

SWARA

THE UNHEARD VOICE OF MENTAL HEALTH

VOLUME-II EDITION-V

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MENTAL HEALTH IN THE TIME OF NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC PHASE 2020-21

Editor's Desk...

SWARA (the unheard voice of mental health) is to make people aware about mental health and associated issues, which often cause people to suffer silently but having discussions and raising awareness about mental health are the first steps to combating the stigma. This time, the non-profit group believes that mental health is, in fact, a critical part of overall wellness which is impacting by the new outbreak of corona virus or COVID-19, which is inciting panic for a number of reasons when WHO labeled the virus as pandemic. This non-profit are an authority in mental health support, recovery, and advocacy, even say that their advocacy work helps to strengthen mental health recovery, an activism is a way that caregivers, loved ones (People's), and all those touched by mental health can give back to and aid others.

People's Forum is a leading organization, in Eastern India, that raises awareness and provides support and resources for mental health. The organisation offer a number of ways to turn one's suffering into action. To address and treat mental health conditions before they cause individual suffering. They advocate for prevention services, early identification, and intervention of symptoms and plans of action.

From the Member Secretary desk....

COVID-19 pandemic is turning out to be a major stress or for most of humanity, As the coronavirus disease continues to take lives across the world, there is another public health crisis raising on each passing day, the globe including our Nation is facing Mental Health crisis and the effects may translate into a range of emotional reactions such as distress or psychiatric condition with suicide-related deaths as its lead indicator. The major impact on mental health by affecting our day to day functioning with increasing unemployment, separating families and various other changes which is not being accepted by the people. The vulnerable sections of the society who are more likely to be under stress from COVID-19 are, migrants, older people and people with chronic diseases, children and teens, frontline workers, beggars & destitute and people who are having mental health issues in other ways we can say this have an impact to entire human world.

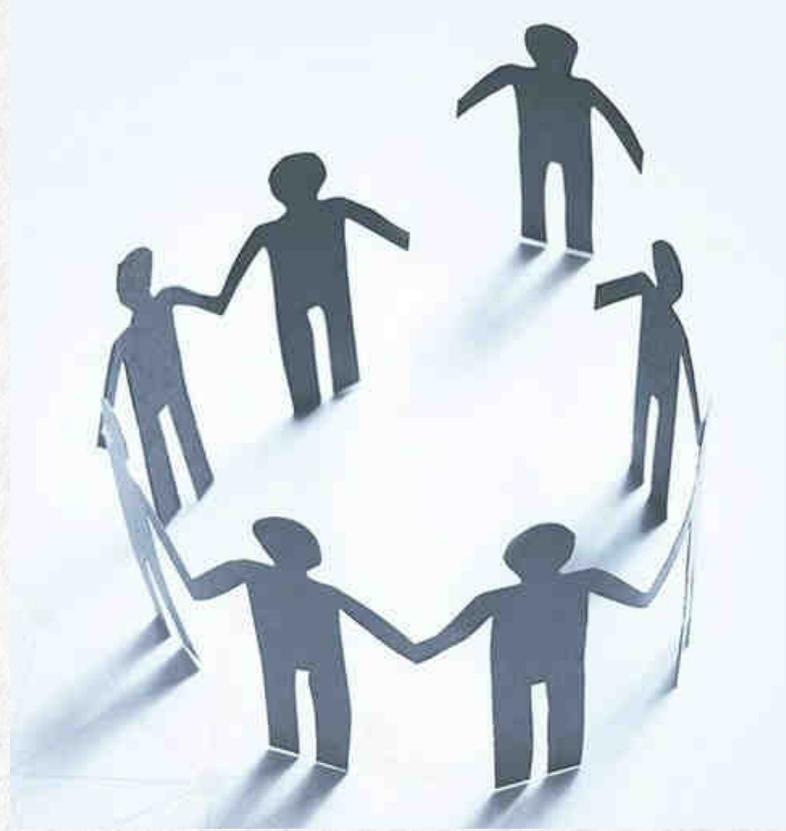
Majority of people are afraid of their own death or their dear and loved ones. Many people feel distressed because of enforced isolation in a quarantined environment. It looks like there will be a substantial increase of the psychological problems which will lead to a long -term Mental Health crisis. In order to minimize the stress levels

and to reduce the risk of depression, mental health professionals, institutions dealing with Mental health should work closely. A close and organized collaboration among psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, psychiatric social workers, and volunteer organisation, as well as with local authorities and health workers in the community is essential in combating the current and after effects of this pandemic. This issue of SWARA is covering some information relating to covid-19 and it's a small initiative from my team to address this bigchallenges. A way forward steps -apple for your feedback.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

It's a new virus, the goal of the virus is to make more viruses, the virus is a very small simple biologic entity that can enter human cells and instruct that cell to make more viruses which can ultimately kill the person it infects or at the very minimum transmit to another person, and it's brutal in its simplicity. It wants to reproduce and it want to find individual, there is many, many things that we can do, with the tools that we have right now, to outsmart this virus, and I think that's the unique thing about this particular pandemic, we are all in a support of rapidly addressing therapeutics, and precaution measures and that will continue to stop transmission, that can break chains of transmission, I think everybody on the planet, needs to understand no matter wherever you live, no matter what occupation you have, no matter what age you are, you can be a part of breaking the chains of transmission by taking the precautions. Staying at home by less interacting and following the routine which can boost the immunity.

In this regard, the administration of People's Forum has done amazing work with the collaboration of government in providing essential goods and services during pandemic times to the migrants and destitute men and women. With the declaration of responsibilities to monitor the implementation of rules and follow important guidelines, both for public and the departmental staff were conducted and COVID safety guidelines of social distancing, wearing masks, using hand wash and sanitizers etc. were diligently followed. During lockdown, catering and order of logistics or vegetables and other supplies were deliver them by the centres (mission Ashra and Aashalok) to maintain their livelihood, and to prevent people from going or staying out. People who were being kept in home isolation were counseled frequently by the staff, to preventing rumours about Covid-19 and avoiding spread of panic, numbers of activities were provided were set up in quarantine centre and officials were appointed to monitor and ensure facilities for residents.



As countries introducing some public participation and restrictions as part of efforts to reduce the number of people infected with COVID-19, more and more of us are making huge changes to our daily routines means change in lifestyle which negatively impact in our physical and mental health.



AVOID



KEEP CLEAN



DISINFECTANT



SYMPTOMS AWARE

SECTION II : UPDATES ON ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

School Mental Health Project- Initiated by Peoples Forum

MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT



-Creating and Nurturing Safe Space for Children

This is an era which has initiated a conversation around Mental Health and becoming aware of the importance of it in individuals life. Mental Health affects every single aspect of people's life, be it a Professional Work, Career, Personal Relationships or daily chores. Due to the unawareness of physical manifestation of mental health; people don't prioritize mental health as they do with the Physical Health.

According to the report of India state level disease burden initiative in 2017, 197.3 million people were diagnosed with mental disorders known in India and more than 3750 per lakh people in Odisha suffered from depressive disorders while between 3200-3399 per 1 lakh people had anxiety disorders. Hence, through this project we start the conversation of Mental Health in School with a 2 hour module consisting of activities and Audio-Visuals Content. It is important to make children aware of the concept of Mental Health and its relevance and importance in their life.

We have started this project in November 2019 and till now we have conducted sessions with 200 students across the state of Odisha. Due to the lack of resources and opportunities for the children of government school; we have primarily targeted them to conduct the sessions. For this, we have collaborated with the different government and non-government Institutions. In Bhubaneswar, we collaborated with an NGO named Society for Children in which we have taken the session with economically and socially marginalized school dropout students. In Paradeep we have collaborated with the CSR project of Paradeep Phosphate Limited, in which we have conducted the 3 sessions with 2 government schools and 1 session with community children. In the Kaniha Block of Anugul District we have collaborated with the CSR Project of NTPC, Kaniha to conduct sessions in 3 government schools of Kaniha block. Apart from this we have also conducted sessions with 2 government schools in Khordha district individually.

In session, through activities and audio-visual content students learn about the Important of Self, Life skills to deal with the various factors leading to bad mental health, the myth and facts about community mental health and also about resources to seek help in case of Mental Health Issues.

Children not only get knowledge from this session but also open about their problems in the session and sometimes speak their heart out. Bullying was the common issue in all the school in which we conducted the session and hence through this session we address the prominent issues of bullying in all the schools. Students also shared their experience of being bullied and the impact of it on their mental health.

In next academic year we have planned to target 4000 students in a government school of Khordha district. Our experience with working students we have learnt that it is also important to work with teachers as they have the most influence on the students in teenage and hence in next academic year we are working on a module to work with teachers in order to create a mental health friendly environment around children.

Training Program on 'Psycho-Social Care & Laws on Mental Health', 20th & 21st September 2019.



The purpose of the training program, was to make the staff more efficient and productive in their work without any hindrance or obstacles, while providing psycho-social care to the residents of Mission Ashra, Mission Aashalok, Ujjawala and AamaGhara.

The beneficiaries participated in a positive attitude with good ethic and willingness to get involved in given opportunity.

The training program for the staff was organized at Skill Development Centre of People's Forum, on 20th and 21st of September, on the topics, 'Psycho Social Care and the Laws on Mental Health'.

The professionals from AIIMs Hospital (BBSR) - Dr. Shree Mishra (Dept. of Psychiatry) & Dr. Renju Susanne (Dept. of Nursing) and Ms. Ashwini Survase (Project Manager) of Tarasha – Field.

Action of TISS was our resource persons. They contributed their knowledge and guidance on Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, Counseling skills & techniques, Psychotherapy, Caregiving and Sensitization to the staff from different centres of People's Forum. Training on documents of Clinical Case History and Mental Status Examination with its google form is done by Pratima Borah and Sunaina Tourangbam, Program Associates of People's Forum.

The participants for the training program include - Multi- purpose Care Workers, Nursing staff, Counsellors, Pharmacists and the management team.

Mandala Art Therapy

Psychoanalyst Carl Jung has called it “a representation of the unconscious self.” The mandala is widely recognized as a meaningful reflection of its creator. Mandala art therapy can be a great source of reflection on one’s soul and the beauty all around us. They represent life and a larger ecosystem and universe that exceed our consciousness. The circle with a centre pattern is the basic structure of creation that is reflected from the micro to macro in the world as we know it.



Using Mandalas within Art Therapy

Therapists make use of mandalas in Art Therapy by inviting the client to create a mandala that represents his or her feelings at that particular point in time. The practice is very self-soothing and centering. Others find mandala techniques to be powerful tools for containing negative emotions, such as fear, anxiety or anger.

Creating a mandala can provide a pathway to meditation and centering, giving the artist a focal point to direct his or her energy and thought. The act of drawing, painting or otherwise creating a mandala can also teach essential self-soothing skills. In other settings, mandalas can be used in conjunction with other exercises to facilitate emotional expression, and can give the artist the visual representation of a confined arena in which to place his or her anxieties, frustrations, fear or anger.

The potential applications of mandalas within the therapeutic setting are as varied as the symbol itself, and mandala art has become so widely appreciated that an array of mandala coloring books can be found in bookstores and other settings.

Counselors of Mission Ashra applied Mandala Art therapy through a variety of artistic processes using geometric patterns in an effort to find or restore a sense of healthy mental balance. Art therapy was put into practice long before the term itself was coined, and mental health practitioners have long understood the power of artistic expression in addressing a wide range of psychological issues. Today, art therapy is used to help treat depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, grief, anger management more. Mandalas in art therapy have gained a great deal of recent attention.

for example Post traumatic stress disorder, depression, Anger management, Anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder (20 PwMI) in order to intervene their self soothing skills, motor capability, coordination, self analysis of creativity and growth of doing and thinking. The residents put their complete desire and interest while working with the counselors.

During COVID pandemic phase we planned for a new therapeutic approach on Mandala Art Therapy but due to this outbreak we couldn't able to search for any professional trainer , we the counselors of Mission Ashra decided to self trained through watching videos and taking knowledge from textbooks and app sites for organizing therapy and applying therapy.

