AIONKWATAKARI:TEKE

(A-YOUN-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

"FOR US TO BE HEALTHY"



SPECIAL COVID-19 ISSUE



As stores and businesses open up, we are getting used to a new normal.



Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawà:ke Shakotiia'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawa'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed and encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative and educational. Slanderous material will not be accepted. Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of KSCS. We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

The Editor Aionkwatakari:teke

P.O. Box 1440
Kahnawà:ke, Quebec J0L 1B0
Tel: 450-632-6880
Fax: 450-632-5116
Email: kscs@kscskahnawake.ca
(Attention: newsletter editor)

Editor/Layout/Design Marie David Executive Publisher: Derek Montour

Proofreading: Winnie Taylor



www.kscs.ca

Contributors:

Alana Atwin
Marie David
Kara Diabo
Mary Gilbert
Frankie Massicotte
Mary McComber
Corleen Montour
Corinna Phillips
Seven Dancers Coalition
Shereen Meloche/Caisse Populaire
Kahnawà:ke

This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace, the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor. Check out our Facebook page at KSCS Kahnawà:ke.

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Taking It Day By Day

How One Kahnawà:ke Family Is Adapting To These Special Circumstances BY ALANA ATWIN, PREVENTION

s WE MANEUVER OUR WAY THROUGH THE current pandemic, every family is being forced to adapt to change. Social distancing, homeschooling, and staying home are the new norms. Some families are managing to find ways to enjoy their time – planting gardens, doing home projects, while others may find themselves a little off-center (some, a lot!) and are struggling with creating a routine for things like screen time, homework, and bedtime.

Families with special needs children are facing unique challenges during these times. There are never the same challenges because there are never the same needs, which makes finding solutions even more difficult. Some children who thrive on routine are distressed because their schedules have been interrupted — they can't go to school, they can't see their teachers or therapists, they're missing the people they trust and the environments they are familiar with.

Staying home has posed a different set of challenges for one Kahnawà:ke family with two boys diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and their parents. Mom explains "having two kids with ASD, one having exceptional needs requiring constant care (dressing, hygiene, stimulation) and supervision is extremely exhausting 24/7. Our sons love to be home, but now that they are home constantly, it has been a challenge to get them out of the house, even for a walk or a car ride. The boys have developed extreme anxiety and feel like they NEED to stay home."

The boys are regressing when it comes to behaviours and their parents believe that the halt of therapy and services are playing a big role in that. Mom continues, "they do miss their people and don't understand the concept of social distancing, which can be a trigger."

The family has worked on implementing a rigid schoollike schedule. This routine worked for one of the boys and helped to regulate his anxiety, but the schedule set off the other child. "We are still trying to figure out what works best as they are still struggling to cope with everything. We are taking it day by day."

Most families know that when social distancing and restrictions end, their families will likely adjust quickly back to old, familiar routines like school and work. However, for this family, it will take a lot more time. "We know that when things go back to 'normal', we will again have another period of adjustment to adapt to." Mom said, "But we do look forward to their weekly therapies, visits with family, going to our cabin, and respite care."

The pandemic experience is happening for everybody, everywhere, and at the same time. Individuals, families, employees, and employers are scouring the internet for resources to help make this new experience bearable. On social media, it is common to see these times referred to as times where everything that was easy is hard, and everything that was hard is impossible.

We are coming to find that there are no real answers and no real solutions. The focus seems to be on making sure we make our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health a priority so that we are able to prepare for the changes we are asked to make; to be kind to ourselves, to not set expectations so high, to not fall so hard when things don't work the way we think they should, and to reach out to the available resources when we need help. This family's strategy of taking it day by day may be what works for this family, but it's also a perspective that would likely help others. "Tomorrow is a new day," mom said. "That's what we tell ourselves on the hard days."

The Value of Tradition

BY MARY MCCOMBER, TSI NIIONKWARIHÒTEN PROGRAM

HE KAHNAWÀ:KE SHAKOTIIA TAKÉHNHAS
Community Services (KSCS) Tsi
Niionkwarihò:ten Program Coordinators have
been re-assigned to work at the Emergency
Food Services site during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the main roles of the Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten
coordinators (Mary McComber and Christine Loft) is to educate KSCS staff on topics around our Kanien'kehá:ka ways and
language. This is in order to ensure staff has an understanding
of tsi niionkwarihò:ten (our ways) and to provide inspiration
for enhancing programs and services with Kanien'kehá:ka
traditions, principles and values.

