



TECOM Connection

Newsletter

June/July 2020



TECOM Adjutant and Staff Secretary Marines

TECOM Adjutant and Staff Secretary Marines staying safe during COVID-19!
(Pictured: LCpl Goncharenko, Sgt Walker, GySgt Mahovich, Cpl Crain, SSgt Villarreal, LCpl Washington)



Mr. Jim Kirkpatrick

Mr. Jim Kirkpatrick (Kirkpatrick Partners) participated in the TECOM Connection "Seeking Your Teleworking Photos". In the photo, Mr. Kirkpatrick is engaged in a meeting with his Kirkpatrick team members. If you haven't already, please read Jim and Wendy Kirkpatrick article, "Training: Your Secret Weapon For Success" March 2020 edition.

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THE NEW NORMAL

From The Editor



All,

I would like to thank Jim and Wendy Kirkpatrick (Kirkpatrick Partners) for their participation in our command newsletter. Please take a moment to read Wendy's email regarding our total workforce newsletter. Your participation and collaboration matter to sustain this newsletter. We continuously appreciate your support for the *TECOM Connection*. My most important message for you is to take care of yourself, your families and your neighbors. Let's unite and connect as a community with our colleagues as we face this new challenge together.

Respectfully,

Terra Eiding
Editor

Terra Eiding working from home.

Wednesday, April 22, 2020 11:41 AM

“

Dear Terra,

Thank you again for inviting us to contribute content to your newsletter. We are really honored to be asked, and pleased to share a few tips with the USMC.

I'm really glad that you are doing a newsletter. In today's fast world, these human connections are important. The photos and the stories really send a community message to the USMC readers, and I think that is critically important.

”

Thanks for the good work you are doing!

Best regards,
Wendy

DISCLAIMER: “Material contained herein is made available for the purpose of peer review and discussion and does not necessarily reflect or endorsed the views of the Department of the Navy or the Department of Defense.”

From The Sergeant Major



Marines, Sailors, and Civilians,

I wanted to take a minute to let you know what I think of you and the work that you do. All of you are among the best people in our Corps. We always talk about the guy or gal behind the scenes making things happen for the fleet, and in most cases that is someone here at TECOM. You all have played an instrumental role in ensuring that the Marine Corps is the most ready when the nation is not. I believe the statement below holds true, particularly in light of this global pandemic.

The 82d Congress published in 1952 that the United States Marines Corps, the Nation’s “shock troops” must be the most ready when the Nation is generally least ready.

As we get ready to welcome in a new Commanding General, and a Sergeant Major followed by my transition to Training Command, I want you to know that TECOM will always be one of the favorite billets of my career. That is in part because of you and the things you do day after day for our Corps!

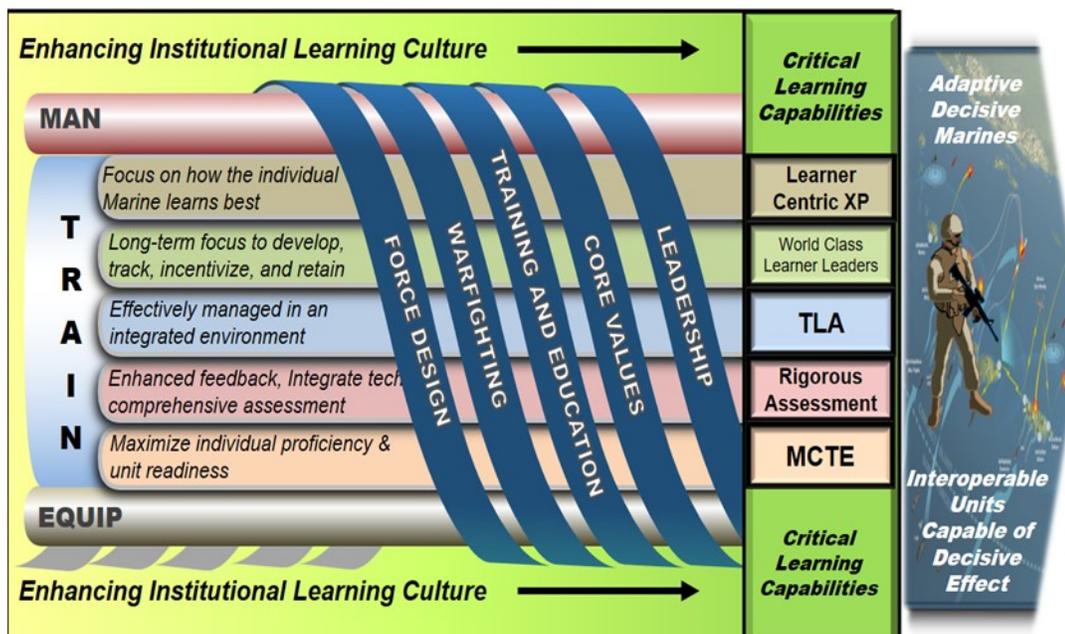
TECOM is headed for major changes, some that have already happened, are underway or to come. I ask you to continue to keep the forward momentum going while leading and mentoring everyone around you. I know that TECOM is in good hands, and everything you are doing for our institution will make our Corps stronger along the way.