Collaboration with Shraddha Foundation

Reunion is always our major focus of rehabilitation centres. Because we totally understand the value and significance of a family which can provide psychosocial care to their members. In our centre we have residents from all over the India but working area of People's Forum is geographically limited to Odisha itself. Hence, for the reunion of residents outside Odishawe collaborated with Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation.

These residents were from the different parts of TamilNadu, Bihar, Kolkata, Assam. All of them have been reunited with their family within the 2 month of sending these residents to Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation. Three of the residents were meeting their family almost after a decade.

This is a Karjat Based organization founded by Raman Magsaysay award winner Mr. Bharat Vatwani, also working for the people with mental illness. Their major focus is also on pan India reunion of the residents. In the first batch of the reunion we have sent the 5 residents from Mission Ashra and 2 from Mission Aashalok.

Community Mental Health Programme



World Mental Health day programme was fervently celebrated at the village area of Bhatakhuri, Bhubaneswar with the overall purpose of raising awareness on Mental Illness by mobilizing village people in the collaboration with Gaon Panchayat committee of Bhatakhuri, which was organized by Mission Aashalok on 10th October. Mission Aashalok is the "Land of Hope" for the destitute men with mental illness who were denied by the society are participating in the programme to ensure that People with Mental Illness are too able to maximize their physical and mental abilities in the community. To access regular services and opportunities to become active contributors in society at large. To activate communities to promote and protect the human rights of through changes within the community, for example by removing barriers to participation, social care, social inclusion. It was a celebration in an empathetic way where distribution of the templates was also a part of it.

Inauguration of Ashya Mission - home for beggars

When the entire world is suffering from COVID 19 Pandemic, humans are started living in a cage life. And at that time our organization People's forum taken an initiative to rehabilitate the beggars and the needy people who were trapped in different areas of Khordha, because of the immediate declaration of containment zone. Initially our organization got to know that there are many needy people and beggars had lost their income source there was no one who could give them food and shelter donate money for their daily requirements. Due to this pandemic situation in every public places and temple were declared lockdown by the local administrative they lost their livelihood because of this pandemic situation our beloved founder of Peoples forum Mr. Gobinda Chandra Pattanaik had taken an initiative for those needy people to rehabilitate them with the collaboration of DSSO department of Khordha district, state government of Odisha. After getting the permission our organization converted Bhramarabara High School Tamando, near Bhubaneswar into a temporary rehabilitation centre. At that moment of time when everyone was afraid to even step out of their houses the Peoples Forum Rescue Team (PFRT) had rescued approximately 150 beggars and needy people with proper sanitation.

After two months our organization inaugurated a permanent rehabilitation centre for them at ASHYA MISSION, Gramadihi, Gangapada, Khordha, where we sifted them from Tamando high school. At Ashya Mission we are providing them proper medication as well as counseling for their emotional stability and also we are trying to fulfill their daily requirements, our vision is to train beggars so that they don't have to beg after released from our centre. So we are providing different types of life skill training so that they can make their own small income source. After proper training we release them to live an independent life by doing some business which they were trained and avoid begging. A daily routine is made for the better health care of both mentally and physically and for providing that there is a team of counselors and pharmacist and nursing staff who are there 24*7 for them. We also conduct different types of recreational activities like singing, dancing, exercise and yoga to reduce their stress and anxiety. They even take part in the gardening as well as sanitization of the premises and some do help with the cooking too.

From The desk of AtulyaKarigari India.

“Writing down your thoughts allows reflection, and can show how well you’re using your time, a great motivator for future aspirations.”

In India, we can see a perfect intersection between the rich and poor, with the rich becoming richer, and the poor being looted by the middlemen.

This is perfectly true in the case of rural artisans, who are the real people struggling to sustain the art culture, and heritage of India but being detained of the money and fame they deserve.

AtulyaKarigari with the support of Annapurna aims to empower these weaker sections of the society by taking their art forms to the urban population and to save the devastating art and the artisans at the same time. But.....Finest steel has to go through the hottest fire ...all of sudden COVID 19 hit the world, economies went dwindling and stock market crashing.... Days spent caged in house, gloomy forecasts, rapid spread of Corona and added burden of solely managing their daily bread with the fear of losing their jobs (few are already out of work) has put many on the brink of depression. Handloom and Handicraft sector (non essential items in the current pandemic) has been affected badly...though the true impact shall be clear only over the coming months. Atulya started facing challenges even before its dream project got implemented.

Dynamic times have lead to emergence of many alternatives and thus AtulyaKarigari decided to partially convert this nonessential sector into a life saving activity of mask making. Lack of transportation and sales have put the Weavers in a situation that they are running short of raw materials and few were not having any at all and on the other hand it badly affected the stitching society as they were not getting any orders as well.

“Weaving thoughts of Annapurna in association with Atulya”

Weavers of Nuapatna were provided with material support like colours and thread... gradually they started with the tie and dye technique to create the Bandha Fabric the original style of Sambalpuri. Slowly and steadily fabrics were in process...that created a ray of hope....thinking about giving orders for embroidery is something that is not practical now...but the ray of hope is about to become a half halo now and one of the group members who was into embroidery and also jobless was assigned the task of engraving the logo instead of printing the same. Yes, we added one more expertise. Finally the stitching group was provided basic training and they started cutting the embroidered clothes to form a three layered face protector. Half halo is complete now with not only giving ray of hope to the groups but they are thrilled and enlightened that they can support their families in this way till things return to normal.

Pupul Jaikar



Inauguration of ASSA (Anti Suicide Squads in Action)

Suicide is an act of taking one's own life. Attempted suicide or non-fatal suicidal behavior is self injury with at least some desire to end one's life that does not result in death. Suicide is a permanent solution to temporary problem, where it has become a serious public health problem for every individual with grief and acute distress and a tragedy that affects families, communities, entire countries and has long lasting effects on the people left behind.. Every year more than 100000 people commit suicide in our country. India accounts for 1.78 percent of all, according to the national crime bureau, India reported 381 suicide cases on a daily basis.

People's Forum is working in the field of mental health rehabilitation centre for two decades and looking at the current pandemic situation, our organization thought it would be very imperative to extend our services to people in need. Therefore, on 10th October 2020 People's Forum inaugurated ASSA (Anti Suicide Squad in Action), a helpline project to provide telephonic counseling to the people in acute distress. The organization is providing different types of services i.e. Psychosocial care, police assistance, medical, legal, shelter, fooding with the working functionaries is 24x7 Helpline with working shift of 3(morning, day and night)

Success Story:

A woman named Mala (Name Changed), was rescued and brought to capital hospital for immediate medical care. She had tried to commit suicide by burning herself. After her treatment she was admitted at Burn ward, she was accompanied by one of her friend. According to the statement of the survivor, she was feeling distressed and depressed as a man she had trusted with her savings was trying to dodge her calls. She tried to get her money from the person but unfortunately couldn't able to success and the situation made her feel distressed where she tried to end up her life by setting herself on fire. Her neighbors immediately rescued and admit her to Capital Hospital and contacted us for help, our staffs provide all the rehabilitative measures and contacted different long stay shelter homes like Swadhaar Greh ad Missionary of Charity to let her for longer period.



DEPRESSION!!

Call Us at

1800 120 22 3333

(24X7 Anti-Suicidal Lifeline)

SECTION III FROM THE PSYCHIATRIST POINT OF VIEW

What a Psychiatrist listens to during COVID 19 ?

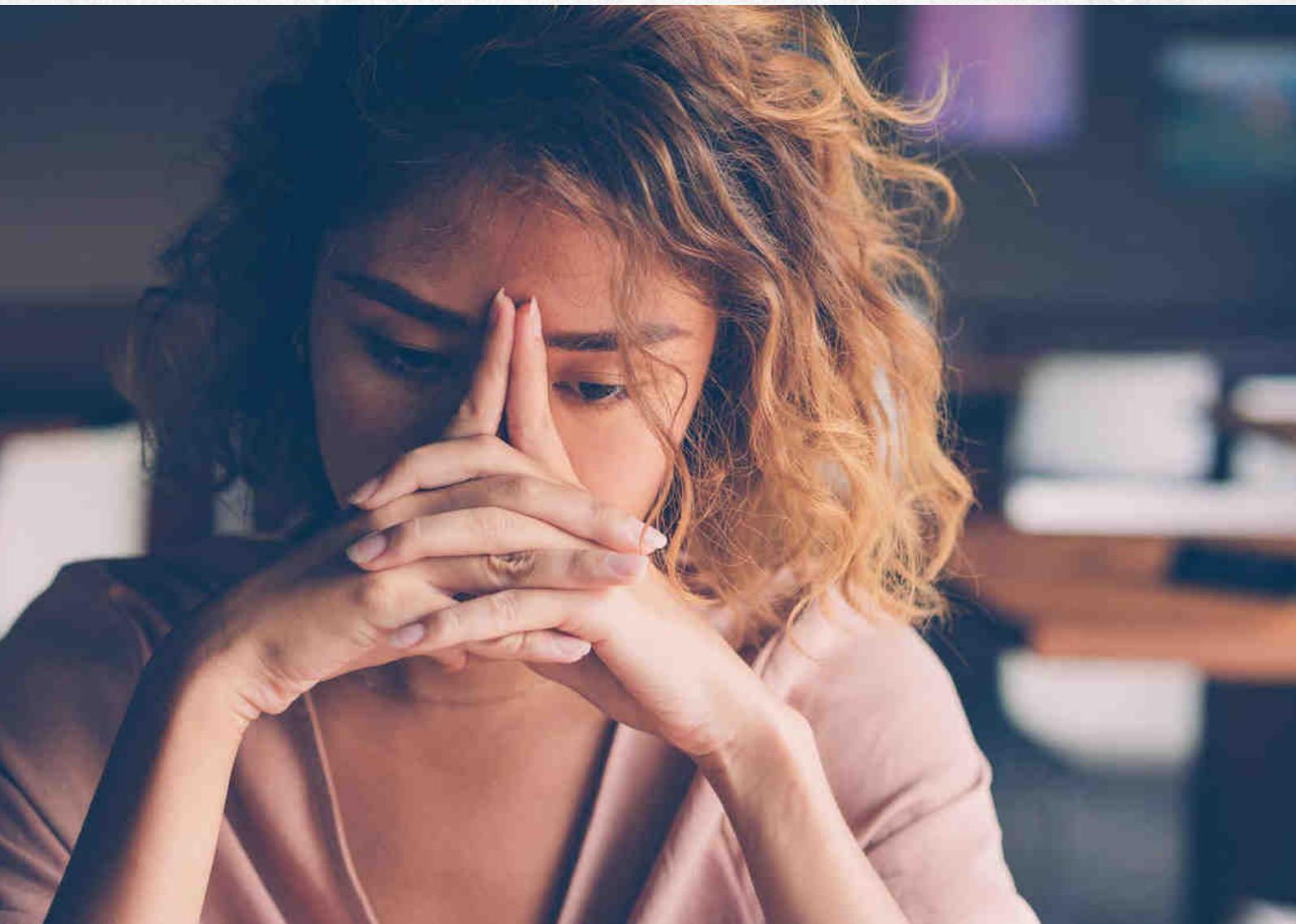
-Dr. Debadutta Mohapatra

AIIMS Hospital , Department of Psychiatry, BBSR

Corona virus outbreak has been affecting almost all the countries of the world. Although the number of COVID positive cases are increasing gradually worldwide, but if we consider the psychological impact almost 7.7 billion people will be affected by the pandemic. Like other Natural calamities it will also have its long-term psychological effects, which needs to be addressed before hand. This pandemic has been compared with second World War and it has been forecasted that it will be rather more dangerous than World War 2. COVID 19 will definitely leave its footprints on various aspects like economic and more so psychological aspects of people those who are affected and also those who survived.

The patients who are already the victim of mental illness are the worst sufferers of this pandemic. They are not able to follow up regularly to their respective consultants due to various reasons like lockdown, shut down and COVID itself. They are not able to get their medication and which worsens the illness. Some people who are not having any type of mental illness are having symptoms of anxiety, depression, excessive worriness and apprehension, and also repeated checking of their own temperature. Some people are so worried that they are preoccupied with COVID like symptoms.

Few small advices to the patients and would be patients that we have to accept the current situation and learn to live with COVID. Once we accept the situation the apprehension will definitely reduce. Next important is to avoid watching media continuously.