This is important because Kahnawakehró:non have informed us, through surveys and discussions, that they want to access services that support and encourage our ways. Research also tells us that cultural practices act as a buffer to social and health issues. For the time being, the pandemic has had an impact on this work because much of what we do involves face-to-face discussions and sharing. The coordinators have had to change focus; however, the work at the emergency food services has re-confirmed the value of tsi niionkwarihò:ten (our ways) in these times.

Throughout our history, we have heard how reminders were sent to us through special messengers. Whenever the communities were in turmoil due to food shortage, war, or illness the people were sent reminders about how to continue to sustain the communities. This usually included teachings for ceremonies, giving thanks and working together.

One example of this is when the Deganawida came to us and provided our ancestors with the teachings of the Kaianere'kó:wa (Great Law). Deganawida encouraged the nations to put away their weapons of war and to work together.

One important symbol for the sharing of food and resources was the "Bowl with One Spoon" metaphor (Ecological Knowledge and the Dish with One Spoon: Conversations in Cultural Fluency #2 8:16) This teaching reminds us that we need to collaborate and share resources.

Working with the emergency food services has shown us once again how generous the community is in terms of providing donations, working together, and sharing resources and knowledge around food security. Community members, organizations, and businesses have stepped up to ensure that we all have access to food by offering services and donations. At a grassroots level, it is wonderful to see how people are sharing information and know-how in order to help each other prepare gardens. We have such a knowledgeable and generous community and this demonstrates how the values of Kaianere'kó:wa have continued on to this day.

Food is essential to life and without available healthy food and clean water we can't survive. Think back if you can imagine, to how it may have been to live over 700 hundred years ago. Our ancestors learned from the land and they had little choice but to be concerned with planting and storage of food.

This isn't something any of us can take for granted. In the past, we had to work a lot harder to ensure that we had food. It is for this reason, that we have ceremony to honour Tionhnhéhkwen (foods/life sustainers) and to give thanks. Today, we can go to the grocery store, even amid the pandemic, and still have easy access to food.

Emergency food services are in operation to assist those who may be impacted by the COVID-19 shut down. For many people, immediate food security may be an issue. We should all be concerned about long term food security and, if we can learn anything from the experience of the

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COVID-19 pandemic, it is that our food supplies can be impacted at any moment. We need to learn how to prepare for contingencies, even if that just means making sure you have savings in the bank or enough seeds to plant next year.

One of the most basic spiritual practices is to be grateful for what we have. One of the first teachings that we received was that of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen (the words before all other matters). In the past, our people had to follow the cycle of seasons for sustenance and learn from nature. For this reason, our culture valued giving thanks to the natural world and ceremonies were done to honour this life-sustaining cycle.

Whether or not a person believes in the old ways, it's difficult to argue the fact that our ancestors were knowledgeable about the world around them and used what creation provided to them to live. Our ancestors were natural scientists who understood that everything is connected.

Scientists today are just catching up to Indigenous knowledge. One example of this can be seen when we talk about traditional food usage and specifically, three Sisters planting. The Six Nations Polytechnic offers an interesting series on Indigenous knowledge. In the video Food Security and Three Sisters Sustainability, an agricultural scientist named Jane Mt. Pleasant explains how efficient it is to plant corn, beans and squash together compared to planting any of the crops alone. The Three Sisters provide more nutrition and feed more people than planting monocultures. Companion planting is used all around the world and our people had this knowledge ages ago (Food Security and Three Sisters Sustainability 6:15).

Our ancestors understood the balance and the science of the natural world. We have a long way to go to get close to knowing what we lost. However, there is much hope for Kahnawà:ke if we continue to use our good minds, get back in contact with the earth and work together.

Source: "Ecological Knowledge and the Dish with One Spoon: Conversations in Cultural Fluency #2". Six Nations Polytechnic. 29 Jan. 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RL83GvOO_C0

"Food Security and Three Sisters Sustainability: Conversations in Cultural Fluency #3". Six Nations Polytechnic. 5 Apr. 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzOvJLEf-4k



These challenging times haven't just upended our daily routines-we've had to take a second look at our finances too. Has your budget taken a hit?

