



COVID-19, Intolerance of Uncertainty, and young patients: Impact and intervention

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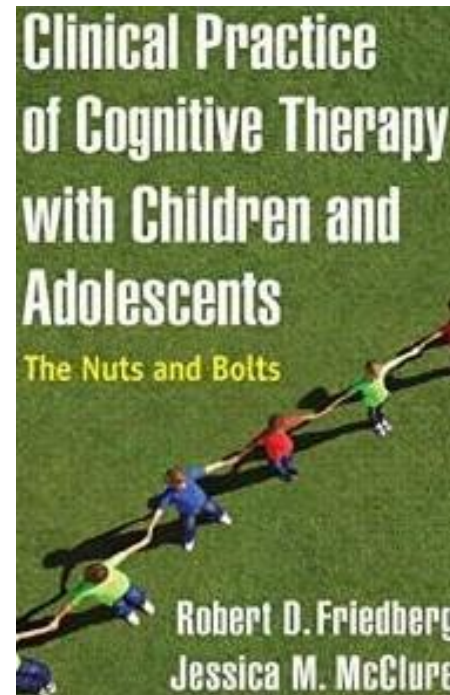
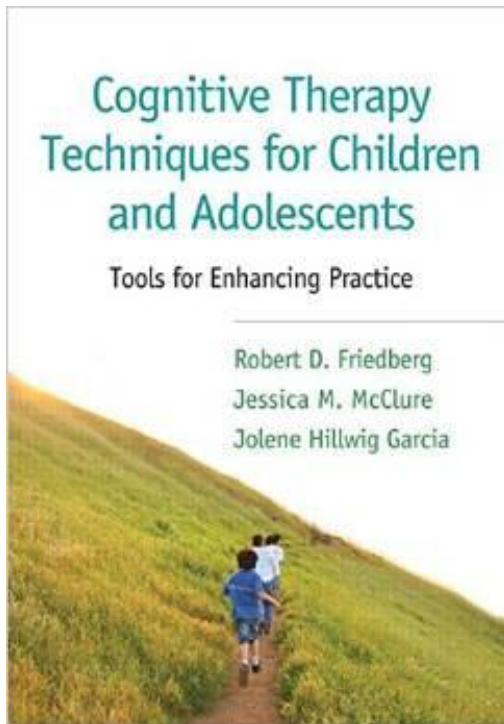
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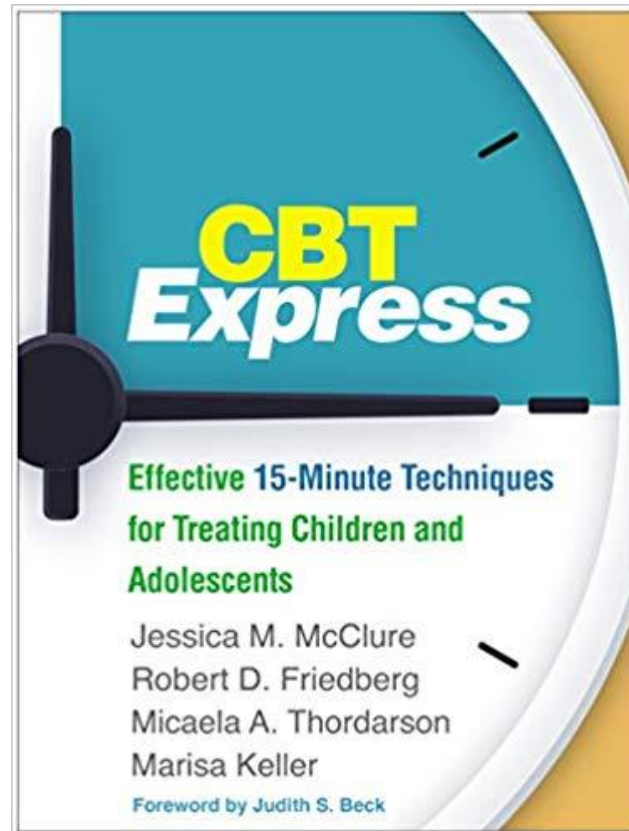


Disclosures: Friedberg, (Guilford)





