

The Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Our Mental Health

We had to change our daily routines due the coronavirus pandemic we have been facing for some time now. Many challenging aspects today such as exposure to pandemic-related news, concerns over getting infected, adaptation to quarantine, may bring harmful effects to human psychology. Adapting to a new process may be emotionally challenging. In the process, each individual may experience different levels of stress depending on their personal tendencies.

What kind of emotional & psychological symptoms could be occurred in this period?

- Shock,
- Denial, disbelief or suppression of trauma-related thoughts
- Fake joy arising out of denial and suppression
- Anxiety, fear, feeling of panic (Future anxiety, negative thoughts about the possibility of getting harm for oneself and the loved ones)
- Intense anger associated with uncertainty
- Disbelief, scepticism (Generalizing and exaggerated thoughts like “The World is not a safe place”),
- Questioning reality,
- Feeling sad or hopeless, withdrawing from others; guilt, shame, self-blame; feeling depressed, disconnected
- Finally, acceptance of the reality could be seen at the last phase.

What kind of physiological symptoms could be occurred in this period?

- Sleep disturbances
- Loss of appetite (reduced stomach activity) or binge eating
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Digestive problems
- Muscle twitches
- Arthralgia (joint pain)
- Diseases caused by stress-related immune changes

Adaptation to the New Period of Life with Coronavirus Pandemic

- The ability to adapt and respond to changing situations may differ from one person to another.
- The adaptation would genuinely begin when the patient assesses what is happening from a realistic point of view and accepts it as the way it is.

- A common spirit of social solidarity and camaraderie enhances our adaptation ability and resistance to stress.
- Your life is restored as you slowly heal. The ability to stay connected with life and maintaining productivity would continue under the current circumstances.
- A new day of hope rises.

Tips for Coping with Stress Caused by Coronavirus Pandemic

- Be affectionate with yourself and give yourself some time so you can adapt to new circumstances.
- Remember, unbearable intense feelings and emotions that may arise from time to time are only temporary.
- If you have difficulty coping with intense emotions, share your feelings with people that make you feel at ease and relaxed.
- Try to avoid being exposed to bad news all the time. Choose your source of information wisely.
- Try to conduct a new daily routine that may help you to feel relaxed in this ambiguous period.
- Try to engage in activities, hobbies that would keep your brain skills alive (reading books, solving crossword puzzles, learning new things etc.)
- Try to focus on your hobbies, activities that make you feel happy.
- As mental health is an integral part of your health, you should take good care of your physical health (a good night's sleep, a healthy diet, regular physical activity etc.) in order to look after your mental health.
- Diaphragmatic breathing exercises help you relax physically and mentally.
- If you wish to make an appointment for an online session with our psychologists from Altınbaş University Psychological Support Unit, send an email to psikolojikdestek@altinbas.edu.tr, indicating your department, first name and surname.

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