Lastly, I am appreciative of the comradery you all have shown me over the last year. I hope you and your families stay safe and healthy and thank you for everything that you do!

SEMPER FIDELIS,
SGTMAJ EASTON

The Critical Capabilities of 21st Century Learning

by The Policy and Learning Branch



With the June 2020 Marine Corps Gazette publication being dedicated to 21st Century Learning (you’ll need to pick up a copy to learn about it), we wanted to take a moment and highlight the critical capabilities which will enhance our institutional learning culture. Excerpt from *21st Century Learning: Professionalizing how we train and educate Marines to sustain a competitive edge in the future security environment* (MCG June 2020).

Learner Centric Experiences

A continuum of learning opportunities that is traceable and adaptable to the unique requirements of each learner.

World Class Learner Leaders

Highly skilled teachers, coaches, mentors, trainers, facilitators, exercise designers, curriculum developers, and small unit leaders who directly influence individual Marine learning.

Total Learning Architecture

An interoperable, enterprise-level architecture that enables, validates, and tracks a continuum of personal and collective learning experiences; enhances individual development, unit readiness, talent management, and rigorous assessment.

Rigorous Assessment

Supports identification of learning trends and informs corrective DOTMLPF (doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel, and facilities)

Marine Corps Training Environment

The full component of Marine Corps capabilities to plan, prepare, execute, and assess training; includes the ability to integrate live, virtual, and constructive (LVC) systems in all domains.



Be Encouraged and Encourage Others

by MSgt Jason Taylor (TECOM, PSD)

First, I would like to start with the hope that all TECOM personnel and families are in great spirits and health. As we all adjust to a new normal, I personally find solace in knowing that our team is safe and healthy. Personally, I have found this adjustment to a new normal, thought provoking and procedural to say the least.

I am MSgt Jason Taylor and I currently work at TECOM in the Policy and Standard Division (PSD) in a section that governs the Training Management Team (TMT) process. The main effort of my work is to gain training discrepancies from fleet aviation communities and submit those discrepancies in order to gain what is required to fix those issues. This is an extremely important endeavor as my team and I work diligently to ensure the fleet concerns are vetted in a timely manner and it gives them confidence that their voices are heard. Collecting these issues means getting out to the platform and communities that represent Marine Corps aviation. This past year I personally visited 10 different platforms and communities to better understand the training concerns they have. This is a collection of complaints and it is a collection of critically thought out training discrepancies that effect how Marines progress in their individual training and readiness (T&R) standards. A lot of the discrepancies we gain through the TMT process is to upgrade or enhance the simulators to which will impact the training of our pilots and aircrew.

During this year's TMT season, my team and I had several first time events happen as a result of planning and necessity. Those firsts included gaining the training issues impacting the Small Unmanned Aircraft system (SUAS). Speaking with community was not only a first, but a highlight of the year for my team and me, as the SUASs are one of the leading edge platforms to which the Marines use to fight with, now and into the future. Next was the gaining of the training issues from 1st Marine Air Wing. We went out to every Marine Corps Air Station in 1st Maw to sit with various commands to gain the training impacts that are specific to the region. We felt this was important as it fell in line with the Marine Corps shift of priority to that area. Last, we held our culminating event which is the Aviation Training Systems (ATS) TMT at the Naval Warfare Center Training Systems Division (NAWCTSD). This allowed us to pair the engineers and programmers who fix and update the simulators with the ATS Directors and Deputy Directors. This pairing allowed conversations to take place between the managers and end users of the simulators with the men and women who would ultimately fix or update the simulator. This led to a way forward on a host of current issues currently in the pipeline.

