



# **SURVIVING PANDEMIC STRESS**

**10 REPORTS ON HOW TO STAY  
SANE IN SPITE OF AN  
EMERGENCY**

**BY DANIEL KILBURN**

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## DISCLAIMER

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Images by Daniel Kilburn

## INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is Daniel Kilburn I am the founder of Emergency Action Planning.

What would you say if I told you that right now you are creating memories? The Covid-19 pandemic will live with you forever. You will remember where you were, who you were with, what you did, what was done to you, and what you did to other people.

Your decisions will affect how you remember this event for the rest of your life.

Your decisions will affect how your children remember this event for the rest of their life.

One common denominator of emergencies and disasters is stress. It does not matter what the event is, there will be stress.

The COVID-19 pandemic has front-loaded stress on the entire world.

In your hands are multiple reports on techniques and processes that you can use to relieve some of that stress. These techniques can be used anytime and anywhere.

These reports are brief and to the point. There is no fluff, just actionable information that if followed will make your memories of the COVID-19 Pandemic, or any disaster worth having.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

On the evening of October 19th, 1989, I was cooking dinner in Monterey, California. As I was putting a tray of halibut stakes in the oven. Suddenly somebody picked up the building about 20 feet in the air and slammed it to the ground. Fish was flying everywhere, pots and pans are crashing to the floor, and I was no longer standing. This was the Loma Prieta earthquake.

It was fortunate that my wife and three-year-old daughter were out of state visiting family, because I was not prepared for what was happening to the world around me.

I decided to learn everything I could about earthquake preparedness so I would be able to protect my family and loved ones. A checklist from the American Red Cross was all I could get my hands on. That checklist has not changed much since 1989. I have since then sought out other sources of information.



In 2004 while living in Florida, my oldest daughter called me. She was upset about witnessing two men in a fistfight at the local grocery store over jugs of water. Four separate hurricanes made landfall on the Florida Peninsula that year. I was out of state instructing at one of the US Army Non-commissioned Officers Academies, and my daughters were prepared.

I have spent the last 30 years learning everything I can about disaster management, from planning to responding, and recovering. I am currently applying this knowledge in my role as the Founder of Emergency Action Planning. I accept responsibility for educating at-risk people on preparing themselves and their loved ones for the disasters and emergencies that will come crashing onto their lives.

Former U.S. Army Senior Drill Sergeant, Father, Grandfather, Author, and Urban Disaster Planning Expert, Daniel Kilburn, will reveal to you how everyone, regardless of experience level can succeed - Today!

Till next time

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Daniel Kilburn".

"Be Safe"

## FACING A PANDEMIC WITHOUT PANIC

At the beginning of a disease outbreak, most people are usually in denial. Some do not believe the disease exists, while some do not think it could get to them. As the outbreak spreads, different groups of people begin to see reality. By the time it is declared to be a pandemic, alarm bells of panic will be ringing worldwide.

However, panicking is not the way to face a pandemic. Panicking does not do any good, only harm. When people panic, they tend to overreact and make decisions that are not well thought out. Some people will start hoarding goods and create artificial shortages, which fuel more panic. The economic effects alone usually take a long time to recover from, and this is true for individuals and the whole nation alike.

### **How then can you face a pandemic without panicking?**

#### **1. Be well informed**

Information is the key to solving any problem. If you are to face a pandemic the right way, you must be well informed. Look for details on how the disease works, how it spreads, what preventive measures to take, and what is the existing treatment. Complement this information with the actual figures of what is happening around you and all over the world. Knowing things like the number of infections, the number of deaths and the number of recoveries can give a clear idea of the progression of the disease and its severity. From this information, you can plan at your best and adjust your life and business accordingly.

When seeking information, be careful of the sources you use. You must only use verified, and authoritative sources as the rest can spread inaccurate information that can harm you.

#### **2. Deal with anxiety**

It is normal to suffer from anxiety during times of incertitude. Stress can cause people to make decisions that are not well thought out, such as spending rent money on loads of toilet paper in fear of a shortage. Dealing with anxiety is very important if you want to face a pandemic the right way.

### **3. Have a game plan**

If you're going to survive a pandemic with very minimum damage, you have to plan and plan appropriately. From the time that the authorities announce an outbreak, start putting together a pandemic plan. Do not wait for the actual pandemic to be declared. A well thought out game plan will include things like how you are going to handle a possibility of self-isolation or lockdown, how to maintain active lines of communication, things to do during the pandemic, how to protect your financial interests and more.

### **4. Put your plan into action**

When you have your pandemic game plan in place, keep following the news and details about the pandemic. As mentioned before, staying informed is critical when it comes to making decisions. Use the information to decide the time to put into action your plan. You do not have to wait for an official pandemic declaration to put your plan into action. Just choose the right moment.