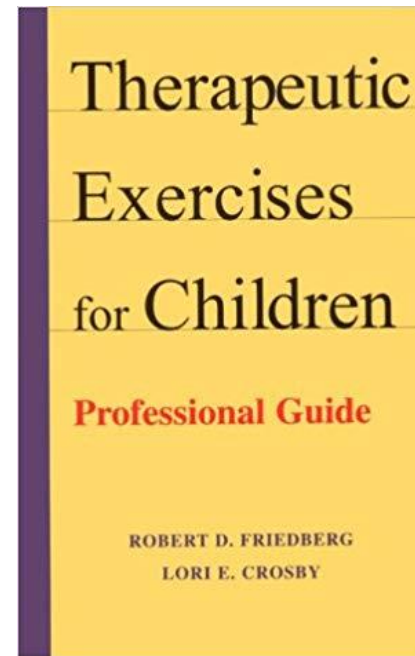
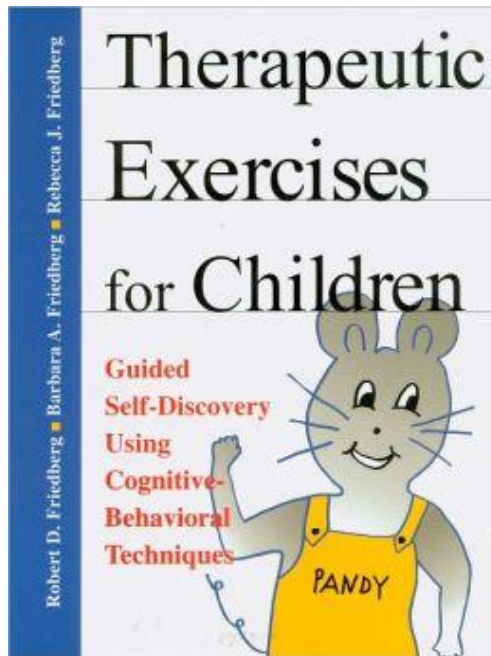
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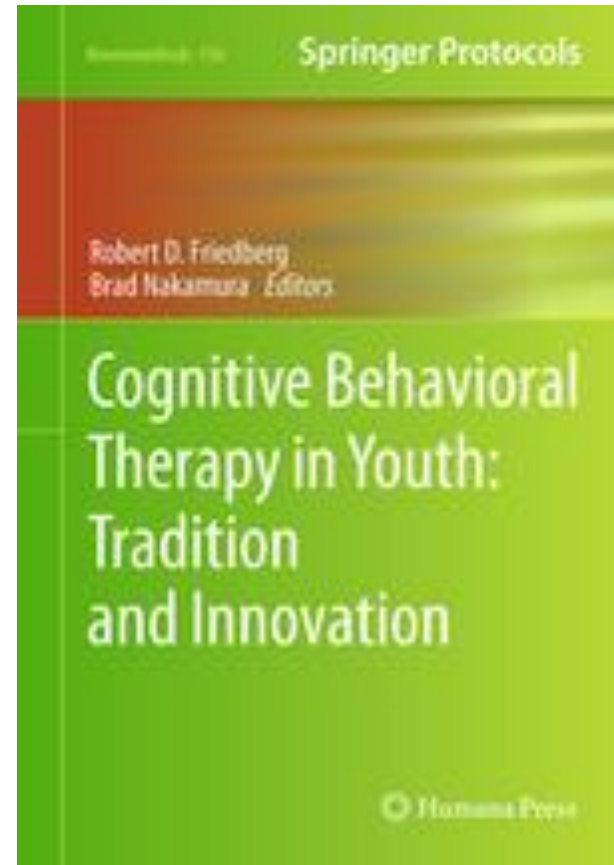
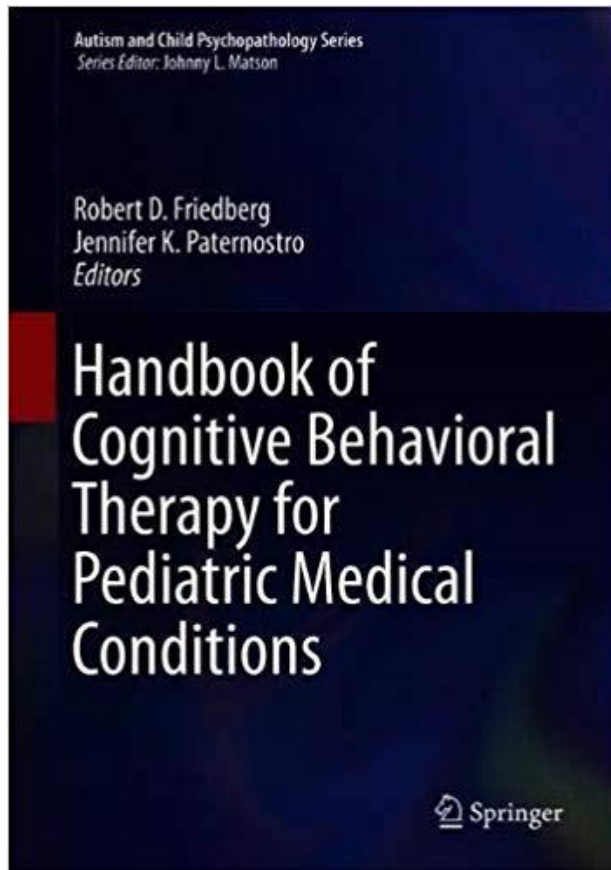
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Agenda



