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Good morning,

I hope this message finds you and your family safe and healthy. I heard from a friend yesterday that at her weekly Friday work zoom meeting, which has been happening throughout the pandemic, there were many children in the background shrieking (something that had not happened during previous meetings). My friend asked, “Do you think people don’t care about using ‘mute’ anymore, or do you think there’s a lot of angst building?” My observation is that some families are feeling pushed to the limit right now. Not necessarily all day, every day, but many people are experiencing some very intense parenting moments...sometimes in the middle of a zoom meeting.

I thought this would be a good time to remind parents about the importance of practicing self-compassion, and to encourage you to do a **self-compassion check-in**. Specifically:

- **Are you practicing self-kindness?** That is, being kind and gentle with yourself, particularly in stressful parenting moments when a harsh inner critic might take over (“I can’t believe I said that – I must be the worst parent ever”). If you notice an unkind, judgmental inner voice, try to replace that thought with a more compassionate statement such as, “This is really hard and I’m trying my best” or “I’m overwhelmed and I need a break – I’m heading to the bathroom to take 5”.
- **Aspire to treat yourself with the same care and kindness that you would offer to a good friend.** Given the unprecedented, stressful, chaotic conditions in the world, how would you support a friend who was struggling? Would you tell your friend, “You’re doing a bad job,” or would you offer your friend gentleness, sympathy, and compassion?
- **Remember that you are not in this alone.** Think about common humanity, and recall that literally every parent in the world is experiencing struggles of one sort or another. Given our physical isolation from friends and family members at the present time, it can sometimes be difficult to remember that you are part of a community of people who are all experiencing these stressful and intense parenting moments. That said, if

you find that you are feeling overwhelmed by feelings of sadness, worry, anger, or frustration, I encourage you to reach out to a mental health professional or to your primary care provider.

I have one additional resource to share this week: Beyond Booksmart is offering a series of free [webinars for parents about supporting online learning and executive function](#).

This week's webinar: **Missed Moments: Helping Families Cope with Disappointment**

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 10:30am

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81670871399?pwd=T2hlc2NVSnVNUFIDNEtIS1NGYVZiUT09>

Password: 703069

As usual, I'll provide practical strategies for families of preschoolers, children, and adolescents and will allow ample time for parents to ask questions. If you can't join live, there are links to all of the recorded webinars on my website – www.drrachelkramer.com

Warm regards,
Rachel