1. Take a deep breath

Whether you had to postpone a vacation or purchasing your dream home, revisiting financial priorities can mean putting important projects on hold. It's not always easy. Before you make your budget, go for a walk, take some deep breaths. Remind yourself that this is only temporary.

2. Calculate your "COVID-19 income"

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, your income might have dropped or even disappeared. The first thing you need to do is make sure your income is equal to your expenses.

You'll have to go over your income (and maybe your savings) and calculate how much money is coming in. Here are some things to take into consideration:

Figure out what financial assistance you can get from the government and Desjardins by reading our article: Finding your way around our relief and support measures. This could make all the difference in your budget.

3. Isolate your expenses!

Before you get yourself into debt, update your expenses according to your new, at-home lifestyle. While you might have saved money in some areas there are new expenses to consider (online shopping, etc.). It's a good idea to take stock of your spending to avoid surprises

You can defer certain expenses. Governments, Hydro-Québec and some institutions like Desjardins are offering relief measures

Try to avoid:

- Putting your insurance premium payments on hold.
- Putting your automatic savings contribution on hold.
 If you can, keep them (or temporarily reduce them).
- 4. Dip into your savings as a last resort!

If you have to use your savings, try these strategies first:

Use your emergency fund if you have one.

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Transfer money you've saved for projects into your chequing account.

Withdraw money from your savings account before cashing in any investments,

Only make withdrawals from your investments if you've exhausted all your other options. Making withdrawals from your investments could have an impact on your long-term goals, so it's a good idea to try reducing your expenses first.

5. Stay on top of it

Coming up with a budget is great. But it's more important to stick with it, especially during a pandemic. An easy way to make it a habit is to schedule it. Choose a time that works for you: Sunday morning

while you drink your coffee, the day you get paid, etc.

Should you use credit?

Credit is an option if you're short on cash, but it should be a temporary solution and informed choice. "Choose the financing option with the lowest interest rate and shortest repayment term possible." Angela Lermieri, Desjardins financial planner. Before committing to credit, contact your Desjardins advisor. We'll make sure that you've covered all your bases. You're not alone—we're here to help you make sense of it all. Feel free to contact us.

Happy budgeting!

*This article has been edited to fit this presentation. Click here to read full article.

Uplifting Yourself During COVID-19

BY: CORLEEN MONTOUR, PREVENTION

This article was written to provide people with some ways that can help with their situation during COVID-19. As a whole being, we are responsible for caring for ourselves, for giving thanks for our everyday living, and for taking care of our families, especially the children and the elderly.

The elderly are the teachers and full of knowledge that we can learn from. The children are the next generation to carry on the teachings. Taking care of yourself should be a priority no matter what the situation.

Here are some ways to uplift yourself.

- Giving thanks as soon as you wake up.
- Taking a shower to freshen up.
- Cleansing your house by opening windows, smudging with sage or white pine needles so the house is rid of negative energy.
- Planting a garden. It doesn't have to be big; you can

always start small.

- Preparing a meal for your household.
- Taking a walk around your yard and giving thanks to the trees, the grasses and the animals.
- Calling a grandparent and or elder that you are connected with.
- Giving thanks whenever you are eating.
- Relaxing your mind before going to bed. This can be done by journaling your thoughts on each day or a particular issue.
- Being creative and using your imagination can be rewarding and fun.
- Laughing is good for the soul, as long as it is not at someone's expense.

Please be safe and accept positive thoughts for you and your family.

Traditional Ways To Handle Stress & Anxiety

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE SEVEN DANCERS COALITION WITH INPUT FROM MARY GILBERT AND MARY MCCOMBER

Give thanks for another day to be alive, for all that you have, with Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen.

- Learn a new cultural art form (beadwork, leatherwork, carving, pottery, tool making).
 - Prepare a vegetable, herb or flower *garden*.
- Go for a nature *walk*. *Listen or read* about outdoor environmental teachings (plant and medicine

identification, tree identification and wildlife, bird calls while you're out on the walk.

 Drink plenty of ohné:kanos or strawberry drink sweetened with maple syrup

• Learn a song or verse with the rattle or drum

Check up on *Elders*, talk with them but also listen to their stories of when and how they went through hard times.

- Smudge yourself and your home with sage, sweetgrass or pine/cedar
- Learn Kanien'kéha words or terms.