COVID-19 Impact

Psychological symptoms

Uncertainty

Intolerance of Uncertainty

Relationship to
psychopathology

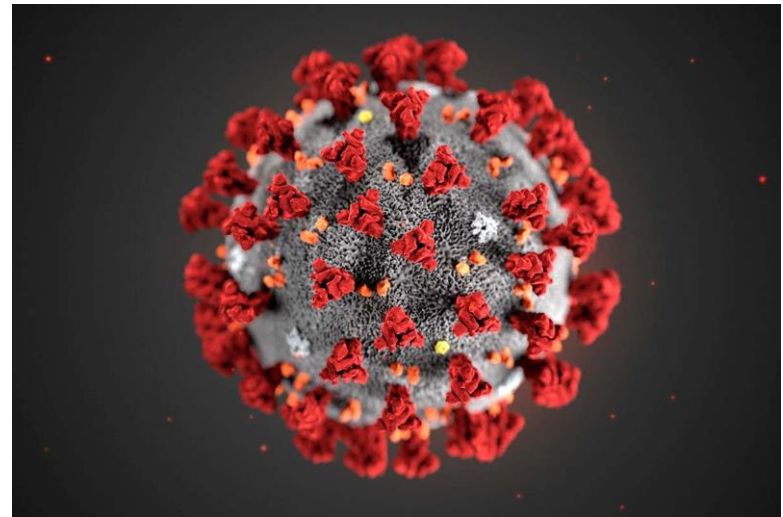
Intervention in the next normal



The COVID-19 effect



- New normal marked by
 - Fear
 - Doubt
 - Depression
 - Social isolation
 - Health disparities
 - Xenophobia
 - Societal unrest
 - Economic costs
 - Ruptures in education



Some specifics



- Anxiety grows during a pandemic
- Re-entry anxiety occurs in the post-pandemic period (Sanderson et al., 2020)
- Marginalized populations suffer disproportionately (Mamelund et al. 2018)
 - Get sick first
 - Lower access to care
 - Job loss
 - Financial stress
- Pediatric patients with co-morbid medical and conditions especially vulnerable



So what is happening in the US



- *Increase of Purchase of Firearms*
 - *Since the pandemic started, 111,000 firearms were purchased. 47,000 were by NEW purchasers in California*
 - *Particularly alarming when combined with economic recession, financial stress, and isolation*
 - *Very high risk of escalating suicide rate*
- *Hoskins, K., & Beidas, R.S. (2020). Intersection of surging firearms and COVID-19 psychological distress, and health disparities. JAMA Network Open. 2021;4(1):e2034017. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.34017*

So what's happening in the US



- Mental health cases are at crisis level
- Prior to pandemic, 7.1% of children in CA receive MH services (approx., 200, 0000)
- Predictions
 - Massive increase of exacerbation of pre-existing anxiety, depression, OCD, and & ADHD
 - Surge of new cases



<https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2020/12/16/covid-19-creating-mental-health-crisis-for-kids-therapist-says/>

So what is happening in the US?



