

# Emotional and Psychological well-being through Counselling A Positive Way Forward

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# What are the current reasons of stressors?

- School pressure and career decisions.
  - ▶ Social distancing , unable to cope with technology
- Uncertainty in issues related to life, isolation and feeling of alienation
  - ▶ Dating and friendships.
  - ▶ Dealing with the physical and cognitive changes of puberty.
  - ▶ Family and peer conflicts.
  - ▶ Crammed schedules, juggling school, social life and family obligations.

# What are the responses to the stressors?

- ▶ Increased complaints of headache, stomach ache, muscle pain and/or tiredness.
- ▶ Feeling left out and isolated worry for the future
- ▶ Uncertainty and anxious and worried
- ▶ Increased anger or irritability (i.e., lashing out at people and situations).
- ▶ Crying more often and appearing teary-eyed.
- ▶ Feelings of hopelessness.
- ▶ Chronic anxiety and nervousness.
- ▶ Changes in sleeping and eating habits (i.e., insomnia, nightmares, or being lonely and aloof and sad).
- ▶ Difficulty concentrating hooked to social media and negative news.
- ▶ Experimentation with drugs or alcohol.

# Strategy to cope with the current times ....

- ▶ Talk about problems with others.
- ▶ Take deep breaths, accompanied by thinking or saying aloud, "I can handle this."
- ▶ Perform progressive muscle relaxation, which involves repeatedly tensing and relaxing large muscles of the body.
- ▶ Set small goals and break tasks into smaller, manageable chunks.
- ▶ Exercise and eat regular meals.
- ▶ Get proper sleep.
- ▶ Practice consistent, positive discipline.
- ▶ Focus on what you can control (your reactions, your actions) and let go of what you cannot (other people's opinions and expectations).
- ▶ Schedule breaks and enjoyable activities.
- ▶ identify your unique strengths and build on them.
- ▶ cultivate the new ability to learn new things .

## **Minding our minds during the COVID-19**

These can be difficult times for all of us as we hear about spread of COVID-19 from all over the world, through television, social media, newspapers, family and friends and other sources. The most common emotion faced by all is Fear. It makes us anxious, panicky and can even possibly make us think, say or do things that we might not consider appropriate under normal circumstances.

### **Understanding the importance of Lockdown**

Lockdown is meant to prevent the spread of infection from one person to another, to protect ourselves and others. This means, not stepping out of the house except for buying necessities, reducing the number of trips outside, and ideally only a single, healthy family member making the trips when absolutely necessary. If there is anyone in the house who is very sick and may need to get medical help, you must be aware of the health facility nearest to you.

### **Handling Social isolation**

Staying at home can be quite nice for some time, but can also be boring and restricting. Here are some ways to keep positive and cheerful.

1. Be busy. Have a regular schedule. Help in doing some of the work at home.
2. Distract yourself from negative emotions by listening to music, reading, watching an entertaining programme on television. If you had old hobbies like painting, gardening or stitching, go back to them. Rediscover your hobbies.
3. Eat well and drink plenty of fluids.
4. Be physically active. Do simple indoor exercises that will keep you fit and feeling fit.
5. Sharing is caring. Understand if someone around you needs advice, food or other essentials. Be willing to share.
6. Elderly people may feel confused, lost and need help. Offer them help by getting them what they need, their medicines, daily needs etc.
7. If you have children at home, keep them busy by allowing them to help in the household chores - make them feel responsible and acquire new skills.

### **Focus on facts, reject rumours and theories**

1. Knowledge is power; the more you know about a certain issue, the less fearful you may feel. Make sure to access and believe only the most reliable sources of information for self-protection.
2. Do not follow sensational news or social media posts which may impact your mental state. Do not spread or share any unverified news or information further.
3. Do not keep discussing all the time about who got sick and how. Instead learn about who got well and recovered.
4. Stick to the known advice- hand hygiene and keeping a physical distance from others. It is being careful about yourself, and also about care of others.
5. A common cold is not Corona infection. The symptoms of Corona have been well described. Follow etiquette of sneezing, coughing, avoiding spitting in public places etc.