### **5. How to tackle a panic attack**

Many people will tell you to remain calm. Unfortunately, not everyone knows how to or shares with you how to manage your peace, especially when a sudden panic attack overwhelms you. At the outset, you need to realize that anxiety is a feeling which stems from the mind with raging negative thoughts and fear of impending doom. This overwhelming feeling then affects your whole body which can freeze or cause hyperventilation

So, let's see how best to tackle a panic attack. First, recognize your feelings as feelings of anxiety. Then start to counter them with positive thoughts and happy souvenirs. Once you have dealt with the mind, you can tackle the body. Sit down or lie down, close your eyes, take several deep breaths, and keep focusing on positive thoughts while telling your body to relax. You should already experience a more relaxed feeling after a few minutes. Complement these little exercises with a hot shower or a bubble bath and maintain deep breathing and stretching exercise. You will soon be able to clear your thought process and face any panic attack in any situation.

## GET YOUR PANDEMIC EMERGENCY KIT READY

The key to surviving a pandemic with the minimum effect is to be prepared. It is even more relevant if there is going to be a lockdown.

To prepare for a pandemic and a possible lockdown, you must put together an emergency kit and store essential supplies.

### **An emergency kit you should have before an outbreak**

Before there is even a worldwide outbreak, you should have the following items in your emergency kit:

- Purchase and keep some prescription medication and over the counter medicines. Prescription medication includes any form of medication that you would typically take for your existing condition. Over the counter medicines include analgesics, antiemetic, stomach relievers, antihistamines, vitamins, etc. Take good note of the expiry dates for your medication and make sure to renew it at least 30 days before it expires.
- Ask for copies of your medical records from your physician. These can be very useful to first responders in the event of an emergency during a pandemic.
- Keep a list of emergency numbers for the different government departments.
- Store reasonable quantities of canned non-perishable or dry food and bottled water.
- Store sanitary and hygiene products.
- Have a First-Aid kit readily available- usual antiseptic, bandage, gloves, scissors, and plaster bands are essential to attend to any bumps or bruises while confined at home.
- Household spares and DIY kits can also become handy if you need to replace light bulbs or conduct minor repairs. So, it is always advisable to buy in advance the right type of spare bulbs which you use at home as well as the standard batteries for household equipment. A general DIY toolkit can also be of essential help since hardware stores would most likely be closed during a lockdown.

### **Refill and update your emergency kit during an outbreak**

Once a situation is declared a pandemic, refill and update your emergency kit according to the type of situation. The following items must be checked and be available if possible:

- A thermometer to control body temperature. If you live with other people, it is best to get a digital non-contact thermometer. Don't forget to also buy spare batteries for your digital thermometer!
- Hand sanitizers and liquid soap are a must.
- A backup glucometer to measure blood sugar if you or any member of your family has diabetes.
- One-time use only surgical gloves.
- Sanitary masks, if agents of the outbreak are transmissible by air or droplets. Pay attention to the health authorities and get the right sanitary masks they recommend.
- Food to last you for two weeks. When storing food for a pandemic, always make sure you think of other people as well. Do not overbuy to the extent that you create shortages for other people.
- Update and refill your medication. Add other medication that is related to the outbreak as instructed by the authorities.
- Ingredients from alternative medication can also be useful during a pandemic. Get lemons, honey, ginger, cinnamon, mint leaves, essential oils, and other natural agents known to have healing or antiseptic properties.
- Entertainment material. Depending on your interests and the number of family members, books and magazines are always a good option. Board games and group games, as well as other entertainment activities for multiple people, is also an excellent choice to keep.
- If you have pets, do not forget to buy pet food.
- You should also get some stationery and other office-related supplies just in case you must self-isolate and work from home.
- If you can afford it, an Air-Purifying respirator can be a good and useful investment.

When preparing or refilling your emergency pandemic kit, remember always to check expiration dates for perishable items. Remember not to forget to think about other people, meaning DO NOT OVER-BUY.

# 10 TIPS TO STAY POSITIVE WHEN EVERYONE IS GOING CRAZY

Staying positive when the world is going crazy is one of the best ways of surviving the tide and sailing out of the storm. However, this task can be challenging but may possibly be the only thing which can get you out of the woods. It requires a strong mindset. If you are struggling to bring yourself to remain positive in times of calamity, here are some tips to help you:

## 1. Plan ahead

As goes the scout's motto- "Be Prepared"! Planning can help control your stress levels and anxiety in a world where people are going crazy. That is one way of knowing you can face anything. One way of making sure you and your loved ones remain positive when faced with negativity is by being well prepared for whatever comes. That is why it is advisable to be prepared for emergencies before they occur. You can prepare for a pandemic before it strikes. You can achieve this by taking the necessary measures needed before it begins-Adequate food, reinforced shelter, warm clothing etc., relevant equipment etc.

