

4M Network

My health, My choice, My child, My life

April 2020

4M Mentor Mothers Webinar Series

Some useful links for webinar no. 11 on Communication and Relationship Skills

In part 2 of that webinar, we talked about how our brains work, how anger can be like a volcano with layers of fear, hurt and need inside it; and we talked about 'I'-statements. To access this and all the webinars in the series, see here:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/6971206>

Emergency numbers – please remember the contact list we sent you in the whatsapp group. You can also access this here if you like: <https://tinyurl.com/4MkeyUKcontacts>

Background

This is very much an informal list gathered between October 2019 and early April 2020, in preparation for the webinar, held in 2 parts, on 2 and 9 April. Wherever possible, we have used information which is freely available for anyone with internet access.

None of us knew back last year, when we scheduled this webinar, that we would all be coping with lockdown because of COVID-19. But now more than ever, we all need some advice and support to help ourselves and one another with looking after each other and with good communications and relationships.

This list is by no means exhaustive. But it offers some ideas about how to manage to look after ourselves (self-care) better than we often manage to do, as well as to manage our relationships with our children, teenagers, partners, parents/in-laws and work colleagues.

We are all on a life-long learning journey here! Some of these may work for you, others may not. There are no perfect solutions.

The resources are loosely grouped into different relationships with people around us – however most are applicable to *all* our relationships to one extent or another. So, do browse all the categories to find the links which are helpful for you.

Nb some of the topics can be quite tough to talk about! But they are still important ones to think about and ideally conversations to have at some stage. So, do look at them for yourself first before sharing them with those around you, to make sure you know their content.

At the end there is space for you to add your own ideas and links. **Please do share them with us also if you would like.**

Looking after ourselves first

This is what often comes hardest to us. This is why we have put this first. Remember what we are told when sitting on an aeroplane – put your own oxygen mask on before helping others around you. This is super-important to us in everyday life too. If we can manage to look after ourselves and remember to give ourselves space to breathe, then we are also better able to cope with whatever life throws at us next.

- A) Self-compassion: This website is full of invaluable advice and support on this topic, based on strong academic research: <https://self-compassion.org/>
- B) 10-minute exercise work-outs – one for each day:
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/10-minute-workouts/>
- C) Couch to 5K – a running plan for beginners:
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/couch-to-5k-week-by-week/>
- D) Going out for a walk on your own when it's first light, to enjoy the dawn chorus of bird song in the soft light on the quiet landscape around you. Maybe spot a fox. See if you can identify different birds' song – there is an app to help you. See what new flowers are coming out in your local park. Smell them to see which have a scent. Touch them lightly to feel their different textures. If you see a herb you recognise, like rosemary, perhaps you could taste it. Use all five of your senses to wonder at the beauty of the changing seasons.
- E) Life-saver. This is a flyer with some good ideas about how to calm ourselves down before we lose our temper with someone. We can practise this on ourselves first and then encourage others in our family to use it too. It is available in a few different languages:
<https://www.maenner.ch/corona-survival-kit/>
- F) Cheap, nutritious meals:
<https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/blog/cheap-healthy-meals-healthy-eating-on-a-budget>

Relationships with our children

- A) <https://www.end-violence.org/articles/new-resource-pack-positive-parenting-covid-19-isolation> This website has a wealth of information related to children. It includes the following one-page tips.
- ♥ One on one [time](#)
 - ♥ Keeping [positive](#)
 - ♥ Structure [up](#)
 - ♥ Bad [behaviour](#)
 - ♥ Keep calm and manage [stress](#)
 - ♥ Talking about [COVID-19](#)
- B) promoting gender equality in schools in the UK:
https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/nov/12/clean-five-schools-of-sexism-teachers-pupils-gender-equality?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Relationships with our teenagers