* Ó:**nen k**á:**ti** tatshitewanonhwerá:ton ne Shonkwaia'tíson tsi akwé:kon **tehshonkwahtkawén:ni** ne':'e tsi ionkwa'nikonhrí:io. (We thank our Creator for giving us the good minds)

Tho niiohtónhak ne onkwa'nikòn:ra (Let our minds be that way/appreciative)



THE SOBER MEDITATION

Here is a simple exercise that is based on this mindfulness approach. This "surfing the urge" technique can help in coping with triggers and high-risk situations.

S.O.B.E.R. stands for:

- · STOP- step out of automatic pilot mode
- OBSERVE what is happening for you (in your mind, body and spirit)
- BREATHE focus simply on your breathing awareness
- . EXPAND be aware of mind, body and situation
- RESPOND notice that you can respond with awareness

For more information call Addiction Response Services at KSCS (450) 632-6880.

For assistance evenings, holidays & weekends call the PKs (450) 632-6505 who will connect you with our After-hours Response Worker

Addiction Response Services During COVID-19

BY KARA DIABO, PREVENTION

of contracting the virus, of loss of work, of being confined to our homes, and isolated from loved ones is stressful for everyone. People who are in recovery and those who are dealing with substance misuse could be at increased risk of relapse or substance abuse. We want to provide encouragement and support during these challenging times and remind you that KSCS is an organization dedicated to providing essential services in mental health and wellness.

The Addiction Response Service team is an essential service and is currently providing services to those in need and continue to accept new clients during these times. We are following directives from the Kahnawa:ke COVID-19 Task Force and are providing counselling sessions by telephone or through secure Zoom meetings.

In addition, we have been offering addiction recovery groups. One of the groups currently running is led by Geraldine Standup and Hazel Mayo and focuses on our traditional ways of healing. The other group is a Recovery Management Group that will be hosted by Robin Sky (addictions counsellor at the Onen'to:kon Healing Lodge). This group is scheduled to start on June 8, 2020 and is still accepting new participants. Both groups run weekly via Zoom.

We recognize that in-person recovery support group meetings are crucial to many people in their journey to sobriety. With the new social distancing guidelines, these meetings are cancelled for the time being. Many groups have organized to host online support group meetings at varying days and times. We encourage people to attend and have listed some of the more popular sources below:

- In the Rooms
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Wellbriety Movement
- Kahnawà:ke's Free Spirit AA meetings: Wednesday's at 7:30 PM via Zoom (meeting ID: 872-9335-0440)

The Addiction Response Services team at Kahnawà:ke Shakotiiatakenhas Community Services has also recently created a Facebook page for people called Ensa'nikonhriiohake. Information will be shared about services offered by KSCS, activities, and events in the community, harm reduction tips, recovery strategies, podcast interviews, and promotion of recovery groups. Through this page, our goals are to reduce the stigma around mental health and addictions, to encourage healthy living through recovery and sobriety, and to promote links to resources available. We will also share relevant information on behavioural and substance addictions. If there are any topics that you would like covered please send us a message via our Facebook page or call KSCS.

If you are interested in seeking counselling services from the KSCS Addiction Response Services team, you can call the intake worker at 450-632-6880. They will take your personal information and set up an appointment to call you. If you are in a crisis situation and need immediate assistance, please call the Kahnawà:ke Peacekeepers at 450-632-6505. They will connect you with the after-hours emergency response worker.

Separated Parents & Custody During COVID-19

BY FRANKIE MASSICOTTE PREVENTION

tines and trying to stay mentally healthy, separated parents may also be dealing with issues of sharing their children during these trying times. Some parents may have concerns about how to proceed.

The priority is on keeping the health and safety of the child/children at the heart of the decisions being made and continuing to follow previous agreements, whether it's a custody or access order. These agreements or orders must be continued to be complied with as much as possible; however, due to the current situation, it may sometimes be difficult to uphold.

It's important for parents to collaborate and to have an open means of communication between both parties. It's also important that a child is sheltered from the tension between parents should there be disagreements. If this is not easily done, a family mediator can be called on to facilitate the discussions and to help parents work on resolving the conflict.

