



Dr. Drew Sinatra: The pandemic has taken a toll on the physical health of many people. It's taken an even larger toll on the mental health of everyone, making self-care even more important than ever. Today, I'm looking forward to diving deep into the impact that the pandemic has on the mental health of adults and children alike.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: We're joined by Dr. Jennifer Hartstein, a mental health expert and author. She works with children, teens, and families in how to treat their needs. We'll talk about staying socially connected while being physically separate during the pandemic. We'll also encourage everyone to be creative in the ways you can stay connected to one another. All this and more on this episode of **Be HEALTHistic**.

Narrator: Welcome to **Be HEALTHistic**, the podcast that's more than just health and wellness information — it's here to help you explore your options across traditional and natural medicine, so that you can make informed decisions for you and your family. This podcast illuminates the whole story about holistic health by providing access to the expertise of Drs. Steve and Drew Sinatra, who together have decades of integrative health experience. **Be HEALTHistic** is powered by our friends at Healthy Directions. Now, let's join our hosts.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Hi folks...if you like what you hear today and you want to listen to future conversations on all things integrative and holistic health, subscribe to our podcast at **BeHealthisticPodcast.com**. Also, check out and subscribe to the Healthy Directions YouTube channel, which features video versions of our episodes, plus extra videos you won't want to miss. And finally, we have more with me, Dr. Drew Sinatra, my dad, Dr. Steve Sinatra, and other health experts at HealthyDirections.com.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Hey everyone, welcome to another episode of **Be HEALTHistic**. Today on the podcast, we're welcoming Dr. Jennifer Hartstein, a nationally-recognized mental health professional who works with children, adolescents, and their families with a wide range of psychological diagnoses. With her extensive background, we knew she'd be the perfect expert to talk about how these very uncertain times are affecting the physical and mental health of our kids — and by extension, our families.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: We're really eager to discuss this topic with Dr. Jen, because like every parent's probably feeling right now, we wonder how this pandemic and all the resulting factors are impacting our kids and teens. And we're really eager to share ways to keep them feeling safe, healthy, and happy. Well, welcome to the show, Jen.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Thanks for having me. Lots to cover.



- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Lots to cover, lots to cover. Is there anything that you want to start off with? I, of course, have lots of questions for you — but is there something burning in your mind that you want to just lead off with?
- Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I'm glad you guys are having the conversation. I think we're just really seeing the tip of the iceberg as to what's potentially going to happen, so having the conversation as much as we can, I think, is really where we got to start. So let's just jump on in.
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Well, my dad and I have talked a lot about the physical issues that are occurring from the virus itself — like all the cases we're having, the deaths, the comorbidities associated with them. We've talked a little bit about the mental health piece, but really, you're here today to really dive into that. So what are you seeing as mental health effects from coronavirus with your patient population?
- Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Well, there's a lot. There actually was just a study that came out, I don't know if you've seen it, about the fact that just having coronavirus — aside from the mental health factors of living in quarantine and all that — we're seeing some absolute mental health issues coming out of even being diagnosed. So people are seeing more post-traumatic stress disorder, and depression and anxiety, and some dementia, because we know that there's that brain fog. So we're starting to see some research on just the mental health impact of being someone who had COVID and maybe is better, but there is some lag. So there's some connection between the physical and the mental, just automatically.
- Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: But then for the rest of us, maybe, who aren't getting sick, but are living in this crazy time, we're seeing an absolute increase. And I think when we first went into quarantine in March and April, there was an 800+ percent increase in calls to suicide hotlines and depression...
- Dr. Drew Sinatra: Right, I've heard about that.
- Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Yeah, and depression and anxiety rates have increased four times as much as we would expect them to increase. And this is across all ages. The age that, I think, we're seeing it the most is that young adult, 18 to 25, college age, just coming out of college...how do they get a job? What do they do? How do they have a life...kind of age.
- Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: But I think what we're also seeing is such isolation. This isn't true all across the country, in New York, there's a lot of hybrid learning. So they sometimes get one day in school, but if the numbers continue to rise, public schools are going to close. If they keep going up, private schools are going to close.



Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So I think the thing we're seeing is — how do we navigate isolation? How do we encourage our young people to be together safely, and to continue to take this seriously? Because I have clients and friends who are saying that their teens are so COVID-fatigued that they're like, "I don't care if I have to wear a mask anymore. I'm just not going to." So, how do we keep them thinking about it even though they don't want to think about it anymore? And that's a big struggle.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yeah, exactly. And what about this population you mentioned, from 18 to 25? There's so much going on there, because it seems like they're getting out of school, and they have their life ahead of them — and all of a sudden, they can't do the things that they've wanted to do for so long. How do you approach that?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I think a lot of it is, I work a lot on practicing radical acceptance, which I think every person in this country right now has to be practicing on some level. It's a lot about recognizing, "Okay, what can I do, what are my limitations, how do I work towards accepting it...even if I don't like it." Because we don't have to like the things we accept, we just have to accept them. So there's a lot of conversation about that.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: And my clients that are in college, maybe they're on campus, but they're on campus doing remote learning. So they're not having the same college experience you or I probably had — of getting to go to a party, or being in a sorority or fraternity, or just sitting on the quad with a group of people. So they're really struggling with figuring out how to connect. And the truth is, as the person who's trying to guide them, I don't really have a basis of comparison of that...I don't know what that's like. So we're slogging through it together, and I think allowing young people to sit in their disappointment right now is probably the hardest job a parent has.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yeah. And how do you bring up this radical acceptance? Because I'm sure that people would meet that with tremendous resistance.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: They do, I mean...think about it, as an adult, who's enjoying what's happening right now? I think we're all having our best...I'll speak for myself, I have my best two-year-old self every once in a while, where I just want to stomp my feet, and bang my hands on the table, and be like, "I don't want this anymore."

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So, there's a lot of permitting that — and then shifting and using the transition of "and" instead of "but." Of yes, this really sucks...and. Since there's nothing we can do about it, what can we do to make the best of the situation? We have to turn our mind back to that a lot, but if we can practice that, as hard as it is, we intrinsically suffer less. If I can be like, "Okay, this is what it is. Yeah, it sucks.



Okay.” And then you can problem-solve. But if all I’m like, “This is awful, and I don’t like it, and I don’t want it,” I’m just stuck in this ongoing sea of frustration, and it doesn’t really help me do anything else.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Right. And what kinds of recommendations are you making for these folks? Do you say go exercise more, talk to your friends more? What are you recommending?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Yes and yes, I say both of those things. I think we really were done a disservice when we went into quarantine, and we were told we had to social distance. It’s a disservice. We don’t have to socially distance, we have to physically distance.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Physically distance. Correct.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Right?

Dr. Drew Sinatra: A misnomer.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: It’s totally a misnomer, and I reframe that to the clients that I work with all the time. I’m like...luckily in New York, especially when it was warmer, you could go to the park and put down a blanket and be close, but not so close and still be with your friends. Or go for a walk, or do something where you can be outside and be engaged. I think across the country, we can do that. So it’s not about not being social, and I think we all got a little weird about that.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So, it’s how can you stay connected? Can you FaceTime, can you talk? Rather than just texting and living behind the screen, make some contact. Move your bodies, make sure you’re eating well. Don’t forget to do the things you like to do. If you like to play an instrument, keep doing that. People are being so creative in how they’re making music together online, or taking a dance class online. Think outside the box. So I think there’s a lot of encouraging young people to be creative, which they inherently are.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yes.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: They are inherently people who think outside the box, so put that to good use. So there’s a lot of figuring that. And then I think there’s a lot of validation of how this isn’t what you want and it’s really a big bummer. So if you need a day to lay on the couch and watch really bad, stupid TV, go for it.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yeah, right. And how do you address the elephant in the room which, in my opinion, is the social media piece. Because you might’ve seen that documentary, *The Social Dilemma*, on Netflix?



Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Yep.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Fantastic, I really thought there was some amazing points that were made in there. With this population, these 18 to 25-year-olds, they're probably using social media a lot more these days because they have more time to do it. Do you have any conversation around that...

