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CRISIS INTERVENTION AND GENERAL GUIDELINES
EXPERT CONSENSUS GUIDELINES
EARLY INTERVENTION

• Help the child understand that it is normal to be upset
• Provide information about acute stress reaction and how any feeling they might have now is a normal reaction to an abnormal situation
• Encourage the child to talk with family and friends about their feelings but respect their right to remain silent
• Educate family and significant others about importance of listening and being tolerant
• accept the need for repeated retelling
• Relieve irrational guilt
• Consider need to explore ways of regulating sleep using cbt-i, slee hygiene or follow pediatricians suggestions
PROTECTIVE FACTORS

• Personal Hopefulness
• Possible psychobiologic factors those with optimistic/cheerful temperaments may be, in part genetically based
• Higher income and education
• Previous mastery of disasters
  • Study of sailors in WWII, older survived better if they had previous experience of being in sinking boat
• Realistic information and availability of information and services that are real, and accurate
EXPERT CONSENSUS
TREATMENT SELECTION

- REFER FOR COUNSELING OR PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION
  - Daily functioning is severely disrupted
  - Child has severe insomnia
  - Child has mood regulation symptoms that are pervasive, persistent and interfere with functioning
Being There

• Important to recognize that there is no “one” right way

• **POWER OF BEING THERE** Prepare yourself to be present- leave personal concerns at door
  • Age of “pizur hanefesh”

• Take cues from person you are reaching out to
  • Let them take control of conversation; follow their lead
  • Avoid the “Oy” - depressed look when reaching out

• Never tell someone that he or she should be “over it.”

• Note from woman who lost father behind painting
Giving Space for Questioning

• Rav Hirsch on “lemah” azavtani-

• Kotzker: I could never believe in a God I could understand

• Rabbi Dr. Dovid Fox on how a “perhaps” response leads to comfort “nichamtani”

• Rabbi Schwab on deeper meaning of word “nechama” as shift in perspective
Leadership in Times of Crisis
Optimism and Enabling A Positive Climate
Focus on the Positive

• Ratio of positive to negative statements in the workplace as crucial predictor of organizational effectiveness
  • Ratio of approximately 5:1 is optimal
    • Same finding as in marriages
Enabling A Positive Climate

- Enabling organizational compassion
  - Being on the lookout for colleagues who need help
  - Organized action to offer help

- Forgiveness
  - Foster climate that encourages seeing mistakes as feedback not setback
  - Attributing failure as coming from temporary and external sources rather than permanent and internal sources
  - Neurosurgeon study
  - Provide support and development transforming blunders into learning experience

- Gratitude
  - Regular use of direct expression of gratitude and appreciation and written notes providing specific thanks
  - Cameron, K. Positive Leadership, BK Press, 2008
Instilling Confidence

• Use of praise and encouragement in a context that conveys belief in the worker’s competence

• Such praise needs to be delivered in a manner that is perceived by as sincere and not coming from an attempt to control.

• Leaders who don’t believe in their employees potential tend to have employees who display helpless behaviors in the face of challenging tasks and are more likely to be viewed as unmotivated
Optimism

• Optimism as powerful correlates of religious action and belief study
  • Seligman study of what predicts who wins elections
  • Example of adolescent on line at Auschwitz and of :“Thank God I’m wearing shoes”
• Optimism regarding day to day events- e.g. “I think everything will work out”- predisposes to constructive, healthy action
General Research on Optimism

• Optimists are:
  • More likely to persevere in face of difficulty
  • More likely to cope effectively with stress
    • Lower rates of post-partum depression, handle life transitions better
  • More popular

• Bowling study- when 3 games are videotaped and feedback is based on strikes and spares rather than misses scorers improve
On an Attitude of Joy
Berachos 31A

• There is no joy when there is no joy, and no joy when there is
  yet no joy. That which is not a joy is a joy, for joy is the
  joy of the joy of joy.

Postville
Geometry and chasidim story
Meaning Making:

- from stuck to positioned - Avoid empty cliches like it’s all for the best, or I know how you feel.
- People prefer flax to the barrel - dangers of יבוחן צדיק השם
  - As opposed to PTG model from stuck to positioned
- Berayso on power of “shemo”
- Reordered priorities - re importance of family, friends and faith
- Fragility of life and it’s lessons on what matters
Self Care & Coping

• Modify your daily activities to meet the current reality of the situation and **focus on what you can accomplish.**

• Shift expectations and priorities to **focus more on what gives you meaning, purpose, or fulfillment.**

• Give yourself **small breaks from the stress of the situation.**

• **Attempt to control self-defeating statements and replace them with more helpful thoughts.** Here’s a helpful checklist for identifying unhealthy thoughts and coping with them: https://arfamiliesfirst.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cognitive-Distortions.pdf.

