

DIY

Do It Yourself:

Cooped Up Couples & COVID-19



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Triad EAP offers benefits designed to help employees, their spouse or significant other and dependents under 26 with personal and/or work-related issues that may impact their job performance, health and mental or emotional well-being.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOW WE CAN HELP

When faced with reduced access to resources, increased job stress, financial insecurity and lack of social support the risk for domestic violence increases. If you find yourself in a dangerous situation, please use the resources listed below for support.

*[National Domestic Violence](#)
Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

*Triad EAP: 24/7 Crisis Support
877.679.1100.



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Triad EAP

We've been cooped up for almost two months. Depending on where you live some restrictions may be slowly lifting but what is certain: COVID-19 is going to require some form of social distancing for many months to come. Many of the places we enjoyed going to are still closed or significantly restricted. Let's face it—families are spending a lot of time together. Add in the stress of issues that were troublesome before the pandemic and you've got a recipe elevated tension. So how can we avoid blow-ups with your significant other and keep the peace while experiencing cabin fever?

Be empathetic: When you support your partner by showing empathy, the lines of communication will open. Empathy means you may not understand someone else's emotions but you understand their logic behind the emotions. Check-in with each other often. Listen to concerns with an open mind. When your partner shares feelings with you, value what he or she shared, without offering unsolicited advice. You are both adjusting to changing dynamics — sometimes daily. What might be a stressor for your spouse may not affect you as much but now is the time to be understanding, patient and supportive.



Missing date nights?

Dinner and a movie—what used to be a simple and easy night out together now presents significant challenges. But that does not mean you have to skip date night, you just have to be more creative. The pandemic has given us a unique opportunity to hit the pause button. Take this time to reconnect. Go for a hike. Cook a gourmet meal together or order delivery and dine on your patio. Invite friends to join you in an online night of trivia or a Zoom happy hour. Carve out time as a couple where you focus on escaping the stress of the day and remind yourselves that you are fortunate to be in this together.

Schedule alone time: We are not accustomed to being together this much. When you feel torn between your own need to recharge and your desire to be with your loved ones, no one wins. When creating new routines during social distancing schedule alone time. Couples that value and understand the importance of giving each other space find they are happier in the long run. By giving yourself alone time you can practice self-care which is any activity that we do deliberately to take care of our mental, emotional and physical health. It is not selfish or indulgent, so be careful not to judge your partner's self-care routine. You may choose to meditate or read a book while they need to go for a run or call a friend. It is an opportunity to reflect so you can your best self and best partner possible.

Implement Rules for Arguments: Don't fool yourself—when tension is running high disagreements will happen. By setting ground rules before an argument is in full swing the discussion can be productive instead of destructive.

Be specific: When something is bothering you, bring up specific issues rather than criticizing your partner's character. Be careful to stay on topic and avoid bringing up old grievances. Save those discussions for another time. When you are ready to begin the discussion be aware of your timing. Schedule a time to talk rather than blindsiding your mate.

Anger vs. Rage: Realize there is a difference between anger and rage. Anger is an emotion you need to discuss. Rage is when you begin to feel a more physical reaction—for example, raising your voice. It's a fine line but when you feel the shift explain to your partner that you need to table the talk so you can calm down.

Ask for help: Not every argument looks the same. Some people will yell while others avoid the situation but the result can be the same—hurt feelings and a damaged relationship. If you find yourself arguing more than usual, take advantage of your EAP counseling benefit. A counselor can help you create tools for managing your disagreements and when done right those tough talks can be a pathway to growth in your relationship.