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Sure.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: ...around maybe you shouldn't be using as much. Are there time limits that you suggest for it?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So what's funny is the 18 to 25-year-olds, interestingly, are a little burned out on social media. The 13 to 18-year-olds are TikTok, Snapchat. Whew, I can't keep up, I learned of a new app the other day that was a writing app, I never even heard of it. I'm constantly learning about new things, it's crazy. So between, there's, Discord and Snapchat and Twitch and TikTok, and then...I can't even remember what the other one was that I learned recently. There's so much to keep up with, and that's how they communicate. So we have to remember, if I say to you, "Don't do it," and that's how you're communicating with your friends and I'm not giving you another outlet, there could be a problem there.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So I want to be mindful. We want to, as adults in the lives of these kids, set healthy boundaries and recognize that they are just on...like, all your screen time rules, for all of us who've been saying decrease screen time — out the window. Because school is online, and learning is online, and communication is online...so we're, kind of, out of luck. So I think the key thing is to say, look, set aside digital-free time in your house — and maybe that's true for all of us. Because I don't know about you, Drew, but I'm on all those sites more just because I'm home and available. I'm not sitting out at dinner, or going to a concert, or to a play, or any of that stuff. So maybe it's about just creating rules in your house that from 8:00-9:00 every night, digital-free time, we all have to do something together. Or...even if it's watching a movie together, but all the phones are someplace else. I think it's creating new rules, because the old rules just don't stand.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I like that, because for us, we allow our kids to watch TV on the weekends only at this point, because weekdays are off-limits. Fortunately, our kids are able to go to school 100 percent in-person. We actually moved up to British Columbia to be closer to my wife's family during this time, and our colleagues down in California, their kids, they haven't been back to school yet. As parents that are...we work two jobs, and we're very busy with our lives, we found it practically impossible to have our kids home all day, and work, and not have



them being on the television all day. So what we do is we have them watch TV on the weekends. And we, of course, do what you just said, we try to spend as much time with them in the evenings as we can, while balancing our work life and all that. But I think it's a challenge for everyone.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: It's hard, it's hard. And I think we are, like, "Put your kids first." But there is the old adage if you don't put on your own oxygen mask, you can't take care of anybody else. So I think as parents, it's so important to stop and say like, "What do I need?" It's okay to ask yourself that question. So, if moving to a place where your kids could be in school full-time was what real...and you were able to do that without much disruption to your life, and that's what worked for you — awesome. If I need to hand my kid a screen so that I can eat my dinner in peace and have five minutes of quiet in my house — awesome.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I think all of the judgment that goes on just needs to go away. 2020 is judgmental enough as a year. And so, it comes down to doing what works — and whatever that is, it has to be okay. I think for parents, give yourself a big break. It's stressful. "I'm working, I've become a teacher when it wasn't what I wanted to be, I'm learning math that I don't understand that I didn't understand in high school, and here I am doing it again. I'm supporting a kid in college who's struggling with making friends, because it's just so uncomfortable." When do you exhale? So I think everybody just has to do what works.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: That's such a great point. From what we do, let's say, it's a weeknight and I've got a call to make, and my wife can't take care of the kids. I'll say, "You guys can watch something involving nature."

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Yeah, perfect.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: And I feel like, at least they're getting some exposure to learning about animals, or plants, or the trees, or the oceans. And then they're not watching some cartoon where they get completely lost. But I think there's ways to approach if you do need a moment to get away, and your child needs to watch something, well, have it be educational in some way.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Mm-hmm. Have it be educational, have it be a game that they can play together. If there's more than one kid, can they create something? Can you give them crayons? We all grew up where our parents needed us to do something, and we didn't all get put in front of screens. So, come up with a tool kit when you're feeling calm enough to have that at your ready, so that you don't, you know...



Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: And I think guilt is a really insidious emotion, right? If everyone's doing the best they can — and I think in 2020, pretty much all of us are just doing the best we can — guilt is unjustified, it doesn't help you. Well then, you'll feel like, "Oh, but I have to give them the time, or I have to give them the thing," and...no. So check your guilt, is it justified? Am I really not giving them the attention they need? Can I try to do better, what do I need to do? We have to be a little self-reflective, I think, too.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Like you mentioned, with the oxygen mask in the airplane. It's like you putting that on first and then helping your kids. What are you recommending for self-care for the adults listening to this podcast?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So I think we have given self-care a really bad rap, because I think we've made self-care seem to be, like, manicures, and massages, and all of this quiet free time. And I would say five minutes of time to yourself can be self-care. Five minutes of, just, quiet...can you take a walk around the block? Can you go sit in your car and listen to your favorite song? Can you take a drive for 10 minutes? Five minutes multiple times a day has been proven to be as good as an hour-long whatever. So where you can catch those free moments, catch them.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: And I think self-care, while we also, kind of...is also a misnomer. It's like, "Oh, it's so selfish." No, it's the best thing you can do, it gives you recharge, it gives you a little bit of a boost. So figure out what you like — what do you like? Do you like music? Put on your favorite music, dance around your living room. What a fun thing to also do with your kids.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Exactly.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Play some music, be silly, laughter. Anything that just gives you a little bit of a break. Our sympathetic nervous system is on overdrive for all of us. Our fight, flight and freeze, it's just fighting, fighting, fighting. We need that parasympathetic side of us to allow us to rest. And that five minutes gives us that boost, so we're not walking around like this, and our shoulders in our ears, and tense all the time.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Absolutely.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Whew, got to put that stuff down. So it's tough, we don't want to walk tense, we're no good to anybody, you'll crash and burn.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: And is there any particular meditation practice that you recommend to people during these times? Whether it's a breathing exercise, or a visual, or auditory meditation?



Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: It's so funny. I teach mindfulness meditation all the time, and I'm the worst mindful meditator ever. I will own that, 100 percent. But that being said, I think mindfulness and meditation comes where you find it. So for me, meditation very often happens when I'm walking my dogs. I can really be super present — I mean, I have to be, on one level. But my phone's in my pocket, maybe I have music on, maybe I don't. But I find that to be a really wonderful, meditative way for me to start the day, that 20 minutes that I'm out with them, taking in whatever's going on.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I also am a big fan of some of the apps that you can download to your phone, that give you a guided meditation for five minutes. Some of them are literally five minutes, every day. And well, we just talked about the fact that five minutes could be all you need, so those are fabulous. And you can't discount the importance of breath — of really taking a minute, sitting in a comfortable chair, feeling your feet firmly on the floor, and just focusing on breathing in and counting to five or six, and breathing out and counting to six or seven. Just doing that for a couple of minutes to reset your nervous system, we can't minimize the importance of that at all.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I really like what you said about walking your dogs, as that being a meditation for you. Because I think people think that they need to be seated in a lotus position, spine straight, quiet atmosphere.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: No.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: But you don't need that. You can do something that you enjoy, like you were just saying.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: You can walk, you can eat mindfully. Really, when you think about what mindfulness is, at its core, it's about being present. So in order to be present, we need to slow down, and we need to recognize that even though I'm trying to be present, there's a thought that's going to take my attention. I'm going to hear a noise in the other room and I'm going to be like, "What's that?" We're going to be engaged in other things. So I think as long as we focus on the fact that if mindfulness is the idea of being present, how can I eat mindfully?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: And I joke all the time that you don't want to mindfully eat one of your favorite foods — like maybe a comfort food or a chocolate bar. Because when you do that, you might realize you don't like that. Like, I did that with Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, and now I don't like Reese's Peanut Butter Cups anymore. So I guess, great if that was what I was trying to accomplish, but not really. So you want to do things you enjoy. You can listen to music mindfully, you can run



mindfully. Find the things that just allow you to be present, and that's where you need to go.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: We had David and Austin Perlmutter on the show, and they were talking about these compounds called phytoncides, which are emitted by certain trees when you walk through the woods, and they can have a positive impact on your nervous system.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: That's cool.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: There's more reason to get out into nature if you can, if you're not under quarantine, to really get out there and walk around. And I find that that's a terrific form of meditation and calming down the nervous system.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: 100 percent...and even if you're walking, pick something to notice. Here in the city, it's easy to say...I'm going to see how many people I see wearing red shirts, and I can focus on that. If I were not here and I was walking in nature, how many different color leaves can I see? Can I notice how each foot hits the ground? Can I feel how my body feels as I move? You can find one thing to really focus on, which also helps make time go by faster if you're a person who doesn't love to move your body. Then you're like, "Oh, but I'm going to focus on this for 15 minutes? Oh, easy." The next thing you know, the time has gone by and you're out.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Exactly, yeah. Well, shifting gears a little bit, I'm curious to hear your thoughts on the impact, we'll call it, physical distancing because we just differentiated that. But what is the effect that physical distancing is having on our younger population? Let's say, ages two to seven, for example. Because I know from my kids, it's so odd when you go to a grocery store, and there's all these little signs that say "Stand Here." And then the kids are very good at just looking down and saying, like, "Okay, I need to stand here." What kind of imprint is that having on them, and where do you see this going?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I think little ones are better rule followers than we are. They're used to standing on their line for school, and like, this is your spot, and this is your circle, and this is where we sit for circle time. In some ways, I think all of those signs just promote what they're learning in school. So they get it. And that age group, by nature, are rule followers. You don't cross, in New York City...I watch little kids with their families all the time and they're like, "No, the light says we don't walk yet. We don't walk yet."