## 2. Filter information

Avoid bad news whenever you can. Do not focus on the kind of information that will not help rectify the situation. Pay attention to material that gives advice on how you can overcome or guard against being affected by the worsening of the pandemic. Filtering information can also mean changing the subject when it is brought up countless times.

## 3. Keep exercising

As you know, exercising is a great way of staying positive, staying healthy, and improving your overall physical and mental well-being. Exercising can also help keep your mind in check. Concentrating on improving your health is another method of staying positive when everyone else is going insane. One mistake you can make when faced with difficulties is changing or cancelling your workout routine. Therefore, keep exercising and enjoy the process.

#### **4. Dwell on happy thoughts**

Thinking happy thoughts does not come easy when it seems as if your world is falling apart. That is why you must try and force your mind to focus on happy thoughts or what is happening internally and not externally. If you cannot think of anything that shifts your mind from the bad news that is being broadcasted everywhere, create happy thoughts. You can achieve this by envisioning where you will be when all the madness is over. Think about the number of people who have overcome or who are overcoming the same situation you are in, look at your photo album and rekindle the happy memories.

#### **5. Manage your finances**

Mishandling your finances is quite easy when you are dealing with a pandemic or a problem that affects a lot of people at the same time. Hence, you need to start managing your finances wisely to avoid having regrets when the problem has passed. You can avoid bankruptcy by just staying calm, avoiding compulsive debts and keeping accurate records and information.

#### **6. Try caring for someone else**

Sometimes caring for someone else is all it takes to maintain your sanity. Shift your focus to doing something worthwhile for someone else or putting a smile on someone else's face. Achieve this by helping the person you choose to help or care for stay safe or recover from what they are going through.

#### **7. Meditate**

Meditation is an excellent way of relaxing your mind and having a much clearer perspective on things. Meditation is a relaxation method that you can begin practicing right away. If it is something that you are practicing already, continuing with it is worthwhile. Try clearing your mind from negative thoughts and focus on one thing that is positive. Do this every single day for at least 30 minutes without any interruptions.

#### **8. Continue with your work or studies**

You may start panicking if you think that your professional life is on hold during a pandemic. However, realize that not being able to go to the office does not necessarily mean the end of progress- this will help you remain calm. Continue with your work or

study even if you cannot go to the office or on campus. Remember that working or studying from home has its fair share of benefits as well. You can work peacefully without the worries of dressing up, with zero or a few distractions. You can control your environment and work at your own pace.

#### **9. Enjoy whatever you do**

Make it a priority to enjoy whatever you do during the pandemic. If you are working on something that you must do but not necessarily enjoy, try coming up with fun or alternative ways of doing things. Instead of doing your work or completing your projects the way your supervisor suggests, you can do it your own creative way, if the job done impeccably and impressively.

#### **10. Avoid negative people**

No matter what happens in the world, negative people will always look for ways to blow things out of proportion. That is why avoiding negative people in supposedly perilous times is the best thing to do. If you are told to stay at home and cannot avoid those sharing the house, you can encourage the people around you to remain positive. While it may be impossible to make sure everyone stays positive, you can always bring up something positive to talk about. This will change the atmosphere.

## PANDEMIC? IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

Understanding what you need to do during a pandemic will help you realize that pandemic is not the end of the world. You can minimize your stress levels and anxiety by simply educating yourself about the pandemic. Know what you need to do once the epidemic starts. Know how to protect yourself as well as your loved ones from getting infected. Know what to buy and practice good personal hygiene, as advised.

Protect your loved ones from panicking if you or a loved one is infected or told to self-isolate. You can achieve this by being prepared before the pandemic starts and by understanding that you are not the only one affected. Know that countless people are doing the best they can to come up with a solution as well as preventative measures. So, focus on keeping up to date with positive news.

### **1. Stay calm by finding out what professionals are saying**

Finding out and understanding what health professionals are saying about a pandemic that has everyone panicking will help you maintain your sanity when everyone else is losing their mind. That is why you must always keep up with information concerning a pandemic only from reputable sources such as *The World Health Organization (WHO)* or your local clinic.

### **2. How you can continue enjoying your life in a pandemic**

A pandemic is not a sign that everything you are working towards is coming to an end. Its presence does not mean you should stop developing yourself financially, physically, or mentally. You can still enjoy your life while coping with a pandemic.

