**Covid-19 Break in Service Plan**

What is our responsibility to our clients in during this quarantine/Covid-19 situation?

Some clients might not want to meet via zoom/ telephone or in person and this is the client’s choice but as mental health providers we need to do all we can to help during this time. If your clients do take a break from services, we would encourage you to do at least one check in with them to make sure they are prepared to go without services. Similar to a safety plan, please consider creating an unofficial “break in service plan”.

**Questions to ask if a client is considering taking a break:**

* Would you like to meet on zoom? It can be strange at first but it is worth a try
* If you can’t meet over zoom, can you meet over the phone?
* Would you like to meet less often?
* Would you prefer to take break from counseling until we can meet face to face? Can we make a break in service plan?

*Make sure the client knows they can contact you to meet (in a way you are comfortable with) as soon as they need it*

**The following are some sample questions to ask when creating a break in service plan.**

**For adults and teens:**

How has your life changed since Covid-19 and quarantine?

How concerned are you about your health or the health of your loved ones?

What can you do to stay safe and keep your love ones safe?

What does your daily routine look like right now?

 *It is important to try and keep some daily routine even in quarantine*

 *Help the client develop a healthy daily routine*

What is causing you stress right now?

*Normalize the stress with your clients and remind them stress is normal and some stress is healthy to motivate us to be safe. Healthy stress could motivate the client to wash their hands and not touch their face. Unhealth/unproductive stress could cause irritability and impulsive behavior.*

*Differentiate between healthy stress and unhealthy stress.*

What can you do if you are feeling like lashing out aggressively towards someone in your home?

*We know in quarantine cases of child abuse, elder abuse and intimate partner violence increase. Please try and assess for potential abuse because mental health providers might be the only outsiders in the home at the moment.*

What can you do if you are feeling like hurting yourself?

What do you see being a stressor in the future if this quarantine continues much longer?

Have you been impacted financially? Are you struggling to get your basic needs met?

 If yes, do you need to talk to your case manager or have one assigned to you?

If you are quarantined with others, where can you go to get some alone time?

*Sit outside in a car and listen to music, go to a balcony or porch, let others in the home know you need to be left alone for a while in a room.*

What will you do to cope with stressors until we can meet again for treatment?

*Call a friend. Go for a walk. Set a routine. Set daily goals. Keep your living space tidy. Sit outside in the sun. Clean out your closets. Binge a TV show*.

What will you do if you feel you cannot cope with stress on your own?

*Contact your therapist to set up an appointment. Contact your psychiatrist if you need your medication adjusted. Contact a love one. Contact your local hospital if you need to go inpatient*

**If the client is a guardian or parent:**

What is different in your home now?

What can you do if you get very frustrated with your children?

What can you do if you are feeling like lashing out at or even hurting your children?

How has life changed now that your kids are out of school?

How can you help your stay on track with their schoolwork?

How have your children been behaving? If behavior is poor, how will you encourage them to have better behavior?

What can you do if your kids won’t stay home?

Do your children seem stressed? How can you tell if you child is struggling?

 If yes, what can you do to help them cope right now?

*Create structure in the home, healthy family activities and activities the kids can do alone, have a routine in the home, have the children help with chores, set bed times and meal times, create a space where someone can go if they need time to themselves (could be creative like a blanket fort on a bed or other safe calming space).*

**If the client is a young child:**

What do you know about the virus?

What does quarantine mean?

How is your life different now?

What questions do you have about it?

*Be ready to answer questions in a child appropriate way*

Some people are worried or sad right now because of all the changes, how are you feeling?  *Normalize feeling worried or unhappy because of the virus*

What can you do if you feel bored stuck at home?

*Talk about healthy activities*

What can you do if you feel angry?

What can you do if you feel sad?

What can you do if you feel worried?

What things make you happy right now?

What are the things you like about your home and family?

What can you do to be helpful at home?

**If you have any concerns about potential abuse/neglect but don’t have enough info to report, go over safety with the child.**

Who are the safe people in your life that you can talk to on the phone?

 *Parents, police, counselors, grandparents, etc.*

What can you do if someone in your home makes you feel scared or unsafe?

 *Encourage them to talk to a safe person*

**Sample progress note to document break in service plan:**

Met with client to ID and process sources of anxiety/depression/anger related to quarantine. Client reported they want to take a break in services until they are able to meet face to face. MHP and client went over a break in service plan for how they client will cope with stressors until they are able to meet face to face. Client reported “I’m doing kinda OK with being stuck at home, but I can see me getting stressed with my kids and my pets being cooped up”. Plan is for client to set a daily routine, walk away when she is feeling overwhelmed, read books and go for walks to cope with stress and contact MHP if she doesn’t feel she can cope on her own.