Some mediation sessions be accessed for free depending situation. For more information to find a mediator or to find out involved, please visit <u>Justice family mediation site</u>. Martha a lawyer, accredited mediator arbitrator, can also be contacted

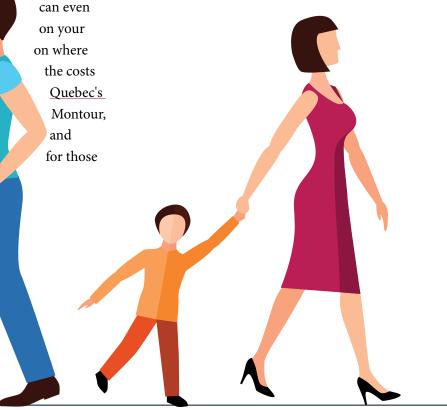
needing services. She can be reached at 514-894-6035.

Through technology, a child can have communication with another parent should they be needing them. FaceTime, Skype and video messenger are great tools for when you can't be there in person.

Check out the government of <u>Quebec's health portal</u> for information about shared custody and support payments. There is also a <u>COVID-19 legal aid clinic</u> that is a free legal aid hotline that includes advice in family law through a shared toll-free number 1-866-699-9729.

Parenting support can be accessed at KSCS by reaching out to a Parenting worker. Please contact the intake worker at KSCS 450-632-6880 to request this service. They can offer tools and references to help parents during this difficult time.

Source: "Questions and Answers on Education and Families during the COVID-19 Pandemic." Gouvernment Du Québec.



Safety Planning 101 What Is A Safety Plan and How Can It Help Me If I'm Experiencing Violence

BY CORINNA PHILLIPS, PREVENTION

been put in place, there have been indications that domestic violence or intimate partner violence and abuse is on the rise.

Violence in relationships and in households can happen anywhere to anyone. Violence in a relationship affects both partners, the children, other family members, friends, and colleagues. Domestic or intimate partner violence can occur in any intimate relationship, including same-sex relationships, and includes violence by women towards men. Anyone can experience domestic violence and the effects of abuse.

It is never easy to live in close proximity with an abuser, especially during this time of uncertainty.

Fears, emotions and reactions may be heightened and

may cause a newly violent environment within the home. If you find yourself living amongst violence or with an abuser, it is a good idea to have a safety plan in place. A safety plan is an outline on how to stay safe while in a relationship, while planning to leave or after you leave, that is specific to your own needs and situation.

Plans can be created by anyone, including someone experiencing violence, a friend or family member, and anyone who is concerned for their own safety or the safety of someone else. Existing safety plans may need to be updated to adapt to the reality of the ongoing pandemic.

It is very important to remember to create a plan or update an existing plan only if it is safe to do so. This means the safety plan will be private, protected and hidden away from an abuser. If it is not safe to have a copy of a safety plan in the home, you can leave a plan with someone you trust and who knows that you may need respite. A trusted

person can be a family member, a

friend, a neighbour, a support worker, etc. A safety plan can help you disclose your situation to someone you trust and should include information for your

unique situation that will help you navigate different scenarios.

Some of the things outlined in safety plans may seem obvious but when you are in a crisis situation it can be difficult to think clearly. Having the safety plan prepared in advance can help you through the stressful moments of crisis. Plans are unique to each person, family and situation. Types of safety plans include safety planning while living with an abusive partner, safety planning

when children and pets are involved, safety planning while you are pregnant, and emotional safety planning.

Safety plans help you keep track of what to do when preparing to leave an abusive relationship for respite or for good, what to do when you leave, after you leave, and may include legal information. You may request a police escort or stand-by when you leave. Sometimes you are forced to leave in a hurry to remain safe. Try to bring any identification, legal papers, emergency numbers, medications, valuables, emergency money, change of clothes, etc., for yourself and for the ones you are protecting, Help is always available to anyone experiencing domestic violence and abuse, seeking resources

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or information, or questioning unhealthy aspects of a relationship. You are not alone.

Many individuals and families live amongst violence and there are always options to explore when considering leaving or seeking help. Having the option of a safety plan is a great way to prepare and to protect yourself and the ones you love. Advocates and resources are available to you 24/7 and can help you prepare a safety plan tailored to your situation. For anyone experiencing violence, in need of support or more information:

For emergency assistance and safety call the Kahnawà:ke Peacekeepers at 450-632-6505.