It is good to be updated but excessive watching lead to unnecessary worry. Daily 10 minutes watching is good enough to be updated. Please take your meal, adequate sleep and most importantly take medication regularly. This is the time to get in touch with your doctor over phone. Many hospitals have started teleconsultation. So, grab the opportunity and talk with your doctor.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of People with Emotional Distress due to Covid-19

-Dr. Abhilekh Das, M.D.
Consultant Psychiatrist
Barua Surgical and Neuro Centre, Jorhat
INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a state of mental well-being in which people cope well with the many stresses of life, can realize their own potential, can function productively and fruitfully, and are able to contribute to their communities. It includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

The emergence of the coronavirus outbreak (novel COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) infection from the Chinese city of Wuhan, has led the entire world into a gloomy situation of severe socio-economic crisis and psychological distress affecting masses at a global level. In addition to social activities been restricted in most countries, almost all non-essential individual movements were prohibited due to quarantine. Local hospitals started receiving thousands of critically ill COVID-19 patients and were forced to implement their emergency protocols. In this context, the general population as well as most of the front-line healthcare workers became vulnerable to the psychological impact of COVID-19 infection due to both the disease burden and its consequences worldwide.

This emotional impact of the pandemic on the psyche of the society has led to the emergence of psychiatric symptoms/disorders including stress, anxiety, depression, frustration, aggressive behaviour, suicidal tendencies, hoarding behaviour, alcohol addiction, internet addiction and so on. Common psychological reactions related to the mass quarantine which was imposed in order to attenuate the COVID-19 spread are generalized fear of contracting the virus and transmission of infection to our loved ones, anxiety and apprehension about the uncertain future, and panic overbuying to hoard unnecessarily which are typically associated with disease outbreaks, and increase with the escalation of new cases and the overt dramatization of disease information and spread of false news in the media. The psychological reactions to COVID-19 pandemic may vary from a panic attack to collective mass hysteria to pervasive feelings of hopelessness and desperation which are associated with negative outcomes including suicidal behaviour. Importantly, such degradation in mental health may lead to poor outcomes in people with physical co-morbidities like diabetes, coronary heart disease or asthma.

We are always there to help you.

You are never alone.

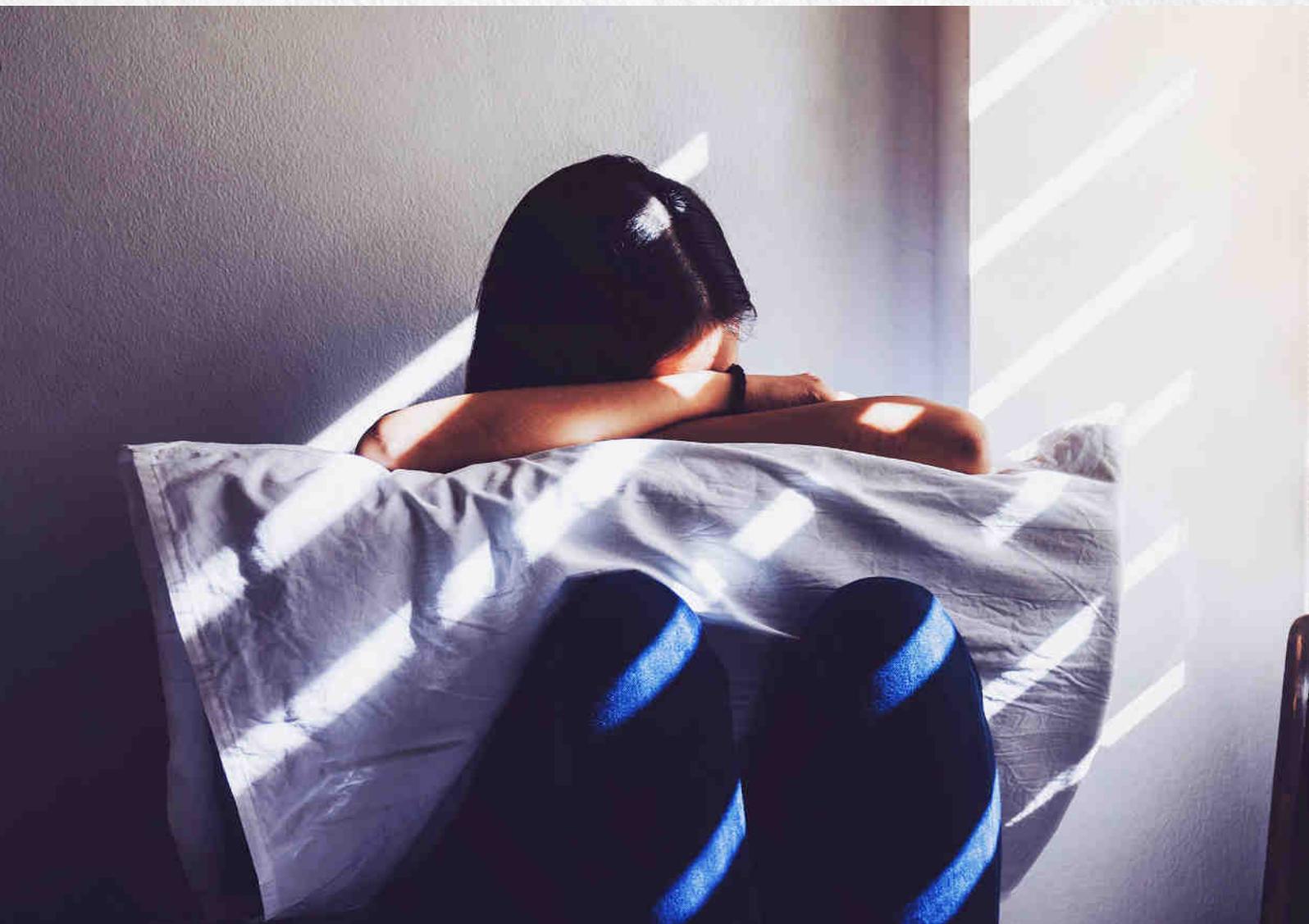
Leave the stigma behind and talk with us, we are to listen.



The Psychological Effects of Social Distancing and Quarantine

The coronavirus outbreak has led authorities around the world to take stringent measures proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO), such as social distancing and institutional/home quarantine. To fight this pandemic, most of the countries banned all the non-required activities and asked individuals to stay home. Globally, offices and colleges continue to operate remotely, restaurants and schools are closed, and nursing homes are barring visitors. However, measures like social distancing and quarantine may cause individuals to experience negative emotions that directly harm mental health. This psychological effect could have prolonged effects if such measures are in place for long. WHO has clearly stated that it is the duration and not the intensity of such restrictive measures that will affect people the most. Longer the period of quarantine, more will be the chances that the patient's mental health is adversely affected.

Some individuals are prone to experience long as well as short mental health issues such as insomnia, stress, loneliness, substance abuse, and emotional exhaustion. Some factors have increased the risk of psychological fallout, like the quarantine lasting over a month, the presence of a pre-existing mental disorder and lack of access to the required supplies or telecommunication. Psychological reactions/disorders during the period of quarantine may include anxiety and fear of contracting the virus and transmitting it to their family members, sleeping difficulties, long periods of loneliness may lead to feelings of boredom and depressive symptoms, loss of personal freedom may lead to aggressive behaviour out of frustration and one may also face stigmatisation from the common public for coming in touch with a patient or for being a patient himself/herself.



Impact of the Pandemic on the Mental Health of the General population

The larger the outbreak, the greater is the emotional and psychological impact on the psyche of the mass. The Covid-19 Pandemic has led experts to believe that a second pandemic – A Pandemic of Mental disorders could be already on its way, such has been the impact of this pandemic on the mental health of people. This pandemic has had an adverse psychological effect on people across all ages and races. Children, including adolescents, are at particular risk of abuse during the pandemic. Children with disabilities, children in crowded settings and those who live and work on the streets are particularly vulnerable. With schools and colleges closed all across the globe, students are battling long periods of loneliness in their homes away from their friends and class mates. The transition to online education and classes has been a pretty abrupt one, and this has only added to the stress amongst students and teachers. This may lead to reduced motivation in studies, abandonment of routine and a larger percentage of drop outs in the near future. In adults, there is a pervasive feeling of apprehension and uncertainty about the future. Financial constraints, economic hardships and social isolation may lead to feelings of anger, symptoms of depression and resorting to unhealthy coping strategies like alcohol drinking to deal with the current stress and feelings of frustration and helplessness. Both frustration and pervasive loneliness seem to derive by the inhibition from daily activities, interruption of social necessities, inability to take part in social networking activities enhancing the risk of hopelessness and suicidal behaviour in this specific context. Overall, it is well known that long periods of social isolation or quarantine for specific illnesses may have detrimental effects on mental well-being. The elderly population is also at great risk of adverse mental health outcomes. With their social network being already reduced, elderly people with poor family support and health issues will be at the greatest risk of neglect, loneliness, poor access to essential services and financial constraints. That many older adults and people with pre-existing conditions (e.g., heart disease, hypertension) are currently extremely worried about being infected with the virus and not having access to appropriate care. Some of them, including those with cognitive impairments, may have difficulty accessing advice on infection prevention and are at higher risk of isolation. Loneliness is a major risk factor for mortality in older adults

Managing Our Mental Health during this Pandemic (Includes Guidelines given by MoHFW, Govt. of India)

These can be trying 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 faced by all is Fear. It will make us anxious, panicky and can even possibly make us think, say or do things that we might not consider appropriate under normal circumstances. Restrictive measures like use of mask, social distancing, quarantine and lockdown are 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. Staying at home can be quite nice for some time, but it can also be boring and restricting. Here are some ways to keep our minds positive and cheerful.



- **Be busy. Do not lose sight of a schedule.** Help in doing some of the chores at home.
- **Distract yourself from negative emotions** by listening to music, reading, watching an entertaining programme on television. Minimise “Corona time”. If you had old hobbies like painting, gardening or stitching, go back to them. Rediscover your hobbies.
- **Eat healthy and drink plenty of fluids** to keep yourself hydrated. Avoid too much sugar and caffeine.
- **Be physically active.** Do simple indoor exercises that will keep us fit and feeling fit.
- **Sharing is caring.** Understand if someone around you needs advice, food or other essentials. Be willing to share. It will help to boost your self-esteem.
- **Elderly people may feel confused, lost and need help.** Offer them help by getting them what they need, their medicines, daily needs etc.
- **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.
- **Stay away from false conspiracy theories and rumours.** Focus on facts, and get correct information from authentic sources. 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.

How to deal with 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, do not hesitate to talk to a Psychiatrist or an Mental Health Expert at the earliest.



Unhealthy Coping Strategies to Avoid

- 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.
- Do not shun or judge people with a Covid infection. While you need to maintain 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.
- 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.



Dealing with Emotional issues after recovery

- 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.
- People who do not understand the illness well may actually keep you at a distance, which is also very stressful and isolating.
- 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.
- 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.
- Having solid mental health doesn't mean that we never go through bad times or experience emotional problems. People who are emotionally and mentally resilient have the tools for coping with difficult situations and maintaining a positive outlook. We need to remain focused, flexible, and productive, in bad times as well as good. It is our resilience that makes us less afraid of new experiences or an uncertain future. Even when we don't immediately know how a problem will get resolved, we need to be hopeful that a solution will eventually be found.

*Team Mission Ashalok,
Peoples Forum, Khordha*

SECTION IV FROM THE PROFESSIONALS POINT OF VIEW

Reempa Sarkar Gurung
Working Professional
Pune, Maharashtra

Pandemic has touched every life across the world. Initially, when all of this chaos started it was kind of excitement and nervousness for this new phase which for sure people alive now have never experienced.

If I don't lie initially it was a relief as was able to spend time with family. We all were together. We spent time, had food together, saw news/movies together. It was a good chance after a stressful/hectic life.

But then as said everything is weighed in Pros and Cons. The Pros were less and the Cons were more: Reality started hitting in very hard:

People have started losing jobs, salary cuts. A constant fear of getting laid. More questions have been raised in your work. Less interaction with the team so tracking becomes difficult. When you meet a person, it builds up a bond but when you don't for a long time it's kind of starts to weaken.