- Health care systems are overburdened
- Prior to pandemic, behavioral health services for children were frayed and fragmented
- Experts expect surging numbers of cases.
- Service delivery will need to be reconceptualized



Psychological conditions exacerbated by the pandemic



- Anxiety spectrum
- OCD
- Health anxieties
- Depression
- Disruptive behavior problems



UNCERTAINTY ABOUNDS



- Uncertainty also grows during crises like a pandemic
- Discomfort and distress in situations that are unknown or unknowable (Carleton, 2016)
 - Fear of the unknown
- Associated with
 - worry, rumination, catastrophizing, avoidance
 - Hebert & Dugas, 2019; Meeten, Dash, Scarlet, & Davey, 2012; Read, Comer, & Kendall, 2013; Rifkin & Kendall, 2020)



Intolerance of Uncertainty



■ Transdiagnostic pathway to:

- GAD
- Panic
- OCD
- Social Anx
- Health Anx



Intolerance of uncertainty



- Approximately 40% of adolescents' variation in worry due to IU (Osmanağaoğlu et al. 2018)
- Worry is often overvalued its as to prevent possible adverse outcomes (Rifkin & Kendall, 2020)
- IU is related to with anxiety-related disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) through its link with worrying and catastrophizing,
- Intolerance of uncertainty ignites hypervigilance to interoceptive cues such as somatic symptoms (Lieberman et al. 2016)

IU and OCD

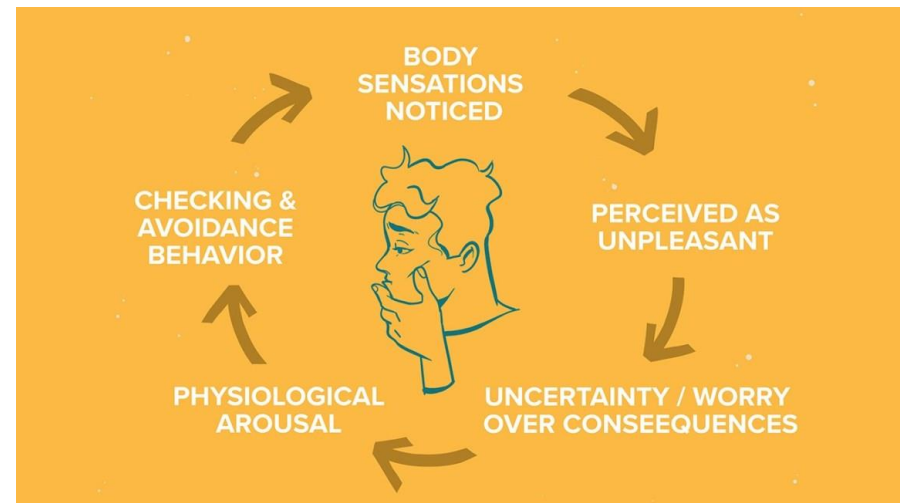


- Youth with contamination fear may avoid people and public places.
- This intensifies during a pandemic
- Checking compulsions serve to reduce uncertainty and doubt.
 - apparent hyperactivity of the limbic system in individuals with OCD when met with uncertainty (Stern et al., 2013; Wever et al., 2015).

IU and Health anxiety(Haig-Ferguson, 2020)



- Health anxiety is on the rise
 - Perceiving benign sensations as a signal of serious illness (Haig-Ferguson, 2020)
- COVID-19 is a “critical incident” to Health Anxiety
- IU also linked to Health Anxiety
- Younger patient more likely to demonstrate the anxiety through more disruptive behavior
- Checking behavior
 - Younger: reassurance seeking
 - Adolescents: online searching



Primacy of perceptions of control



- Chorpita & Barlow (1998) model
 - Early experiences with diminished control propel an explanatory style that is reactive to perceived threat to control
 - Anxious youth fear loss of control over
 - External events (objects, places, other people etc)
 - Internal events: (emotional and bodily reactions)





Intervening with Intolerance of Uncertainty

Common target areas



- Perceptions of uncontrollability/
 - unpredictability
- Worries abt health
 - Catastrophizing
- Ruminations abt health
- Sense of unfairness



