How do we deal with covid fatigue, honor our anger, grief, and fear, and continue to engage in meaningful action...

...in the context of ongoing uncertainty?

MPS Annual Meeting, 2020

Sophia Vinogradov MD

Thank you to our colleagues who helped to prepare the original version of this presentation: Christopher Warlick MD/PhD; C. Sophia Albott MD; Katie Lingras PhD LP
How were we doing when the pandemic first started?

How are we doing today?

(POLL)
Here are all of the things that Sophia can do without thinking twice:

Go birding (#ChristianCooper)
Go jogging (#AmaudArbery)
Relax in the comfort of my own home (#BothamJean and #AtatianaJefferson)
Ask for help after being in a car crash (#JonathanFerrell and #RenishaMcBride)
Have a cellphone (#StephonClark)
Leave a party to get to safety (#JordanEdwards)
Play loud music (#JordanDavis)
Sell CDs (#AltonSterling)
Sleep (#AiyanaJones)
Walk from the corner store (#MikeBrown)
Play cops and robbers (#TamirRice)
Go to church (#Charleston9)
Walk home with Skittles (#TrayvonMartin)
Hold a hair brush while leaving my own bachelor party (#SeanBell)
Party on New Years (#OscarGrant)
Get a normal traffic ticket (#SandraBland)
Lawfully carry a weapon (#PhilandoCastile)
Break down on a public road with car problems (#CoreyJones)
Shop at Walmart (#JohnCrawford)
Have a disabled vehicle (#TerrenceCrutcher)
Read a book in my own car (#KeithScott)
Be a 10yr old walking with our grandfather (#CliffordGlover)
Decorate for a party (#ClaudeReese)
Ask a cop a question (#RandyEvans)
Cash a check in peace (#YvonneSmallwood)
Take out my wallet (#AmadouDiallo)
Run (#WalterScott)
Breathe (#EricGarner)
Live (#FreddieGray)

I CAN BE ARRESTED WITHOUT THE FEAR OF BEING MURDERED (#GeorgeFloyd)
Past 6 months: Experiences and stressors of Covid-19

Stressors

- Uncertainty
- Financial impact/job loss
- Risk of infection to self/family/colleagues
- Social isolation, loss of teamwork & camaraderie
- Limitations in resources (testing, PPE, ICU beds)
- Housing inequality

Physical health disparities (beginning prenatally)

Mental health access disparities (beginning in early childhood)

Educational disparities (exacerbated by remote learning)

Systemic and institutionalized racism

Stereotype threat, racial profiling, microaggressions, discrimination

Income inequality

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Past 3 months: Experiences and reactions to murder of George Floyd and ensuing events

Stressors

- Anger/rage
- Fear
- Betrayal, cynicism
- Shame
- Helplessness/inadequacy
- Grief/despair

- Historical trauma
- Posttraumatic stress disorder, Retraumatization

Access to resources cut off or reduced in already low resourced communities

Anger/rage, fear of retaliation for protests

Black, Native American, People of Color
Stress induces unhelpful patterns of thinking (self-monitor for these)

- **All or nothing (binary) thinking:** right/wrong, safe/unsafe, productive/unproductive, helpful/unhelpful, strong/weak
- **Catastrophizing:** imagining / extrapolating to the worst outcome
- **Mind reading:** making assumptions about what another is thinking and then filtering their behavior through that lens
- **Fortune telling:** predicting outcomes without recognizing their inherent unpredictability or the biases imposed by current situation / state
- **Discounting the positive:** focusing on negative; loss is more painful than gain is rewarding
- **Over-generalization:** applying one observation / piece of data to a broad outcome
Battle Buddies: Rapid Deployment of a Psychological Resilience Intervention for Health Care Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Cristina Sophia Albott ¹, Jeffrey R Wozniak ¹, Brian P McGlinch ², Michael H Wall ², Barbara S Gold ², Sophia Vinogradov ¹
How do we manage our stress reactions and work together to move successfully into a new future?

