

Kristi Webb

Thank you for asking about this; it is good to know that the experience of AUNE graduates can perhaps be helpful to current students.

Every day, I walk from home to my office, where I have been seeing all of my folks virtually since March 16th. I use a HIPAA-secure platform called VSee, which took a bit of coaching for some of my patients to get comfortable with, but we are all now in the routine of it.

I find that telemental health (TMH) is surprisingly rich and deep. For some of my older folks, the connection is all that they desire; others waste no time, diving right into their issue and working hard for 50 minutes. The online disinhibition effect is, I think, part of what produces such rich work; there are very few filters. I have to be careful about that effect on myself, though, and not allow my mouth to carry me away!

I spent a lot of time, early on, providing psychoeducation about how human brains respond to uncertainty, how to tolerate anxiety, and that people have different levels of tolerance for risk. These days, I find myself focusing more on messages such as, "Give yourself grace." I have a question that I pose to each person, each week; I started by asking for one positive, have asked them to name one thing they're grateful for, one thing they've mastered, one thing that remains a challenge, and to name one thing they've done for someone else this week. My patients seem to look forward to that, and if I forget to ask, they remind me.

For the last 2 1/2 weeks, all but one patient has asked for help managing their distress about the murders of Black people. Some have been doing anti-racism work for a while; others are at the start of their journey. I had a brief moment of hesitation before I started offering to share resources but I decided that staying "neutral" was a lie and would help neither my patients nor people of color. I have had a professional [Facebook page](#) for about 7 years; I post the Skill of the Week there every Monday at 8 a.m. I recently posted there about the skill of Building Mastery (I'm a DBT therapist), specifically applied to anti-racism. As I have focused on skills relevant to managing during these stressful times, the page's reach has expanded dramatically as my followers share with others. That's gratifying.

Thanks again for asking!