Who among us could have imagined the effects of Covid-19 on our day to day lives? It is a frightening and overwhelming time for all our institutions and especially in the world of education. Parents, kids...and teachers are having their routines turned upside down by the onslaught of Covid-19. We have been caught unprepared for the immediate and practical demands of such drastic changes to the way we educate. Sudden school closings have left our educators with the daunting task of replicating the functions of school without an actual school setting. The challenges are many and are frequently the topic of our daily conversations. What is less often recognized or discussed is the significant \textit{emotional fallout} for our beloved but often underappreciated educators.

For many, many teachers the greatest hardship during this epidemic is the loss of regular contact with their students. They long for classroom interaction and eye contact. No one knows better than our educators that students rely on their teachers not only for academic instruction but also for a sense of stability and support. They are well aware that student success requires time and trusting relationships.

\textbf{At the very heart of the teaching profession is the personal and professional satisfaction that comes from seeing the positive impact on students’ lives.} At present, teachers are doing all the required work with significantly less satisfaction and none of the fun. As teachers do their best to maintain the relationships with their students from afar, they must also find ways to cope with their own sense of loss. This requires quite a balancing act.

Finding a balanced mental and emotional state of mind is a personal journey. Below you will find questions offered for your consideration and reflection as you strive to reach a state of “okay-ness” despite distressing circumstances.

\textbf{Creating Individual Touchpoints: } How can you create personalized touchpoints with your students that are structured and consistent? Are there mediums that you may need to employ to maintain contact – emails, video messages, phone calls or even old-fashioned handwritten notes?

\textbf{Acceptance: } Are there consequences of this current distance learning that cause you significant worry or anxiety? Are there aspects of this situation that you need to accept are out of your control? Is there a need to accept that students may fall behind and you will need to meet them where they are? Can you find value in the different life lessons your students are learning – lessons about resilience and community?

\textbf{Self-Care: } Are you doing all you can to care for yourself during these difficult days? Are you practicing self-compassion for your own emotional reactions – fear, frustration, sadness, lack of purpose, etc...? Are you willing to occasionally relinquish the role of always meeting the needs of others? Would it be helpful to reach out for support and understanding from others in your life?

\textbf{Staying Balanced}

\textbf{If the EAP can be of any help, please do not hesitate to call. } 1-800-542-6021