

Self Care Resources

Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program (COLAP)

Could you use a free, confidential, and “virtual” helping hand? COLAP’s got you covered.

While the initial shock and stress of world events and shelter-in-place has passed, we continue to face new and difficult stressors. You might feel isolated, overwhelmed with urgent demands on your time and attention, or be juggling multiple personal and professional issues that include physical illness and financial concerns. Heightened stress can also exacerbate behavioral health issues such as anxiety, depression, substance use, and addiction. Your [Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program \(COLAP\)](#) is open and providing free and confidential assistance for the legal community. [Click here](#) for quick tips on teleworking and staying calm during changing times for judges. For a confidential consultation and discussion about your stressors, helpful resources, or to schedule a free ethics CLE well-being webinar for your firm or organization, contact your Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program: 303-986-3345 or info@coloradolap.org. * All calls and emails are confidential * [Click here](#) for information on virtual support group meetings exclusively for the legal community through CLHL.

Tips for Working From Home

[Tips for Teleworking and Staying Calm During Difficult and Changing Times](#) (COLAP)

What You Can Do Today

Maintain Healthy Relationships. The flip side of social isolation is that many people will be isolated together, creating a forced physical closeness that can cause distress. For healthy relationships, we all need to regulate our closeness and distance from each other. Before reacting to someone’s request for “personal space,” try applying your strength of [social intelligence](#) to consider their needs and emotions. Now, more than ever, we can be more generous in offering each other allowances for time out from one another. Create an agreed upon schedule for your family. Work in dedicated times together along with agreed upon times alone, along with set work spaces for alone/private time. (VIA Institute on Character)

Self Care

[American Bar Association: COVID Mental Health Resources](#)

[Greater Good Magazine, Greater Good Science Center](#)

Through articles, videos, quizzes, and podcasts, we bridge the gap between scientific journals and people’s daily lives, particularly for parents, educators, business leaders, and health care professionals. *Greater Good* magazine is published by the Greater Good Science Center (GGSC) at the University of California, Berkeley. Since 2001, the GGSC has been at the fore of a new scientific movement to explore the roots of happy and compassionate individuals, strong social bonds, and altruistic behavior—the science of a meaningful life.

[Four Things to do Every Day for Your Mental Health](#)

#4 Be. Amid all the “doing”—the preparing, protecting, adjusting, coping, responding, providing, procuring—humans need moments to simply BE. It’s not necessarily about serenity, or warm fuzzy feelings. It’s about pausing long enough to let your nervous system come back to baseline after prolonged activation. Experiment with what works for you. If meditation or guided relaxation works for you, great! If watching a crappy TV show while snuggled into the couch helps you to just BE, that’s good, too. And if painful emotions get too loud or overwhelming when you try to slow down, that’s OK, too.

[General Wellness Topics- Colorado Lawyer Assistance program](#)

Browse articles by the Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program, including: Self-Assessment for Well-Being, Whose Stress Are You Taking On?, Why People Behave Badly, and more. (ColoradoLAP.org)

[How to Clear Your Head](#)

Video (Greater Good Science Center)

[Rethinking Our Self-Care During the Pandemic](#)

As the pandemic continues to unfold, a few universal truths are reaffirming themselves to me: First, in almost all but extreme cases, we have a choice about how we want to respond to what is happening. Second, the cliché and often-time overused metaphor of putting the oxygen mask on ourselves first so that we can help others has never been truer. (Mindful.org)

[Self-Care in the Time of Coronavirus: Prioritizing your own well-being benefits your whole family](#)

When you're a parent, self-care often slips to the bottom of the list. But taking care of yourself isn't a luxury. It's essential. And during this difficult time, when children are home and stress is running high, it's more important than ever. Here are five tips from our clinicians that can help. (Childmind.org)

[Self-Care is the Key to Stress and Anxiety Management](#)

As lawyers, we're conditioned to work hard, putting our well-being second to our clients. And we tend to hold ourselves to impossibly high standards. We can falsely believe that every minute not spent billing is time being unproductive, therefore wasted. We can discount the importance of resting the mind and the body. (American Bar Association)

[Taking Care of Yourself](#)

To be able to care for the people you love, you must first take care of yourself. It's like the advice we're given on airplanes: put on your own oxygen mask before trying to help someone else with theirs. Taking care of yourself is a valid goal on its own, and it helps you support the people you love. (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

[Why You Need a Self-Care Plan](#)

Three reasons to map out your self-care needs and how to create your own unique plan. Plus, how to get yourself back on track when you falter. (Mindful.org).

Boundaries

[Tips for Healthy Boundaries](#)

Personal boundaries are limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships. Here are tips for setting healthy boundaries. (TherapistAid.com)

Other General Tips:

Tips for the Helpers

Boundaries, Boundaries, Boundaries! Although we need to be flexible with our clients and meeting them where they are at, remember healthy boundaries are needed to help create predictability for the client and reduce your level of burnout/compassion fatigue. We encourage setting general boundaries for yourself with some level of flexibility as things are changing every day. Each individual has unique ways to cope and their current situation is different from others. Take some time to understand your individual needs and develop a plan from there.