• Remember, you are a role model for your children. How you handle this stressful situation can affect how your children manage their worries.
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DEALING WITH PARENT-TEACHER CONFLICT
PARENT TEACHER CONFLICT
Parent-Teacher Collaboration: Managing Teacher-Parent Conflict

Anger Control and Conflict Resolution When At Odds with Parents

Based on: Kosmoski, Managing conversations with hostile adults
• The world is shut down but teachers are working hard
• Parents lurking and criticizing on on zoom

• Parents saying “why pay full tuition when the amount of instruction we are receiving is less

  Ideal mindset :
• From threat to challenge
• From stuck to positioned
• Post-traumatic growth
Defusing the Angry Screamer

A survey of 250 teachers found that they had all experienced an angry, screaming parent at least once.

Those who felt they handled the situation best described the essence of their response as taking a calm and rational approach while refusing to be drawn into a yelling contest.

Based on: Kosmoski, Managing conversations with hostile adults
Understanding the Out of Control Parent

- Individuals who grow up in homes where conflict is dealt with by yelling, screaming or criticism learn to rely on angry intimidation as a way of dealing with frustration.

- The more powerless an individual feels the more likely they are to try to achieve control through intimidation.

Based on: Kosmoski, Managing conversations with hostile adults
Tips for Dealing with Out of Control Parents

• Force yourself to breathe slowly and deeply before responding
• Bounce back calmness by emotionally detaching:
  • Some sample self statements that can facilitate this detachment are:
    • This is not personal, it has nothing to do with me
    • I’m watching an adult temper tantrum
Prepare Effective Retorts
Tips for Dealing with Out of Control Parents (continued)

Calming statements that help de-escalate such situations include:

- “Hold on, I want to be able to hear you correctly, so you’ll have to slow down a little”
- “Help me understand your point of view, just take your time and tell me the whole story, I’ll speak when you’re finished
- “Go ahead, I’m listening. Why don’t you start at the beginning and tell me all about it”

Based on: Kosmoski, Managing conversations with hostile adults
• If parent is not responding to attempt to de-escalate plan a meeting at a later time—preferably within a day or two
  • Say: “this is so important that it deserves my undivided attention, let’s make an appointment as soon as possible”
Apologize When Appropriate

• **Acknowledge**: “you’re right”
• **Apologize**: “I’m sorry I did that”
• **Make it right**: “I’ll do my best to fix this”
• **Recommit**: I won’t let this happen again

Based on: Kosmoski, Managing conversations with hostile adults
COPING WITH CHAOS

• Normal reaction to abnormal event
• Challenge: From alone together to together alone
PSYCHOEDUCATION NCTSN

• Hold your family discussion in a comfortable place and encourage family members to ask questions.

• Consider having a separate discussion with young children in order to use language they can understand and to address specific fears or misconceptions they may have.
CHALLENGES FOR CHILDREN

• Suddenly almost everybody around me is nervous
• Children (like adults) do best with structure and routine-
• We are wired for connection with other- especially children-
  isolation from friends is difficult and confusing
• Unable to see grandparents
• Feeling stuck in apartment and inability to go to the building’s
  playroom
TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS

• PROCESS NOT EVENT BUT SIGNIFY IMPORTANCE BY FORMAL DISCUSSION: Hold family discussion in comfortable place with no distractions, cell phones and other distractions off

• Separate discussion with younger children begin by asking them what they know– remember to be understood, first understand

• Minimize exposure to media- research after 9/11 found that heavy media exposure was a PTSD risk factor for children

• Encourage questions:
  • Validate feelings
  • Consider use of art, writing, and music
  • Explain that not every respiratory disease is COVID-19
  • Check back with children when situation changes
Children (continued)

- Promote continued virtual contact with educators, extended family, and friends
- Focus on hope and temporary nature (understanding child time)
- Consistent schedules including bedtime, meals and exercise
- Required helpfulness- power of chesed for kids
- Boredom. Loneliness, anxiety and even panic are normal reactions to an abnormal situation
Psychological Impact of Quarantine and How to Reduce it: Lancet 2/26/19

• Key take home messages of research:
  • Need for quarantined people to fully understand why
  • Need for rapid, clear information
  • Arrangements for supplies need to be made
  • The shorter the quarantine the lower the psychological risk
  • **Voluntary quarantines are associated with less distress and fewer long-term complications**
  • **Altruistic component of self-isolation should be emphasized**
COMMON CONCERNS OF MILLENIALS

• First experience with major challenge in generation raised with snowplow parenting-
  • Fear of infection
Anecdotal Reports on Rising Divorce Rate in China Rising After Mandatory Coronavirus Home Quarantine

• According to the offices that track divorces in China:
  • Divorce rates have risen sharply following their mandatory coronavirus home quarantine
  • One office saw over 300 couples applying for divorces in the period that immediately followed the three weeks
  • Another registry in Xi'an received 14 requests in one day, hitting the upper limit
  • Officials claim it's due to self-isolated couples spending too much time together
• Attempt to see unpleasant feelings related to the coronavirus, as just feelings – not reality – and to accept that parts of life are hard and that that’s OK.

• negative feelings are an inevitable part of life, and we can best deal with them by accepting them, learning from them, and then acting in accordance with our larger life goals.