Working from home is not reducing workload in fact it has increased pressure. Now for household chores, the support of maid is gone as they are not allowed to enter so add that to the office work. Then comes the online education system, which needs to sit along with the kids so that later on make them learn those things. The day starts with the kid's school and the day ends with the kitchen. Do not have any time for ourselves.

Have forgotten the difference between weekdays and weekends. The workload is the same. No one to meet and talk, nowhere to go, no holidays... It is frustrating. Kids are becoming inactive and irate as how long can u ask them to watch those repetitive cartoons? It is not like we have time to spend with them, we still are as busy as we were before lockdown. probably more now.

Just waiting for the world to go back to normal...

Now I know what I miss. I need those times wherein I could move freely; I could go out to eat, my kids could play... I miss those times.



STRUGGLES IN LOCKDOWN

**BanashreeHuzuri,
General Secretary,
Helpline Health Care Society, Assam**

In an era when the countries are continuously developing new technologies, making new innovations each day but no such development has yet been able to prevent the new virus, COVID-19. New researches are going on but the only possible solution till now is isolation which has resulted in complete lockdown in most of the countries of the world.

“Helpline Health Care Society, Assam” is an organization which has been working in health, education and overall development of the society since 2004. Thus, we have been able to closely observe the plight of students, workers engaged in different informal sector and people suffering in different health issues during the lockdown. All these crisis have affected the mental health of these vulnerable section.

In our country with majority of the population living in villages do not have access to most of the luxuries that city dwellers can have. In the lockdown, where most of the schools are imparting education online, not all village student can afford a tablet, laptop or even a smart phone. “The Assam Academy” an “Ideal English Medium School” under our organization is located in a rural area in Kamrup District, Assam, where most of the students come from lower middle class background. In this school, we are personally engaged with every students and their guardians, making them realize their dreams, imparting quality education, to work for a bright future, become a responsible citizen and develop our society. But the lockdown has affected them a lot as they can't come to school neither all of them can afford a smart phone. So, for those students, we have contacted their neighbours who can help our students and let our students attend the online classes. Our local teachers residing in different villages have personally helped the students by visiting them maintaining precautions. Thus, we are trying every possible way to unite the society spiritually and mentally. On 5th June, 2020, our students have planted trees near their homes and celebrated the “World Environment Day” amid lockdown.

The pandemic has given us ample time to ponder over the mistakes that we must not repeat as human beings, make our lives healthy, connect ourselves to the nature and build a sustainable future. Along with it, we have to work for the section of people who have been affected by it the most.



Stress level of teachers during pandemic

Dimpy Baruah

Professional in Teaching, Assam

A sudden transformation of words like "Zoom" and "Google Classroom" from noun to verb is not easy to adopt by the Indian Society. From coping with a basic internet connection to structural issues of modifying teaching methods to virtual, educators have come under tremendous stress since India's schools began shutting down from March.

For educators teaching online is extending the working hour without any limits, it's more like 24 x7 hours work. From gathering and preparing items for the online class and then conducting the virtual class educators are left with no personal time for family because after conducting the class, teachers have to attend online training sessions, webinars conducted by the management.

The virtual class has created a barrier in the Student-teacher relationship, as student hesitates to behave naturally and this pretends to be a different personality.

As they are observed by their parents and for teachers, virtual classroom means they are under the observation of the parents which threat this confidence because parents end up criticizing the teaching method.

Although various boards have ordered not to conduct online exams there is pressure from the management and parents to conduct online exams, so that there is a value of fees. Now, who will explain that conducting online exams where students are seating at home is not benefiting the child?

But educators under pressure are conducting online exams, checking and also grading students. And thus teachers under confusing the state of mind have adapted themselves to this new environment to prove their efficiency.

Whereas this situation demands a stress-free life but students are also pressurized to adopt this new method. But there are students who have siblings who also have to attend the online class but there is only one mobile, now these students develop some kind of complexity. Since Indian society is not programmed for such online classes, so the child who lives in a small house does not have dedicated space for online classes which in turn leads to distraction. Again students who are in classes I and II cannot operate the app and thus waste half on the time.

Even the parent's online classes are a new challenge as they have to seat along with their child by guiding them to follow the instructions given by the teachers. They are under doubt what if their child misuse the instruction to get easy access to some website which is not healthy, for working parents who have resume this work now have to leave these mobiles at house or take leave from a job, so that the child can attend the online class.

So now the questions are – do teachers deserve this stress in this pandemic?

Do students are really benefited from this pen paperwork?

Instead of mere formalities of record-keeping schools should make teaching relaxing by making it more activity-based so that the child enjoys learning by doing. In the midst of this pandemic where everyone is lockdown at home than no one deserves the stress of being judged.



How Odisha police force is facing challenges during COVID-19 times

ISPC - Rasmi Ranjan Mohapatra Sir
Khandagiri Police Station, BBSR

Sir Rasmi Ranjan Mohapatra, Inspector in charge of Khandagiri Police Station, shares his experience of overcoming hurdles and challenges during pandemic. After detecting a case on 16th March, Odisha was the first State to announce lockdown. At first, it started with a massive change from shift duties to 24x7 service by frontline police officers, the situation was getting worst and the Indian government has declared shutdown On March 24, 2020, which later extended to complete lockdown, where the society and community were strictly restricted and announced that all individuals within its borders should remain at home for 21 days. During lockdown measures, the individuals were only allowed for essential movements outside their homes. The police force have its immediate impact as it was started with a massive problems created by a large-scale movement of the seasonal migrant laborers, compelled to flee from the city of Bihar, Kolkata, Andra Pradesh and Chennai, where they work for the safety of their rural homes. They were at their darkest hours just to return back to home.

Local police agencies were tasked with enforcing social distancing, activities took into some broader terms where the frontline police officers took the responsibility of entire odisha region, they sealed up (nakabandi) all the containment areas, while dealing with the migrants, the idea was troublesome to make people understand and aware about the virus, according to the noble police, the local peoples were illiterate so they were not understanding the consequences that can be caused due to corona outbreak while roaming outside.

The police are a primary port of access to State services, and the lockdown brings officers into regular contact with citizens needing urgent assistance in handling the cases where the health sector need the help of the Police officers are also at the forefront of India's public health campaign, providing information and essential supplies

The context of enforcement of COVID detection camp/ screen centre for COVID- 19 test with the help of Bhubaneswar Municipality Corporation (BMC). Many of the migrants were started escaping from the screening centre which enforces the police department to escort the migrants from odisha border to their respective regions.

Deepina (name changed) current resident of Mission Ashra was rescued by the Police officers of khandagiri near Baramunda, was trying to commit suicide, Insp, Rasmi Sir stated that as there were no female

The lockdown poses great burdens on frontline police officers in India, given capacity constraints and the social context of enforcement. Social distancing contravenes social norms and competes with the needs and livelihoods of the poor. Indian municipalities have thriving street cultures, with roadside stands selling food and goods in the open. A vast urban informal economy functions on the free movement of workers. Frontline officers expect some violations of lockdown rules, but their aim is to prevent no violence and breakdowns of public order. With

The funds available for preventative policing, community policing, and citizen outreach are miniscule. Despite these handicaps, Indian police agencies have risen to the challenge of enforcing the lockdown and promoting public health.



SECTION V: MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN DURING PANDEMIC PHASE

An “Invisibilised” Section... Do we Really Care about Them?

CENTRE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, KOCHI-WEDNESDAY, 29 APRIL 2020·READING TIME: 8 MINUTESPublic

IN LIMBO #14

By Joshita Nag (she is a social worker currently located in Odisha. She has completed MA in Social Work with Children & Families from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Email: joshinag2@gmail.com)Disclaimer: The views expressed here are solely of the author and not of CSES

COVID 19 has come with a whirlwind of challenges that have brought the whole world to its knees. The health impacts, economic impacts, social impacts and emotional impacts are all being dreaded. While we all have our own set of anxieties to gear up for, one of the cohorts often missed out is that of - CHILDREN. Even when we do talk of children, we universalise the identities, experiences and needs of the children. The group “Children”, just like all other demographics, is characterised by complex and multi-layered differentiations and diversities. Therefore, the impact of the pandemic on children belonging to different socio-economic background requires to be understood separately. Marginalisation amplifies vulnerabilities. Therefore, there is a growing need to look into the issues of deprived children, such as those belongs to Adivasi and Dalit communities, transgender, non-conforming children and children with fatal diseases, disabilities or mental illness more deeply during the Covid-lockdown period.

As a social worker, working with and specialised in the field of child rights, I cannot stop thinking about how does our children endure this situation. Are we prepared to support them? This article is not intended to give any advice or suggest any solutions; this is a completely reflective piece, which hopefully makes us all think. Let us go through some situations that add up to the vulnerability and threat to children in general and see if COVID19 magnifies the vulnerability further.



Urban Slum Dwelling Children

Children living in the slums of urban cities, often belong to migrant families or families which survive on the meagre daily wages of the adult members. Their access to food, especially nutritious food has drastically affected due to closing down of schools, anganwadi centers and mid-day meals! This has also put them out of learning environments. With growing uncertainty about when this lockdown will end, there is also no surety when the learning will resume. While the entire world is moving to digital platforms to enable "work from home", educational institutions have also started attempting digital learning. But do the majority of our children in India have access to this super luxury? We are completely undermining the reality of huge digital divide existing in our country. Digital access for most of us is the only form of connectivity during these times of isolation. But in these acts of belongingness, connectivity, are we able to include everyone?

Forget digital learning, we are always harping about social distancing in these times, but in a dingy slum lane, with houses that don't have even one feet distance between them, how are people supposed to maintain one metre distance? Social/Physical distancing is an elite luxury that millions of people, in our country cannot afford. Slums mostly have shared resources like community toilets. All of us have notched up our sanitation mechanisms to fight this pandemic. However, when thousands of people share a toilet, how do we maintain sanitation of the kind that is required to keep this virus away? According to the 69th round of National Sample Survey (2012), above 20% of urban slum dwelling population uses public/community toilets and around 36.1 % had no access to toilets. Do they have access to clean water and sufficient soaps/hand sanitisers to comply with the hand cleaning guidelines mandated by World Health Organisation (WHO)? Besides, when one has to choose between starvation and possible exposure to virus, what will one choose?

Many women in these slums work as a house help in urban families. Their movement between different houses to earn their bread throws them to the high risk of getting exposed to the virus. Most families did not give their house help off until the country went into complete lockdown with no possibility of travel. The complete lock down snatched away even the meagre source of income they had, which severely affect the nutritional requirement of the children. The children belong to such sections are now forced to starve.

Open playing spaces have never been a luxury for the slum dwelling children; but it was a social necessity for them given the narrow space at their home. Children in urban slums grow up together. Even during these times, if any of us have the access to get any ground report, we will see how children are not confined within homes, not because they don't want to be, but simply because they don't have adequate space. However, many of them even lost this space and their only enjoyment in life -group play- due to the lock down. With the rising number of cases of community transmission in Mumbai, we are waiting on a ticking bomb, of the slums in Mumbai. If you have any idea of the living conditions of these slums (beyond Dharavi too!), you will know that social distancing in these places is a 1000 years away! In such a case if any slum has an outbreak of the virus, will we be able to contain the spread? I seriously doubt.



Children in Rural Areas

Even though the pandemic has not spread yet in rural parts, and we really hope it doesn't, the lives of children in rural areas are equally affected. With the stop of goods and services from cities to villages, children are only going to be able to access basic food, if at all, and not adequately nutritious food. They too are missing out on mid-day meals, as well as the leanings from school and anganwadi centers. Digital divide is far higher for the rural population. For homes, where electricity is yet to enter, expecting digital learning infrastructure is way out of line.

If the economy does not support farmers in harvesting and and transporting their produce to the cities, we might even be witnessing hunger deaths amongst children in rural areas in the coming weeks. . It is also important to always remember that during a pandemic, access to prompt health care is of utmost importance. Do our villages have that? Are the existing systems of health care, food security, and other essential services in the rural areas equally accessible to all the people in the villages?