You tell me to "Leave work at work"? How am I supposed to do that now? Boundaries is a term we frequently hear in our job already. The statement "Leave work at work" is already difficult for us to do! Now our work and the challenges our families face daily are melting into the sanctity of

our homes. How do we maintain some level of separation of this work and home life in order to sustain our mental health and ability to function at a high level? We encourage you to talk to co-workers on what is working well for them and challenges.

Here are some tips to try:

- ❖ Develop a general routine for yourself and whomever lives with you (pets included!). You may have to be flexible day to day but have a general routine.
- ❖ If you are managing multiple schedules (spouse, partner, kids, etc), increase communication and check in daily if not more regarding everyone's needs.
- ❖ If you have the availability develop one space for your work that can be confidential and separate. Not everyone has their own office at home so be creative in developing your workspace (I am in my basement so my kids don't have to worry about being quiet all day and I can have some physical distance from my sessions with clients). Maybe identifying one specific spot when you are talking to clients or others to maintain that boundary within your home. However have some flexibility of working on reports or notes when outside or a spot there is some sunshine. Find what works for you but be mindful of having separation.
- ❖ If your clients are the only ones you are talking to throughout the day, try and connect with someone else (co-worker, friend, family member, neighbor).
- ❖ Create a routine that provides the perception of separation of work/home. This could be doing your normal routine of getting dressed for work on work days and then lounging on weekend days. Taking a walk/stepping outside prior to sitting on your computer or making calls or after you are done with work. We no longer have that drive time to decompress so find a short activity(reading, changing "work" clothes, listen to music, grounding activity) you can do prior to re-engaging in your personal life. We are aware it is not so black and white right now so find small steps and things to do that work for your situation.
- ❖ Be mindful of cell phones and calls. Some people have work phones/personal phones. Others use same phone but maybe google voice number. Either way, find ways to have a separation of work calls so you are not being flooded with work information 24-7. You know....the random 3am texts/calls that we get sometimes. Find a way to shut those off or leave your work phone at your desk so you are not waking up to that. Although this is an ongoing challenge, it is so important right now for our mental health and ability to sustain long term in this capacity to find a boundary within calls and texts.

There is SO much information being sent out on how to manage things during this time. Develop your personal plan. You can take in different ideas but don't feel you have to do what everyone else is doing. Find what works for you!

Tips for Working with Children and Families

- ❖ As you develop your own routine and boundaries, be clear and upfront with your clients about your availability. If you have a client you talk to frequently but maybe you don't have as much availability now due to your own personal demands, be upfront about this. You do not have to share your personal reasons but be honest about this change so clients do not insert their own reason (feelings of abandonment, no longer care, there case is not important, etc.). Develop creative ways to address the needs.
- ❖ Be clear in your expectations with clients right now. Have them write down the information discussed as our memories and adaptive abilities is taxed. It will be important

for you to ensure you are writing things down as well as we are all on information overload!

- ❖ Your clients may need help in developing healthy boundaries as well (work/school/child welfare involvement). Maybe pick one thing to focus on during your call or visit. If they need ongoing support help them in accessing this. They may need help in setting boundaries with others (family, kids).

Developing and maintaining boundaries is not easy, especially when someone is experiencing emotional distress. So be patient with yourself and clients as the development and sustainment of boundaries may fluctuate.

Mindfulness

[Mindful.org](#)

Mindful is a mission-driven non-profit. We're dedicated to inspiring, guiding, and connecting anyone who wants to explore mindfulness—to enjoy better health, more caring relationships, and a compassionate society.

[How Mindfulness Can Help during COVID-19: Tips for calming anxiety during a difficult time](#)

These are trying time but incorporating mindful practices into your daily routine can help calm anxiety and build healthy coping skills. Here are some tips from our clinicians on making mindfulness work for you and your family. (Childmind.org)

Managing Anxiety

[Anxiety and Coping with the Corona Virus: Managing worry – your kids' and your own](#)

Our daily lives have been disrupted, we aren't sure what tomorrow may bring, and for many of us the nonstop news and social media coverage isn't helping. Our experts say that dealing with your own anxiety can be the most powerful way to make sure your kids feel secure. If you or your children are feeling worried, learning how to deal with that anxiety in a healthy way can help the whole family be more resilient, both now and when the pandemic is finally over. (Childmind.org)

[What to Do \(and Not Do\) When Children Are Anxious: How to respect feelings without empowering fears](#)

When children are chronically anxious, even the most well-meaning parents can fall into a negative cycle and, not wanting a child to suffer, actually exacerbate the youngster's anxiety. It happens when parents, anticipating a child's fears, try to protect her from them. Here are pointers for helping children escape the cycle of anxiety. (Childmind.org)

What is your Window of Tolerance?

[Dr. Dan Siegel](#) coined the term Window of Tolerance. Simply the area and capacity to deal with conflict and difficult situations without moving to fight, flight or freeze response. Take a moment to look at these sites and increase your understanding of your own window of tolerance. These sites provide a neat visual and brief description of this concept. When outside our Window of Tolerance, we are using our "emotional and reactive brain" and struggle with accessing our "thinking brain".