• “The idea that I could accept my anxiety – as opposed to trying to get rid of it – was revolutionary to me. And the way I do it – by recognizing it when I see it, saying something like “I accept this anxious thought,” or perhaps even using my imagination to invite it in to stay for tea, and then telling it I need to move on to something else” –(Laura Turner, NYT, 3/12/20)
Research on Psychological Impact of Quarantine

• Post-traumatic symptoms
• Confusion and anger
  • Impact heightened by:
  • Longer duration
  • Infection fears
  • Boredom
  • Inadequate supplies
  • Financial stress
  • Stigma
Coping: Multiplicity of styles

• Respect right of family members and friends to deal in their own way
• Rav Ami and Rav Assi
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CHESED
Health and Volunteering

• When elderly individuals volunteer they have a 40% lower probability of dying in a given year than matched controls (Harris, 2005, Journal of Health Psychology, 10(6), 739-752)

• 132 patients with MS assigned to two groups- the group asked to provide “unconditional positive regard” and support to members of the other group showed between 3 and 7 fold more improvement in symptoms
  • Psychological benefits included increased self awareness, confidence, and fewer symptoms of depression (Schwartz (1999) Social Science & Medicine, 48:1563-1575)
Volunteering and Health: Longitudinal Study

• In 1956, 427 wives and mothers who lived in upstate New York were followed for 30 years.

• Regardless of number of children, marital status, occupation, education, or social class, those women who engaged in volunteer work at least once a week lived longer and had better physical functioning, even after adjusting for baseline health status.

Volunteering in Adolescence

• Enhances social competence
• Improved self-esteem
• Protects against anti-social behaviors
• Less substance abuse
• Fewer teen pregnancies
• Less academic failure

Altruism and the Immune System

Altruism as a component of personality, as measured by a personality questionnaire given to persons with HIV, is significantly related to lower levels of stress hormones thought to affect progress of the disease.

• Earthquake prep story
Summary

• Managing expectations- Elevator
  • Temperament that has difficulty with anxiety, awfulizing, avoidance, problems with transitions, clingy, whiny etc

• Avoid taking over; Allow failure

• Remain calm-
  • pull back, planned discussion, perspective taking

• Model managing your own anxiety

• Model confidence in your CHILD
Helping the Anxious Child

GENERAL GUIDELINES
Importance of Managing Expectations

(משלי ו) לך אל הנמל
Elevator analogy
What to Avoid: Excessive Reassurance

- Anxious children will ask for reassurance far more frequently than their peers
- Automatically saying “everything will be ok” - is fine but not when it interferes with child’s own efforts at self-regulation
  - May also inadvertently reinforce the anxiety by rewarding attention seeking
- Instead: “what can you say to yourself that might make it more ok?”
- When implementing such a change in how you respond to their need for reassurance
  - Let them know
  - Consider initially rewarding their efforts at trying to self-soothe
Dangers of Taking Over for Child
The Gift of Allowing Mistakes

• Over long-term feeds avoidance
• Although teacher direction is a natural and understandable effort at protecting child- remember that children can drown in our chicken soup
• In analyzing times where you took over ask yourself: “what is the worst thing that would have happened had I allowed the situation to play out without my input?”
• Power of mistakes
  • Neurosurgeon study
  • Work of Dweck
Parenting Style Associated with Resilience Post-9/11

• In sample of adolescents 6 months after 9/11 parental input that was most helpful was:
  • parental encouragement of positive reframing
  • Encouragement of emotional expression
  • Atmosphere of low parent adolescent conflict

Drowning in Chicken Soup

- Relative to students whose parents did not restrict their activities, children whose parents restricted their activities and their travel in the six months after the attacks (presumably because of anxiety over future terrorism) were:
  - Three times as likely to meet criteria for probable PTSD
  - Twice as likely to exhibit symptoms of other anxiety disorders and major depressive disorder

Benefits of Monkey Bars
Sandseter, E. Evolutionary Psychoogy (2011) 9(2) 257-284

• A child who's hurt in a fall before the age of 9 is less likely as a teenager to have a fear of heights
• By gradually exposing themselves to more and more dangers on the playground, children are performing their own systematic desensitization to overcome and enduring fear of heights
• "Risky play mirrors effective cognitive behavioral therapy of anxiety"
The Cost of Impatience

• Clinginess, whining, and the realization that nothing you do or say seems to help, understandably can lead to yelling, criticism and general loss of temper- a response guaranteed to feed the cycle in children who are naturally attuned to any form of loss of your presence or love

• Need for step back response, reminding self that this is probably more “can’t” than “won’t”

• Power of:
  • striking when the iron is cold
  • a cognitive mind set of curiosity, “tolerant distance” and empathy
Calm Discussions

- During calm time discussing “what if” scenarios regarding other children-
  - Generating alternatives and potential outcomes
  - Breaking big tasks down to manageable components
  - Power of relaxation training with “suds” before and after
On the Importance of the Friday Night Berocho: Sefer Hachaim (brother of the MAHARAL)
כשם שיש לוחשים עסק עמו, והיאנו פעל בצל שבין לילה היה וני לילה אבד