Understanding and Coping with the Mental Health Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Supplemental Slides for Panel Discussion

- Presented by:
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Disclosure Information

- I have no current or potential conflicts of interest in relation to this presentation.
Objectives

1. Participants will be able to differentiate between trauma, burnout, and anxiety responses.
2. Participants will be able to identify 3 strategies for managing acute stress/trauma/anxiety.
3. Participants will be able to identify at least 1 new strategy for supporting their colleagues and community on an ongoing basis.

Coping Strategies

Practice “Meaning Making”

Being resilient means surviving a difficult event and gaining something from the experience

3 Steps for Adaptive Coping:
1. Accept the challenging situation for what it is
2. Make space for your feelings and notice them
3. Ask questions to “make some meaning” of the experience

Meaning Making Questions:
- Can I learn something?
- Can I grow or challenge myself in some way?
- Can I positively impact others?
- Can I practice perspective taking?
- Can I use this as an opportunity to be kind to myself?
**Action-Oriented Thinking**
Believing things are out of our control increases helplessness, anxiety, and stress

**To Increase Resilience:**
- Consider what you can control in the situation
- Make active choices, even if they are relatively small ones
- Widen your perspective – notice the negative, positive, & neutral
- Practice Gratitude + Self-compassion

**Getting Grounded**
Connect with things that are stable and not likely to change to create an “anchor system”

**Identify Your Anchor Points:**
- Personal & professional values
- Why you chose this profession
- Your approach to interactions with patients/colleagues
- Family relationships & supports
- Other personality & identity characteristics (humor, culture, religion, etc)

**Care for Basic Needs**
Addressing basic needs creates a solid foundation & regulates emotional/physical systems

**Consider the 8 areas of health:**
1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Social
4. Financial
5. Environmental
6. Intellectual
7. Spiritual
8. Occupational

**Regulation Coping:**
- Deep breath
- Stretch or move your body
- Eat or drink something
- Consider your caffeine intake
- Do something repetitive
- Use your 5 senses
References