My work or attitude has not altered at all during the time of social distancing, though like most, I've had to change my routine to one that fits within a social distance construct. I typically would work out in the base gym 4 to 5 times a week depending on my schedule. To compensate for missing time at the on-base gym, I stay in shape, using the small gym I have at home. I have a weight bench, about 450 total pounds in barbell weights, resistance bands that range from 25 to 50 pounds, a workout mat, several exercise balls, and an elliptical. In the evening, I go on runs or walks to gain some much needed fresh air. I'm not the world's best runner, but the exercise itself has given me an excuse to get outdoors, which is a good thing

To ensure I stay mentally healthy, I'm reading several types of literature right now; *Stamped* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram Kendi, A systems engineering capstone report from the Naval Postgraduate School on *Distributed Maritime Operations and Unmanned Systems Tactical Employment*, and *Hill 488* by Ray Hildreth. I've also bought the annual pass to Master Class and have starting taking notes on the various subject contained within in effort to grow as an individual.

Along with my personal goals, my first priority is my responsibility to the fleet Marines who count on all of us at TECOM to ensure they have the best training the Marine Corps has to offer. I've reached out to the communities to which I work with to let them know that although I am not in the office, I am 100% available, and hard at work on the things that matter to them. I encourage all to stay motivated and keep moving forward! As an introduction to a *Street Car Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams wrote, "Time is short and doesn't return again, it is slipping away while I write this and while you read it, and the monosyllable of the clock is Loss, Loss, Loss, unless you devote your heart to its opposition."

What's Up with Application Development?

By Timothy Travis

A while ago I downloaded an app to my phone that would allow me to track the GPS location of my sixteen-year-old son's phone. I'm sure if you have a teen, or pre-teen, child you can guess why I did this. After the download and the installation, I was presented with a series of screens into which I had to enter information. The application directed what information was needed and, at times, stopped my progress when I did something wrong. I noted that on every screen there was the question mark icon that has become universally known as Help. After filling in all the information, I opened the application and was able to see a pinpoint icon on a map representing the location of my son's phone, and by association my son since he is never more than a foot away from his phone. I have to admit, I am not a technophile, but downloading the application to track my son was easy. You may be asking yourself, what does Tim's personal experience have to do with training Marines. The answer is simple. Commercial application developers have figured out how to rapidly create software applications that help users do things they want and need to do and the Marine Corps has taken notice. The rapid development process is called Agile, and as part of the Logistics Information Technology (IT) Portfolio Management Modernization Strategy the Marine Corps has started to implement Agile practices. I happen to be the Training Lead on one of the first Agile Logistics IT development efforts, Technical Data Management (TDM) – CATALYST, so I have a front row seat to adopting Agile. So let me introduce you to Agile, and how it may change the training landscape.

The Agile Manifesto

Agile was created during a meeting of software developers in 2001 who came together to, "find an alternative to documentation driven, heavyweight software development processes" (agilemanifesto.org/history.html, 2001) that delayed software delivery and missed the client's requirements when finished. The outcome was the four values of the Agile Manifesto: Individuals and interactions over processes and tools, Working software over comprehensive documentation, Customer collaboration over contract negotiation, and Responding to change over following a plan. The group then created 12 guiding principles on how to implement the Agile Manifesto's values. I am only going to focus on a few of the principles. If you are interested in learning more, visit <https://agilemanifesto.org>.