Children in Child Care Institutions (CCIs)

It is a reality that CCIs in India are highly over crowded in general, which provides an alarming picture of the alternative care system of our country. Given the lockdown, things might get worse for our CCIs. We cannot be even sure about the food situation of such homes. With the crowding of children, there is a high chance of rapid spread of virus in such homes. With shutdown of contact with the outside world, there will be no visits from families, which may affect the mental health of such children. Their learning process got hindered. Will this invisible population, ever truly recover from these setbacks? Child Care Institutions are not just 'orphanages', they cater to a multitude of needs of children.

The daily routine stipulated for children in CCIs is imperative for their mental growth and character formation. However, with the imposed lock-down and staff shortages, their day today routine gets affected which will have detrimental effect on the overall development of the children.



Children in Conflict Zones

Children in conflict zones, children of refugees, children in relief camps, children affected by communal violence - are much vulnerable to a crisis like current Covid pandemic. The recent communal attacks in Delhi, left more than 50 people dead. The massacre has forced thousands of families from North East Delhi to seek refuge in camps situated at the outskirts of Delhi. How will the families in those camps secure themselves from this deadly virus?

Hundreds of vulnerabilities affect children. Children who are dealing with mental illnesses and physical disabilities might be struggling to overcome this crisis scenario. How many of them will have access to their own set of basic necessities, which may be different from the able bodied people. How do the children take care of their terminally ill parents/grandparents without proper access to health care facilities? What effect does this lock-down period create among the children who were earlier subjected to various types of abuses? What could be the magnitude of domestic violence they might have endured during this period.

The most important question I want to ask here is; how will the post COVID19 world look like? What all things will it offer for our children? While sitting behind the TV screens, applauding the police brutality by justifying it as the only way to keep Indians at home, we conveniently forget about the children. Do we really care about the children of the victims of such police brutality, just like the man who got killed in the police attack in West Bengal while he went out to buy milk? Will his family, in the midst of this pandemic, be even able to grasp and grieve his death? The first 1000 days of a child's birth significant in shaping the development of a child. This pandemic might have a disastrous effect on children born in the midst of this chaos. We need to review our preparedness in supporting (both in terms of physical and mental) pregnant women and lactating mothers, especially belonging to vulnerable sections. I would like to end this not by thinking aloud; "how are we going to fill the huge void the Covid-lockdown times created in the lives of our children.



Society For Children (Bhubaneswar & Paradeep)

The coronavirus pandemic and the unprecedented measures to contain its spread are disrupting nearly every aspect of children's lives: their health, development, learning, behaviour, their families' economic security etc.

As project punarjivan working for children who are addicted, drop out and hard by behavior, we organize camps where we correct children and teach them and guide them to come out from addiction. As we have conducted 4 camps, we have been sent some of our returned camp children to residential schools. They were so happy to continue their study.

But when lockdown announced by govt and students were asked to leave hostel. We talked to one of our child pari (name changed) she said as she was not in to addiction when she returned from camp and then went to school, now she stays in home, where in Same community people takes substance, she is also not able to control herself and she started taking substance again & missing her school, hostel everything.

Our another camp returned child Kajol (name changed) she studied hard to give her exam as she wants to join in Army, due to lockdown and cancellation of the exam she feels lonely and low. She also not able to being in touch with her friends.

Kalia (name changed) our another returned camp children, who is very passionate towards study, he was suppose to get admission in class 5 but due to lockdown he is also being frustrated for not getting admission and where he used to take tuition classes, that has been closed for which he feels boar and tensed in his home alone.

The lockdown may have loosened for adults, but the struggle and confinement is still very much real for children. SOCH team at Paradeep has been connected to the children on a regular basis. Adolescent girls have been feeling anxious, and imprisoned during this lockdown. Our coordinators spoke to some of them to understand their experiences, and it revealed the state of their mental health during this lockdown and Covid19.

Anjali (name Changed) shared how due to lockdown her exam was cancelled. She had been preparing for a long time, and had worked very hard for this exam. Initially she felt very anxious, and now that it has been cancelled she is feeling deterred. On top of that for the last 2 to 3 months they have been staying at home and are not able to go outside, which is now building their isolation, and loneliness.

Rani (name changed) isn't able to meet her friends, because they could only meet during school. She is also not able to go outside. The loneliness has impacted her so much that now she is feeling afraid even at the name of the pandemic. The lockdown and covid19 has impacted the lives of children in various ways. Their social life is deeply disturbed and this is all taking a toll on their mental health.



Challenges Students are facing due to COVID-19

NAME: Hara Prasad Bhuyan

Class: VIII-B

School: Guidance English Medium (GEM)

- Students are facing internet connectivity issues.
- Students are from different social background and not every student has access to laptop or an internet connection. It is not possible for such students to attend the online classes.
- Those students who have not smartphone or skintouch mobile they are also facing problems and couldn't attend the online classes.
- These types of problems are facing by me also like we are two brothers, my brothers online clases time is 9:00 am. Sometimes my online classes also taken in 9:00 am. So, I couldn't attend the online classes. My brother also facing theses problems. When I take the class he couldn't attend the online class.
- The parents who have only one mobile and they have two children are facing lots of problems. So, the parents also buying new mobile for two children. But if some cases the parents have not enough money to buy another phone.
- These types of problems are facing by the students and me during lockdown. During online classes sometimes there is net problem. So students cannot hear what the teacher is saying. So, they can't understand he chapter.



Being a Student facing challenges due to COVID19 and its effects on students

NAME: Jayashree Panda

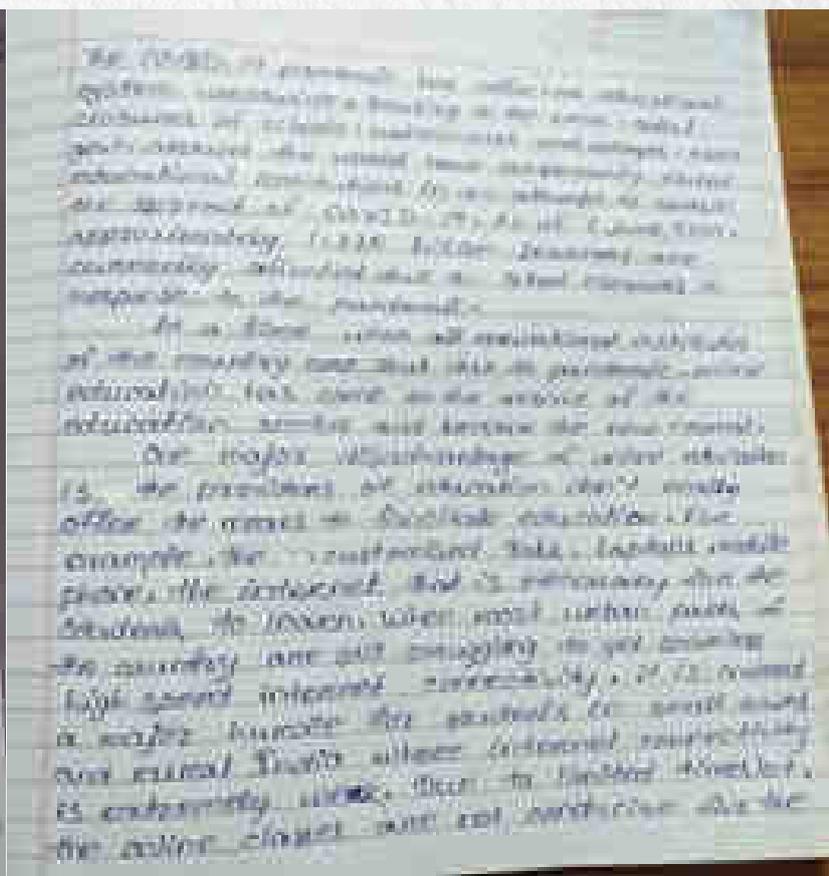
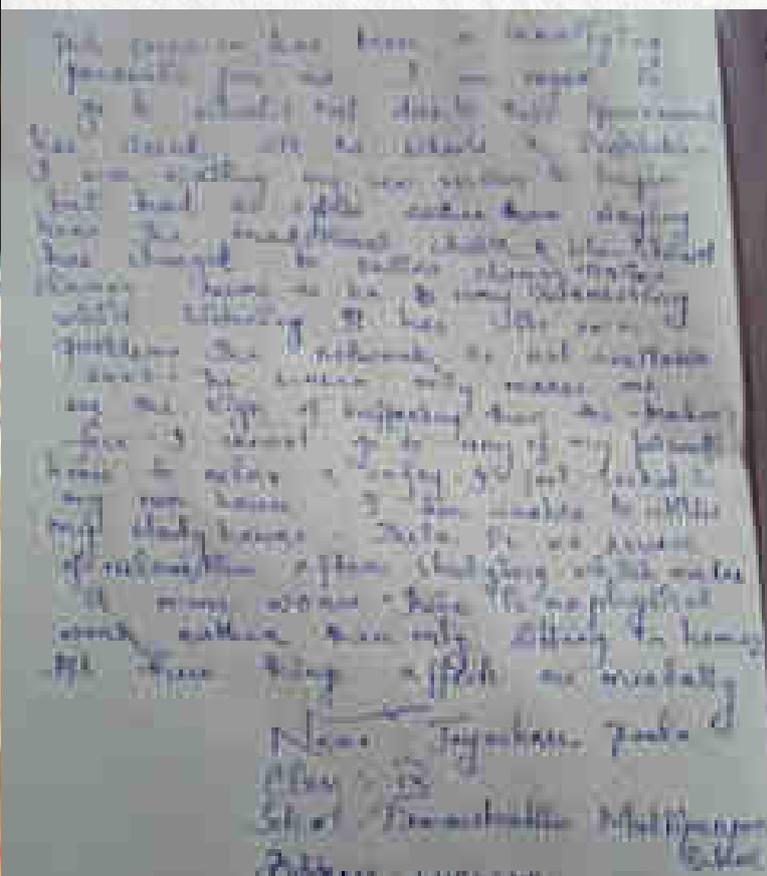
Class: XI

SCHOOL: Demonstration Multipurpose School, BBSR

The petrifying and severe impact of COVID19 has shaken the world to its core. The government of India has temporarily closed all the educational institutions due to spread of COVID-19 Pandemic. 91% of the world population is facing difficulties regarding studies. More than 30 crores of children are affected in India. So the government has to come up with the idea of online classes. But still online classes have their own problems. In India, everyone do not live in cities, or have 24 hours network connection or have smart phone with tem economically all the students are not stable. So they do not get these opportunities. And poor network is the major problem which Obstacle the study of a child.

All the doubts are not being cleared nevertheless their id a difference between online classes and traditional white chalk and a blackboard. Many exams are not being held which monthly disturbs students. everyone are not used to the new technology , Game period was apart that provide physical fitness and gave a opportunity to relax, But these days due to COVID19 students are staying at home and prefer mobile phones to pass their time and so they are physically being affected.

This COVID19 has been a terrifying pandemic for me. I eagerly want to go to school but due to lockdown I couldn't. I was waiting for my new session to begin but had no option rather waiting at home. The traditional blackboard and chalk has changed into online classes, online classes seems to be very interesting while listening, it has its own problem, the screen only makes me see the buffering than the teacher face. I cannot go to any of my friends house for relaxation after studying which makes it more worst. There is no physical work rather than sitting at hie which indirectly affecting my mental and physical health.



Effects of Lockdown on Families from Different Socioeconomic Groups in India

Sinoriteta Tourangbam

M.A. ECCE, Ambedkar University, Delhi

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, also known as the coronavirus pandemic, is an ongoing pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID 19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2. The outbreak was first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The World Health Organization declared the outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January, and a pandemic on 11 March. The number of coronavirus cases in India neared the 9,36,000 marks on 15th July.

Effects and Challenge Encountered

The three socio-economic groups - upper, middle, and lower class are facing the same pandemic differently. Amidst of lockdown, the government has put restrictions on daily activities, such as stepping outside of the house, maintaining social and physical distances, shutting down offices, schools, consumer goods & FMCG, accommodation, economy, and financial markets.

Both the upper and the middle socioeconomic groups have much greater facilities of networks and devices to be able to stay connected, the children are able to stay connected with their schools and receive education through online classes. As for the adults they are able to do their jobs from home. The major backlash faced is the effect of more screen time affecting the eyesight of both adults and children. Facilities of food, medical supplies are also easily accessible to them.

