

Let's talk about it...

Helping Families Process Feelings, Together

Life as we knew it changed in an instant. Youth and adults are trying to cope with these sudden changes, everyone in their own unique way.

The following tips can be used to discuss what each person is feeling and help others respond appropriately so everyone feels heard. These questions are relevant to people of all ages, parents and youth, and are most helpful when each person shares their perspective.

Group Processing Tips

- **Set expectations before the discussion:** be respectful, group confidentiality, etc.
- **Ask open ended questions:** "Tell me more about that?" "What do you mean by...?"
- **Give affirmations:** let the other person know you are listening and are present
- **Use reflective listening:** reflect back what you heard in your own words to confirm you understand what they're sharing – ask them to correct you if it is not what they meant
- **Keep the sessions simple:** you don't have to ask every question – let conversation flow naturally, using the questions to start talking
- **Listening sessions are not group counseling:** they help others share their experiences, express need, and get support from a larger community
- **Know your limits:** seek additional support and share community resources as needed

Questions for Group Processing

- What have you experienced?
- What has been challenging for you?
- What has been challenging for your family?
- What are your needs right now?
- Where have you seen joy?
- What surprised you?
- What have you been learning during this time?
- Where have you seen God working in your life?
- What has this time looked like for your family?
- What are your feelings on expectations not being met?