You may also contact KSCS at 450-632-6880 and speak to an intake worker who can connect you with the proper resources and a counsellor who can help you develop a safety plan. If it's after hours, on a weekend or a holiday, you may call the Peacekeepers and ask to speak to the After-Hours Response worker where you will be connected for help.

Other Resources

National Domestic Violence Hotline: A US-based service that offers 24/7 compassionate support, crisis intervention information, educational services, referral services, online instructional materials, safety planning and more. Call I-800-799-7233.

- Log onto <u>TheHotline.ORG</u> to chat
- Text LOVEIS to 22522

SOS Conjugal Violence: Offers 24/7 counselling, evaluation, information, awareness, support and referral services for victims of domestic and family violence. (Find an Indigenous shelter in Quebec or ask to speak to an Indigenous counsellor). Call 1-800-363-9010.

<u>Women Aware:</u> The site offers support and services to those experiencing domestic violence. Call their support hotline 514-489-1110 Monday to Friday from 10:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

For more information about Safety Plans

What is a safety plan?
Get Help For Yourself: Safety Planning

Safety Planning Tool

Interactive Guide to Safety Planning

Staying Safe on the Internet

Behind the Screens: Reducing Tech Footprints. Delete your browsing history if you suspect an abuser is monitoring your activity. Here are some resources to help you learn how to delete your browsing history online. Please note that most websites have a quick exit button which will reroute you to a new blank web page in case you need to clear your online tracks quickly.

Learn How an Abusive Partner can Monitor your Computer or Cellphone

Who's Spying on your Computer: Spyware, Surveillance, and Safety for Survivors.

Sources:

"Path to Safety-What Is A Safety Plan?" The National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1998.

Zande, Irene van der. "Personal Safety to Help Stop Domestic, Dating, and Other Relationship Violence." *Kidpower International*, 25 Mar. 2020.

Coping Skills Meneging Emetions & Releasell

Many people use substances to reduce stress, anxiety and anger. Learning to manage emotions in a healthy way requires practicing relaxation techniques which can help to prevent relapse.

Journaling

Writing about personal experiences helps us to process and deal with emotions. Make sure to write about experiences as well as how it made you feel. Journaling is very therapeutic and improves mental wellbeing. Call KSCS for a free journal!

Deep breathing

A simple technique to help with grounding and relaxing our body and mind.

www.mantalhealthcommission.cg/English/covid19

Square breathing

This simple exercise can help calm your nervous system and alleviate feelings of anxiety when you're getting overwhelmed.