The pandemic is least favourable to the lowest section of the society i.e., the daily wage earners, or the migrant workers. "Hungry and without hope, thousands of migrant workers streamed out of Indian cities after PM Modi announced a 21-day lockdown. The last time so many Indians covered such long distances on foot was probably during Partition." (Brut India- 3rd March 2020, for India's poor, a VOYAGE before the virus). With the loss of work, the family are encountering many problems of providing food and shelter, with the unfortunate situation they are facing to connect with their family from their villages, children are unable to get a proper education, health & medical services are not easily accessible to them. Unable to use transportation to go back home, they are finding means such as walking many kilometres on foot. The shelter over their head is all shattered, with the shutting down of factories, construction sites, and loss of domestic help. "What we call home is where we think we belong; a place that accepts and supports us. We give that warmth up for earning an income. Except we do not see everyone out on this pursuit as equals. For one class we host an investment mela in a five-star location; the other, we let them walk for miles without food or water, because we failed to account for how they could get home, safely and with dignity. Even while they bear the burden of having lost their livelihood." (article published by ET- CoronaVirus impact: we have to help migrants find a home). In the midst of the lockdown, they are neglected by the different sets of society leaving them into a vulnerable state.

The encounter of many domestic cases have been emerging during the pandemic, the children and women being vulnerable in this situation as according to the article written by Lachmi Deb Roy- Domestic Violence Cases Across India Swell Since Coronavirus Lockdown (7th April 2020) states that in the close four-wall which is a clustered space, men are taking out their anger upon women. "The National Commission for Women (NCW), which receives complaints of domestic violence from across the country, has recorded more than twofold rise in gender-based violence in the national Coronavirus lockdown period. The total complaints from women rose from 116 in the first week of March (March 2-8) to 257 in the final week (March 23-April 1)." doubling the case rising in the state of Bihar, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Punjab. Women being not being able to file the complaint due to being scared that there won't be much help besides an increase in harassment. This violence is scarier for the lower section of the community because of the income shutting down, not being much help in domestic work and also being their husbands a drunkard and not able to get any alcohol makes them put out their frustration physically.

Regarding the cultural context, many North-eastern who are living in different parts of the country are facing racial abuse, physical and mental abuse which was all due to the differences in facial features. Violence against them and stigmatizing, them who come to metropolitan cities for work or studies, are not facing the corona phenomena. It always happens every minute which takes an ugly turn once in a while. "People from these states were being slandered with terms like "corona", "Chinese", "chinki", being spat at and forcibly quarantined even though they showed no symptoms. They have been denied entry into apartment complexes, forced to evict their flats, and even asked to leave restaurants (before lockdown) as their presence was making others uncomfortable" (The week- Northeast people battle racism amid coronavirus pandemic Northeast people are facing increasing harassment and violence over their looks. By Rekha Dixit by Rekha Dixit March 28, 2020).

Children are constantly being nagged constantly by their parents, their privacy has invaded and the term 'personal space' does no longer exist which is affecting the mental health of the children. With all the online classes, work from homes the screen time has increased which is affecting their eye sights, and body restraining. With the constant internet now available parents do not mind of having their children being on screen all the time as they assume they might be working but during this pandemic "Bois locker room" created by teenagers have resurfaced showing conversations regarding rape threats to women, degrading terms against young women and exchange of soliciting pictures among themselves.

The problems are occurring in the routine; coping up with work, education, and family; finding ways to adapt to the lockdown; downfall for the economy faced by all the three classes; medical services; food & shelter; basic necessities for the lower section of the society; increase in work responsibilities among the family members.

Adaptation

In my experience of adaptation as a whole family, each individual has taken some roles to cope up with the situation. As I'm able to take online classes that are provided facilities by my college faculty, I'm able to finish up my course by submitting many assignments, the internet is slowed down and poor connection problems my family shuts down or stop using devices which intake internet during my online classes. My elder sister has been a great help doing the assignments, my mother and grandmother make sure that I'm not interrupted in any possible way while I'm studying or working. We as a family of four the household works are equally divided, when I'm doing the dishes in the morning, my mother would be cleaning, my sister would be cooking, and my grandmother would be doing other miscellaneous work such as stitching or feeding the dogs.

My mother's income not being stable she has found means to save up the money, also my sister has been a great help financially. To give our dog another animal friend we adopted a new puppy which made livelier in our home. We are able to strengthen our relationship with each other because during this lockdown we have faced minor inconvenience and irritation from each other which ends into a huge fight or a small tiff, where at the end of the day we forget it in a positive note and as a way of apologizing we all watch funny movies or series together, or cook meal with whatever resources available to us. We all have found many talents, my mother learnt making cloth mask with my old shirts and t-shirts which she also distributed among our neighbours, with many South Korean series I have watched online I somehow learned few phrases which made me learn different languages, my sister showcased her talent from what she has learned in Masters and with the help of my course, she with the help of 7-8 friends are doing a relief work called "one step many smiles" where they would gather money, and other resources to buy ration and distribute it among the families who are in need, every week they choose new destinations to cover up and distribute as many rations as they can to feed. My grandmother passes her time taking care of the new puppy and doing embroidery work on handkerchiefs.

We as a family are looking at the positivity of the pandemic, encouraging each other, picking up each other when we want to give up, brightening up each other in many quirky ways so that one or the other person does not feel demotivated.

Comment

The information pulled together based on the literature presented in the family's class, especially the work of Kagitsibasi (2017) and Turnbull et al (2009). The whole world is facing the pandemic, each social class is facing difficulties and are adapting to it differently. Major backlashed faced are by the lower class of the society, as their major concern is not just the education of their children but also the necessity to earn and survive to maintain their livelihood, they are now dependent on the government and the NGOs to provide the facility of food, shelter, and hygiene. Still, with such great facilities provided, there is a feeling of uncertainty eating them up from the inside how long do they have to suffer, and how many rations will it suffice to fulfil their hunger, or how will they go back to their homes where they can connect with the family, getting proper care and medical facilities.

The middle class and the upper class are moderately affected as they are able to survive with the source of income they're somehow getting from their work or businesses, or have enough savings to help them survive. With sudden unpredictability and a sudden halt in their normal life has created many demotivation, which is also affecting the mental & physical health among the family members.

Each family member of the socio-eco group is dealing with the pandemic differently, some are facing major changes and difficult to cope up than others, some are taking this as an opportunity to learn new things and achieve new talents, some are investing in the relationship among their family members.

In my opinion, the way to survive this pandemic is with love and support to each and every one of the society by providing any sort of help even if it is a minor thing but at least putting a smile and making each day go through a positive note and having a hope that the next day will be better with much good news.

SECTION VI: PEOPLE SUFFERING WITH COVID-19

Ananya Kashyap
Social Worker, Assam

I'm just here to share my experience on Covid-19. On 2nd December me and my father, we both were tested positive with Covid-19. We opted for home isolation. It took a toll on us emotionally, physically, mentally. And the burden and stress care givers go through is unstoppable, to top of my mother also tested positive within a week, it was my brother who was taking care of my whole family, who solely did everything from cooking to serving us with all the required needs, and it might sound easy but it's not, also we dismissed our house help during the time.

Most people have the perception that corona virus is just like simple flue or viral fever. But its nowhere near that. Thankfully we all were tested negative two days back, during that I lost all my appetite, I lost 2kgs f my weight, went through sleepiness night with shivers and fever and still recovering from the tiring weakness. Though I've been tested negative I'm still going through all these symptoms. It what I went through and it might differ from one individual to other. But it's not easy for anyone who has been tested positive.

And it was worse for my parents as they both are 55+ so, for all the people reading this please be safe out there. As we cannot confine ourselves to our houses anymore, the only way is to keep us safe is by taking certain precautions that we all know but fail to follow at times and do things keeping in mind the safety of your own and others. And our parents are more valuable than anyone, so think about them and keep yourself safe.



You have been diagnosed with Covid-19 and you are still feeling sick after several weeks and months because of-



How to Lower the risk?

We are seeing the numbers of starting to jump back up, everyone is beginning to put justifiable hope in the vaccine, the vaccines will end the tragedy of death and horrific feeling, or who is admitted in ICUs, but it will not stop the transmission as there are still going to be people out there who are not protected because they can't be vaccinated or don't want to be vaccinated, but don't have access to vaccinated.

In the time of getting second and third generation, vaccines could play a huge role the people distributing vaccination is unjust with many people, the vaccines could be a huge solution for these transmission, will have total control of this danger, there is hope and light at the end of this tunnel.

Think about what you're doing, think about the risk is everyday wherever you go and take the steps to lower the risk please get vaccinated and still.

And you have tools in hand, follow the guidance, keep your physical distance, wear your mask, clean your hands, practice respiratory etiquette, open your windows, avoid crowded places, and bless with home.



What should I expect after getting a Covid19 Vaccine?

High authorities are carefully monitoring, to ensure that the vaccines are safe to everyone who receives them.

When you get vaccinated some side effects are normal and expected- they signal that your body is building protection against the virus. Common side effect includes soreness or redness around the injection site, mild fever, tiredness and headache which would last for a week, if the symptoms are more severe than the last week, tell the health worker from whom and where you have received the vaccination. They would treat the symptoms.

Negative reaction, health authorities may suspend the use of the vaccines storage transport or administration of the vaccine. Before processing have been who supports the use of the vaccines, and tracks reactions to vaccines around the world, keep in mind that it is extremely rare for serious health problem to be directly caused by the vaccines. And before distribution covid vaccines went through strict testing, covid 19 vaccines proven to reduce the risk of the sick from the covid. Get vaccinated would be the best choice to protect yourself and your community.



SECTION VII: ROLE OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST DURING PANDEMIC

Counseling during a Pandemic - Establishing tele-psychology facilities

Priya Ahluwalia

COUNSELOR - POST RESCUE OPERATIONS

On 11th March, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as a global pandemic. By mid-march 2020, the number of cases of COVID-19 began to sharply increase in India. As a precautionary measure, a national lockdown was also announced by the Government of India on. In line with the precautionary measures, Prerana decided to limit its staff's field interventions. However, a sudden break in the client (child) and counselor's relationship during highly anxious times such as a global pandemic can adversely affect the rapport established between the client and the counselor. Maintaining contact with clients is especially important because the distress they normally experience may be intensified in such times. The client-counselor contact ensures that they remain mentally grounded and safe during these distressing times.

Measures were undertaken to establish temporary tele-psychology facilities to ensure that contact is maintained with the child. The American Psychological Association defines tele-psychology as provision of psychological services using telecommunication technologies. Telecommunication technologies include but are not limited to telephones, mobile phones, video conferences, email, chat, text and internet (eg. self help websites, blog, and social media). Tele-psychology is a novel and pragmatic method of service delivery in the current time as it can overcome a number of logistical barriers and serve a large number of people in a cost effective and safe manner. Although tele-psychology exhibits great potential yet its implementation may have several challenges.

In spite of the challenges, tele-counseling and tele-psychology are valuable resources in situations of emergency. These services ensure that basic psychological aid is provided to the client and the client-counselor relationship is maintained. These services can further be strengthened through structured protocols, training and workshops. Although tele-counseling has great utility, it cannot fully replace traditional face to face counseling. It can be seen as a powerful and certain ally to offer support and assistance to traditional counseling in times of need.

One of the key challenges faced while establishing tele-psychology was that the service provided continued to meet the ethical and professional standards of care in spite of the mode of delivery. Thus, prior to conducting any session, the counselor, based on past experiences, had to evaluate whether the client has access to and is comfortable with the technology on which the service is offered. For example, Vrindha (name changed) is a 14 year old girl, who currently lives with her parents and siblings. Her family owns one cellphone. The counselor on her previous visits, has observed that the cellphone has several technical issues such as the sim-card not working properly, poor battery among others. Moreover, the cellphone is mostly with the mother. Thus, the counselor felt that in these conditions even if tele-counseling was offered to Vrindha, it would not be effective.