Agile Principles

The first principle I want to discuss is, *Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software*. In the current IT development process, often referred to as Waterfall, all of the requirements for an IT system are identified up front, the contract is let, the contractor works the requirements, and the government sees the new IT system at SIT and/or GAT which could be a year or more after the requirements were identified. What happens if the requirements changed during that time or the system developed doesn't meet the intent of the original requirements? Time and money are wasted and the Marines are still left without the solution to their identified need. One of the main goals of the Agile method of IT system development is to bridge the gap between development and operations and to deliver working solutions early and often. Agile development accomplishes this by identifying the value of requirements. The value is then further broken down to the smallest developmental unit called a User Story (for further information visit scaledagileframework.com). A user story is written in the language of the user and not a developer. For example, the structure of a story is: As a (user role), I want to (activity), so that (business value). The outcome of a user story is a functioning piece of software. Not only is the value broken down, but also a team's time is managed to support rapid development. Development teams, which are made of cross-functional members, work in two-week development durations called Sprints. During the Sprint, the team takes users stories and design, develop, test, and demonstrate the working software. Five to six Sprints are grouped into a Program Increment. Where the Sprint allows one team to develop and test a piece of software, the Program Increment tests the development of multiple teams and user stories with the goal of providing a Minimally Viable Product (MVP). An MVP is the smallest piece of software that can be tested to ensure the application meets requirements and can be released to users so they can begin benefiting from the application's capabilities. This process not only provides early and continuous delivery but also meets another Agile principle: *Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with preference to the shorter time scale*.

My current project is focused on solving issues identified in the Logistics IT Portfolio Management Modernization Strategy with regard to weapon systems total lifecycle system management. Following the Waterfall methodology this could take years to accomplish. In adopting Agile through a series of two-week sprints, it was determined Provisioning and Cataloging of Technical Data Management would be the first piece of the total lifecycle system management process that would be modernized. Our team's challenge was to create a single software application, our MVP, which would improve provisioning and cataloging efforts over the current four legacy systems that limit access to data and do not comply with the Marine Corps adoption of the GEIA STD 0007. We had twelve months to achieve this goal. (continued on page 7)

We successfully developed the MVP, TDM CATALYST, because we followed the Agile principles related to working, cross-functional teams: *Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project; Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility; and, the best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing team.* One of the most important concepts in Agile is that the development team is given the authority to make decisions for the application’s development without the need for leadership approval. The goal of leadership should be to build projects around motivated people, with an environment and support needed, and trust the team to get things done. TDM-CATALYST has been successful in its ability to work as a team with the right support from leadership to meet the MVP goals. Most of our challenges have come through working with outside organizations unfamiliar with Agile, but we work those challenges in the same way we develop the application – one Sprint at a time.

Agile’s Training Impact

So, let me close with focusing on the training aspects of Agile. The principle of, *Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility*, plays a large part in training development. One question the TDM-CATALYST team continually asks itself is – “What in-system tools and guardrails can we implement in the application design to assist users with system tasks?” Training is built into the system as part of the goal to make the application intuitive. Much like the application system helps that allowed me to download the application to track my son, our focus is to provide everything a user needs within the system to complete their tasks. For example, where concepts are new or more information will facilitate a user’s decisions, we have provided links to the standards, policies, and directives so users can read them and make their entries without leaving the system (See Figure 2). One of the other training functions we are adopting is the concept of Communities of Practice where users can communicate with each other and provide answers to each other’s questions through a blog associated with a Knowledge Base. TECOM will play a part as we leverage new ways of presenting information to our users using the MarineNet Video Services, MarineNet Moodle classrooms, and Adobe Captivate Prime Learning Management Systems. Combining both the in-application training and what TECOM can offer for rapid training delivery will facilitate and improve user adoption of new Logistics IT software applications. The possibility of getting Marines the tools they need more quickly to protect our interests across the globe through TECOM and Program Management Office collaborations excites me – and I hope it excites you as well.

