AWARENESS

What exactly is bothering you? Write it down and list out what you're feeling both physically and emotionally. If you can't find the words, list out colors, emotions, and sensations.



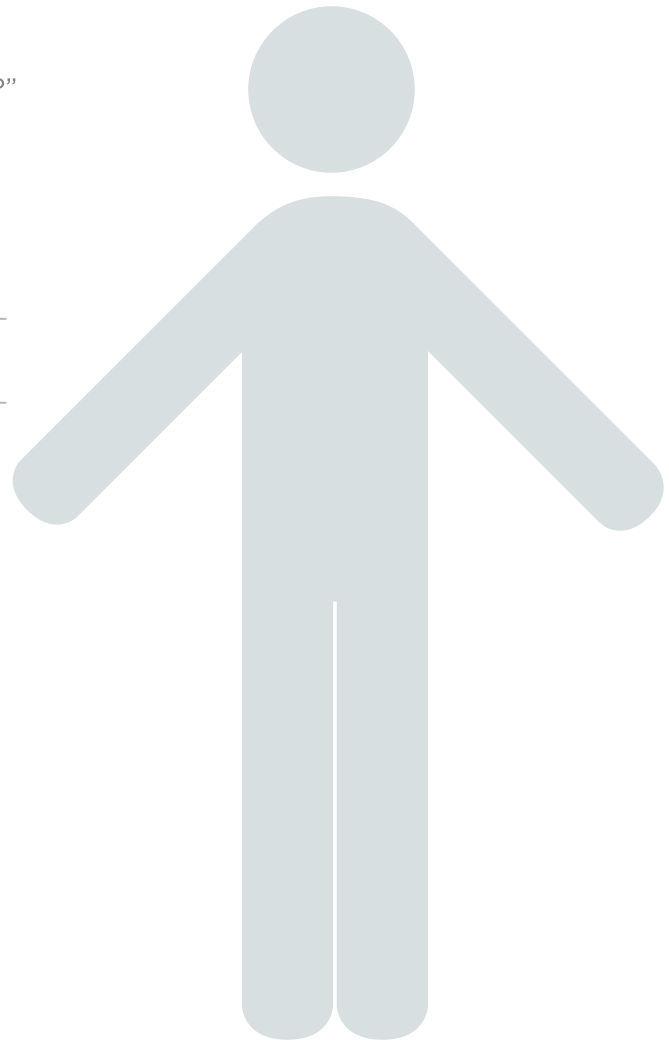
HUMAN BODY MAP

Fill in the lines for "What Am I Feeling & Where?"

WHAT AM I FEELING?



Use the diagram to circle where



DEALING WITH CHANGE

Address these questions

What is the biggest change you're dealing with right now?

What worries you about this change?

What excites you?

What are facts versus opinions?

REMEMBER THE GOOD

Despite the pain or discomfort of this reality, remember what or who makes your life wonderful. Write those things down and always remember them.

TIP:

Radical acceptance is a great way to accept the things you cannot control. This way, you're relieved from the friction of fighting against it. For instance, you can tell yourself, "I can't change what has happened. It is what it is. I'm still alive and tomorrow is a new day." Then, focus on the parts of the situation that you CAN control.

WHAT MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAN DO

For clinicians and mental health professionals, providing care to others during this time can lead to serious stress, anxiety, fear, and other strong emotions within yourself. How you cope with these emotions can affect your well-being, the care you give to others while doing your job, and the well-being of the people you care about outside of work. During this time, it's imperative that you recognize how your particular stress triggers appear, how to build your own resilience, and know when to ask for help.

- *Know about stress-related disorders, compassion fatigue, and burnout*
- *Communicate with your coworkers, supervisors, and employees about job stress*
- *Talk openly about how the pandemic has affected your work*
- *Identify factors that cause stress and work to identify solutions*
- *Ask about how to access mental health resources in your workplace*
- *Recognize that you are performing a crucial role in fighting this pandemic and that you are doing the best you can with the resources available*
- *Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting and mentally exhausting, especially since you work with people directly affected by the virus*
- *Practice how to “leave it at the door”, personally and professionally*

RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Paradigm Treatment Resources

[TeleCARE](#)

[Mental Health Conditions We Treat](#)

[Client Testimonials](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Mental Health Resources and Links

[NAMI](#)

[Mental Health America](#)

[One Mind](#)

Inclusive Mental Health Resources

[The Loveland Foundation](#)

[Black Girl Therapy](#)

[Asian Mental Health Clinic](#)

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)

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