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Tips for School Staff During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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As school professionals, you are in a unique position to support our community. Responding to COVID-19 can take an emotional toll. With new pressures and demands during this crisis, anxiety and stress levels may well be higher than usual for you, your students and their families.

Redefine “Work”

- Working from home means a new set of challenges. Give yourself permission to transition gently as you adapt.
- With more screen time and less face time, expect to feel more drained. Take breaks when possible. (Websites like <https://justgetflux.com/> can help by decreasing blue light.)
- Working from home means you are likely doing multiple jobs - be kind to yourself about what “productive” looks like.

Create Boundaries

- Find ways to have a defined start and finish for your workday. A structured routine can help.
- Create a separate workspace at home to contain the work experience.
- Email can be relentless. Take breaks and don't feel obligated to respond at all hours. The people you're corresponding with could also use a break.
- Just because someone is upset it does not mean they are upset with you. Remember the history of your relationship and the context of the current crisis.

Accept Not Knowing

- Students and families often look to you for answers and it can be stressful not to have them.
- Joining in the unknown with your students and their families can be a source of containment and connection in this crisis.
- Right now, not knowing still means you are doing your job well.

Stay Connected

- Find ways to connect to the parts of your job you enjoyed most before this crisis.
- Be creative about finding ways to remain connected to coworkers and students.
- Now is a good time to call on your community resources for support (i.e., friends, family, religious leaders, and mental health professionals).

Take Care of Yourself

- Savor moments of pleasure or fun. Laughter is therapeutic.
- Strengthen connections; be understanding with yourself and others.
- Take breaks from work or caregiving when you can.
- Find time to be alone when you need it and are able – even if it's just 15 minutes to breathe!