Tele-counseling may not be able to offer the same sense of comfort and emotional safety as traditional means of counseling as the counselor cannot see the important non-verbal cues to identify the client's socio-emotional state. These cues are essential in ensuring that a well rounded discussion takes place to enable healing. In another case, when the counselor was conducting a tele-counseling session with Ritika (name changed), during one part of the session, there was a long period of silence from Ritika's end. Traditionally the counselor would have used her body language or facial expressions as a way of continuing the conversation. However, since it was not possible in the current situation, the conversation had to be continued using the previous discussion. Thus, the counselor felt that the session dealt with superficial concerns and could not delve deeper.

Shraddha, Counselor
Mission Ashra

Mental health is the level of psychological well being or an absence of mental illness. It is the state of someone who is functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioral adjustment. Mental health problems may arise due to stress, loneliness, depression, anxiety, relationship problems, death of a loved one, grief etc. Therapist, psychiatrist, psychologist, social workers, medical practitioners and community health activist play their role as mediator, facilitator, educator, and provide help through treatments, applying prevention measures such as therapy, counseling or medications.

Arpita, Counselor
Mission Ashra

Mental health is a state of wellbeing of an individual. It includes our emotional, psychological, social wellbeing of an individual. When someone is mentally healthy, he or she can think do his/her duty or daily activities properly. It includes positive thinking, interpersonal relationships, and self satisfaction. When someone does not satisfy with him/her, feel lonely, dislike by others, then he or she become unhappy, sad, depressed and his/her wellbeing is affected. Most of the time we are also unable to maintain the balance between our ID desires and superego that imbalance creates differences types of psychological symptoms like stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression and phobia etc. In this way, it affects our mental health. We should do exercise, yoga, walking regularly, eat nutritious food, sleep deeply for 6 to 8 hour, stay in a hygienic to achieve a good mental health. I would like to conclude that people with no mental illness can also have poor mental health in future.

Mission Ashra, Janla isthe centre where we serve destitute women with mental illness. Here the counselors and the nursing staffs are giving their effort to make our residents mentally, physically and emotionally stable. We are working here in 3 shifts. We provide various activities, so that they can engage themselves. These activities keep them active. Working with the residents of Ashra suffering with different disorders is challenging, where we face many obstacles while providing its not an easy task but them being destitute makes it a much more challenging but atleast we have a platform through which we can make people aware of the term mental health and how it is necessary to take care about there mental health just the way we take care about our physical health.

“What Mental health needs is more sunlight, more candor and more unashamed conversation.”

Everyone feels worried or anxious or down from time to time. But relatively few people develop a mental illness. The actual difference? A mental illness is a mental health condition that gets in the way of thinking, relating to others, and day to day function. Dozens of mental illness have been identified and defined. They include depression, generalized anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder and many more. Working as a counselor in a mental health sector like Mission Ashra is quite challenging and yet very insightful. Where we provide counseling therapies, day to day activities, basic utilities whereas including daily health checkups to the mentally ill and destitute women.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PSYCHOLOGIST AT AHSRA



The challenging part here is working with the destitute women, because of the fact that they are destitute and that's why it becomes really difficult for us to collect their initial information and know about the root cause of their mental illness because of which their treatment procedure is hampered. But the most positive thing about working here is that though they are mentally ill and destitute they have made their own family among themselves and stay put. A public sector like this would really help in creating awareness about mental health and removing it as taboo.

Priyanka, Centre Manager
MissionAshya

"One of the most fulfilling aspects of working in the mental health field is being able to provide support to others during the most challenging moments in their life." As a mental health counselor we provide them different types of therapies, encourage our residents, after guidance to individuals and examine issues including anger management, hallucination, depression, suicidal thoughts etc. It gives me a great pleasure when my clients start recovering.

Swati, Counselor
Mission Ashya

My experience as a counselor in a shelter home for destitute men with mental illness

(Roles, Responsibilities and Challenges)

As the problem of Mental illness is growing day by day in our society, those who have mental illness and his family members are not able to take care of the patient, become homeless after being abandoned by the family. Most people with mental illness wandering on the roadside and started begging for their living and forced to adapt that is the reason their hairs are grown and looks are very dirty, beard and nails grown, decrease self-care and eating food from roadside dustbins.

I am working as a counselor in mission Aashalok last four months, and I had many experiences and observations that if the proper guidance and support can be provided it can play an important role in mental health or substance use problems. For example, in the center people who are clinically depressed and show unique behavior, and come from that background where they were faced social stigma from society. In our society, the lack of awareness is a basic problem related to mental health even my family also so we need to aware people individually and as mental health professional it's our responsibility to create awareness about mental health even I am requesting to our guardian when you have seen a mentally ill patient sitting on the road. Not to avoid them take some proper measures and steps to protect them, they have to need appropriate treatment.

Our mental health is as important as our physical health. Mental illness refers to a wide range of disorders (Depression, Anxiety, mood disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders) that affect mood, thinking and behavior. When someone is hospitalized with a physical illness it's common for friends and family to talk about it (physical health) on the other hand when an individual hospitalized with a mental illness we rarely talk about it. Mental illness affects 19% of the adult population, 46% of teenagers and 13% of children's each year. It's time for change our thoughts and discuss about mental health. It can be cured by counseling, proper medication, therapies and most importantly by sharing our thoughts and emotions with others also needs to understand others emotions.

When the patients wandering on the street most of the people saw them very negatively, also a common stigma if the person is not mentally ill and people are behaving very badly with them but the reality is different because some of the patients are not very bad in condition but due to bad behavior they are facing the mental health issues if the perfect guidance and care can be provided to them the chances of care is possible. Most of the mental disorders like depression, anxiety disorder, panic attack, and different type of phobia that can be cured without medicine.

Due to various types of personal issues like family conflict, peer group conflict, an economic issue, relationship issues, etc. In our society some people who are distressed deliberately harm their bodies, usually secretly using self-harm as a way of dealing with intense emotional pain. Some people experience several mental health problems, such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia. They may have periods when they experience their own or a different reality, they may hear voices, see things no-one else sees, and hold unusual beliefs feel exceptionally self-important or read particular meaning into everyday events. Where around 1.1 lakh peoples are mentally ill in Odisha only one government hospital is available for mentally ill patients. As we know that Odisha is the poorest state of our country because of natural disaster and tribe population the mental health issues are in large numbers.

Mental health is a subject of stigma, Stigma is when someone negatively sees you because of your mental illness. Social stigma and discrimination can make mental health problems worse and stop a person from getting the help they need or it may be unintentional or subtle, such as someone avoiding you because the person assumes you could be unstable, violent, or dangerous due to your mental illness.

As a counselor working in a shelter home my focus on various points as follows:

Resident Safety

As a residential counselor my responsible for overseeing day-to-day activities of a facility or shelter. This includes the overall care and safety of the residents under my supervision being an counselor. I monitor the attitude and mental behavior of each client. If a problem arises in the facility, as a counselor I often the first one notified. My responsibility is ensuring residents are following all the rules and regulations set forth in the program. If a resident is violating rules, I address the issue and ensures the problem is corrected. I also plan and supervise recreational activities among residents and may also assist with client transportation.

Community Resources

If a resident is in need of services the facility is unable to directly provide, I also facilities him to though other organizations in the community to get the assistance he needs. This may include referrals for medical care, housing, employment, or clothing. For this reason, I have to remain knowledgeable of all community resources.

Resident Needs

I am a residential counselor I am monitoring the overall progress of each client. In most cases, I hold weekly meetings to address any client's needs and concerns. If a resident needs counseling regarding personal or family issues, I try to provide such counseling and help to the client. I also working to act as a life skills coach, helping each client set personal and financial goals, and create strategies to reach those goals.

Documentation & Communication

Because I have to deal with so many clients, I will try to keep a file to record notes from each client meeting. These notes include, but are not limited to, incident reports, the client's goal list, and the steps the client has completed to reach those goals. In some cases, I would disclose this information to other staff members, including the program director. As such, the notes on each client's file must be clear enough for other staff members to read and understand.

Challenges working in mental health care

Building trust:

In counseling the client-counselor relationship is important to deal with his personal issues, the trust is making it easy to take initiative and find the particular therapy method to care for a client and find the various ways of treatment other than medicine. When a patient is coming in mission aashalok in a very unconscious condition and not well so it takes too much time after medication to talk with clients and communicate about the problem.

Dealing with Disruptive or Dangerous Behavior:

Some of the patients are aggressive in nature, to communicate with them is very challenging and they are not ready to share their life. Some of the clients are in very critical condition and time taken to understand and adjust in the environment of mission aashalok.

Burnout

Working with clients who have chronic mental health disorders, severe substance abuse disorders, or a history of childhood abuse and neglect can often lead to "burnout." Working with substance-abusing clients who have experienced childhood maltreatment can further challenge as a counselor's capacity to remain focused on treatment. Burnout occurs when the pressures of work erode of a counselor's spirit and outlook and begin to interfere with the client's personal life, the balance in personal and professional life is also a reason for burnout.

Multiple roles

Sometimes due to the lack of staff, it's important to facilities clients and other professionals to work other than counseling facilities to the clients like working as a care worker or originating program and fun activates in center .

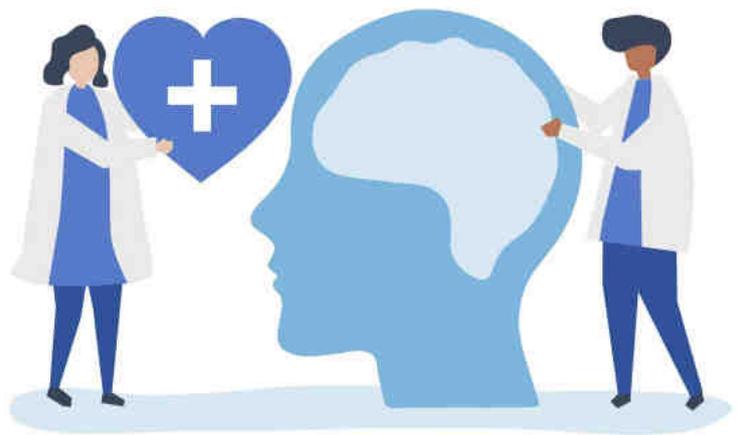
Importance of medical and new therapeutic approach in counselling.

The definition of health includes mental health along with its physical, emotional, social and spiritual components.

In mission Aashalok we are focusing on both approaches to help the patient and improve their mental health condition. The different types of therapeutic approach in counseling is helpful to addressing the clients problems from various challenges she/he faces with mental health, most of the patients come from lower middle class families in our center.

The therapeutic approach is the lens through which a counselor addresses their clients problems but in our Centre we are focusing overall improvement of mental illness thought medication and Counseling.

Various types of activities and counseling therapies facilitate the patients but the major issue we are facing is in patients to develop their interest with activities. The history of patients is very hard to find and a challenging task to use individually for case to case. Medication is helping the patients to calm and improve her/his condition of mental illness which reduce symptoms and prevent relapses of a psychiatric disorder. Medications can also help patients minimize cravings and maintain abstinence from addictive substances.



Use of Effective medication for mental illness

Effective medication options exist for the treatment of most of the major disorders, including mood disorders such as major depression and bipolar disorder; anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder; and schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders.

Effective psychotherapies have also been developed and tested for many mental health disorders and can be utilized without medications for patients with mild or moderate disorders. However, medication is an important mainstay of treatment for patients with more severe and/or long-standing mental illness symptoms. When we rescue a patient it's very essential to provide medication because the condition of the patients is not stable during that time as well as illness and diagnosis also not found. Then it's very important to provide basic and proper guidance through medication.

Nonadherence to the medication plan is often found in a patient who experiences the following:

- medication-related side effects.
- concern about the interactions between substances and the medication (a patient may not take his or her medication if a return to substance use occurs).
- belief that the medication isn't working.
- feeling better, which leads the patient to believe that the medication is no longer needed.
- misattribution of the mental health disorder symptoms to the use of the medication.
- disorganization or apathy related to the ongoing substance use disorder or mental health disorder.
- Lack of family support for medication taking.

The problem of Readmission facing because of Medication adherence

Many patients do not take medication as prescribed. Some simply forget medications, but often "forgetting" is really related to an underlying concern. Prescribers should assume that a patient will sometimes fail to take his or her medications. In these cases, they should ask about the missed medication in a nonjudgmental way. When patients are not adherent to the medication plan, modifications to the medication prescription or to the plan should be based on the patients' unique reasons for not taking them, we are taking patients back to the center for their medication and care.