**Individually**
- Acknowledge negative emotions: anger, fear, anxiety, sorrow, despair
- Foster your positive emotions: gratitude; compassion for yourself and others; solace from music and other creative outlets
- Spend time with your religious, faith-based, or spiritual practices; spend time in nature
- Honor your unique story and the unique story of each person around you

**Collectively**
- Embody optimism
- Find connection
- Foster self-efficacy
- Engage in collective efficacy
MinnRAP Program

Minnesota Resiliency Action Plan
What is the Buddy System?

- Model used by US Army (Battle Buddy) for peer mentoring and support.
- Having a Buddy helps to:
  - Validate experiences
  - Identify and address stressors early
  - Keep work at work
  - Develop and maintain resilience
Role of Dedicated Mental Health Consultants

- Present at the kick-off/launch meeting with the unit
- Provides contact information to members of the unit
- Takes their cues from the unit, responding to unit-specific needs
- Connects with the Unit Lead or Champion regularly to track needs
- Offers to facilitate small group sessions customized to each specific unit
- Establishes brief, non-intrusive “touchpoints” with the unit to maintain visibility of the program (the goal is culture shift)
• Anticipate and identify specific stressors you are likely to encounter

• **Plan:** Identify those that will be most difficult for you
Develop a **personal resilience plan:**

How will you cope with these difficult stressors?
• Anticipate and identify the specific stressors you are likely to encounter
• Describe your likely responses to these stressors
• Identify the stressors and responses that will be most difficult for you
• Describe your personal resilience plan: How will you cope with these difficult stressors? What resources are available to you? What strengths and resilience factors will you make use of?
• If you or your Battle Buddy are experiencing escalating or cumulative stressors and coping responses are getting overwhelmed, it is not your job to be a therapist. Please move into the Deter phase by seeking or helping your BB to seek mental health support, pastoral counseling, or connection with EAP.
Turning our emotions into meaningful action: First steps

- Self-care in ways that work best for you*
- Connect with colleagues*, check on your colleagues of color
- Check in with your teams, supervisees, see if time off is needed*
- Call on colleagues to help cover professional responsibilities if needed
- Try to practice active self-compassion. Be kind to yourself. Take breaks.
- Extend compassion to each other

*Know that steps will differ for different communities and individuals
Turning our emotions into meaningful action: Next steps

- **Speak up** when you see/hear biased comments, actions, policies, and in daily life, even if (especially if!) there are no POC around. Silence is betrayal.

- **Listen** to each other and our UMN faculty, staff, and learners who have long been advocating for change in education, research, and clinical care; learn from their writings and teachings (eg J. Kerandi, 2020; R. Hardeman, 2016, B. Cunningham 2014, 2015, etc); **Examine existing resistance to change**

- **Get comfortable with the uncomfortable** task of self-inquiry (learning occurs at the edge of our comfort zones), talk to children about current events (especially white children)

- **Avoid** asking BIPOC to do more emotional work; consider who you ask to hold your experience.
“The most clear-sighted view of the darkest possible situation is itself an act of optimism.”

--Jean-Paul Sartre

“Optimism is always the primary justification for its own existence. It can seem naive until it is gone. The assumption that things can get better, with the expectation that they should, creates the kind of social ferment that yields progress.”

– Marilynne Robinson
Continued Learning & Resource List

How to Be an Ally to People of Color:
https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234?fbclid=IwAR11rvFH8pv7ddD12oE5a9oWBBvfmgJa48jBpj3dGpKqlYKRINCxjEXMzeM

Anti-racism Resources:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BRIF2_zhNe86SGgHa6-VlBO-QgirTwCTugSfKie5Fs/preview?pru=AAABcnX07hc*Pm8gUUGqTq4TxCwAWKNadg&fbclid=IwAR3Sx1odL3b0m7ABxXHiNkfVwx1oWB9DxbdsB5yJ92L_I_V8QnFjWaSXAw

Self-Education Resource List from Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1p5_t8jKwLJAKuMCed6EYZnjX0hbPDddQIKkODyVNvyQ/edit?usp=sharing

June 3 MPR Community Conversation: Spotlight on Black Trauma and Policing
https://apmg.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uHllyy-qJQWamDZm6JF4tnQ