

Serene Mental Health and Pandemic

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Abstract

Mental Health refers to our psychological, emotional and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It determines how we handle our mental stigmas, anxiety and stress in life. Having a positive Mental Health is imperative for every stage in life from childhood to adulthood. During pandemic our mental health affects a lot. A working knowledge of different mental health implications can help us understand and address the mental health risks of the pandemic.

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Introduction

Mental Health refers to our psychological, emotional and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It determines how we handle our mental stigmas, anxiety and stress in life. Having a positive Mental Health is imperative for every stage in life from childhood to adulthood. During pandemic our mental health affects a lot. A working knowledge of different mental health implications can help us understand and address the mental health risks of the pandemic. A poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation, China found that the key worries related to the coronavirus pandemic leads to **anxiety** are:

- You or someone in your family will get sick
- Your investments, such as retirement or savings, will be negatively impacted
- You will lose income due to a workplace closure or reduced hours
- You will not be able to afford testing or treatment if you need it
- You will put yourself at risk of exposure to the virus because you can't afford to stay home and miss work

Some more potential symptoms are:

Obsessions - In a Pandemic situation it is easy to become obsessive about disease prevention, especially for those with OCD — “unwanted, intrusive worry that one is dirty and in need of washing, cleaning or sterilizing.”

Loneliness- Social distancing is considered critical to slowing the spread of the pandemic. However, it can understandably lead to loneliness. Numerous studies have shown the adverse mental health and physical impacts of loneliness, including the potential to trigger a depressive disorders.

Traumatic Stress- Sometimes quarantine Individuals may also experience traumatic stress. A survey of people subject to quarantine during the SARS outbreak in 2003 found that nearly 29% experienced traumatic stress. Stress during a pandemic can include

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, the things that make you different from

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other people, and the community you live in. Older people, children, mentally ill people are more susceptible to react during pandemic

As Teacher Educators we come across number of stigmas, anxieties and stress during Pandemic /infectious disease spread more than anyone else because of multiple responsibilities on various facades of vivid panorama.

At Professional level

Salary deduction

Job insecurity

Economical drainage

Course completion

Increase work pressure
home

At Personal level

How to survive

whether my family members survive

Increase home work

Economical weak

Fear of ambiguity how long we stay at

How to maintain serene Mental Health

With the awareness of these mental health risks, we should work towards coping with this challenging situation and reduce the potential impact on our mental health. Some of the coping strategies to help get oneself through the pandemic –

News can be helpful by encouraging precautions and prevention about pandemic, but compulsively and obsessively reading and watching about the outbreak can be detrimental to mental health .So Be mindful to focus on reliable sources of news information, accept uncertainty and trust the medical community around the globe and your own country as pandemic rate varies from country to country. These are a few suggestions that may help you follow the news while protecting your mental health.

Stay connected with friends and family by Social media especially those who may be isolated. Be ready to listen to their concerns and share yours. Learn reflective listening skills to help your friends and loved ones. Social connectedness is critically important to warding off loneliness and resulting depression. There are many online peer supporting groups and NGO's to help people with mental illness and their caregivers.

Finish course work of children through **online mode** is the innovation of modern world.

Giving money making, creative, lectures etc. ideas on social media can **supportoneself economically**

Distraction

“What psychologists know is that when we are under chronically difficult conditions, it’s very helpful to divide the problem into two categories: things I can do something about, and then things I can do nothing about,” says Dr. Damour. There is a lot that falls under that second category right now, and that’s okay, but one thing that helps us to deal with that is creating distractions for ourselves. Dr. Damour suggests doing homework, watching a favourite movie or getting in bed with a novel as ways to seek relief and find balance in the day-to-day.

Above all focus on yourself

Have you been wanting to learn how to do something new, start a new book or spend time practicing a musical instrument? Now is the time to do that. Focusing on yourself and finding ways to use your new-found time is a productive way to look after your mental health

Feel your feeling

Missing out on events with friends, hobbies, or sports matches is incredibly disappointing. The best way to deal with this disappointment? Let yourself feel it. When it comes to having a painful feeling, the only way out is through. Go ahead and be sad, and if you can let yourself be sad, but at a certain limit you’ll start to feel better faster.

Processing your feelings looks different for everyone. Some are going to make art, some are going to want to talk to their friends and use their shared sadness as a way to feel connected in a time when they can’t be together in person, and some are going to want to find ways to get food to food banks, What’s important is that one should do what feels right to you.

Get in touch with health workers if depression and anxiety persist for longer times

Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news and social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.

Take care of your body-Take deep breaths, stretch, meditation and other stress buster yoga exercises regularly, take healthy and balanced diet, Take plenty water, Take good and plenty sleep, Avoid alcohol, drugs **Make time to unwind.** Try to do some other activities you enjoy to break the routine

Create new routine and new work environment

Take care of your own emotional health. Caring for a loved one can take an emotional toll, especially during an outbreak like pandemic. There are ways to support yourself.

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Stay home if you are sick. Do not visit family or friends who are at greater risk for severe illness from pandemic. Use virtual communication to keep in touch to support your loved one and keep them safe.

Be flexible, listener, behaviourally calm

Take Care of your behavioural health- Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation during an Infectious Disease Outbreak. Social distancing is a way to keep people from interacting closely or frequently enough to spread an infectious disease. Schools and other gathering places such as movie theatres may close, and sports events and religious services may be cancelled. Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. It lasts long enough to ensure the person has not contracted an infectious disease. Isolation prevents the spread of an infectious disease by separating people who are sick from those who are not. It lasts as long as the disease is contagious. Introduction In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, local officials may require the public to take measures to limit and control the spread of the disease.

As a teacher educator one should know that not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way. Some common changes to watch for include

- Excessive crying or irritation
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- There are few suggestions to support the children
- Discuss about the Pandemic outbreak with the children and answer their queries.
- **Reassure the child or teen** that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.
- **Limit your family's exposure to news coverage** of the event, including social media to avoid misinterpretation of the facts
- **Try to keep up with regular routines.** If schools are closed, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities.

- Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members
- **Teach yourself and children to Begin the Day with Gratitude** - Before your feet hit the floor in the morning, think of something that you're grateful for. Making this a focus for yourself, and teaching your children to do the same, can have a significant impact on your emotional health. The heaviness of the current situation can quickly weigh us down, and if we begin our day with doom and gloom, then we have set the negative feeling pendulum into full swing.

Conclusion -

“Mental health is not a destination, but a process. It’s about how you drive, not where you’ve going”- Noam Shpaner

What does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but it empties today of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil, it makes you unfit to cope with it if comes. Your mental health is more important than the test, the interview, the meeting, the family dinner and the grocery run during pandemic. Take care of yourself. As rightly said by David Satcher- “There is no health without Sound Mental Health”

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