<https://lindsaybraman.com/window-of-tolerance/>

<https://www.drmariedezelic.com/window-of-tolerance--traumaanxiety-rela>

Tips for the helpers

Every one of us is experiencing this ongoing trauma. We are being pulled in many ways which could look different on a daily/hourly basis based on the needs of our clients and our own family and situations.

Prior to contacts with clients/meetings/or even with co-workers do a quick check in with yourself. How are you feeling? Where are you at on your Window of Tolerance? If you are feeling outside of your Window of Tolerance evaluate your ability to complete your next task in an effective manner. Do you need to delay that next task? If you cannot delay it, evaluate what can you do to bring yourself back closer into your Window of Tolerance. This simply could be meeting a basic need (eating, drinking water, walking around for a minute), completing a grounding exercise or connecting with a co-worker, supervisor, or someone that can provide support.

Knowing where you are at will help you in how you communicate with others and the ability to engage with clients and make effective and thoughtful decisions.

Tips for working with clients and families and other professionals

After checking your Window of Tolerance, connect with your client and assess their current Window of Tolerance and capacity to engage in difficult conversations in that moment. This should be done prior to delving into your checklist of questions. Simply asking questions such as How are they doing? How are they coping with everything that day? What are some barriers and challenges they are experiencing?

When delving into difficult topics, first seek to understand and refrain from attacking and using judgmental statements/questions. For example... "Help me understand what the barrier is to completing your UA's right now" vs. "You aren't doing your UA's and this will impact reunification".

Although we are always trying to be mindful in how we engage and communicate with clients, now is a time to be increasingly mindful in our communication and how a client may perceive statements as a threat and potentially move them out of their Window of Tolerance to have an effective conversation.

Caseworker may need to do a brief check in with other professionals as well if they are present and difficult decisions or conversations are needed.

Resiliency

Building Your Resilience

We all face trauma, adversity and other stresses. Here's a roadmap for adapting to life-changing situations and emerging even stronger than before. (American Psychological Association).

Emotionally Resilient Living: Why We Need Humor More Than Ever

During times of stress and uncertainty, it's so easy to inadvertently contribute to the problem by taking ourselves too seriously. Humor and the ability to get out of your own way can help you avoid becoming mired in feelings of negativity and helplessness so you're better able to see what needs to be done to move forward. (EmotionallyResilientLiving.com)

Five Practice Tips to Develop Gratitude and Become More Resilient

What are the components of resilience? Grit, determination, mental skills, mentally strong? Absolutely, but when I was first trained in Resilience I was totally surprised that gratitude was one of the fundamental skills. Not the first time my initial impressions were wrong when learning a new skill or set of skills. Here are five tips to develop gratitude. (Invistaperforms.org)

How To Help Teens Shelter In Place: Their Behavior is Normal + Helpful Tips to Engage

Teenagers and college students have amplified innate, developmental motivations that make them hard to isolate at home. The hormonal changes that come with puberty conspire with adolescent social dynamics to make them highly attuned to social status and peer group. Friends feel like *everything*. In addition, their hard-wired attunement to social status makes them super touchy about whether or not they are being treated like children. Their most central developmental job during adolescence is to *individuate*, to leave the nest and become independent from us, their parents. So, of course, they feel infantilized when ordered to shelter in place. Let's start with their high motivation to individuate, to be out from under our control. We can work with this existing motivation by *treating them like competent young adults* rather than little kids.

Worksheet: Evaluation Your Needs

By focusing on what you can control, and building upon protective factors, you will improve your ability to cope with many of life's challenges. (TherapistAid.com)

Other General Tips:

Tips for the helpers

Humor

- ❖ Find your humor outlet- It might look different for each setting (those not working in our field may not appreciate our dark humor like other co-workers do).
- ❖ Connect with friends/colleagues that are silly and make you laugh.
- ❖ Listen to a comedian
- ❖ Find some funny memes to share with someone.
- ❖ Watch a funny show (Tiger King, Bachelorette, Parks and Rec) whatever speaks to your TV pleasure.
- ❖ Check out the Wellness Platform-I think they were offering laughter sessions.

Gratitude

- ❖ Journal something you are grateful for
- ❖ Help others outside of work
- ❖ Attached is a gratitude worksheet or you could develop a gratitude box

Tips for clients and families

Helping our clients build resiliency will help lower their risk in developing PTSD as well as coping differently in the future when faced with adverse experiences.

Humor

- ❖ Find a way to laugh with your clients and families
- ❖ Encourage them to do activities which promote laughter.
 - Have a dance party
 - Play dress up and do a show
 - Play silly games
 - FB video chat provides funny pictures and games that kids love to do while chatting with others

Gratitude

- ❖ When helping clients and families find gratitude ask them the question of what they are grateful for. Avoid the comment “At least you have.....” Be thankful you have....
 - Encourage them to do something for one another or the community
 - Encourage connection to their faith if this is important to them.
 - Find the good in what your clients are doing. Help them build on what they are doing well.
 - Clients or families could create a gratitude jar or box. Write down what they are grateful for and put it in the jar or box. Read them out loud to one another.