Mindfulness
The next step in self-regulating emotions during uncertain times.

Duration: 5 minutes  Frequency: Variable  Difficulty: Light
Practice any or all of the following activities.

Instructions:

1. Simply breathe. Breathe in deeply through the nose and into the diaphragm for 5 seconds and out through the mouth for 5 seconds. Direct awareness to the sensations in your body, and let thoughts come and go without judgment. Repeat each inhalation and exhalation 5 times.

2. Mindful Walks “Noticing Walk:” Stroll through the neighborhood, nearby park or open field and have your children notice things they haven’t seen before. Designate one minute of the walk to being completely silent and simply pay attention to all the sounds they can hear — birds, wind, cars, a lawnmower etc. Ask your children to write and/or discuss any new sensations which may have emerged.

3. Listen to the bell: An easy way for children to practice mindfulness is to focus on paying attention to what they can hear. You could use a bell, a set of chimes, or a phone app that has sounds on it.

For more support, visit:
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Tell your children that you will make the sound, and they should listen carefully until they can no longer hear it (which is usually 30 seconds to a minute). This exercise has a calming effect, and it is a fun way to teach children to pay attention to their surroundings.

**Explanation:**

Mindfulness is noticing our thoughts, our sensations and being grounded in the present moment. Becoming aware of our thoughts and external and internal environment can help children focus, concentrate, and simply make better, more conscious decisions by not allowing every urge and impulse to take precedence. By practicing mindfulness, children can apply skills to become more self-aware during this time and minimize impulsive behaviors rooted in stress.

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