- A) Trauma and the brain. This explains how our brains work and how trauma can affect our ways in which our brains process things
<https://centerforadolescentstudies.com/trauma-and-brain/>
- B) Using eg art or music or cards to work with traumatised people: it can often help to have a really good chat with your teenager doing something together with them which they like. Here are some hints and tips about this:
<https://centerforadolescentstudies.com/critical-intervention-working-traumatized-youth/>
- C) Some important things to discuss with your teenagers as they grow into young adults, from @GBVPreventionNet: “Some of the ways you can contribute to ending sexual harassment include; - Don't make or laugh at inappropriate jokes about women. - Ask women before you touch their bodies. - Don't send sexual messages or emails to women without their consent. #safeworkplaces4women
- D) Think about consent to sex like offering someone a cup of tea: a good animated video to spark discussion: <https://youtu.be/pZwvrXVavnQ>
- E) The importance of knowing about alcohol-related blackouts in relation to sex: <https://www.alcohol.org/effects/blackouts/>
- F) The effects of alcohol and fighting: <https://www.alcohol.org/effects/fighting-drunk/>
- G) About violence during consensual sex: 'A man tried to choke me during sex without warning' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-50546184>
- H) A good lasting adult relationship is like a table with four strong legs - **physical** (attraction); (good, mutually supportive) **friendship**; (getting on with their) **family** and



friends; and (stable) **finance.** You can manage with only 3 of them being strong but the ideal is to have all four strong.

- I) Supporting gender-diverse young people:
<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/>
- J) Supporting young lesbian, gay and bisexual young people (London group):
<https://www.mosaicityouth.org.uk/>
- K) Understanding drug use:
<https://www.talktofrank.com/get-help/worried-about-a-child>

Relationships with our partners

- A) Me, You and Baby Too. Short videos. And useful questions eg: “Often, it's the little things that help you feel close. What does your partner do that makes you feel loved and cared for?

<https://www.oneplusone.org.uk/our-resources>

- ♥ Makes you a cup of tea.
- ♥ Kisses you goodbye.
- ♥ Says “I love you.”
- ♥ Gives you some time to yourself.
- ♥ Asks you about your day.
- ♥ Cleans the bathroom while you’re out.
- ♥ Texts you just to say something nice.
- ♥ Lets you choose what to watch on TV.”

- A) how to have great sex in long term relationships:

https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/oct/29/the-intimacy-secret-how-to-have-fantastic-sex-after-decades-together?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

- B) How we stay together weekly articles:

https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/nov/02/how-we-stay-together-trust-boundary-setting-and-pushed-comfort-zones?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

- C) The Money Clinic Radio 4 series:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0007b04>

- D) How to split bills with your partner and talking to your partner about money:

<https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/talking-to-your-partner-about-money>

- E) Coping with a partner with alcohol addiction:

https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/nov/01/my-husband-is-kind-but-his-drinking-is-out-of-control?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

- F) Dragon Slippers - a graphic novel about controlling behaviour in a relationship. This is the related website: <http://www.dragonslippers.com/home.html>
- G) Katie Hood Ted Talk. The difference between healthy and unhealthy love: https://www.ted.com/talks/katie_hood_the_difference_between_healthy_and_unhealthy_love
- H) In the UK, unmarried women do not have inheritance rights - civil partnerships and law: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0009z2m>
- I) A marriage researcher's favourite books and podcasts for better relationships: https://ideas.ted.com/a-marriage-researchers-favorite-books-and-podcasts-for-better-relationships/?utm_source=recommendation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=explore&utm_term=ideas-blog-1
- J) How to stop having the same argument again and again: https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/jan/03/how-to-stop-having-the-same-argument-again-and-again-and-again?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
- K) Good morning my perfect husband/wife! Something we say to each other every morning to start the world afresh!
- L) Say something nice every day: https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/feb/09/five-ways-to-be-a-better-partner?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
- M) Gaslighting – what is it? How can it be addressed? <https://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-relationships/communication/gaslighting-what-are-signs-and-how-can-it-be-addressed>

Relationships with older family members / in-laws

In addition to all the materials above, you may want to consider these resources.