## **EFFECTIVE TIPS TO CONTINUE WITH YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE FROM HOME**

### **1. Set up a home office**

Advancing or maintaining your professional life does not have to stop because you are home bound during a pandemic. You can still achieve the same excellence that you are well-known for at the office while at home. There are a few things you can do to make the home environment conducive to office work. Setting up a home office is a great place to start. Make sure your home office is as tidy as the office you usually use.

If possible, you can even dress formally to give yourself and everyone around the house the sense of how important your office hours are. Allocate 6 to 8 hours to continuing with your work and do not allow any interruptions. Make sure your home office resembles your regular office where possible.

## **2. Talk to your loved ones about the need for quiet hours**

Working from home has many advantages, including controlling your schedule, working in your terms as well as maximizing on time otherwise wasted traveling to the office. Nonetheless, working from home comes with its share of disadvantages, such as constant interruptions as well as noise. Therefore, talking to your loved ones about the need for quiet hours free from interruptions is essential.

Make sure everyone understands that you will not tolerate any disturbances unless there is an emergency. In this way, you will be able to concentrate better, and it will show in the quality of the work that you produce. That is how you can continue enjoying your work in a pandemic.

## **3. Understand working from home is as crucial as working from the office**

The quality of your work is determined by how you approach the work you do. If you treat working from home differently from working from the office, the quality of your work will show. Avoid producing below standard practice by carrying out work you do from home the same way you handle work from the office.

Keep in mind that all that matters is that you are producing quality work. Stay in touch with your supervisor and your colleagues if you are working on a project that requires communication.

## **DIFFERENT WAYS OF DEVELOPING YOUR RELATIONSHIPS IN A PANDEMIC**

### **1. Stay in touch**

Staying in touch with your loved ones during a pandemic is vital to keep your relationships healthy.

## **2. Help each other out around the house**

If you are required to remain indoors for a certain period, you can continue growing your relationships with the people you live with by helping each other out. Assisting with household chores and taking turns minding the kids or pets can help strengthen your relationship. It is also a great way of distracting yourself from the bad news circulating.

## **3. Work on assignments with your co-workers or classmates**

If you are a student, you can continue working on your assignments with other students online. If you are a working adult, you can keep with your projects or work assignments with other co-workers online. Sharing ideas, correcting each other, and coming up with new methods of tackling your work becomes more comfortable and even faster.

# 10 CREATIVE FUN FAMILY ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO AT HOME

Being stuck at home as a family can sometimes get boring, especially if you always stick to the same tried and tested activities like watching movies and playing monopoly. The things you do at home with your family often condition the amount and quality of fun you will experience. If you have an abnormally long amount of time to spend at home with your family, you need to be creative and try exciting new activities.

**Here are some fun and innovative ideas to boost your family time:**

## 1. Origami

Origami is an ancient Japanese art that involves folding paper to make different kinds of shapes like animals, plants, etc. It is an engaging form of art that anyone can learn. To learn origami, all you need is some white paper, color pencils, scissors and glue. You can easily follow tutorials on YouTube together as a family. Depending on how competitive your family members are, you can also have Origami contests after you have mastered several shapes.

Recently some artists have gone on to add some led lights to the paper shapes to give the artwork some beautiful light and color scenery. To kick things up a notch, add colored led lights and display the forms in the house.

## 2. Indoor camping

Indoor camping is another fun activity for families. It is easy to set up, and everything you need is usually already available in the house. You can turn the living room into a camp out space, turn off the lights, and take turns telling scary stories while roasting marshmallows on a portable burner.

## 3. Make short movies

Depending on how many you are in your family, you could write and create short video clips that you record using a phone or a camcorder if you have one. The idea is to have everyone participate in the whole movie-making process, including writing the script, picking the wardrobe, and acting it out. Keep the dialogue short so that you do not have to memorize a lot of words. It is even more fun if you turn the whole house into a movie set.

#### **4. Treasure hunt**

A treasure hunt is another way of having fun as a family. To make it enjoyable, have one person set up the hunting clues and divide the rest of the family into groups. The hunting clues should cater to all different age groups of the family so everyone can actively participate.

#### **5. Indoor Olympics**

Organize your own indoor Olympics as an entertainment for goofy and hyperactive family members. Create ten competitions that you can do indoors. The activities have to vary in nature and difficulty so that everyone can enjoy and participate. Assign points according to ranking at the end of each event. The winner of the tournament is the one with the most points at the end of all activities. Ideas for activities include eating competition, cup golf, bucket ball, song lyrics, etc.

#### **6. Family Master Chef**

Depending on the resources you have in the house, another very fun activity you can engage in is a cook-off. Just like the TV Master Chef, divide into teams and compete in creating an entirely new dish using a chosen set of ingredients. To make it more interesting, write down the different ingredients on a spin wheel and take turns to spin the wheel to select the ingredients. Use only the selected ingredients for the cook-off!

