

S U M M E R 2 0 2 1

Psychcare Bulletin

Summer 2021 Edition

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A Word from the Editor

Welcome to the Summer edition of Psychcare Bulletin, the seasonal newsletter of the Trauma Centre of Australia.

As Australia begins to emerge from COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, we thought it would be timely to offer a series of reflections on how our readers can best navigate the uncertainty that will undoubtedly accompany life as we seek to co-exist with the virus.

Many will be grieving and angry. Some will remain fearful of a new variant and a re-emergence of restrictive measures. Others may simply feel numb and tired. Whatever you are going through, this issue contains some great advice from Psychologist Yeritza Mendivelso and Trauma Centre CEO Peter Horton on how you can healthily adapt to the so-called “new normal” of our COVID-19 world.

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Moving forward BACK TO THE FUTURE

Humans, as any other organism in the world, are capable of permanently adjusting their behavior as the natural environment requires us to evolve. These changes are responsible for providing the skills and resources needed to successfully adjust to this changing world.



Adaptation includes behavioral and emotional adjustment, and the entire brain is involved in this process. Adaptive functions include integration of sensory information, learning, planning of behavior, motor responses, and neuroendocrine adjustment, (P. Smelik, 2008).

During the adaptive process our thought and emotions will be different than during our normal mental state. These altered thoughts and emotional reactions guide us to use the correct coping skills in order to deal with various stressors. Successful adaptation will cause the adaptive mode to fade away since it is no longer necessary. This process will lead to a raised state of well-being. (Lehti, 2016)

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Now that we are slowly moving back to the new “normality”, our post-COVID world can be viewed as another situation we must adapt to. Some questions we may now need to ask ourselves are: Do we feel ready to accept that the world is different? Do we feel mentally and emotionally stable? Do we have the resources and tools to face these changes? Did we acquire enough skills to prepare for this? How we feel about this?

These questions, and our answers to them, help highlight the stage we are at in the adaptation process. For that reason, we want to guide you and help you to move smoothly but surely back to your routine, thinking always about your wellbeing and what is healthiest for you.

Yeritza Mendivelso



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We have developed the Advanced Certificate of Trauma Counselling. If you would like more information please visit our website

www.traumainstitute.com.au

Or contact our office of (03) 9852 7797



BE WISE...

1. Take your time.

You will need some time to adapt and adjust your routine to feel well again.

Go by your own rhythm until you feel comfortable, safe, and ready to move forward.

2. During lockdown you will have experienced changes and acquired new routines. This means that you must have applied some strategies to cope. Keep the positive ones, especially those that helped you feel good, healthier, and more stress-free. You might need them now!

3. Keep an open mind. See this as an opportunity for a fresh start; you are a new person who now understands their priorities better. You now know more about yourself than before! This includes knowing what is better for your mental and physical health.

4. Be organized and patient with the process of adaptation. This will give you a sense of control and will help you to not get overwhelmed with plans, tasks, chores, etc.

Start with small plans, even just a few tasks on your list. Distribute your time wisely and leave some time for yourself.

5. Social interaction is important. We are social beings, and for that reason we need to keep in contact with friends and family as they are a protective factor in your life. Recognize the value of their company as one of the greatest support systems you can rely on.

6. If you require extra help in this process do not feel ashamed. It is important to recognize that sometimes we do not have the tools or strategies to go through hardships by ourselves. It is important to ask for help, especially if you are feeling overwhelmed by stress, conflict, or returning to your routine. Be sure to reach out and ask for help from those around you and contact mental health services to help support your wellbeing.



“It’s not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It’s the one that is the most adaptable to change.”

-Charles Darwin

“Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.”

-Stephen Hawking



FINDING YOUR NEW NORMAL

I am often reminded of my teachers instilling in me the concept of *“the only thing in life that is constant is change”*. By you transposing this truth in your life it will help you adjust toward a new normal.

As we re-emerge from COVID-19 lock-down there is a re-imagining of what it means to live a “normal” life. The way we live and work is different. Masks are now commonplace, as is social distancing.

Work has been re-defined; people have shifted to working at home, and with restrictions easing both working from an office and home may become the new norm into the future.

Education, schools, and Universities have moved online. The way a class is made-up has been deeply affected, with Universities forced to consider their future without international students.

How we socialize and connect is also different, with large social gatherings remaining an uncertainty. Not seeing loved ones, the closure of borders and travel, even the way we shake hands and embrace each other has drastically changed. Our ability to cope with these changes in a healthy way has been severely challenged.



“Things change. And friends leave. Life doesn’t stop for anybody.”

– Stephen Chbosky



TIPS TO HELP YOU ADJUST

1. Saying goodbye to the old normal. This may bring about anger, denial, anxiety, and depression.

Allow yourself time to grieve what you have lost.

2. Develop a new routine. It will help with establish a sense of normality.
3. Keep a diary. Writing about your experience, thoughts and feelings is always a good therapy
4. Create your space. Creating and defined area will help with boundaries between work and play.
5. Being connected to loved ones and friends is a must. Loneliness is harmful for your mental health.
6. Create fun and smile. Walk a dog, have a coffee, eat in your favourite place.
7. Care for yourself. Time constraints can be managed adjust your expectations.
Set realistic goals, give yourself permission to take time out.
8. Be informed about what is happening with the changing landscape.

Peter Horton



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STAYING WELL AFTER LOCKDOWN

Always get information from reliable sources. Try to manage your visits to COVID-19 exposure sites.

As you come to terms with your new-normal, be gentle on yourself. Allow time and space to grieve what was and to celebrate what can be.

For some the journey is difficult. Remember that qualified counsellors and psychologists are always available to help.

- ✓ Wake up early
- ✓ Try to stick to a routine
- ✓ Control the controllable
- ✓ Ignore the BS
- ✓ Walk daily
- ✓ Stayed Hydrated
- ✓ Journal Often
- ✓ Limit your drinking
- ✓ Stay connected
- ✓ Call your friends
- ✓ Read more than you watch
- ✓ Be grateful for what you already have
- ✓ Connect with people you love
- ✓ Meditate
- ✓ Don't quit
- ✓ If YOU NEED HELP-ASK FOR HELP



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Trauma Centre of Australia Pty Ltd

WHO WE ARE:

Trauma Centre Australia are one of Australia's most qualified and experienced providers of psychological support and assistance. We specialise in immediate, on-site response for Critical Incident and Trauma Management services, and 24/7 Employee Assistance and Support.

WHO WE SERVICE:

We provide psychological support services to personnel, and strategic advice to organisations in a broad range of settings including Commonwealth, State, and Local government, large and small businesses including, the aviation industry, multi-national corporations, law enforcement, health care workers, hotels, banks, community clubs and emergency first responders.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Our psychological support team make your confidentiality a priority. Our systems, records and data are kept secure. Our conferencing systems are purpose built and ensure the highest degree of security we could find and are purpose built and owned by us. We do not use mainstream video services that can be easily hacked.

SERVICE AGREEMENT BENEFITS

As part of your psychological support plan, we can work with you to tailor a Service Agreement that provides you with the security and confidence of priority, psychological care response whenever and wherever required 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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- To provide you with the confidence of knowing your organisation is cared for by professionals 24 hours a day 7 days a week, onsite or in-person as required.
- Allows your management team to focus on your core business and direct mental health and psychological support issues to caring and qualified professionals
- A typical Service Agreement with us may cost less than \$1 per day

To enquire about a Service Agreement for the mental health needs of your people, please write to me at peter.marshall@traumacentre.com.au

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