- A) Recordmenow app: - this is a great way for you or your children to learn from the older generation how life was for them 'in the olden days', when they were young. This app can record these conversations and can create a valuable lasting memory for you of your older relative's life and how things have changed over the years. For instance, where did they grow up, who were their siblings, what was their school like, who were their friends, where did they live, what was their house like, what was their earliest memory, what food did they like to eat most as children - so many questions. <http://recordmenow.org/>
- B) Dear Life - a book about death and dying and how we can all prepare for something which is the one certainty that will happen to us all. This can be a really hard thing for



us all to think about and is considered taboo to talk about in many different cultures. We are in some ways lucky because, as women living with HIV, we have all had to face up to the realities of our own lives ending in ways which others around us may not have done. But sadly, in these COVID-19 times, this topic is now all too much of an important one for all of us - especially if older friends or family acquire it. We are being urged by the media to have conversations about this now, so that we already know a little about what we, our parents or other older people - or our partner - might want to happen - whether or not we want to go to hospital if we are ill, what we want to happen to us there, if we die how we might want to be remembered.... . This book by palliative care doctor, Rachel Clarke, helps us think through these important questions and start the necessary conversations.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Dear-Life-Doctors-Story-Love/dp/B07Y8P4C2L>

C) Will writing. It is really important that we all have a written will, so that it is clear what should happen to our possessions when we die. If we have a formal legal will, then there is much less stress for everyone left behind than when someone dies 'intestate', which means with no will. Especially if a couple aren't married, it may mean that their partner will not be able to inherit the family possessions they have shared over the years. Ideally it is good to have a solicitor check over your will for you, but this can be expensive. Follow the advice on this website, which is widely recognised as a very good site for all kinds of financial matters. It explains how you could get a will made for free, eg through a charity:

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/free-cheap-wills/>

D) It is also important to have two witnesses when you sign your will. These can be anyone who isn't related to you and who won't benefit in any way from your will. Here are some ways in which people are getting wills witnessed! Coronavirus: Wills 'being signed on car bonnets' amid lockdown

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52215141>

Please remember – if you or someone you love does have to go to hospital, make sure they take their smartphone, charger and headphones with them and know how to use them, so you can keep in touch.

Some more general references

A) Being kind can help us live longer: Why being kind could help you live longer:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-50266957>

B) The power of body language and how it can shape how we feel about ourselves:

https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are/up-next?rid=d6dosDsYwLE5&utm_source=recommendation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=explore&utm_term=watchNow#t-948849

- C) Caring for women subjected to violence: A WHO curriculum for training health-care providers <https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/caring-for-women-subject-to-violence/en/>
- D) Supporting others to resolve conflicts: https://ideas.ted.com/3-steps-to-having-difficult-but-necessary-conversations/?utm_source=recommendation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=explore&utm_term=ideas-blog-3
- E) Recipes for recovery: <https://survivorsvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Recovery-Recipe-Book-Brief.pdf>
- F) Resolving conflict between people in shared accommodation: https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/apr/07/in-it-together-how-to-share-space-and-resolve-flatmate-rows-when-you-cant-storm-out?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
- G) Comfort food! https://www.theguardian.com/food/2020/apr/06/no-flour-eggs-or-butter-no-problem-23-cake-recipes-for-when-youre-missing-an-ingredient?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
- H) Practical considerations for intersectional, trauma-informed first-line support with survivors of gender-based violence: https://users.neo.registeredsite.com/0/2/7/17704720/assets/Practical_considerations_f_or_intersectional_trauma-informed_first-line_support_with_survivors_of_gender-based_violence_v4.Final_09_March_2020_.pdf
- I) Staying active and curious during COVID-19: https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/apr/07/stay-active-and-curious-20-tips-to-help-avoid-sadness-in-lockdown?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
- J) Speak wisely, Rick Hanson newsletter: Just One Thing - Speak Wisely: <https://www.rickhanson.net/speak-wisely/>
- K) The Complete Guide to Overcoming Depression by Paul Gilbert £3.99 e-book: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Complete-Guide-Overcoming-Depression-bundle-ebook/dp/B009ZRR186/ref=sr_1_2?crid=2B1FOPQBIMLD7&dchild=1&keywords=paul+gilbert+overcoming+depression&qid=1586325803&sprefix=Paul+Gilbert%2Caps%2C401&sr=8-2
- L) Sitting meditations for people living with HIV from Positively Mindful (Mel): <https://www.positivelymindful.org/mindfulness>
- M) Daily short meditations for 40 days (currently free) from 2 of the world's leading practitioners: <https://soundstrue.lpages.co/mindfulness-daily/>

Your own notes