

# Surfing the Pandemic Waves:

## 10 Tips from Third Wave Psychology

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# Introduction: a few words of wisdom

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“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way”

- Viktor Frankl

*Man’s Search for Meaning*

# Third Wave Psychology

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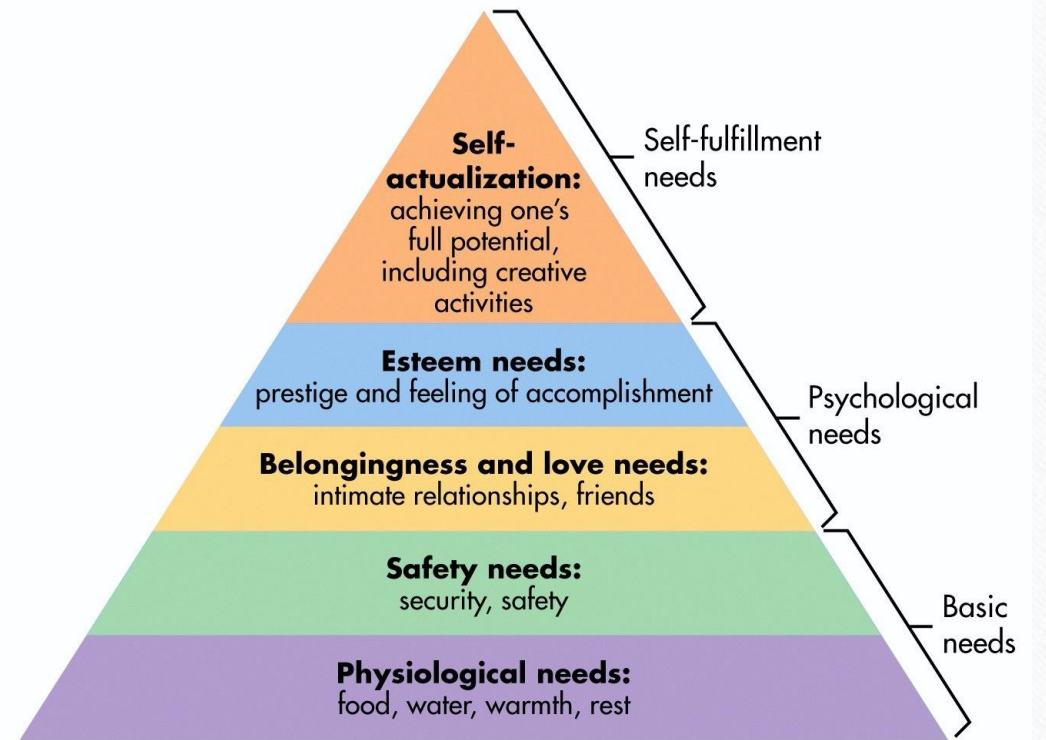
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)
- Self-Compassion and Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT)



# 1. Build healthy habits

- Get good sleep
- Eat real food
- Regularly exercise
- Limit toxins (e.g. news, screens)
- Create routine and rituals

\*DBT Skill: ABC Please



## 2. Practice Radical Acceptance

- Accepting reality as it is.
- Life can be worth living even with painful events in it
- Radical = all the way
- Not a linear process
- Radical acceptance is **not** approval, compassion, passivity, resignation.

### What is Radical Acceptance?



#### COVID-19 IS HAPPENING

##### Non-Acceptance

Why is this happening?  
I don't want this to be happening.  
This is making my life more challenging.  
I don't like this.  
People are stressed out and I'm stressed out.  
I am shut inside my home.  
I wish it would end.  
I hate the mask.  
COVID-19 sucks!



#### COVID-19 IS HAPPENING

##### Acceptance

It is what it is.