Brand New Narrow Band Measures



- Virus related fears COVID-Related Thoughts and Behavioral symptoms - Child Version (COV-TaBs-C; Schneider & Storch, 2020).
 - New 10 item scale
 - 5 point Likert scale
 - “I worried a lot about COVID-19”
 - “I felt alone or missed people a lot because of COVID-19”

Intolerance of Uncertainty



- Intolerance of uncertainty (Intolerance of Uncertainty Index-A for Children (IUI-A-C; Rifkin & Kendall, 2020)
 - New scale
 - 1-5 Likert Scale
 - “I can’t stand that there are some things in life that I won’t know ahead of time”
 - “Other kids are better than me at dealing with not knowing what will happen.”
 - Strong internal consistency (.94)
 - Solid convergent and discriminant validity



Problem Solving

RIBEYE (Problem-solving)



- Used in the TADS studies (Rohde et al., 2005)
- R-Relax in the face of stress
- I-identify the stressor
- B-Brainstorm
- E-Evaluate the options
- Y-Say yes to the best option
- E-Encourage yourself with a reward to alternative problem solving





Cognitive restructuring

Constructing Coping Thoughts: Make it Rain



- Friedberg and Paternostro (2019)
- Coping thoughts should be
 - Realistic
 - Accurate
 - Impactful
 - Necessary for better functioning



Butterfly Thoughts





Event	Feeling	Caterpillar Thought 	Can This Caterpillar Thought Change into a Butterfly Thought?	Butterfly Thought 

FIGURE 7.3. Butterfly Thoughts Worksheet. From Friedberg and McClure (2015). Copyright by The Guilford Press. Permission to photocopy this figure is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use only (see copyright page for details). Purchasers can download a larger version of this figure from www.guilford.com/friedberg-forms.

Breaking the Crystal Ball



Breaking The Crystal Ball Diary

(Sample)

PANDY SAYS



My crystal ball thinking tells me what I fear will happen.
What do I fear will happen?

That when I go to the school party everybody will
have somebody to sit with but me. I'll spill food on
myself and everyone will look at me and laugh.

How will I feel if it happens?

Scared, embarrassed, and sad

What really happened?

I sat with some other kids. We all laughed at
jokes. I forgot to worry about spilling.



What did I do to make things work out?

I smiled at some kids and asked if I could sit with
them. I paid attention to the kids' jokes and tried to
ignore my worries about spilling.

Count Dreadula



FIGURE 6.5. Armando's Count Dreadula Diary.

Date	Situation	Feeling and rating	Automatic thought	 Count Dreadula asks	 Count Dreadula says	Rerate feeling
9/18	Taking a test	Worried (8)	<i>If I make one mistake I'm doomed. People won't respect me.</i>	<i>Am I punishing myself? How forgiving am I being to myself?</i>	<i>Punishing myself for one mistake is too mean to myself. I can forgive myself for mistakes.</i>	Worried (4)
9/21	Don't know	Worried (9)	<i>It's horrible that I cannot tell the future. I can't stand the unexpected.</i>	<i>Am I letting my feelings trick me into thinking they are facts? Am I forgetting my strengths?</i>	<i>Yep. Feelings are not facts, they are just feelings. I am strong. I can stand it.</i>	Worried (4)

Shake it off!!



Ages: 8–14 years.

Module: Cognitive Restructuring.

Purpose: Replace the depressogenic private speech with more productive alternatives.

Rationale: Depressed youth are challenged with negative views of self, others, their experiences, and the future. Shake It Off provides the opportunity to counter these debilitating thoughts with coping responses.

Materials: “Shake It Off” song, sticky notes, [HQ Card 7.5](#), Shake It Off (p. 161), and a writing utensil.

Expected time needed: 10–15 minutes.

Shake it off



Shake it off



HQ Card 7.5

Shake It Off

Practice coming up with Shake It Off thoughts to answer the negative thoughts going through your head.

