



Public Safety Psychological Services

20818 44th Ave W, Suite 150, Lynnwood, WA 98036
Office (425) 775-4477, fax (425) 527-0466

Cerise M. Vablais, MBA, PhD, ABPP cvablais@psspc.net
Board Certified Specialist in Police and Public Safety Psychology

Staying Sane In Insane Times – “Balance”

Noun “in which different elements are equal or in the correct proportions”.

This weekly tip sheet is to support you and your families during this ongoing public health event. During our annual wellness visits, using the acronym **PIES**, we discuss ideas for staying healthy and resilient. We welcome your ideas – email us at cvablais@psspc.net As always, if you or a loved one are feeling suicidal, please call “911”, Code4NW at 425-243-5092 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

Physical Health – the “**P**”

Balance. Practicing physical balance has both mental and physical benefits. So, this week spend some time doing *one sided exercises, think yoga tree pose, skater lunges, one leg deadlifts, alternating arm bicep or hammer curls*, etc. When we focus on using one side of our body, our brain has to compensate to help us stay stable. This has a side benefit of focusing our breathing to slow down or we will not stay balanced. *Bonus points: Notice how different your balance can be from day to day. Look for any patterns in the differences. (And don’t worry if you fall.)*

Goal: Spend 5 minutes a day on some sort of exercise that requires you to practice balance.

Intellectual Health – the “**I**”

Consider the opposing view point. To maintain balance in our intellect, we must strive to continue to consider alternative and, even opposite, views. During a time that has felt so polarized, taking some time to actively seek out information about an opposing view point can be healthy and sustaining. This does not mean you have to change your views on something but it may help you begin to understand others just a little bit better. For example, consider giving equal time to news stations that present both a conservative and liberal view. Again, this is not an attempt to change your view, but to better understand that dialogue that is occurring.

Challenge: Read or listen to a source of information that is radically different from what you generally listen to. If you write, jot down your thoughts on what surprised you, what didn’t and anything you may have learned.

Emotional Health – the “**E**”

Practice balance in your emotions. Spend five minutes “checking in” with yourself in the morning. Are you feeling stressed? Sad? Happy? Consider briefly the opposite of your emotion and what that would feel like in your body. What thoughts would accompany that opposite feeling? Become aware of our emotions and how they feel in our bodies and the thoughts that accompany them can assist us in striving for balance.

Goal: I will aim to check in with my emotions 5 out of 7 days this week.

Spiritual Health – the “**S**”

Actively cultivate balance in your life. Most of you have jobs where you focus on EVERYONE ELSE. Take time this week to focus on yourself. Give yourself permission to take care of yourself. Breathe, write, read, talk to a friend, meditate or pray. But make a conscious effort to consider ways in which your life is out of balance.

Challenge: Identify one area of your life that is out of balance and make a small change. (HINT: most of us are having to spend too much time on the screens. Have a media free day or half-day)

Balance your thoughts with action. If you spend too much time thinking about a thing, you’ll never get it done.

– Bruce Lee



Public Safety Psychological Services

20818 44th Ave W, Suite 150, Lynnwood, WA 98036
Office (425) 775-4477, fax (425) 527-0466

Cerise M. Vablais, MBA, PhD, ABPP cvablais@psspc.net
Board Certified Specialist in Police and Public Safety Psychology

Staying Sane In Insane Times –“PIES” for Kids and Teens

Balance - Noun “in which different elements are equal or in the correct proportions”.

During our annual wellness visits, using the acronym **PIES**, we discuss ideas for staying healthy and resilient. We welcome your ideas – email us at cvablais@psspc.net As always, if you or a loved one are feeling suicidal, please call “911”, Code4NW at 425-243-5092 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

Physical Health – “P”

- **Practice physical balance.** This week, encourage your children to play around with balance. Stand on one leg. Do a yoga tree pose. Play a sport that is completely different than what they usually enjoy, e.g. if they are usually playing soccer, have them try basketball. If they only participate in team activities, encourage them to try a solo exercise. The idea is to get them to do something that is very different physically than what they usually do.

Intellectual Health – “I

- **Encourage your child to consider alternative viewpoints.** You can use varying topics to practice this exercise. Some suggestions: What is your favorite ice cream flavor?, What is your favorite color? What is your favorite school subjects? Then ask them to choose their least favorite and discuss the benefits of that alternative/opposite. These types of debates are not only good for their brains, but can result in lots of giggles and fun!

Emotional Health – “E”

- **Check in with your children in the mornings. Ask them to name their primary emotion.** Then ask them what that feels like in their body and what thoughts they have in their head. Help them name their feeling. For example, “I feel frustrated and that makes my stomach hurt.” Then ask them to name the opposite feeling and how that might feel. If they are feeling negatively, ask them to focus on the opposite positive feeling for a few minutes before they settle in for their day of learning. Helping them develop an awareness of their feelings can help them begin to appreciate having a balance of thoughts, feelings and emotions. You can also do an internet search for a feelings charts with various faces identifying emotions – this can be fun for younger children.

Spiritual Health – “S”

- 1 **Practice anonymous acts of kindness.** Balance your focus on yourself with a focus on others. This can work for kids still at home with siblings in our continued virtual learning environment. Go to each child individually and tell her or him to plan a special surprise for someone in the family. This can be like “Secret Santa” in September ☺

“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving. ~ Albert Einstein