6. In most people, the Corona infection causes mild symptoms and the person only needs to follow social distancing till he/she stops being infective, usually 2 weeks. Mild infection does not require a person to be admitted in hospital. Only people who have breathing difficulties need to be in hospital. Most people recover.

### **Handling emotional problems**

1. At times of anxiety, practice breathing slowly for a few minutes. Try and distance the thoughts that are making you anxious. Think of something calm and serene, and slow down your mind.
2. When feeling angry and irritated, calming your mind, counting back from 10 to 1, distracting yourself helps.
3. Even when feeling afraid, deal with it by asking yourself:
  - a. What is under my control?
  - b. Am I unnecessarily worrying about the worst thing that can happen?
  - c. When I have been stressed in the past, how have I managed?
  - d. What are the things I can do to help myself and be positive?
4. Feeling lonely or sad is also quite common. Stay connected with others. Communication can help you to connect with family and friends. Call up people whom you haven't spoken to and surprise them. Discuss happy events, common interests, exchange cooking tips, share music.
5. If any of these emotions persist continuously for several days, despite your trying to get out of it, talk about it with someone. If the feelings worsen, a person may feel helpless, hopeless and feel that life is not worth living. If that happens, call at helpline number (080-46110007) for advice from a mental health professional or contact your doctor / mental health professional.

### **What is NOT advisable**

1. Avoid tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. Use of tobacco or alcohol or other drugs to cope with emotions or boredom can worsen physical, mental health and reduce immunity. People who already have a substance use problem may require professional help, especially when they feel low in mood or stressed.
2. Do not shun or judge people with a CoVid infection. While you need to maintain a physical distance and keep yourself safe to prevent such infection, remember they need care and concern. If you know someone who might have the infection, tell them about precautions, and how to get medical assistance, if required.
3. If you happen to get infected with Corona, remember most people get better. Do not panic. Practice self-isolation and take medications that are advised.

### **Emotional issues after recovery**

1. While it is wonderful to recover from Covid infection, you may actually face stress after you have recovered and wish to get back into the community. You may have fear about your loved ones falling ill.
2. People who do not understand the illness well may actually keep you at a distance, which is also very stressful and isolating.

3. You may experience feelings of guilt that you were not able to work or care for others. This may lead to feelings of depression, helplessness or frustration.
4. Use the ways mentioned earlier to deal with these feelings. Share your positive story that it is possible to recover from COVID infection.

### **Recognise mental health problems in your near and dear ones**

Just as you can recognise your own mental health problems, be sensitive to such problems in your near and dear ones, which may include:

1. Changes in sleep patterns
2. Difficulty in sleeping and concentrating
3. Worsening of health problems
4. Increased use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs

Be supportive to them. If the problems persist, please contact the helpline (080-46110007) or contact your doctor or a mental health professional.

### **Persons with mental illness**

Persons who had previous mental illness may face newer challenges during self-isolation or Covid infection:

1. They would also have the same fears and stress as others which may worsen their previous mental health condition
2. Social isolation may make them more withdrawn, moody and irritable
3. They may not seek/ get easy access to medicines and counselling

Help and support is vital for persons with mental illness from their families and other care givers. Health helplines can provide support, in addition to regular taking of prescribed medication, a regular daily routine, keeping engaged and positive.

Remember, good mental status in the difficult times may win you the battle more easily!

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# Celebrities Suffered From Mental Illness:-

Anxiety Disorder



# Clinical Depression



# Bipolar Disorder



# Schizophrenia



# What is wellbeing?

Physical

Emotional

Social

Psychological

# Understanding STRESS: An anathema to wellbeing



- Physical and psychological response to a change, life event and a new situation.
- Eustress
- Distress – stressor perceived as threatening, unmanageable, unsettling.... Feel of loosing control.



