

COVID-19 & MENTAL HEALTH

a resource guide

“what we are
experiencing
right now is
unprecedented,
unusual &
extraordinary.”

— Pooja Nair,
QACP Faculty, MHP

- If you are feeling stressed, anxious, sad, scared or even frustrated right now, know you're not alone.
- COVID has resulted in changes to how we live our lives, routines, patterns and mindsets - changing how we work, study, connect with each other and more.
- Thus feelings of worry, stress, tension, anxiety, numbness, sadness are normal responses to periods of crises.

mental health is an *important* part of the conversation.

mindset switch from 'living' to 'survival'

DESPAIR

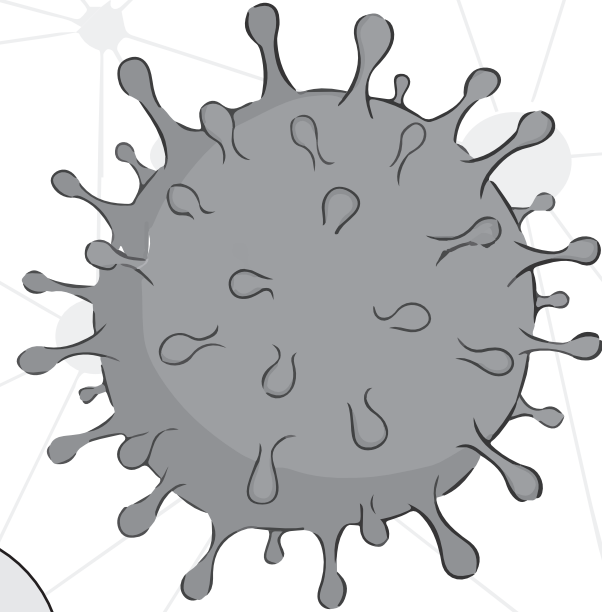
FEAR
for loved
ones lives

DECREASED
JOB/FINANCIAL
SECURITY

INCREASED
HEALTH
ANXIETY

LONELINESS

SOCIAL
WITHDRAWAL



normal human responses to a global pandemic:

- Food and eating challenges & difficulties
- Resurgence of compulsive and addictive behaviour
- Obsessive or intrusive thoughts, memories or fears
- Generalised fear, anxiety, panic & overwhelm
- Depression, dissociation, shutdown, freeze, hopelessness
- Feelings of abandonment or loneliness or isolation
- Sense of loss of control or powerlessness. Feeling confused
- Anxiety around money, shelter, food and other survival needs
- Past traumas being triggered, activated or re-experienced
- Health anxiety heightened (about COVID-19 and otherwise)
- Feeling like existing chronic needs are being ignored
- Thoughts and feelings about death and dying
- New and old grief surfacing
- Feelings of anger, irritation and frustration
- Caring for everyone to one's own detriment
- Feeling exhausted, fatigued, unmotivated, lethargic
- Hyper-focus, surges of energy, keep 'doing' to distract

how *stress* affects the body.

SKIN

hair loss, dull/brittle hair,
brittle nails, dry skin, acne,
delayed tissue repair

IMMUNE SYSTEM

decreased immune function, lowered
immune defenses, increased risk of
becoming ill, increase in recovery time

REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

decreased hormone production,
decrease in libido, increase in PMS
symptoms

GUT

nutrient absorption, diarrhea, constipation,
indigestion, bloating, pain and discomfort

BRAIN

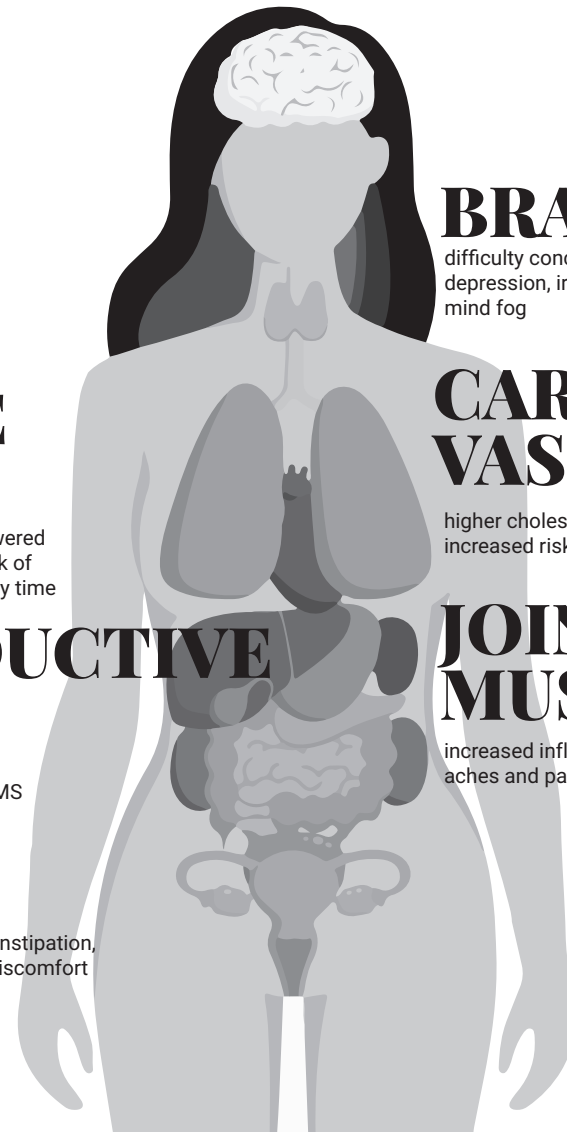
difficulty concentrating, anxiety,
depression, irritability, mood,
mind fog