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Right.



Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So I think, in that sense, they are good. But I think one of the things I worry about, and I don't think we know enough yet what this is going to do, is the impact of touch. Touch is such an important piece of our lives. Granted, as parents, we're giving that to our kids. But kids touch each other, and their grandparents, and there's so much healthy touch that we want young people and that age group in particular, to understand and recognize, that I don't want them to be so afraid of that as they get older. And that is one of my big worries.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I don't think we have any research on it yet, I don't think we know where that's going to go. But just based on research we do have of the importance of touch, we want to make sure that at home, then there's enough loving touch, and teaching those things. If you've created your own little pod that kids can do that with one another, how to encourage that.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Kids are impulsive, right? So if your four year old goes over to throw their arms around their best friend, before you freak out, try and take a breath and be like, "Hey, I know you want to hug your friend. At this time with things being so weird, we can't hug our friends. What's a different way we can have a greeting? Can you give an elbow? Can you tap feet?" Whatever. But I think we're all so anxious that our first reaction might make more fear than it does promote learning. So I think that's my big fear, what that's going to look like as they get older and we come out of quarantine.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yeah, I like that creative piece there, the elbow bump or whatever it is. Because I know our kids...you can sense that there's this fear of humans now. Everyone's contagious and everyone's sick, and that breaks my heart. Because now they're growing up not trusting people, thinking that everyone's contagious and everything. Hopefully, after all this is said and done, they can go back to a normal life...

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Right.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: ...that won't completely, permanently imprint on them, but that is a concern of mine. So I think what you said is so important, that we need to be creative in other ways to connect to other people.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Absolutely. With grandparents, especially, since we can't necessarily hug — can you come up with a funny bow or dance that you do as a greeting? Or any of that stuff that's like fun and creative and connected, but doesn't require touch. And it's hard because we are built on that — oxytocin gets released when we touch. It's the feel good, connecting, love hormone and we want that to be activated. And I don't know that it's going to be damaged irreparably, but it's definitely going to be different than...I'm a toucher, I touch everybody, and I



have to remind myself I'm not supposed to do that. And when I do it, as an adult, I'm like, "Oh my God, I wasn't supposed to, I'm so sorry. I'm touching you through your jacket on your arm, I'm not really touching you." It becomes very challenging.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I know, I'm in the same boat. We get that oxytocin release when you hug people, too.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: It's great.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: You just got to hug your family members more, I suppose.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Yes. I think if there's a good thing, it is...there's an element of building connection within your family. Listen, not everybody is going to be able to do that. But if you can build healthy connection, there's something good that comes out of that. Being able to be more validating and to be more present allows better connection. And that's really good for your kids and for you.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Exactly. And what are your thoughts on masks and children, and development of speech and everything? Do you have any concerns about that long-term, or they're going to do fine with that?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I think they're going to do fine with that. I think it sucks we all have to be in masks, and I think for kids it's hard, and I think facial recognition is hard. But I think they're so resilient, they're little resilient beings, and we have to remember that. And that they will figure it out, and there will be ways to teach...the more creative teachers get, they're going to teach ways. Because they're still getting facial expression on screens — it's not the same, but they're still getting it. So I think it'll be okay.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: And I think we're going to be doing a lot of social....I think, if anything, what I hope comes out of this is the need for social-emotional learning will bump up to the top of the list of importance within schools. Because we are going to have to be really re-teaching connection, and feelings, and understanding perspectives from other people in a way we might not have had to do before.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Right, right. And what type of stress management practices do you have for the little ones, anything in particular?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Yeah, you can do great breathing exercises with little ones. One of the things I love to do with little ones is have them imagine...and sometimes we draw it out when we want to do breathing, smelling a flower. So breathing in through their nose to smell a flower, and then blowing out a candle. So they can learn how to



