

Counselling and Psychological Services

The Official Newsletter of CAPS at Duke Kunshan University



Since China announces the nationwide loosening of Covid restrictions, there has been a surge in the number of Covid cases. As more people we know and ourselves test positive, we might face some new challenges psychologically. Thus, we will address some of the challenges and discuss tips for emotional regulation during the post-covid era in this month's newsletter.

Uncertainty, anxiety and fear surrounding Covid-19

We still have many uncertainties surrounding Covid-19 such as the severity of the symptoms, side effects, the duration of the epidemic, the spread of new variants, etc. The vulnerability of elderly family members, shortage of medication supply and overburdened healthcare system are some common sources of anxiety.

Tips

Name and acknowledge all kinds of emotions that you may be experiencing and focus on the things you can control at this moment, such as:

- Reduce personal risks by keeping the basic health and hygiene practices
- Be proactive in Covid emergency response by creating a concrete plan
- List all the possible practical solutions and try to maintain a normal daily routine

Guilty and/or shame of holding responsibility for infecting others

If you have tested a positive result, you might be questioning yourself and ruminating about what you could have done differently to prevent spreading the virus to someone else. This tendency to judge past decisions based on present knowledge might be the result of “hindsight bias”.

The distress caused by prolonged post-covid symptoms

Most people with COVID-19 get better within a few days to a few weeks after infection. However, some may experience a prolonged recovery process and/or post-Covid conditions, which might cause psychological distress.



Tips

- Understand that getting Covid and spreading Covid is not a moral failure.
- Recognise the effort we make to mitigate the risks while accepting that the nature of Covid means we may yet be exposed to it despite our best efforts.
- Learn to question your automatic thoughts with your knowledge.

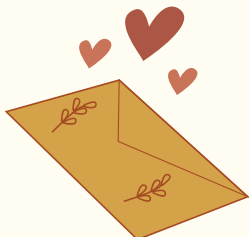
- Be mindful of your pain thoughts. Notice when you describe or think about your symptoms helplessly, try to change the words to something more manageable. For example:
 - Change:
“I’m so weak and in so much pain, I can’t do anything today. I’ll never be able to do things as before.”
 - To:
“I know that I feel a bit tired today, but I can try some deep breathing and relaxation that worked for me last time. I will pace myself to save my energy.”

Grief and traumatic experiences related to Covid-related deaths

The pandemic causes more deaths in extraordinary circumstances. Moreover, the safety measures and restrictions eliminate social gatherings. The traditional funeral ceremonies which create a mean for emotional expression in the process of grieving and recovery has been limited. These factors create more challenges in grieving process.

Tips

- Say goodbye in a formal way with a word, a song, or a prayer.
- Take part in an activity that has significant meaning to you and your loved one
- Connect with other people and the community:
- Delivering the news of death to other relatives
- Coordinate a date and time for family and friends to honour your loved one.
- When you feel overwhelmed by the intense emotions related to the loss of your loved one, please contact a grief counsellor or other local mental health services.



Excessive exposure to the news resulting compassion fatigue

Among all the information circulating about Covid-19, some may seem to be controversial or conflicting. Moreover, viewing too many traumatised events might cause people with high levels of empathy to feel despair.



Content | Suwen Luan

Design | Yifei Huang

Editor | Yitong Cai & Siqi Chen

Resources:

On-Campus Resources

CARE Team: Located in Applications Portal

DKU CAPS: caps@dkukunshan.edu.cn

DKU Emergency Hotline: 0512-3665-7110

Off-Campus Resources

Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education (JED) College Student Hotline: 025-5825-5200 (24/7)

Lifeline Connect Hotline

Free Bilingual Services: 400-821-1215 (10am-10pm)