

## Social Distancing Survival Jar for Young Adults and Teens

**What:** The Social Distancing Survival Jar is designed to offer ideas on how to cope with unhelpful thoughts and not so good feelings during COVID-19. Find a jar that you can use then cut out the following suggested skills and ideas. Pick one or as many as you want at a time. Try to spend at least 20 minutes exploring what works or what doesn't work for you. And, feel free to add more of your own as you go 😊. This can actually be your forever survival jar as we embrace the new normal.

Here are some guidelines to help in dealing with feelings that one should be mindful of:

- Feelings come and go. They don't last forever.
- You are NOT your feelings and your feelings are NOT you.
- Life is not always pretty, organized, or perfect. It is made up of both highs and lows. Having negative or bad feelings is normal.
- Most people react to get a quick release, but end up feeling guilty or regretful afterwards. Feelings are generally not the problem, negative behaviors or actions are the problem.
- You can create a space between your feelings and actions using effective coping skills and come up with a response that reflects your true intention.

**When:** There are many ways you can use the Social Distancing Survival Jar. You can use it as a reminder in the morning when you feel neutral and fresh or a couple times throughout the day to keep you grounded. Another time that would be highly recommended is when you are aware that big feelings are coming up. If you look at the feeling thermometer rating scale here, a good time to use the jar is when you are between number 5 and number 7. Most kids think about practicing coping skills when it is already too late. That's why the skill doesn't work as well as they had hoped.

Feelings Thermometer

1 = I'm feeling great

2 = I am relaxed and happy

3 = I am cool and collected "I've got this."

4 = I am okay

5 = This is hard, but I am in control

6 = I'm starting to feel uncomfortable

6.5 = I just don't feel like myself; I am bored and feel disconnected from my friends

7 = I am heating up

8 = I am boiling

9 = I am ready to explode

10 = I am exploding out of control



-----  
Turn the music on and DANCE away.

-----  
Do something silly or wild that you normally don't do. Be safe and creative, of course. Just be free and don't criticize or judge yourself 😊

-----  
Getting frustrated at your current life situation won't generally change anything. It is what it is, at least for now! Be creative and think out of the box. This can be a time for you to explore new possibilities.

-----  
Create a space at home for relaxation that you don't need to share with anyone.

-----  
Create relaxing bedtime routines to help you get to sleep before midnight.

-----  
Make sure you walk away or take a break from screens every 2 hours during the day.

-----  
Exercise, lift weights, do yoga, take a walk outside, or walk your dog.

-----  
When someone says something that irritates you, check your thoughts and behaviors. What urges come up? Be curious instead of reacting. If you wait and process the experience, you might be able to come up with something that they will want to listen to.

-----  
Try rock painting, diamond/gem painting, numbers painting or working in a coloring book, if you have not tried any of these activities recently or ever.

-----  
Watch a funny YouTube video.

-----  
Practice enjoying alone time. You can sit outside with a cup of tea, warm milk, or whatever you like, and just watch what goes on around you.

-----  
Look at the stars tonight and appreciate them.

---

Look up feelings chart online, print one out, and go over it one time at least. Teach yourself to name your feelings. Strangely, this skill does not come naturally, but it can come with practice.

---

Shower and get dressed up like you are going on a date or hanging out with friends.

---

Do one kind thing for someone else today. Surprise him or her.

---

Set a reminder in your phone saying, "I am amazing" or "I am capable." It might seem funny at first, but this is one way you can rewire your brain.

---

Declutter your desk, closet, or bedroom, starting with just one small area at a time.

---

Put on a homemade face mask and give yourself a manicure and/or a pedicure. Boys can do this too. Be silly, but if you don't think it's a good idea. Skip it.

---

Create a structure in your daily routines, especially during the weekdays. You will feel less lost if you have one.

---

Read a book, a comic book, or a magazine, just for fun.

---

One way to be kind to yourself is by not judging, comparing, or evaluating yourself.

---

You are human, so embrace mistakes, imperfections, and faults. Life is not always pretty, fun, and exciting.

---

When you disagree with someone, try putting yourself in their shoes. No need to agree or argue with him/her. Just try!

---

Talk to someone about your feelings. Good things can come out of being open and vulnerable.

---

Set up a donation pile in your room and take out something that no longer sparks joy for you.

-----

Write a list of things you want to do after you can leave your house safely again.

-----

If you need to scream, go for it. You can warn people around you first, so they are not scared. Use your pillow to get your aggression out.

-----

Embrace any feelings that come up. Negative feelings and positive feelings are not different unless you act on them. You are never wrong to have feelings. Accept them as they are.

-----

Sit by the window or go outside and watch the clouds going by. Breathe in and out and enjoy the present moment.

-----

Walk or run around on grass barefoot.

-----

What scent brings you joy? Walk around your house and gather any scent that soothes or relaxes you. For example, coffee, fresh grass, lavender, peppermint, wild orange, lemon, perfume, soap, candle, etc.

-----

Have a list on hand of what to do when you miss your friends.

-----

Take a nice long shower or a bubble bath. Feel free to light a candle in your favorite scent if it will soothe you.

-----

Create, build, or fix something that you have always wanted to do, but didn't have time to get to it yet. Now is the time!

-----

Some people engage in "emotional" eating when they are bored, sad, or anxious. Ask yourself before you want a snack if your tummy is hungry or you are eating to avoid thinking or feeling your feelings in that moment.

-----