

The logo features a central dark blue circle with the letters 'UIC' in light blue. This circle is surrounded by a yellow ring, which is further enclosed by a red ring. Four thick lines radiate from the center: a yellow line pointing up and right, a red line pointing up and left, a yellow line pointing down and left, and a red line pointing down and right. The background is a solid light blue.

UIC

Alumni Exchange

**JANE ADDAMS
COLLEGE
OF SOCIAL WORK**



Alumni
Exchange

Welcome!

See upcoming events, watch past events and recommend topics at go.uic.edu/alumniexchange



Alumni
Exchange

Finding Joy From a Distance

Life in and After a Pandemic

Lisa Salvadore LCSW, LCPC, CADC

Visiting Lecturer

UIC Jane Addams College of Social Work



2020 COVID-19 Pandemic

We are in a crisis. As individuals, as families, as communities, as a country, and a united world.

- **Crisis Defined:** A **crisis** is a stressful time in life when we experience a breakdown or disruption in our normal daily activities or family functioning.
- Extreme emotional stress/strain that could lead to anxiety.
- Crisis events override normal bodily and mental abilities.

The Human Response to a Crisis

Instantaneous physiological, hormonal and emotional changes occur.

- **Fight or Flight**- increased blood and adrenalin flow to fight off a perceived threat or flee to safety.
- **Emotional Response** – Shock, numb, disoriented, deep sadness, loss & grief.
- **Cognitive Response** – Contradicts views of self and one's safety in the world.



Common Experiences and Feelings

- **Emotions and Mental abilities:** Shock, feeling numb, decreased concentration and attention span.
- Our **Perception** is altered. (How we understand or interpret something).
- **Physical:** increased/decreased appetite, insomnia, exhaustion, muscle tension, sleep problems, hypervigilance.

Feelings of Stress

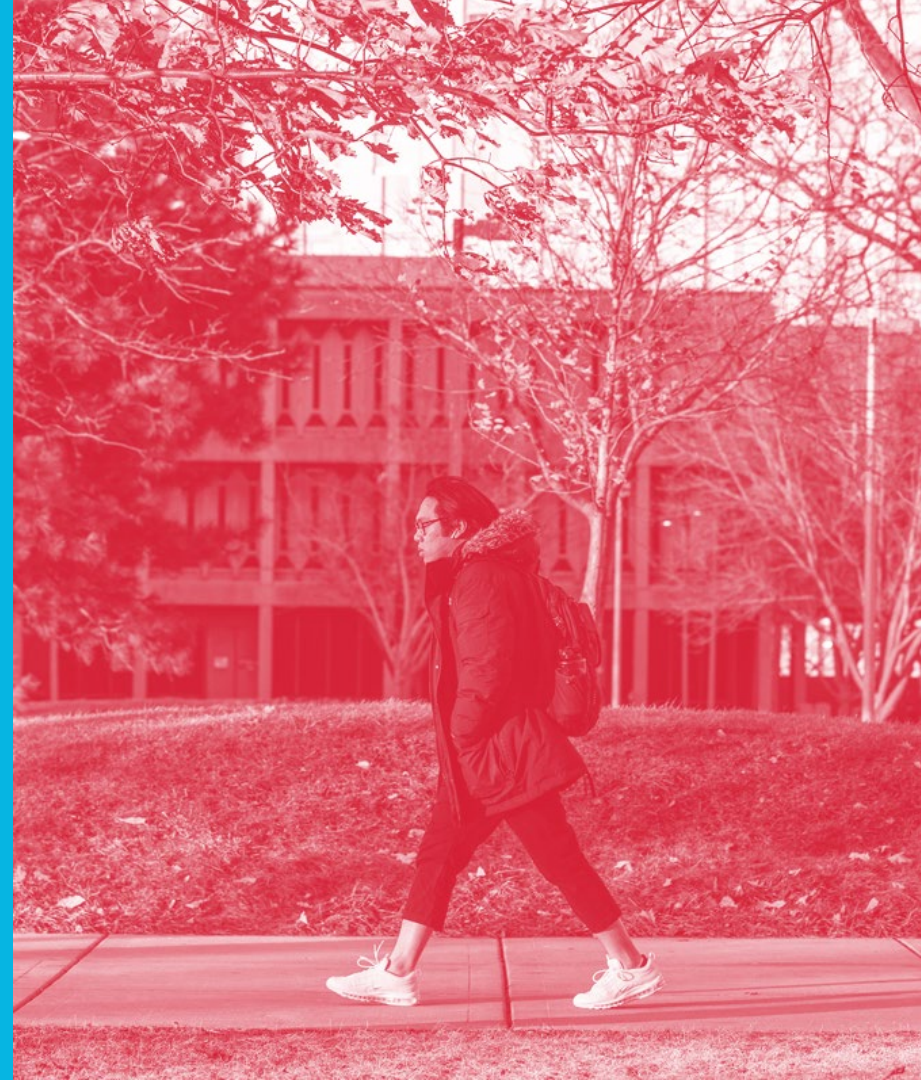
Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include...

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Feeling alone.
- Challenges of working from home.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs or other prescription medications.
- Disruption of your daily routine.
- Preoccupation with worry about what is happening in the world.

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations.