# Effects Of Stress





# Body

# Mind



# Emotions

# Behavior



# What happens when we are stressed. . .



**Depressed mood**

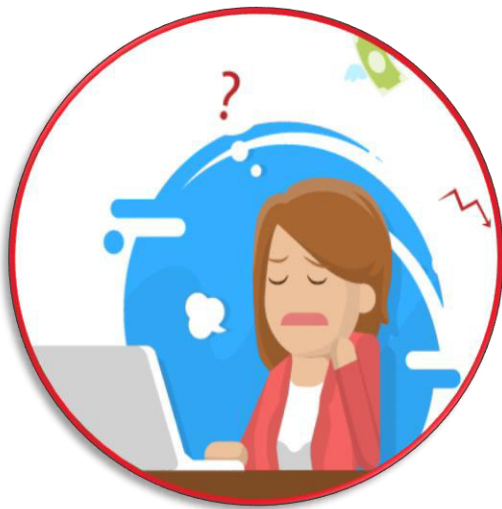


**Sleep disturbance**



**Fatigue**

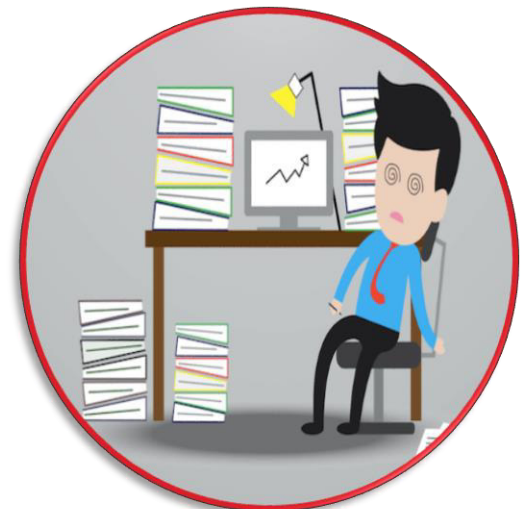




**Poor concentration**



**Poor thinking and  
decision making**



**Impaired work  
performance**





**Decreased  
productivity and  
quality of work**



**Increased tardiness  
or absenteeism**



**Impaired  
presenteeism**





Higher risk for  
workplace accidents



Increased  
likelihood of  
substance abuse



Leads to suicidal  
thoughts



# Causes



- Daily crisis
- High pressure work
- Personality- less able to cope, introvert
- High expectations
- Chronic medical problems
- Family, Social and Legal Problems.
- Changing family dynamics, Reduced family and peer time



Economic Stresses

# WARNING SIGNS

- High resistance to going to work everyday
- A sense of failure, anger and resentment
- Discouragement and indifference
- Isolation and withdrawal
- Feeling tired and exhausted all day
- Loss of positive feelings.
- Avoiding discussion of work with colleague
- Frequent physical illness
- Substance use
- High absenteeism





# If not managed, stress can lead to ...

- Depression,
- Anxiety
- Substance use disorder
- Precipitates episodes of mania or depression in bipolar disorder
- Worsening on OCD symptoms
- Precipitates psychosis in schizophrenia patients.
- Poor work performance
- Disturbed relationship



# Cognitive Distortions:

- All or None thinking
- Over generalization
- Mental Filer
- Discounting the Positives
- Jumping to conclusion
- Labeling
- Personalization or blame



# Tips For Effective Psychological Wellbeing



# 1. Preparation for Life Transition

- Anticipate the stress that is likely to come in the near future and prepare to handle it.



## 2. Social Support

- Your friends and family can be very helpful in enhancing your emotional well-being.