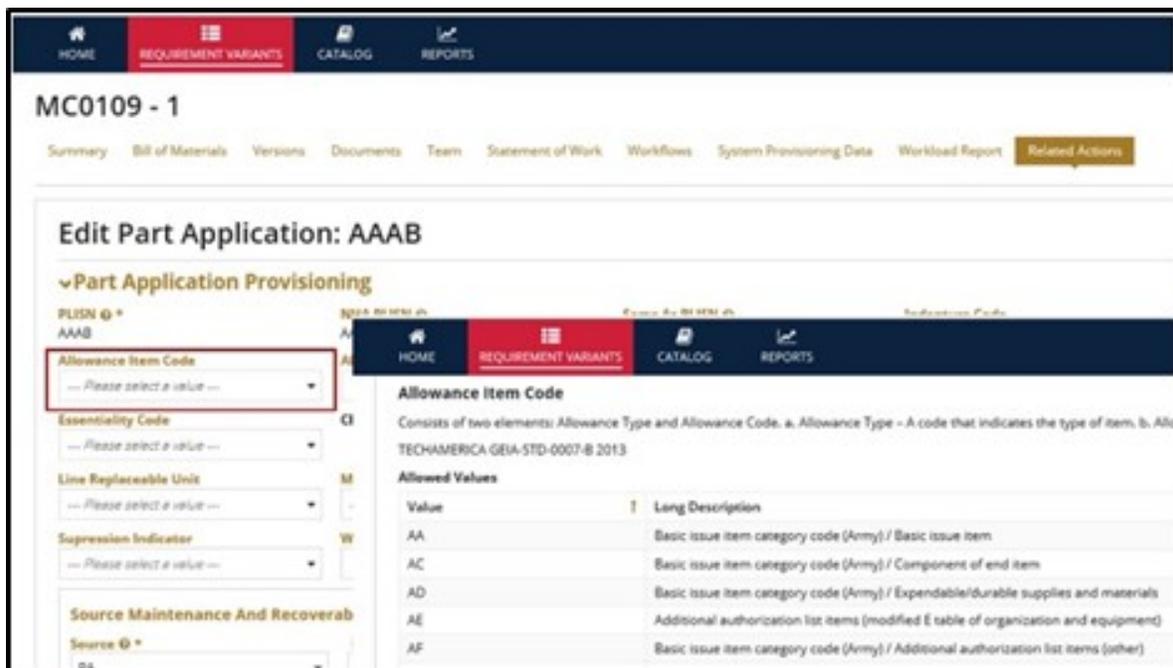


Figure 2: TDM-CATALYST In-System Help

Connections & Engagements

Reading Isn't Canceled.
Kindness Isn't Canceled.
Conversation Isn't Canceled.
Love Isn't Canceled.
Hope Isn't Canceled.
Creativity Isn't Canceled.
Music Isn't Canceled.
Imagination Isn't Canceled.

COVID-19:

←→ | **SOCIAL**
DISTANCING



Keeping 6 feet between you
and other people

The meme above regarding various activities not canceled illustrates our TECOM workforce navigating through this unprecedented time in our world as the new normal of connections and engagements continuously evolved. And, most importantly relationships aren't canceled as seen over the next few pages. Thank you to those who have participated.

Connections & Engagements



“Social Distance Gauge Model 2020 CV-19
NOTE: Yellow indicates caution zone”



“Director and Deputy MSTPD
demonstrating proper social distance
technique using the Social Distance Gauge
Model 2020 CV-19”

or

“When I say 6 feet, I mean 6 feet!”

Connections & Engagements



Bob Cooney, Doctrine Branch

Bob Cooney ...

The biggest adjustment to teleworking was not wearing a tie while working. The most enjoyable part about teleworking is not wearing a tie while working.



Rosemarie Fitzsimmons, Doctrine Branch

Rosemarie Fitzsimmons ...

“The biggest challenge to teleworking was that not all involved parties agreed to sign the MOU.”

Connections & Engagements



Sheila Brown & Family, G8



Ms. Sheila M. Brown...

Social Distancing while teleworking and classwork.

Zarriaunna Alexander, Senior (Class of 2020), Gabriel Armstrong (4th Grade) and Emmanuel Armstrong (1st Grade)



Terry Booker, Okinawa SNCO Academy

Terry Booker ...

“Terry Booker, Academics Officer teleworking from Hawaii.”



GySgt Daniel Franklin

GySgt Daniel Franklin, leading it with the rest of the faculty from SNCOA Camp Pendleton providing a workshop on High Reliability Schools founded by Dr. Robert J. Marzano. This model is based on 40 years of educational research, defines five progressive levels of performance that a school must master to become a high reliability school—where all students learn the content and skills they need for success in college, careers, and beyond.

Connections & Engagements



Robin Mooney, NMMC

Robin Mooney...

The National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC) Robin Mooney on a TECOM Health and Wellness program walk.



Wesley Hicks, G1

Wesley Hicks...

Getting a rental car for my daughter due to the repair shop not fixing the issue that was originally problem.



