

COPING WITH COVID

RELATIONSHIPS & MARRIAGE
NADINE DURBACH, LCSW





TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

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- **Individuals, couples & families**





MAGNIFYING GLASS

If relationship is historically good, it is good now/if relationship is historically unhealthy or dysfunctional, it appears cracked now

BUILDING BLOCKS

- **Trust**
- **Honesty**
- **Reliability**
- **Your own building blocks**



GLUE: THE STUFF THAT MAKES 2 PEOPLE STICK TOGETHER

- Finding qualities that attract you to your partner
- Keep a weekly journal/log – write down one quality a day that you find attractive, respectable, honorable, likable, hot in your partner
- After one week, review your lists together
- This heightens relational intimacy – you and me babe against the rest of the world



COMMUNICATION

- **Care & communicate**
- **Don't criticize & crunch**
- **Create boundaries & basic rules**
- **Treat each other with care**
- **Connect before you correct**
- **We go where we feel welcomed – we stay where we feel valued**





SELF CARE

- **Good for couples to lead separate, interesting lives so shelter in place is not normal and not healthy because we are meant to be apart in order to come back together.**
 - **I can't miss you if I don't miss you!**
 - **The power of solitude supports the power of connection**
 - **Take time for your oxygen mask – this looks different for each person “I exercise, he sleeps!”**
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WHO'S IN THE SANDBOX?

- **Let's play**
- **Use humor to laugh with each other, not at each other!**
- **Sharing is caring**
- **Lightness/ levity vs. heaviness**
- **Get creative**



INTIMACY

- **Relational intimacy is not the same as sexual intimacy**
- **Stress impacts desire**
- **Physical touch can be in the form of a pedicure, massage, haircut**
- **Date night**
- **Photo therapy**





WE ARE LAYERED!

- **Get to know one another**
 - **Jada Pinkett Smith**
 - **Actions create emotions/ behaviors create feelings**
 - **If you want to feel more in love, act more in love**
 - **More you put into it, more you get out of it**
 - **The more we give, the more we love**
 - **Love comes from giving: what does your partner need?**
 - **You can only change yourself**
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QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD

- **Is this an optimum time to bring up issues that have been dormant with a spouse/partner?**
- **Handling a couple's differences in COVID strictness? Cannot really compromise without feeling worry/stress (Coping styles/expectations/MoSCoW prioritization scale)**





TAKEAWAY FROM TODAY

**The thing that challenges us the most,
is the thing that we have to give the
most to.**