SOLUTIONS

**Investments and  
Retirement Planning**

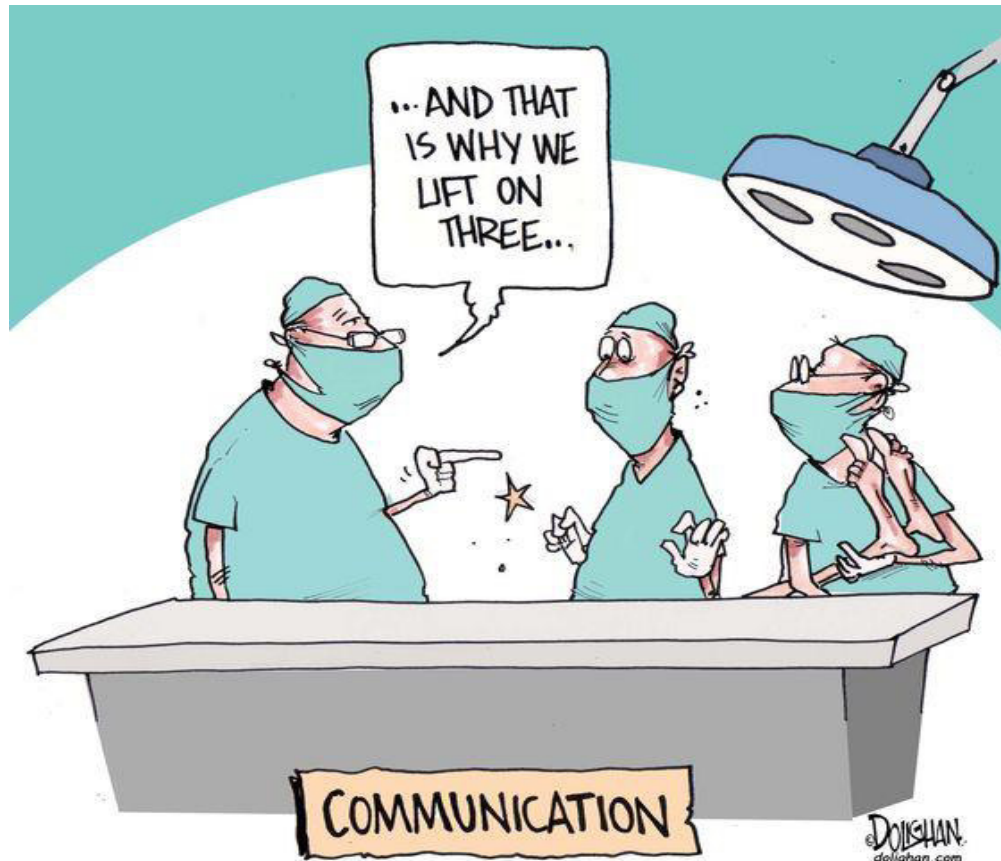


**“I have 1,872 Facebook friends, so I figure at least ONE will be willing to support me in my old age!”**



# 3. Effective Communication

- The ability to express and share feelings, thoughts, and emotions clearly, openly and honestly.



# 4. Acceptance and Confrontation

- It's important to accept that you are having stress, and then to fight it.




# 6. Gratitude Writing

## ➤ What are you thankful for?

 Gratitude During Covid-19 Pandemic

1. I am safe in my house 

2. I have clean water to drink 

3. I am lucky to have internet

4. I am thankful for getting this me-time 

5. I have food to eat when many dont.



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# Healing from Trauma



confront your feelings



exercise



volunteer/join support groups



avoid triggers



avoid drugs and alcohol to suppress emotions



Go to therapy



mindful breathing

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# 8. Lifestyle Changes

- Stay fit and healthy.
- One should eat a balanced diet, exercise on a regular basis, use relaxation techniques, get regular hours of sleep
- Have some leisure time and enjoy life!



# 9. Professional Help

- When you're unable to handle your stress and this results in repeated problems for you, then it is time to take the opinion of a mental health professional.



Won't admit he has a problem. Won't even admit he's the patient.



You don't  
have to have a  
mental illness  
to talk to a  
Psychologist.



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# Celebrate Your Success!!

- Celebration is a vital part of stress management.
- Celebrate the achievement of your goals to maintain a healthy balance in life between work and personal life.
- Reward yourself when you complete a task or finish a project.
- Celebrate everyone involved at the task at hand upon completion.



## 2020 Mental Health Checklist

- ★ Prioritising Self
- ★ Mindfulness
- ★ Being Grateful
- ★ Positive Self Talk
- ★ Taking Breaks

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# Thank You

