

I have noticed that my own mood is fluctuating as this social isolation persists. I am worried that my emotional ups and downs and overall low mood will have a negative impact on my kids. I know I need to be a good role model for my kids and I feel guilty that I may not be at this time. How do I support my child while being true to how I am feeling?

A: We are all going through a prolonged crisis and we will all have good days and very hard days regardless of our age or role in life. It's normal to feel overwhelmed or feel you have "hit a wall." Role modeling normal, real feelings and reactions to unusual and even traumatic times like these is very important to your children. There is nothing wrong with you as a parent or a human for feeling anxious, frustrated, or sad during this time. In fact, it is normal and expected. It's important to acknowledge to your kids that you too are feeling a whole host of feelings. Follow this up by showing your child [how you can take control of your response](#) when you hit a wall or get into a dark mood. Identify and model positive behavior strategies for yourself by choosing specific positive activities that can improve your mood, notice when you may feel resistant to engaging in helpful behaviors, acknowledge the resistance is due to stress, fake it until you make it, and then notice how good you feel after each positive activity. Naming your feelings, modeling and accepting you may fall short on a given day are important lessons for our children to learn and acquire as they navigate their own challenges in life.