#### **7. Family Project**

Starting a family project is an excellent idea if you are going to spend a considerable number of days at home together as a family. The choice of a project depends on the family's interest, but they can range from redecorating the house to making dress up or superhero costumes together. You can also start a family garden if you have space.

#### **8. Learn a new language**

Learning a new language is a fun activity to engage every member of the family. Since it is a new language, everyone will be at par and can start together. Just agree on the language and get it going. There are so many learning apps and free online tutorials available that you cannot miss this opportunity! To get things more exciting, plan a future trip to a country that new language is spoken!

## **9. Turn your home into an Art Gallery**

Get the inner artist out of every family member by organizing a home art festival. Everyone must participate and use his creativity and imagination to express his artistic side by painting, drawing, googling or making collage with old newspapers. At the end, stick all the masterpieces on the walls to create your own family art gallery!

## **10. Revamp you family photo album**

Remove the “digital” dust from your old photos kept on your computer and start a fresh family photo album. This can be a fun activity to do with the family as each family member reminisces the good old souvenirs. Revamping your digital photos will also be a good opportunity to clear up duplicates and irrelevant pictures, freeing up valuable space on your computer or cloud storage.

## HAVE THE RIGHT MINDSET WHEN SELF-ISOLATING

An infection outbreak is a stressful time that often requires the adoption of stringent but necessary measures. During a pandemic, people are forced to self-isolate to curb the spread of the disease and prevent new infections. It is a critical aspect of mitigating the disease, and as such, everyone should play their role adequately.

Self-isolation has two objectives: To protect yourself and to protect others. Knowing how to behave and act when one is alone or when they are amongst other people is essential. Therefore, you need to develop the right attitude and reflexes when self-isolating.

To protect yourself and the people around you, here are some behavioral do's and don'ts that should be on the tip of your fingers:

### **1. Always act to limit contact**

Self-isolation limits contact with other people, save for those with whom you are in self-isolation. Whatever you do, it should be on the top of your mind to avoid contact or physical meetings with other people, infected or not. Avoid having visitors in your house. Do not visit other people. Do not go out unless necessary, and even then, make sure you take precautions to protect yourself and to protect other people.

### **2. Self-monitoring is key**

Always monitor yourself for the signs and symptoms of the disease. These signs can be early symptoms of the disease or symptoms of the infection worsening. Use a reliable source to educate yourself on the signs and symptoms to consider.

### **3. Hygiene, sanitation, and more Hygiene**

Being in self-isolation does not mean that you do not have to follow the hygiene recommendations issued by the health authorities. Continue to practice personal hygiene and surface sanitation when you are in self-isolation. Make it a point to disinfect all surfaces and points of frequent contact after each use, especially if you are living with other people.

#### **4. Think of vulnerable individuals**

Whatever you do during self-isolation, always think of vulnerable individuals around you. Susceptible groups include people at the extreme ends of age and people suffering from chronic and pre-existing conditions like diabetes, asthma, etc. Think of these people and try to put them first in everything you do during self-isolation, whether diagnosed with the infection or not.

#### **5. Seek help when needed**

You should not hesitate to ask your healthcare provider for help if you have any problem or you are not sure about something. Self-isolation does not mean you should figure things out on your own. If you develop a symptom, before you decide to self-medicate, ask someone else with authority and knowledge for advice and confirmation.

#### **6. Stay informed**

Make it a habit to always stay informed. Follow news updates on the outbreak and go beyond by reading scientific articles related to the outbreak. The more you know about the disease, the better you will be equipped to help fight it. One thing though, always ensure that your sources are reliable as lousy information is worse than no information.

#### **7. Think Positive**

While it is essential to stay informed about the progress of the pandemic, you should not let the news of growing number of cases or even deaths impact you negatively. Remember that bad news always sells very well. Do not get in their game. Be informed but do not be influenced by what you hear. Always keep a positive outlook on things and find ways to distract yourself.

#### **8. Get fit**

When self-isolating, it is always tempting to laze yourself on the couch in front of the TV. While this may be fine for the first days, remember that self-isolation could last for a few weeks. So, keeping fit physically will not only help your body but also your state of mind. Do some stretching exercise or some light exercise. There are ample of fitness programs available online with varying degrees of difficulty.