breathe in through their nose really slowly, and then breathe out through their mouth. Because you don't blow out a candle with your whole mouth open, you do it real slow.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: If they're like, "I don't like flowers." Well, what's their favorite thing to smell. Inevitably, you get somebody. So what's their favorite thing to smell? Smell that. And so we can come up with some of that, and different imagery that they can use. There's a lot of great kid's yoga stuff that you can do that's really fun for them, that slows them down. And kids need to move. So, have a dance party. How can you get the ya-yas out? Let's have a ya-ya party, and everybody moves around and jumps up and down, like, shake it out however you need to. I think all of those things are important.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: And quiet time is important. We used to use "time-out" as punishment...but time-out was really meant to be a time for us to reset our bodies. It became punishment, but it was really meant to be like, "Go, reset, calm down." So let's re-invent time-out as a way for all...let's all just calm down. It's a "calm down" corner instead of a time-out corner, which could be really helpful to teach kids that they have control over how to regulate themselves.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Right, right, okay. Well, before we wrap up today, is there anything else that you want to let our audience know about what you've been seeing in your patient population, or in what you're doing?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I think it's important for all of us as adults to recognize that we're anxious, too. And it's okay to model that and express that to our kids. Because I think there's this belief, like, don't show emotion — and I think the way your kids understand emotion is if you show emotion. So if you're worried...I mean, listen, you don't want to burden them with like, "Oh my God, I'm so afraid." But if you go, "Wow, this is really overwhelming. We're still stuck home. God, I'm so frustrated. How do you feel?" I think it gives some really amazing opportunity for conversation, and for real modeling on how to express those challenging emotions. Emotions aren't good or bad, just some are more challenging than others.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: So I think that's one of the things I'm trying to encourage...that you're all going to get frustrated with each other. Our circles are smaller by design right now, so we don't have the distractions we might want. So recognize that everybody's going to be a little bit more on edge, and give everybody a little bit of a pass, maybe — including yourself.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Great point, that's a great point. Well, for our **Wellness Wisdom** segment here as we end, if you had one big, simple "pearl" of wisdom for all our parents listening with helping their kids manage stress and anxiety. I mean, we talked



about meditation, and the breathing exercises you mentioned...but what else would you recommend?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I have two.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yes, two's okay.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: I'm breaking the rules. Okay, so the first one is listen more, talk less. Just to explain that, I think we try and talk for our kids, and we don't actually hear what they're saying. So sit back. If you can't do it, literally, put your hands under your legs to remind yourself to sit on your hands — and let them tell you how they're feeling, and let them talk to you. Don't rush to fill in the blanks, because you might be wrong, and then you're shutting them down. So my first one is always listen more, talk less.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: And my second one is everything can wait five minutes.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Love that.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: You don't need to decide right then.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yes.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Most of the time, it's not life or death. So take a break, sit on it, wait, doesn't matter. But pretty much everything can wait five minutes. So I'll credit that one to my brother, I stole it from him.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Can I add on one more thing to that?

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Mm-hmm.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I'd love it for our audience to know, too, that sometimes your kids may not directly talk to you about something that's bothering them, but they may indirectly talk about it. I know my son held up this stuffed animal one time, and talked about how this stuffed animal was feeling sad. I was like, "Oh, maybe that's something that he's feeling inside, too."

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Yep, yep.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Be open to different ways of expressing.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: 100 percent, be open to all of that. You might be working, and your teenager — this is especially true with teenagers — is lurking by the door. They want to talk



to you. They're not there to just be annoying, but they don't know how to come in and be like, "Hey, can we chat?"

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Right.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Notice the subtleties, because those are the times that you get much more information than you realize.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Yes, yes. Well, Dr. Jen, thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Thank you.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I certainly learned a lot.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Thank you for having me.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: Absolutely.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Stay safe.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: You, too.

Dr. Jennifer Hartstein: Thanks.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: That's our show for today, folks. If you have a question or an idea for a show topic, please send us an email or share a post with us on Facebook. And remember, if you like what you heard today and you want to be an active member of the **Be HEALTHistic** community, subscribe to our podcast at **BeHealthisticPodcast.com**, or on Apple Podcasts, or wherever you download your favorites. You can also find more great content and information from us and the Healthy Directions team at HealthyDirections.com.

Dr. Drew Sinatra: I'm Dr. Drew Sinatra, and this is **Be HEALTHistic**.

Narrator: Thanks for listening to **Be HEALTHistic**, powered by our friends at Healthy Directions, with Drs. Drew and Steve Sinatra. See you next time.