



Integration through Dialogue

Integration durch Dialog

Overcoming everyday challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic

Dialogue makes it possible to bridge differences and focus on what we have in common. In times of a pandemic, dialogue makes it easier for us to cope with our everyday lives. Dialogue can nurture family relationships, through active listening and the willingness to learn from one another. During these difficult times, dialogue becomes an essential tool to address hopes and fears.

As a result of the lockdown that was implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have faced completely new challenges in their everyday lives. Language barriers may cause misunderstandings and confusion, especially for refugees and migrants.

This short brochure intends to show how everyday challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic can be overcome through dialogue.

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THEME 1

COVID-19 in everyday life



Challenge

#1

For many people, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about a disruption of everyday life. While many found it unexpectedly pleasant to be able to work from home, for some it was a challenge to be able to take care of children and to work from home at the same time.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- **Plan family meetings as part of a daily routine!**
Family meetings are very important at a time when everyone is at home in a confined space and can provide a safe platform to share so that everyone feels heard and understood. Family meetings can help with addressing and adjusting to new needs, such as the need for alone time or quiet time to focus on specific tasks. Likewise, because everyday life with children can be stressful, family gatherings provide a time and place for each person to share concerns and worries.
- **Plan joint activities!**
When a daily routine changes because one is working from home or children are studying at home, regular activities that involve the entire family can provide a positive shift. Walks outside or meals together help strengthen the family bond. Sports that can be practiced outdoors, such as running or cycling, can help relieve stress in the family.
- **Make compromises!**
Compromising with one's children helps to build mutual understanding and shows children that their point of view is valuable



Challenge

#2

The most important measure that was implemented to limit the spread of COVID-19 was also seen as a challenge for many. Physical distancing made social interaction with people that one is used to seeing every day difficult. Meeting colleagues or friends had to be avoided, and visiting the elderly was strongly discouraged or not allowed. This meant that many children could not see their grandparents.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- **Maintain contact (but remotely)!**
It is important to find other ways to maintain contact with people who are in the close family circle. There are many ways of doing this, by phone or through video apps. Regular contact, even if from a distance, can have a positive impact on one's psychological well-being. This is especially important for those who live alone, so that they do not feel isolated.
- **Every act of kindness counts!**
Taking care of someone who is part of a risk group, by going grocery shopping or buying their medication, can make a big difference.



THEME 2

New challenges for children

Challenge

#3

The unusual new situation can also be a challenge for children as their daily routine changes and they lack social interaction with their friends and classmates who they are used to seeing every day.

WHAT CAN I DO?

➤ Create a routine and stick to it!

In this new situation when children suddenly cannot go to school and see their classmates, it is still important for them to continue having a daily routine – even if the routine is at home. This includes setting a bedtime, time for homework and a time for playing, for example. Even if such everyday routines vary from household to household, it is still important to stick to this rhythm and be consistent.

➤ Communication is key!

Talking to children and educating them about any difficulties and challenges is essential. This allows for the child to be given an explanation regarding the current situation instead of just assuming that they understand, and ultimately communication helps to build mutual understanding.



Challenge

#4

E-learning can be seen as an asset and a challenge at the same time. The shift in the dynamic between teachers, parents and children due to the COVID-19 pandemic can be an added challenge to e-learning.

WHAT CAN I DO?

➤ Be up-to-date!

Parents should be encouraged to be in contact with their children's teachers and to be up-to-date on school activities. This will help to improve a child's learning performance.

➤ Actively take part!

Parents may also want to tune into some online lessons in order to get an idea of what they are like, and consequently to better support their children with their homework.



THEME 3

Living together in harmony

Challenge

#5

Even if being able to spend more time at home with the whole family can be nice, there are times when everyone's patience is put to the test.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- **Maintain peaceful interactions!**
It is important to maintain a good-natured relationship with one another and especially one's children. As a parent, one should try to talk with one's child as often as possible to show understanding and resolve any potential problems.
- **Being physically close**
is even more important at a time that can be frightening for everyone. It is essential as a parent to give your child a feeling of security and always try to convey the idea that the current situation is only a temporary one, that can be managed together.



THEME 4

Seize new opportunities

Challenge

#6

Spending more time at home can lead to some bad habits. Some have more time at their disposal than usual, and it can be a challenge to fill that time with productive and positive activities.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- **Try to maintain everyday routines as best as possible or find alternatives!**
Continue to participate in routine activities and/or tasks if possible or find alternatives. For example, if gyms are closed find options to engage in physical activity outdoors, such as running.
- **Set new goals!**
Write down lessons learnt during this time and potential goals for the future. These could, for example, include how to optimize one's personal finances through more effective planning and time management.
- **Learn to appreciate life more and enjoy successes!**
Many people have lost relatives and friends to COVID-19. Such life events are difficult, but they can also bring people closer together and remind us of the important things in life.





Interested in dialogue sessions?
Please contact us to learn more!

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Link the programme



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