People who may struggle with the stress of a crisis include:

- People who feel more vulnerable such as older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for COVID-19.
- Children, teens, and individuals with special needs.
- People who are caring for vulnerable family members.
- People who have had previous experiences in extreme situations.
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, or first responders.
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use.



ITS OKAY TO GRIEVE...

@_HAPPYASAMOTHER



YOUR CANCELLED
TRIP



YOUR BABY
SHOWER



YOUR GRADUATION
CEREMONY



YOUR CHILDS
BIRTHDAY PARTY



YOUR
FREEDOM



TIME WITH
LOVED ONES



YOUR
WEDDING



YOUR
BIRTH PLAN



A STABLE
PAY CHECK

There is no “normal” way to cope with a crisis...

- Some people withdraw
- Some sleep a lot
- Some don't want to be alone
- Some can't sleep
- Some have trouble getting tasks done
- Some are laser focused and stay busy
- Some people are superstars
- Most people just try to stay afloat...

We are resilient!



Alumni
Exchange

Finding Joy From a Distance

Positive Social Connections in a Time of Physical Distancing

Roseann Adams, LCSW, MSW '91

Positivity for a Change



NOT *Social Distancing*: Social Connection with Physical Distancing

Humans are social creatures.

While physical touching and physical closeness may not be possible during this time, expressions of social connection are even more essential than ever.

We need social solidarity, not social distance.

How can we express social connection while we keep our physical distance?



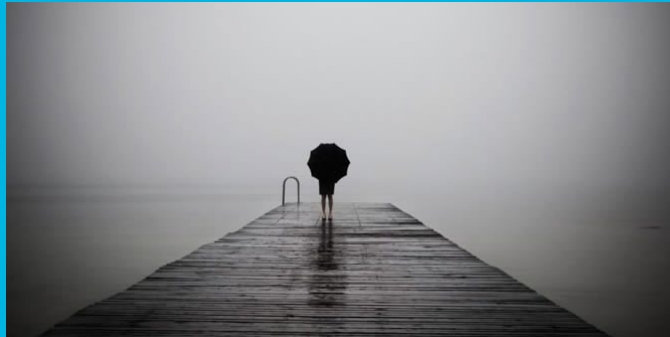
Credit: Alessandro Grassani for The New York Times, 3.14.20

Isolation is Hazardous to our Health

When vulnerable people are part of a social network, their chances of survival are better.

This pandemic has made us all more vulnerable.

When we connect with others to offer help, it helps us too.



Living in Deep MUD

Mystery – When will we get our lives back?

Uncertainty – How will we do what we need to do to survive and recover?

Doubt – What if it all gets worse before it gets better?
Am I doing enough to protect myself and others?

MUD ----Soap & water won't wash that away.



Practice Radical Acceptance

Accept what isn't possible.

Take time and space to grieve.

Find ways to get what we need in the world we are in now.

How have you found ways to create social connection with physical distancing?



Balance Informed Reality with Examples of Hope and the Power of Positive Connection

We're all bombarded with sad news about increasing numbers of positive cases and dire worst-case scenario predictions. While it's important to stay informed we need to give ourselves and each other antidotes of joy and connection so we can find strength from stories of survival and recovery through disaster.

What are some of your sources of joy and connection?

How have you shared joy and positive energy to those with whom you interact?



Make Time for Joy

Shoring up our reserves of joy and positive energy restores our strength to deal with the demands of responding responsibly to life in the time of Coronavirus.

What joyful experiences have helped you through a difficult shelter in place moment?



Touch If You Can

If you're fortunate enough to be sheltering in place with another person or a pet, make time for touch.

Touching someone releases dopamine, oxytocin and serotonin which can boost your mood and curb depression.

Touch has been shown to drop a person's levels of cortisol (stress hormone) and strengthen the immune system.

A hand hold, a snuggle a hug.



Nobody Does Resilience Alone



Staying socially connected keeps us grounded and helps soothe us out of anxiety and panic.

How have you creatively connected with others when in-person visits haven't been possible?

Sometimes social support just isn't enough. Protecting your emotional and mental health is just as important as protecting your physical health. Many therapists are offering tele-therapy sessions which for many people are proving to be just as effective as in-person sessions.

What Will We Keep?

The lessons of all this loss and change in the time of Coronavirus: how very little we need, how very much we have, how important it is to share, and the undeniable truth of our connection to each other and everything on earth.

What are some lessons you want to keep from this time and that you'll take with you when we all go back to moving freely and fully into our lives?



Resources

Coping with Stress

- www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_managing_stress.asp
- www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html
- www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a_2

Family Help

- www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/stressed-about-covid19-heres-what-can-help

Lighthearted & Positive

- *Some Good News (SGN) with John Krasinski – YouTube*
- *Inspire.com*
- *Goodnewsnetwork.org*
- *Happynews.com*

Roseann Adams LCSW, MSW '91

www.RoseannAdamsLCSW.com

roseannadamslcsw@gmail.com

312-409-3736



Lisa Salvadore LCSW, LCPC, CADC

UIC Jane Addams College of Social Work

lsalvado@uic.edu

630-715-6000



Alumni
Exchange

Welcome!

See upcoming events, watch past events and recommend topics at go.uic.edu/alumniexchange