Charley, Assistant Academics Officer (29 Palms Academy)



Charley's Mom, GySgt Popp (29 Palms Academy)

GySgt Popp...

Sharing Charley providing her assistance while teleworking.



TRAINING RESOURCES

Whether you need a certificate or desire a training course to stay on top of a latest industry topic, see the below for free or associated fee training opportunities.

TRAINING SOURCES	TRAINING LINKS
HROM –sponsored onsite classes	http://www.marines.mil/unit/hqmc/hr/Pages/ARHM_Training.aspx
Navy COOL	https://www.cool.navy.mil/
Marine Corps COOL	https://www.cool.navy.mil/usmc/index.htm
DoD Civilian COOL	https://www.cool.osd.mil/dciv/index.htm
Navy e-learning	https://lms.nel.navy.mil/
MarineNet	https://www.marinenet.usmc.mil/marinenet/
Navy Knowledge Online	https://www.nko.navy.mil/
Army Knowledge Online	www.us.army.mil
Defense Acquisition University	http://www.dau.mil/
Linkage, Inc.	https://www.linkageinc.com/
New Horizons	https://www.newhorizons.com/
Human Resource Institute	https://www.federaltraining.com/
American Management Association	http://www.amanet.org/index.htm
Fred Pryor Seminars	http://www.pryor.com/Site/BrowsePS.aspx
Learning Tree	http://learningtree.com/
Linkage, Inc.	http://www.linkageinc.com/learning_events/
Management Concepts	http://www.managementconcepts.com/
National Seminars Training	http://www.nationalseminarstraining.com/SeminarsByState.html
Project Management Institute	http://www.pmi.org/Pages/default.aspx
Skill Path	http://www.skillpath.com/
USDA Graduate School	https://www.graduateschool.edu
eBooks/Audiobooks	http://navy.libraryreserve.com
Navy Digital Library Account Access Instructions	 Navy Digital Library Account Access Instr

COVID – 19 RESOURCES

7 tips for working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic

As more people are working from home to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), what was once a perk may now seem like a punishment. It can be hard just to find and set up a workspace and connect with work, let alone deal with the isolation.

If you are used to going into work, you may miss opportunities for regular social interaction and connection with co-workers. Regardless of which life stage you're in, working from home may cause feelings of isolation, frustration or stress that can impact your mental health.¹ Here are some tips to help you manage your new work-life balance:

Set yourself up for success

Find the most quiet place you can to set up your home work area. Make sure you have good lighting, a comfortable chair and plenty of outlets to plug in your computer, monitor, phone charger, etc. Put everything you need nearby so that you don't need to constantly hop up to find a report, get supplies, etc. Maintain as much of an office-like demeanor as you can. If you are using video for meetings, remember, you're on camera too.

Establish your routine

When you're away from the workplace, it's important to set specific hours—and stick to them. It's easy to work more hours than normal, but that may cut into your family time and affect your sleep schedule. You may also feel pressure to prove that you are spending your time productively, and this can result in increased anxiety and stress. Set your boundaries and develop a routine: wake up at the same time every day, take a shower, get dressed, etc. Keep as much of your non-work life as it was before the pandemic: eat well, exercise and get fresh air—just remember to maintain a 6-foot distance from others.

Practice self-care

Self-care is any proactive activity that we do to take care of our mental, emotional and physical health. Good self-care is the key to improved mood, reduced anxiety and a good relationship with yourself and others. While so many normal activities are disrupted, take some time to practice gratitude, eat healthy, get enough sleep and maintain or start an exercise program. You will feel better for it.

Increase communication

You might find it easier to be productive without your most chatty coworkers constantly buzzing in your ear. But social interactions—even with coworkers—can alleviate feelings of isolation and loneliness. Try to maintain normalcy by setting up regular check-ins with your team or manager that allow you to provide progress updates, sort through problems or brainstorm ideas.

(continued on page 14)

COVID – 19 RESOURCES

Cherish children

If you have children at home due to school closings, helping them make sense of what is happening in the world will help you process the situation too. Kids of all ages are as vulnerable as adults to feelings of anxiety, stress and sadness. Do the best you can to manage childcare, plan for different age groups and ask for help from those near to you, while staying mindful about social distancing. Be flexible to accommodate your children's needs and those of your employer. This is a unique moment in history. Move through it as gracefully as you can and create good memories for your family.

