Covid Pandemic: Psychological Impact of Fear and Helplessness on the Minds of People

Asba Masroor

Abstract:

This article seeks to extend the information about the psychological impact of covid pandemic on the minds of people.The pandemic, it all initiated with the feeling of fear and also economical and financial stress. But people were coping up with all these things by feeling relaxedby a long lockdown imposed, but it all went through confusion and it all started piling up with anxiety and depression. The psychological health of younger adults , mainly students have been worse throughout during thepandemic. Concentrating well on studies became a matter of concern in this strenuous period. Students had to resort to the 'new normal' i.e. studying online, which had its own complications of maintaining enough productivity. On the other side elder individuals started ending up with boredom, insomnia and other health issues. Also the working people were hit drastically as in a blink of an eye they were all locked up in their homes and there were no face to face interactions for them which created many psychological problems like loneliness and depression. This article also aims to help people and students improve their mental immunity and maintain a good psychological health and to stand out as stronger individuals during the pandemic.

Introduction:

As the coronavirus pandemic rapidly sweeps across the world, it is inducing a considerable degree of fear, worry and concern in the population at large and among certain groups in particular, such as older adults, care providers and people with underlying health conditions women and children. In public mental health terms, the main psychological impact to date is elevated rates of stress or anxiety. But as new measures and impacts are introduced especially quarantine and its effects on many people's usual activities, routines or livelihoods levels of loneliness, depression, harmful alcohol and drug use, and self-harm or suicidal behaviour are also expected to rise. Covid has created a sense of fear all over the world. Messages for the general population,COVID-19 has and is likely to affect people from many countries, in many geographical locations. When referring to people with COVID-19, do not attach the disease to any particular ethnicity or nationality. Be empathetic to all those who are affected, in and from any country. People who are affected by COVID-19 have not done anything wrong, and they deserve our support, compassion and kindness.

Discussion:

How all age groups were affected:

The most hard hit age group people were the women,children ,students and old age people. Children were fed up of being locked at home and the women were tired of being working unproportinately all time. Old age people were afraid of their health all time ending up in anxiety. People with sleep disturbances had a lot to suffer, their insomnia became a curse for them which made them sleepy and half dosing all day halting their activities. Older adults, especially in isolation and those with cognitive decline/dementia,have become more anxious, angry, stressed, agitated and withdrawn during the outbreak or while in quarantine.

How students were affected:

It all started as a crisis for everyone but it was really a very big matter of concern for the students who had to resort to the new normal for studying. The ONLINE learning which had some pros but very disturbing cons. Students were psychologically not so disturbed at the beggining

of the pandemic but eventually led themselves to stress and anxiety. Students comprise a major part of most countries in the world and hence is one of the biggest community to be affected in lockdown. Students are physically bound and confined to their homes but this didn't stop them from learning. According to UNESCO 32 crore students are hit by covid in India which is more than the population of many countries. Considering the number given by UNESCO it is a very big total to deal with, while many anticipated that the situation may get under control and awaited the pandemic to end. Most of the schools and colleges decided not to halt their studies and moved on with online classes and distance education. However, unfortunately,we still don't have a tech-savvy infrastructure so the students and teachers had to suffer a lot. Students had to resort to the NEW NORMAL of studying. It has its own boons and banes. Students were confused with the new schedule and ended up with stress of studies. Many of them got their new spectacles due to the use of screen for a long time. Many of them lost their track of being consistent in studies and are now ending up in anxiety.

How to manage stress related to studies:

1) Strategize your work.
2) Make a plan and cling on to it.
3) Be consistent.
4) Eat, sleep and workout.
5) Take powernaps between your studies
6) At last be safe and follow instructions to be safe from covid

How to manage Psychological and Mental Health problems:

Feeling under pressure is a likely experience for many at this hard time. It is quite normal to be feeling this way in the current situation. Stress and the feelings associated with it are by means a reflection of the stressful environment around the people.Managing your mental health and psychosocial well-being during this time is as important as managing your physical health. Take care of yourself at this time. Try and use helpful coping strategies such as ensuring sufficient rest and healthy food,engage in physical activity,and stay in contact with family and friends. Avoid using unhelpful coping strategies such as use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs. In the long term, these can worsen your mental and physical well-being. The COVID-19 outbreak is a unique and unprecedented scenario for many workers,particularly if they have not been involved in similar responses. Even so, using strategies that have worked for in the past to manage times of stress can benefit now for people.

You are the person most likely to know how you can de-stress and you should not be hesitant in keeping yourself psychologically well.

This is not a sprint; it's a marathon.

Some healthcare workers may unfortunately experience avoidance by their family or community owing to stigma or fear. This can make an already challenging situation far more difficult. If possible, staying connected with your loved ones, including through digital methods, is one way to maintain contact. Turn to your colleagues, your manager or other trusted persons for social support your colleagues may be having similar experiences to you.

Mental health of Children and how to Manage it:

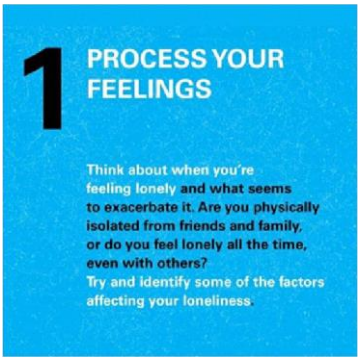
Help children find positive ways to express feelings such as fear and sadness. Every child has his or her own way of expressing emotions. Children feel relieved if they can express and communicate their feelings in a safe and supportive environment. Keep children close to their parents and family, if considered safe, and avoid separating children from their parents and care takers. Further, ensure that during periods of separation, regular contact with parents and carers is maintained.

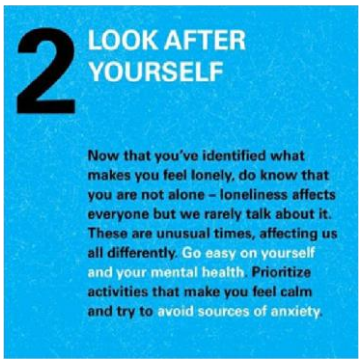
Maintain familiar routines in daily life as much as possible, or create new routines, especially if children must stay at home. Provide engaging age-appropriate activities for children, including

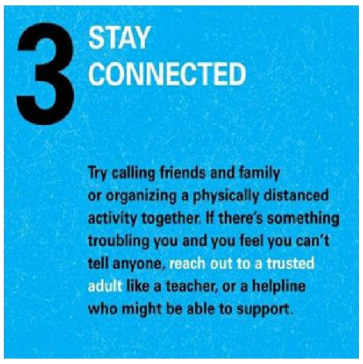
activities for their learning. Where possible, encourage children to continue to play andsocialize with others, even if only within the family when advised to restrict social contact. During times of stress and crisis, it is common for children to seek more attachment and be more demanding on parents. Discuss COVID-19 with your children in an honest and age-appropriate way.If your children have concerns, addressing them together may ease their anxiety. Children will observe adults' behaviours and emotions for cues on how to manage their own emotions during difficult times.

References:

1) WHO
2) UNESCO
3) UNICEFTimes of India (news paper)







Asba Masroor
(MBBS Student)