# 10 THINGS TO AVOID WHEN QUARANTINED

A quarantine for most of us is an unprecedented experience. In such situations, there are a lot of unknown and often unanswered questions. It is essential, however, to know what you can do and what you cannot. This article will address the 10 main things you need to avoid when quarantined. Here are some critical things to be aware of:

## 1. **Avoid contact with other people**

If you need to self-quarantine, you have to isolate yourself from others. Protect others from getting infected by keeping your distance and avoid being in the same room with them, as far as possible. Depending on how the infection in question is transmitted, do not share dishes, towels, eating utensils, bedding items, and other personal items with other people.

Adopting these habits will help control and prevent further infections. Clean all surfaces and frequently manipulated devices such as computers and mobile phones using a disinfectant. Always remain alert to symptoms related to that specific infection.

## 2. **Do not entertain visitors**

Avoid the risk of spreading the infection if you have been quarantined by stopping social visits and other close contacts. You can order takeaways, but make sure you avoid physical contact with the person delivering the order. Protect people who help with house chores by requesting them not to come to work, at least during the quarantine period. Such people may include child-minders, housekeepers and dog walkers.

## 3. **Avoid contact with your pet**

Your pet can unknowingly become a transmitter of viruses. Limiting contact with your pets when quarantined is a way of protecting yourself as well as your pet. Avoid getting licked by your pet, petting your pet, as well as sharing food with your pet. If possible, ask someone else to be responsible for your pet while in quarantine.

#### **4. Avoid traveling**

It is safer to refrain from moving outside for whatsoever reason while in quarantine. Make sure you stay at home and avoid spreading the infection to others. If your symptoms start worsening, make sure you call your doctor first and avoid showing up without any warning. Alternatively, head to the medical facility where they have set up a specialized zone for such pandemic-related symptoms.

#### **5. Avoid coughing or sneezing without covering your mouth or nose**

If transmission of the virus is via droplets, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing to help contain and prevent the spread of infections. Throw away used tissues and wash your hands thoroughly after sneezing or coughing, applying the 20 seconds rule. Wash your hands thoroughly using soap and warm water after going to the bathroom and avoid touching your face, mouth, or nose.

#### **6. Avoid handling food without washing**

Always wash your hands before preparing or eating food. Avoid preparing food for others while quarantined to prevent the spread of the infection if you show some symptoms of infection.

#### **7. Do not leave your health to chance**

Avoid relying on other people for knowledge of how you can best take care of yourself as well as your loved ones while quarantined. Make sure you are well aware of what you must do once you or a loved one are self-isolating. Have proper knowledge of the steps that need to be taken and know what to buy. Make sure you have access to all the necessary items needed while quarantined. Do not hesitate to contact health professionals when the symptoms start worsening.

#### **8. Avoid assuming your kids understand what is happening**

Being quarantined or being in self-isolation can cause a lot of discomfort to your loved ones. Make sure you educate your kids about pandemics and quarantines. Make sure they understand that being quarantined does not mean the presence of an infection. Calmly explain to them the situation and the reason for staying at home. Educate them on the precautions to take during that time.

**9. Avoid disconnecting with your loved ones completely**

Avoiding physical contact with your loved ones does not mean to be emotionally or socially disconnected. You are also encouraged to keep in touch using emails, calls, or social media. Maintaining this virtual contact will significantly reduce stress levels.

**10. Avoid self-medicating**

One mistake people make when quarantined is trying to control or get rid of the first symptoms by self-medicating. Do not self-medicate or increase dosages if you are already under specific medication. Self-medication or the risk of overdosing will not help you fight or prevent suspected infections.

## STUCK AT HOME? 10 ACTIVITIES TO AVOID GOING CRAZY!

When authorities declare a Pandemic situation, you, like the rest of the world, are home-bound to mitigate the propagation of the disease. Staying at home is enjoyable for the first few days but staying on lockdown for many days can drive anyone crazy. The best way to avoid going out of your mind during a pandemic is to have things to do.

### HERE ARE SOME EXCITING ACTIVITIES YOU CAN TRY IF YOU MUST STAY AT HOME:

#### 1. **Clean up or revamp your house**

Staying at home is an opportunity to declutter, clean up, and reorganize your house. You have all the time you have always needed, why not use it to improve your home? A clean and tidy house will also make it enjoyable to stay indoors during quarantine and to do some work from home. You can take a step further and redecorate the living room and maybe even repaint the bedrooms if you have that kind of resources. To enjoy revamping your house, even more, look for original inspiration online, watch home deco videos on YouTube, and read some blogs.

#### 2. **Make a list of things you have always wanted to do, the bucket list**

Many people have something they have always wanted to do but never found the time. If you are stuck at home during a pandemic, you can use the time to get some of those things done. Make a list of everything you have always wanted to do and the time it would take to get each one of them done. Focusing on trying to achieve some of your long-standing objectives can prevent you from going crazy.