Help others

Organizations that help others are doing their best to stay open, and contributing to the greater good can improve your well-being. If allowed by your state/local government, consider dropping off food at a food bank. You can also set up a social media group to share information with and encourage others working from home.

Take breaks

In the office, there's usually time for coffee breaks, lunch walks and chats with colleagues that give some breathing room from work. Just because you are working from home doesn't mean you aren't entitled to the same breaks. Hitting the pause button throughout the workday can be good for productivity. Get up and stretch, take deep breaths and look up from the computer at regular intervals. Remember to eat, and check with your supervisor for permission to take a break for a quick walk.

For more information and tips, visit [MagellanHealthcare.com/COVID-19](https://www.magellanhealth.com/COVID-19).

Your program is completely confidential and here to help you and your household members 24/7/365. No situation is too big or too small. Give us a call or visit your program website to get started.

1Smith, P. (2020, March 10). How To Deal If Working From Home Is Hurting Your Mental Health. Retrieved from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/working-from-home-mentalhealth_n_5afd88e2e4b0a59b4e014602?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAALPysx5taWAnltmdXV9uEcuIXzXyRxgs3xGUH0ztFrzmyZfyFKQUQo1BetFTXXoiY1lnEVcXeQbFXLffHW2baI7Yr9eG5nDkYyB5iecH6hx8iRFumbBwpzRVhn1H7uRr-3ZngjIoto2Ctd1o-7SI4sEDdIr-GAyVlgsNUEul-5MM

2Michael, R. (2018, July 8). What Self-Care Is - and What It Isn't. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/blog/what-selfcare-is-and-what-it-isnt-2/>

The DON CEAP

1-844-366-2327

(1 844 DON CEAP)

For TTY Users: 1-800-635-2883

COVID –19 RESOURCES

Coping with isolation during COVID-19

Humans are social beings, and the social distancing that is necessary to flatten the coronavirus curve is hard on everyone. The forced change in social behavior and the resulting isolation can affect people's mental health in many ways. Whether you are home alone, with a sick family member or with kids out of school, isolation can increase stress and anxiety.

Depending on your situation, isolation can impact you in different ways. From loneliness to feeling cramped, dealing with these feelings on top of worrying about the COVID-19 outbreak can be overwhelming.

General tips

- Keep in touch with your social support groups virtually through social media, FaceTime, Skype, online games and other digital platforms.
- If the weather is nice, go outside and get some fresh air. Maintain a 6-foot distance from others.
- Stay busy. Read, play games or work on a project.
- Decrease the time you spend watching or listening to upsetting media coverage.
- Draw on skills that you have used during difficult times in the past to manage your emotions. That may include deep breathing, meditation, positive self-talk, etc.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle. Stay hydrated, eat nutritious meals, exercise and get enough sleep.
- Avoid using tobacco, alcohol or other drugs to cope with your emotions.
- Get the facts about your risk and how to take precautions. Use trusted national and international resources including the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and State Departments of Health.

For people living with children

- Remember that during times of stress, it is common for children to seek more attachment and be more demanding on parents.
- Be honest when discussing COVID-19, but do so in an age-appropriate way. If your children have concerns, help them ease their anxiety.
- Help children find positive ways to express their fears about the situation. Every child has their own way to express emotions. Sometimes engaging in a creative activity such as drawing can help this process.
- Maintain a safe and supportive environment and practice familiar routines in daily life as much as possible, especially if children are confined to home.

For caretakers of older adults

- Give clear information about how to reduce risk of infection in words older people with/without cognitive impairment can understand. Repeat the information whenever necessary.
- Engage their family and other support networks in providing information and helping them practice prevention measures (handwashing, proper sneezing and coughing techniques, etc.).
- Be aware that older adults in isolation and/or those with cognitive decline/dementia may become more anxious, angry, stressed, agitated or withdrawn during this time.

For more information and tips, visit MagellanHealthcare.com/COVID-19.

**Like all difficult times, this too shall
pass. Let us not lose hope and pray
for brighter days ahead.
STAY SAFE. STAY CALM.**