CARDIO- VASCULAR

higher cholesterol, high blood pressure,
increased risk of heart attack & stroke

JOINTS & MUSCLES

increased inflammation, tension,
aches and pains, muscle tightness





signs of stress

PHYSICAL

tense muscles
feeling exhausted
disturbed sleep patterns
chronic headaches
change in appetite
weakened immune system
tummy trouble
body ache
elevated resting heartbeat

PSYCHOLOGICAL

forgetting things
feeling disorganized
procrastinating
inability to concentrate
constant worrying
withdrawing from others
easily agitated/irritated
trouble making decisions
low self-esteem & feelings of worthlessness
inability to relax even on days off

dealing with stress & anxiety



accept

that you cannot
control everything



do your best

instead of
aiming for
perfection



practice selfcare



learn

what triggers
your anxiety &
how you have
coped before



reduce

your news
intake to only
trusted sources

dealing with uncertainty & isolation



remind

yourself what
is certain -- focus
on the things
that ground
you



create

a sense of
flexible structure
& routine



focus

on short-
term goals
& tasks



use social media

for good. Follow
communities
coming together
for relief work



stay connected

with others, use all
technology to
stay engaged with
friends and family

types of *self-* care.

PHYSICAL

- moving your body
- what you eat
- amount of sleep

EMOTIONAL

- understanding your feelings
- coping mechanisms
- expressing yourself

SPIRITUAL

- discovering what you believe
- creating a practice
- meditation

PRACTICAL

- household chores
- organization
- safety and security

SOCIAL

- good support system
- boundaries

PERSONAL

- creating core values
- hobbies
- time alone

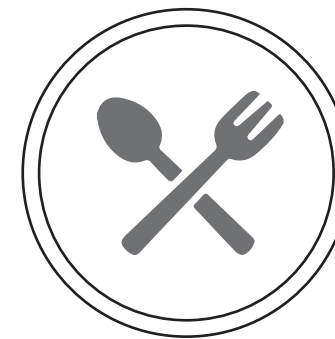
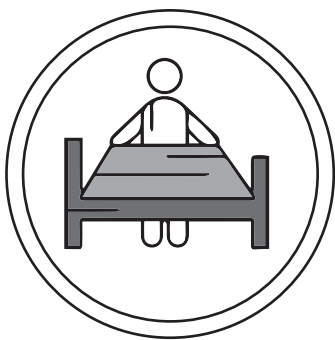
SOCIAL MEDIA

- good boundaries
- no endless scrolling

PROFESSIONAL

- work boundaries
- positive work environment
- continued learning

stealth mindfulness.



SHOWERING

Let your shower take over your senses. Listen to the water, feel the water on your skin. Inhale the steam & smell of the soap. Massage your scalp while shampooing. Leave feeling refreshed.

BED-MAKING

As a moving meditation, mindfully breathe while smoothing and tucking your sheets. Make your bed your absolute and only focus for a few moments.

GETTING DRESSED

Be fully present in choosing and putting on your clothes. Take in the colours and feel the textures of each garment. Bring your attention to every detail, like buttons, zippers, and laces.

WALKING

Concentrate on the physical sensations of walking and how every step feels as you raise your legs and set your feet on the ground.

WAITING IN LINE

Take a few deep breaths, to center yourself while waiting. Acknowledge your immediate surroundings & the presence of others while wishing them well.

EATING

While eating, let all your attention go to how your food tastes, how the aroma hits your nose, and the texture inside your mouth.

grounding exercise: 5-4-3-2-1

using the 5-4-3-2-1 technique, you will purposefully take in details of your surroundings using each of your senses. Strive to notice small details that your mind would usually tune out, such as distant sounds, or the texture of an ordinary object.



what are 5
things you
can **see**?



what are 4
things you
can **feel**?



what are 3
things you
can **hear**?



what are 2
things you
can **smell**?



what is 1
thing you
can **taste**?



www.mhi.org.in



contact@mariwalahealthinitiative.org



[@mariwalahealth](https://www.instagram.com/mariwalahealth)