Sticky Note Thought → Shake It Off Thought

Sticky Note Thought

Shake It Off Thought

Sticky Note Thought

Shake It Off Thought

Sucky Note Thought

Shake It Off Thought

STAY 

Fox Talk



Fox talk



HQ Card 7.6a

Translating Fox Talk: Sample

Your Fox says:



Your translation=

Hint: Change words like *always*, *never*, *all*, *none*, *everyone*, *everything*, *nothing*, *must*, *will*, and *should* to *sometimes*, *some*, *kind of*, *maybe*, *might*, *could*, and so on.

I will never get good grades.

I probably will get mostly good grades, but I might get a bad grade if the work is hard to do.

Everyone hates me.

Some kids don't like me, but some kids do.

Fox Talk



HQ Card 7.6b

Translating Fox Talk

Your Fox says:




Your translation=

Hint: Change words like *always*, *never*, *all*, *none*, *everyone*, *everything*, *nothing*, *must*, *will*, and *should* to *sometimes*, *some*, *kind of*, *maybe*, *might*, *could*, and so on.

Master of Disaster



FIGURE 6.3. Shoshanna's Master of Disaster Worksheet.



Disaster I can master: *The girls at my lunch table will continue to pick on me because my hair looks frizzy in my braids and I don't have a date to the dance.*

Master questions:
 How sure are you that the disaster will happen? (Circle one.)

1 2 3 4 5
 Not Kind of A lot

When has the disaster happened before? (Circle one.)

Never Sometimes A lot

If the disaster has not happened, what convinces you it will happen now? _____

What was your explanation for the disaster happening before? *I am ugly and people think I suck as a person.*

What is another explanation for your sense it will happen now? *They are just mean and look for someone to pick on and make feel bad.*

If your disaster has happened in the past, how did you handle it?

1 2 3 4 5
 Not well Kind of Really well

What did you do? *I really blew it. I got depressed, scratched on myself a little with an Exacto knife, and stopped eating for awhile.*

If you did not handle it well, what is different about you now? What could you do now that would be helpful? *I am stronger now. I really can't punish myself for other people's bullshit. Just because they treat people like crap doesn't mean I should treat myself like crap. Their opinions do not shape me. I'm not clay in their hands. I am just going to make myself who I am.*

If you have a plan for the disaster, how bad could it be? How in control are you? _____

Really in control.

Master of Disaster conclusion: *Although I let the girls control me before with their mean comments, I know not to let them do that again. What I do makes me who I am, not their opinions. I can handle their crap without cutting or stopping eating.*

Exposure and new moves



- Change occurs and endures in the context of negative affective arousal (Robins & Hayes, 1993)
- Exposure puts the skills learned in the previous modules to the test by taking action (Purdon & Clark, 2005)
- The art of cognitive behavioral psychotherapy is like sculpting iron (Cotterell, 2005)
- Helps the head and heart reach consensus (Padesky, 2004)
- Way to show you can (Kendall et al. 1992)





Exposure, Exposure, Exposure

Ages: 4 years through teens.

Module: Behavioral Experiments and Exposures.

Purpose: Quickly educate the family on anxiety and the power of exposures.

Rationale: Exposures are extremely powerful in improving anxiety symptoms, but therapists often don't have enough time with families to gradually introduce the concept across multiple sessions.

Materials: Any items to demonstrate exposures (typically things in a clinic or office, including a glove, piece of paper, or pen); [HQ Card 6.5](#), Exposure, Exposure, Exposure (p. 137).

Expected time needed: 15 minutes.

Fun therapeutic adventures for dealing with uncertainty



- Pop-up monkeys
- Minute to Win it (McClure, Friedberg, Thordarson, & Keller, 2019)
- Improv theatre exercises



Ponginator



Ponginator

Website: *www.thechaosandtheclutter.com/archives/dollar-tore-minute-to-win-it*

Materials: Empty egg carton, ping pong balls, timer.



Speed Eraser



Speed Eraser

Website: <http://community.today.com/parenting-team/post/25-minute-to-win-it-games-for-teens-ton-of-fun-guaranteed>

Materials: Unsharpened pencils with erasers; ceramic cup; timer.

Speed Eraser is a difficult task that prompts lots of frustration. Patients have to bounce the pencil off a hard desk-top surface by its eraser so it lands in the ceramic cup. The patient has to land seven pencils in the cup in 1 minute.