### 3. Reflect on your values

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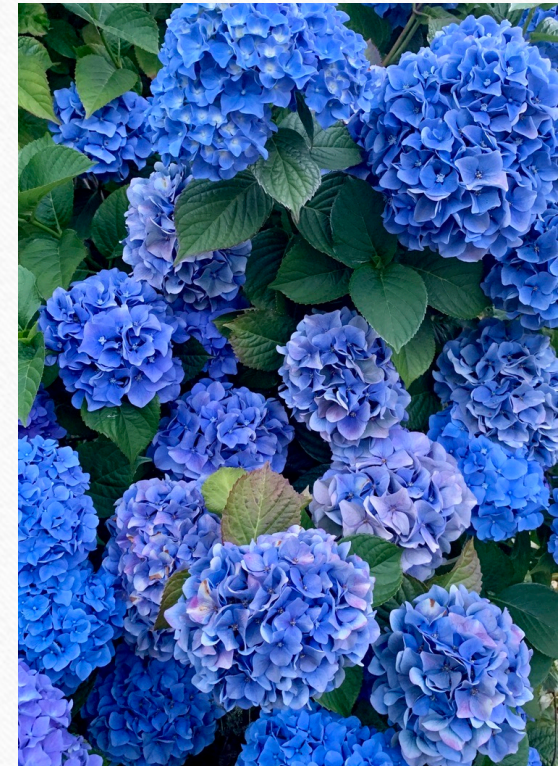
- What do you want to stand for in the face of this crisis?
- What sort of person do you want to be, as we go through this?
- How do you want to treat yourself and others?



## 4. Live Mindfully

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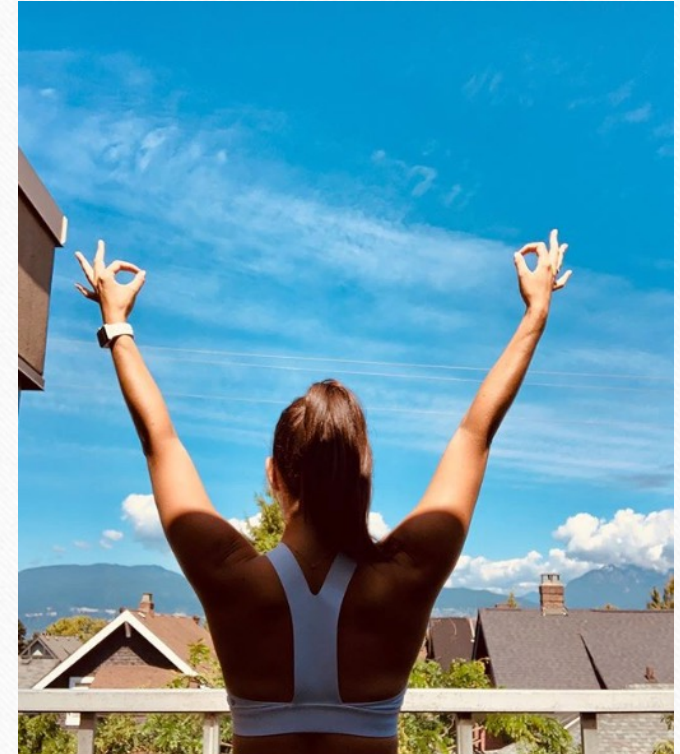
- “Paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn)
- *Beginner’s mind*
- Finding beauty and joy in the small moments
- Formal (meditation) and informal practices (e.g. washing the dishes mindfully)



## 5. Move your body

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- Our bodies need movement (duration and variability)
- Practice developing the intention of moving your body in different ways throughout the day
- Moving our bodies can help shift our emotional states





## 6. Practice flexibility

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- Practicing openness
- Doing what works (effective action)
- Letting go of rules when they are no longer applicable or no longer serve you
- Adapting to changing circumstances
- Putting things into perspective



# 7. Connect with people (and pets)

*“A lone monkey is a dead monkey”* - Kelly Wilson

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- Take a bit of time each day to maintain social connections and deepen them
- It's not the *quantity* of social contacts that matters; it's the *quality*!
- Taking good care of ourselves influences our social networks



## 8. Connect with nature & spirituality

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- Research shows a strong association between time spent in nature and reductions in stress, anxiety and depression
- Connection with a greater sense of purpose can help us get through difficult times



# 9. Practice gratitude

*“Small things matter”* – Kelly Wilson

- Take time to notice and appreciate what we do have, even the small things
- Retraining our brain to notice the good rather than focusing on the bad
- Can boost our physical and mental health
- Keep a journal and note 3 things you're grateful for each day



# 10. Be kind to yourself and others

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- Self-kindness/Kindness towards others
- Remember our common humanity (we're all in this together)
- Mindfulness
- **Loving Kindness Meditations**



# Exercise: Loving Kindness Meditation

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# Setting an intention

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What's one step you could take (big or small) to care for yourself during these times?



# Thank you

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*“You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf”* - Jon Kabat-Zinn