Problem in medical model as per my point of view:

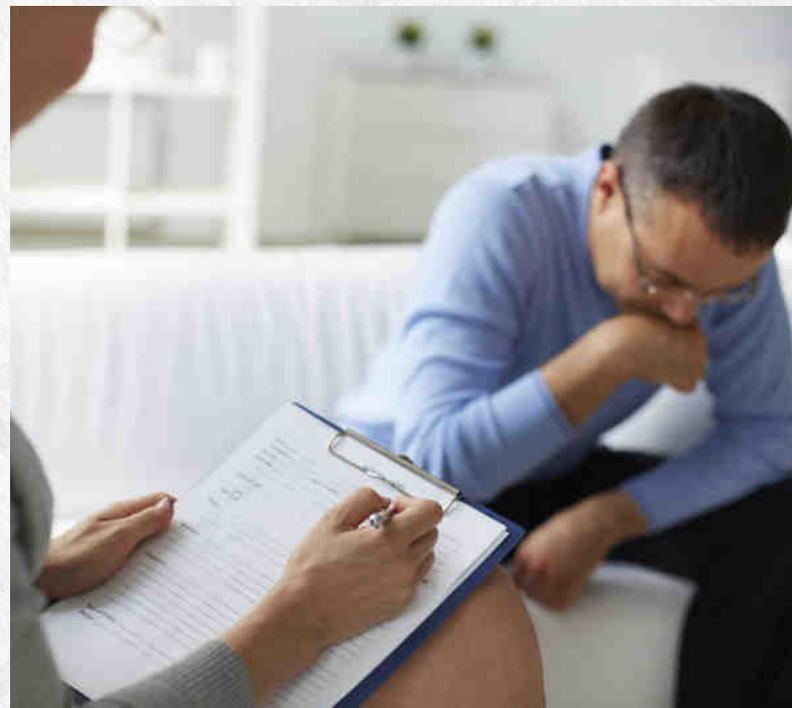
What is happening here? The doctor makes a judgement of the patient's behaviour, usually in a clinical interview after a relative or general practitioner has asked for an assessment.

The doctor will judge that the 'patient' is exhibiting abnormal behaviour by asking questions and observing the patient.

Judgement will also be influenced heavily by what the relatives and others near to the patient say and the context is mental illness more likely to be diagnosed in a mental hospital?

Counselor of Mission Aashalok,

Peoples Forum



Role and Importance of different types of therapeutic approach of counseling in mission aashalok

Various types of mental health problems come from the background, lifestyle and past experience related to this. It is very important to provide guidance through counseling, but in our Centre the counselor is providing group therapies individual care plans for every case.

Nature of patients and different types of therapies for every individual like cognitive behavioral therapy can be for the patients are anger issues, self-harm, substance abuse, bipolar etc. according to this form of therapy seeks to identify and help change potentially self-destructive or unhealthy behaviors. In the next stage the use of humanistic theory can be useful that emphasizes the importance of being your true self in order to lead the most fulfilling life. The choice of counselor and study is very helpful to take a proper choice for individual care of every patient in the Centre.

SECTION VIII : Mental health and well being of people suffering with acute distress and suicide intervene during this Pandemic Phase

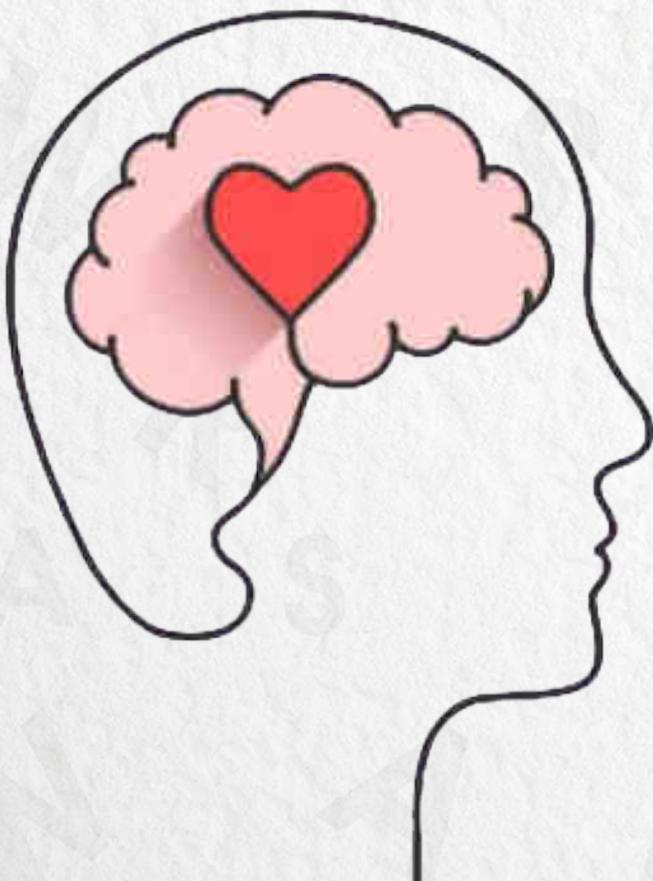
Suicidal ideation and emotional breakdown Due to COVID - 19

Much has been talked about the consequences that COVID - 19 has had on mental wellbeing of people across the globe. Under such circumstance where the world has witnessed a 360 degree change in lifestyle, jobs, resources and human contact, the impact is directly related to the psychological and social happiness. COVID-19 has brought a raft of intense new stressors while removing many of the resources people have traditionally used to cope with stress.

Social isolation, anxiety, fear of contagion, uncertainty, chronic stress and economic difficulties may lead to the development or exacerbation of stress-related disorders and suicidality in vulnerable populations including individuals with pre-existing psychiatric disorders, low-resilient persons, individuals who reside in high COVID-19 prevalence areas and people who have a family member or a friend who has died of COVID-19. Disrupted routines and the potential for contracting a life-threatening disease may be exacerbating pre-existing problems such as mental illness or substance use.

At the same time, physical distancing is endangering mental health even as it protects physical health. In his famous book on suicide, Durkheim emphasized that social connectedness is a critical factor in emotional health and social stability. Various research investigations demonstrated that social isolation and loneliness are associated with major depression and generalized anxiety disorder. Studies have shown that both objective social isolation (e.g. living alone) and subjective sense of being alone are associated with suicidal ideation and behaviour. The Quebec Health Survey showed that living alone and having no friends were associated with both suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. Social disengagement played a role in the increased suicide rate during the 2003 SARS epidemic in Hong Kong. One-third of SARS-related suicide victims experienced social isolation during the SARS outbreak. From a suicide prevention perspective, it is troubling that the most important public health approach for the COVID-19 epidemic is social distancing. People in crisis may avoid hospitals, whether for fear of adding to the burden of already overwhelmed facilities or of catching the virus.

The impact of economic problems related to the COVID-19 crisis on mental health may be severe. Millions of people around the world lost their jobs as measures required to contain the virus, including self-isolation by workers and consumers, shutting of plants and stores and prohibitions on sports and entertainment events are detrimental for economy. Studies observed that increases in the unemployment rate were associated with higher prevalence of depression, alcohol and other substance use disorders and suicide deaths. Job insecurity and unemployment constitute significant risks of increased depressive symptoms in prospective observational studies. If I take example from history to prove the point then I would like to draw your focus on increased suicide during the Great Depression when suicide mortality peaked with unemployment, in the most recessionary years, 1921, 1932 and 1938. Almost all European countries have experienced rising suicide rates during the 2008–10 recessions. Economic decline during and after the COVID-19 pandemic will probably have a powerful and harmful effect on mental health and result in an increase in the prevalence of psychiatric disorders and suicidal behaviour. The stark truth is financial problems may reduce access to psychiatric treatment and the effects of job loss on suicidal ideation will snowball.



The media has reported on several heart-wrenching suicides believed to be linked to the toll COVID-19 is taking on individuals. According to my opinion, one event can bring stress, but it's not going to make someone suicidal out of the blue, it is typically a combination of biological, psychological, environmental and other factors that renders people vulnerable to suicide. Stressful experiences such as learning about the diagnosis of COVID-19 fear of infecting others, symptoms of the illness, hospitalization, especially admission to an intensive care unit, and loss of income may lead to the development of anxiety, depressive and post-traumatic stress disorder. Psychiatric conditions including mood, anxiety, sleep and substance use disorders are associated with suicidal behaviour. For example, depression is a major risk factor for suicide, accounting for up to 60% of suicide deaths. Mental health consequences of the COVID-19 crisis including suicidal behaviour are likely to be present for a long time and peak later than the actual pandemic.



-Shreya Sarkar

Ways of easing out stressors?

The team at People's Forum has been looking for answers to this question since last year which resulted in a national conference on suicide prevention on 10th January, 2020. Many eminent professionals working in public health sector joined the conference, Aarambh, to discuss the ways on how suicidal ideation can be stopped. In the discussion it was agreed by all that it is important to talk to someone who are showing symptoms of suicidal ideation and reach out to them as an ally, get oneself educated on the things to say and then follow up with professional help. Psychologists and other mental health practitioners should be prepared to assess and address suicidal ideation, suicidal behaviours or suicide attempts. To boost their understanding of suicide, psychologists can review the suicide prevention literature and clinical resources. Practitioners should make sure they are up to date on newer approaches to preventing and treating suicide, and Management of Suicidality as well as more general approaches like crisis response planning and dialectical behaviour therapy. Psychologists might also want to identify apps that can provide supplemental support to patients between therapy sessions. In addition to apps offering help with mindfulness, relaxation and coping, there are resources specifically focused on suicide. If a psychologist suspects that a patient is experiencing suicidal ideation, he or she should work with the patient to create or update a safety plan that includes a list of warning signs, coping strategies like exercise or relaxation techniques, and contact information for the psychologist, other professionals and friends they can ask for help. Psychologists should do their best to educate patients and everyone else on ways to recognize warning signs of suicide and how to keep those at heightened risk safe and make sure they get the care they need.

A A R A M B H

A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON **YOUTH SUICIDE**

PREVENTIVE MEASURES & LEAD INITIATIVES

1 death
every
40
seconds



AWARENESS

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6th
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2019

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The story so far....during Pandemic

-Surje Gurung

Founder of Cross Combat Fitness Centre

The pandemic has hit many businesses whether big or small. The lockdown measures implemented in the country had forced many businesses to reduce operations with so many restrictions or permanent shut down. One of the most suffering industries which is been hit hard is the Fitness industry. The threat of coronavirus has left the fitness industry crumbling and barely able to stand in the current scenario. I own a small Fitness studio in Mumbai and it was the only source of income for me. Initially, I thought this lockdown will go for 15 days when the first announcement was made to close the gyms and I will be able to pull out through this temporary shutdown. But now it's been 4 months and it feels like this year is just not moving. With severe cash flow depletion and all reserves swallowed up is building tremendous mental pressure and financial distress. However, to prevent my business from running completely dry, I have started online sessions to lower the burden of pressure but the impact of the pandemic is not lessened a bit. It is not only me who is facing these tearful days, but there are also many such gyms that are on the verge of shutting down and many gym owners and have gone out of business. Every day there is heartfelt news popping up on social media about closures of gyms or businesses and suicidal attempts as its simply not possible to survive with no income for months followed by an unbearable burden of high gym rents due and pending heavy loan payments and personal day-to-day expenses are also becoming unaffordable. This is creating emotional distress amongst the people and many cases of suicides popping up aren't any more surprising. After all, it's not easy to make money virtually. I am not able to sleep well at night, to be honest. There is no news of gyms getting reopened anytime soon to contain this pandemic so I believe that this is just the beginning and it's going to be more threatening in the coming days if there is no relaxation given on the fitness industry. It will be not wrong to say that even If I will be able to open the doors once more, things will not go back to how they were before the crisis hit. There will be so many new implementations to limit the risk of COVID 19 which will make us face more challenges and may also pose a financial risk. I really fear and going through severe mental breakdown thinking about the struggle to come back to normal life and generate enough income in the future.



SWARA

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