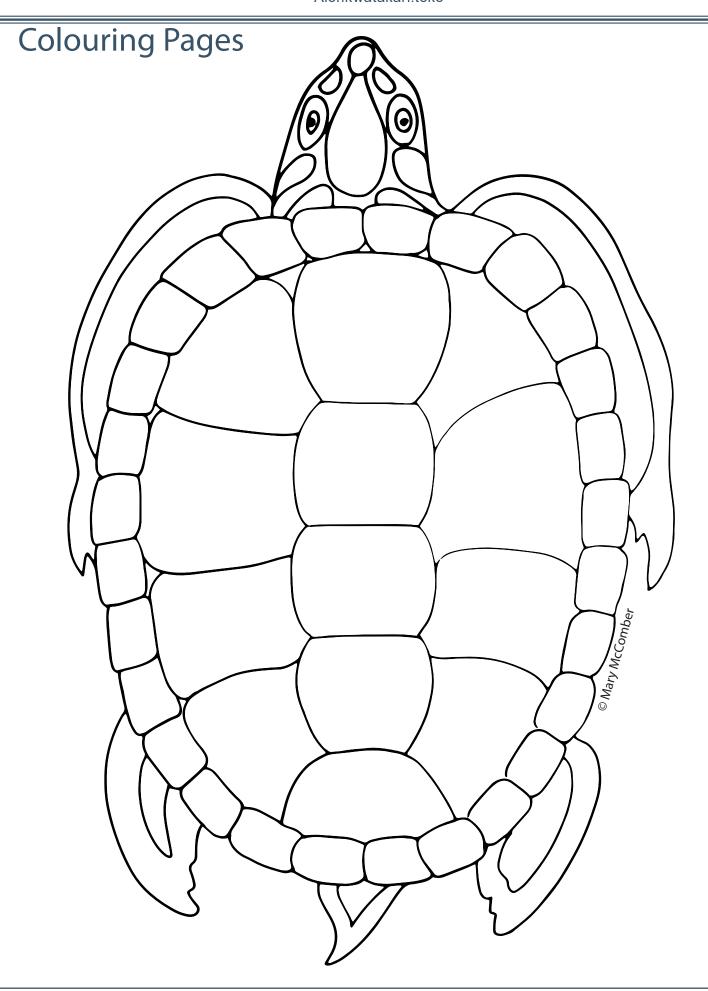


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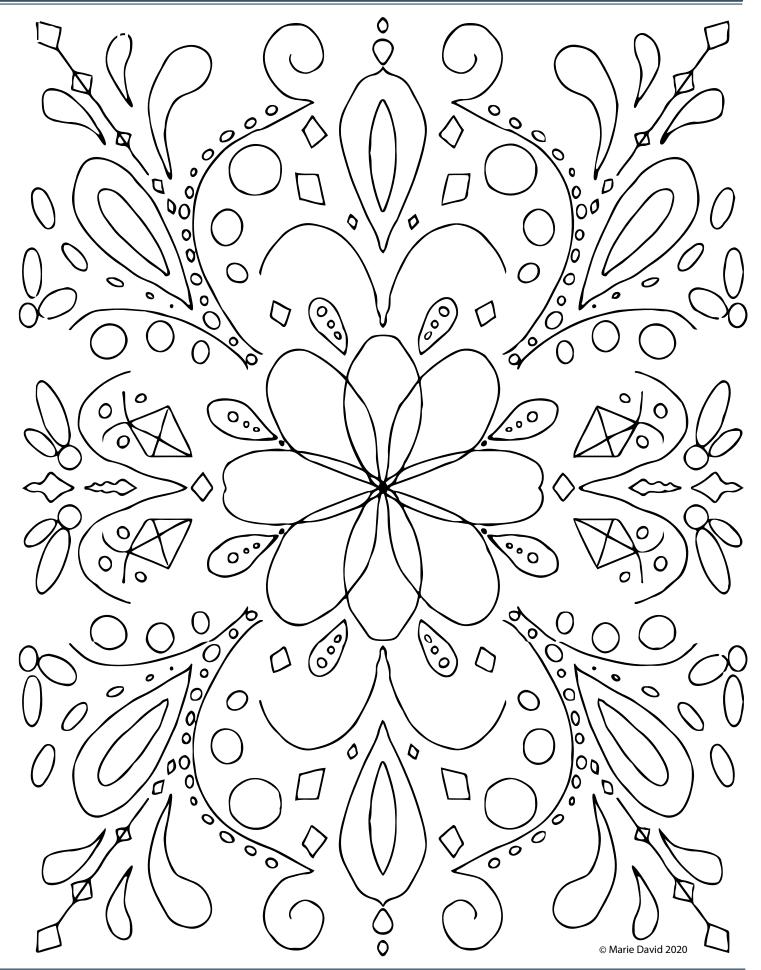
Our brain is so powerful it can be used to turn thoughts into emotions. It is beneficial to think of a relaxing situation or memory. Imagine yourself there and focus on each of your senses. It helps to calm the mind and body and shift our mood to a positive place. Use imagery as a quick 5 minute escape.

For more tips or information about recovery call KSCS at (450) 632-6880. For assistance evenings, weekends and holidays call the PKs (450) 632-6505 who will connect you with our after-hours worker.









PROTECT THE HEALTH OF OTHERS!

Respiratory nvgiene



If you have to sneeze or cough, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.



Dispose of soiled tissues in the trash.



If you do not have a tissue, turn your face into your shoulder or the bend of your elbow to sneeze or cough.



Wash your hands often. antiseptic product.

If soap and water are not available, use an

IF YOU ARE ILL. AVOID VISITING FAMILY AND FRIENDS.



covid-19.kmhc.ca

TÓKA' TSI'TERONTÁHKWA NÉ:'E KÉN:TON TSI SHEIA'TANÓNHSTATS











Québec.ca/coronavirus

418/450/514/819 tóka'ni 1 877 644-4545

Québec ##

Do you have questions or suggestions? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

Aionkwatakari:teke P.O. Box 1440 Kahnawà:ke, Quebec J0L 1B0 Tel: 450-632-6880 Fax: 450-632-5116

Email: kscs@kscskahnawake.ca