Resilience for Children & their Families 3: Overcoming Fear during Covid-19

Hi, it’s Dr. Machelle! Let’s discover what to do when you’re afraid.

Your brain is so special. Close your eyes. Imagine a huge magical bird. What colors are the feathers? How do the wings look? What sound does it make? If you could ride your bird, where would it take you? Open your eyes. That is your brain! It can create many beautiful things. Your brain is amazing!

But, what if my brain thinks of scary stuff?

When you are afraid, your brain might shout:
- Run Away!
- Freeze!
- Defend!

I send power to your heart, arms, and legs to go so fast!

But Wait!

What if I am home safe?
But, I’m thinking about COVID-19. Or, I’m worried about someone who is sick. My brain is going too fast! What can I do?

So, when you are afraid:

1. Take 5 really deep breaths.
2. Remember when you did a really good job even though you were scared.
3. Figure out one way to solve the problem you are thinking about.
4. Think of someone who loves you so much. What does their face look like? What would they say to help you?
5. Find a way to talk to that person about what makes you scared.
6. Think of one safe thing you can do now to feel better. Go do it!

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Brain Buddy art by Sable Thompson, M.D. Candidate, University of Virginia School of Medicine.

Dr. Machelle art by Rachel Smith. Resilience Builder #3 (Reading Level 1.5) ©RiseResilient, LLC, 2020

Psychology Today, 2019
Harvard Health, 2018
Mahan & Ressler, 2015