#### 3. **Take a new course to learn new skills or to improve existing skills**

During the pandemic lockdown, you can use some of the extra time to educate yourself by learning new skills or by enhancing some of your current skills. Improving yourself can be very useful in getting ahead after the pandemic when things go back to normal. It is also a perfect way to block out crazy thoughts and feelings of doom that invade the mind during a time of isolation.

#### **4. Get into vlogging and blogging**

If you are into YouTube videos and reading blogs, you can start your own YouTube channel or create a blog. The contents of your blogging can be anything that you want; The goal is to have fun with it and use it as an outlet to let out steam and keep yourself from going crazy.

#### **5. Do not be afraid to pamper yourself**

It is ok to indulge yourself in hard times. Research show that doing something pleasant for yourself can be very therapeutic. So, if you are stuck at home, take some time every other day to pamper yourself. It does not even have to be anything fancy; simple things like taking a bubble bath, surrounding yourself with scented candles can be quiet relaxing and therapeutic.

#### **6. Make plans for future holidays**

When you are stuck at home during a pandemic, you do not have to sit around and worry about the crazy events. Instead, you should do things that give you joy and hope. Start planning for your future holidays; Research on possible destinations and activities which you could do at that destination. The positive feeling that comes from planning the next event can be beneficial in avoiding the feelings of doom, which often accompany a pandemic lockdown.

#### **7. Learn a new language**

Another exciting activity you could engage in to stop yourself from going crazy during a pandemic is to learn a new language. If you are going to plan a future holiday or trip, why not just go a step further and learn the local language of the place you intend to visit?

#### **8. Think of new goals**

A pandemic will pass, and life will return to normal. Take some time to reflect on your goals, what you have achieved, and what you can do better. Come up with new goals and hit the ground running when things go back to normal.

## **9. Start a new personal project**

Having an ongoing project gives people something to look forward. If you are stuck at home, try to start a new project to provide yourself with some purpose, and stop yourself from going crazy. Craft projects, genealogical tree, pot planting are just a few ideas. Be original in your imagination; you may surprise yourself!

## **10. Rediscover old forgotten games and TV shows**

Being stuck at home is also an excellent opportunity to catch up on some TV shows and rediscover some old and forgotten games that you were once watching or playing. If you are at home with your family, you could revisit some classic board games.

# 10 CREATIVE WAYS TO ENTERTAIN YOUR KIDS DURING A PANDEMIC

During a pandemic, everyone is affected irrespective of gender or age. People of all walks of life are affected and kids are not spared. By their very nature, kids are hyperactive- they need to move, they need to interact and focus on specific activities. Not being able to go to school, play with other kids or just run outside can have a lasting impact in their lives. It is every parent's and guardian's responsibility to minimize the negative impact of the lock down on children. Doing this requires a certain level of creativity throughout the duration of the lockdown.

## 1. **Play fun group games**

There are quite a number of board games that your kids can play to stay distracted during a pandemic. The most important thing to keep in mind is to stick to the kind of games that they love. You can also take part in some of the games to make things more interesting. You could pick the game once in a while but involve the kids in the selection of a game and stress to them that selecting a game is their responsibility.

## 2. **Play brain stimulating games**

Brain games or games that challenge the intellect will not only keep your kids mentally sharp, but it will also keep them competitive and entertained. Compliment your children when they complete a level or stage to keep them motivated and feeling proud. Encourage them when they fail to complete a certain level the same way you would encourage them when they are doing their homework.

## 3. **Try online games**

You can also try playing online games with your kids or let them play with their friends online. However, keep a close eye on the kind of games and activities they choose to play online.

#### **4. Let your kids help with the household chores**

Household chores are yet another activity, aside of games, you can engage with your kids. Teach them or ask them to give you a hand with the chores and make it interesting. They can help prepare their favorite meal, help set the table, and help clean the house by dusting the furniture. They can also help with washing or folding the laundry. Some kids love it when they do something that their parents encourage or ask them to do. So, give it a try!

#### **5. Start a family project**

You can come up with certain family projects that your kids can participate in. It could be any type of project that your kids will love. It does not have to be a school project. It could be the kind of project that they can actively contribute to. For example, you can grow pot-based plants, repaint the bedrooms or build a 3D puzzle or create your genealogical tree. You could even learn a family dance on YouTube or form a band if you have instruments laying around.

#### **6. Give them books to read**

Books are a great way of keeping your kids' minds off the pandemic. So, try giving them books to read. You could give every child a different book according to their age and then ask for a 5-minute summary every day before they go to bed. This will not only keep them busy, but it will also perfect their intellect as well as feed their curiosity. Make sure there is a reward for each completed book.