Sources for improv exercises



- <https://www.learnimprov.com/gibberish-exercises/>
- <https://www.theatrefolk.com/blog/improv-games-for-collaboration/>
- Bedore, B. (2004) Improv games for children and adults. Alameda, CA: Hunter House.



Words to live and practice by



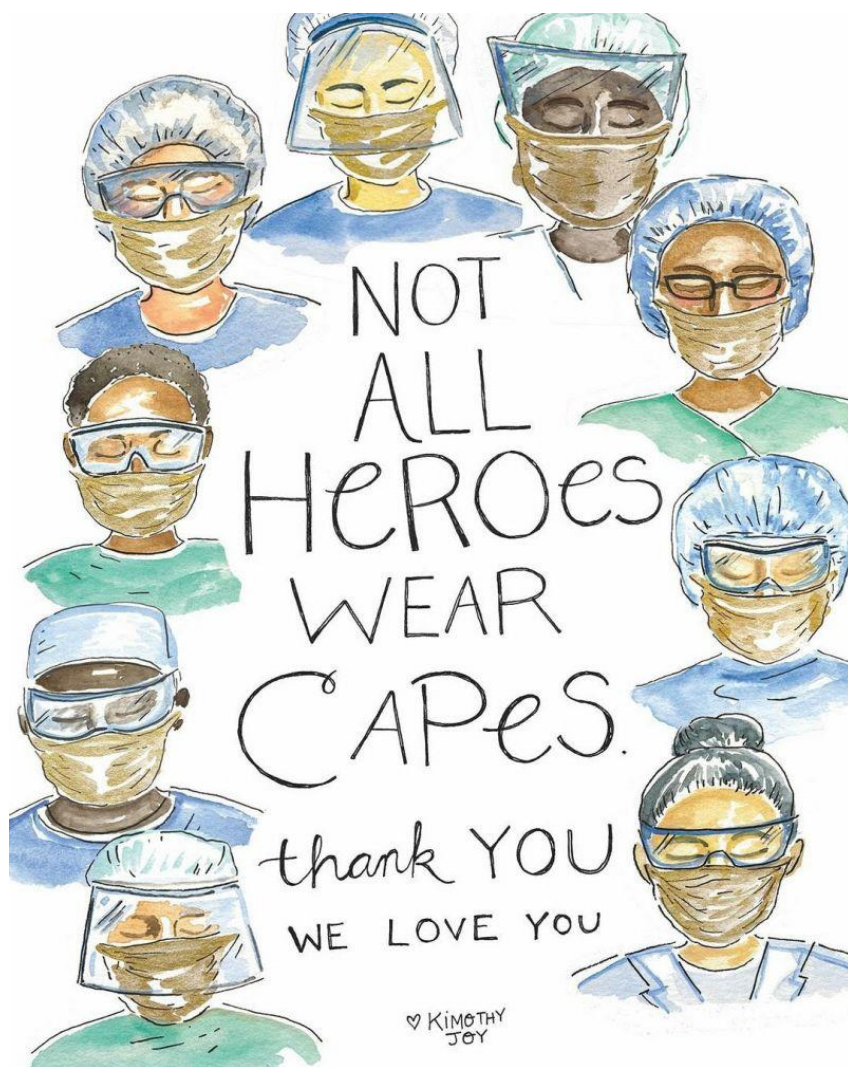
- “Now, more than ever, the illusions of division threaten our very existence. We all know the truth: more connects us than separates us. But in times of crisis the wise build bridges, while the foolish build barriers. We must find a way to look after one another, as if we were one single tribe.”

■ T’Challa

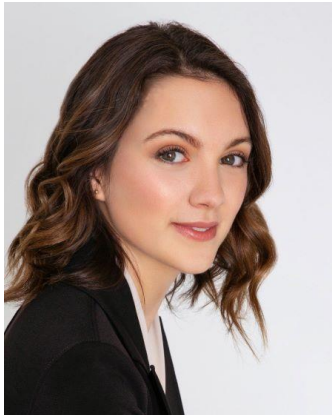
Black Panther (2018)



Thank you to the health care
and front-line heroes!!!



Thank you to the CSTAY team



CSTAY (*not pictured Yasaman Mohavedi, Yan Leykin)



AND THANK YOU TO Dr.
McNicolas all of you at UCD!



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