#### **7. Help with their schoolwork**

While kids are asked to stay at home while schools are closed, they may be given assignments and homework. You can keep your kids entertained by helping them out with their homework. If the school does not give them any work to do while at home, you can come up with your own assignments. Focus on areas that your child is currently struggling with at school so as to help make the work comprehensible.

#### **8. Watch movies with them**

Movies are without a doubt a great source of entertainment for both adults and kids. You could watch one or two movies a day with your kids as a form of entertainment.

## **9. Have them come up with their own ideas of entertainment**

Coming up with great ideas of entertainment for your kids is a good thing. Nonetheless, if you want them to genuinely enjoy you can let them come up with their own forms of entertainment. Doing so is also a great way to empower them when you have run out of ideas. All you need to do is approve of the kind of entertainment they choose and participate cheerfully when asked.

## **10. Help cultivate their talents**

It is true that every dark cloud has a silver lining. Even during a pandemic your kids' talent can be improved. You can take advantage of the situation and find ways of improving or even discovering your child's talent. For example, if your child is an aspiring artist encourage the artist in him or her by buying color books, pencils, and crayons. You could also go the extra mile by visiting reputable art galleries online and explaining what each photo symbolizes, where and when the painting was made, and what inspired the artist to produce that particular painting.

## RECONNECTING WITH FAMILY MEMBERS DURING A PANDEMIC

During a pandemic, some people have no option but to self-isolate and others are put into quarantine to get better control of the disease and stop its spread. These extreme measures can put a strain on some relationships, especially closely-knit families who see each other often and do things together. In some cases, a parent must be isolated from their kids, and that can profoundly affect parent-child relationships.

Staying connected during a pandemic is especially important for families. By just practicing a few habits, you and your family can come out of a pandemic even stronger than before. Here are some practical ways to encourage you stay connected with your family when self-isolating:

### **1. Talk about the situation**

Talking is the healthiest way of dealing with any issues related to emotions. If you want your relationships to survive a pandemic lockdown or to repair fractured relations, you must take some time to talk to your loved ones. Talk about the disease and why it is essential to maintain a period of isolation. Go on to discuss in detail how the separation will go and what methods of communication you will adopt to stay in touch. Make it a must to give each other regular updates until the period of isolation is over.

### **2. Check-in with texts and video calls**

Check on your loved ones through regular texts and video calls. We live in the technology era, which makes it possible to remain connected with people regardless of the distance. It is even possible to have group calls where the whole family can participate in different locations.

### **3. Play online games together**

Staying connected with family does not mean talking and chatting alone. You must incorporate other activities that you can do together. Playing games online, together as a family, can maintain the connection needed to get through a lockdown with minimum stress. There are different kinds of games online to suit various family interests. Depending on the sort of things you like as a family, you can play board games, sports games, role play, strategy, adventure, etc.

#### **4. Work on a family project from a distance**

Another way to reconnect with family members is to start a family project. A family project will ensure that you frequently communicate as a family. It will also bring about some challenges that you will have to work together to overcome, thereby uniting the family. The family project does not have to be complicated; it could be starting a family YouTube channel, blogging, or business. You could also start preparing the family's genealogical tree.

#### **5. Plan a future family get-together or vacation**

While you are in self-isolation or lockdown, try to work together as a family to plan the next gathering or family vacation. You can give each other tasks to do and make decisions together until the whole plan comes along. Planning together gives family members the feeling of being loved and being relevant, which plays a significant role in building connections and reconnecting for those who had lost touch.

#### **6. Help each other with goals and resolutions**

Encourage each other in coming up with goals and resolutions. Discuss and establish each other's vision board and come up with a mutual vision board as a family. Help each other evaluate past achievements and failures and map up new objectives for when the pandemic is over. By being involved in each other's lives, you build a stronger bond, guaranteed to withstand any crisis that may threaten to shake your walls.

#### **7. Time to forgive and reunite**

A time of crisis is an excellent opportunity to tackle past hurts. Talk about these issues openly with the relevant family member and forgive or ask forgiveness where necessary. Paradoxical, though it may seem, a pandemic is an opportune moment to mend and start over any broken or wounded relationship with other family members. It may hurt at first, when dealing with these issues, especially if there were deeply buried emotions, but the intense feeling of relief and restoration will be liberating once relationships are mended.

## CONCLUSION

The stress relief concepts reviewed in this document are not all inclusive. Some of the material may be dated and most of it is timeless. If you come up with something not included, I will be grateful to learn about it.

I can be reached at [daniel@emergencyactionplanning.com](mailto:daniel@emergencyactionplanning.com) with your questions, concerns, and comments.

Till next time

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Kilbann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Be Safe