

*May 4, 2020 3pm-4pm "Your Mental Health is Important!" by Dr Min Ku, PhD., TELL Kansai,*  
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### **#It is a Disaster**

Pandemic, Infection, Recession, State of Emergency, Schools Closed, No Visitors...

In the face of fear and uncertainty, how can we cope?

Recognize that this is a natural disaster just like any other natural disasters, such as earthquakes, typhoons, tsunami, etc. Disasters causes stress responses. We need to develop coping skills.

### **#Stress response**

"Fight and Flight" Sympathetic response

"Rest and Digest" Parasympathetic response

Stress situation: Sympathetic>>Parasympathetic

### **#Where Do You Hold Your Stress?**

Each person responds to stress differently. Physical & Mental.

Trouble concentrating/Headache/Anxiety/Anger/Stomach problems/Fatigue/Decreases sex drive/skin irritations/muscle tension/teeth grinding/apathy/etc...

### **#Stress in Children**

Under 5 yrs old: Regressive behavior, soiling, wetting, clingy, sleeplessness, nightmares, loss of new skills, minor illnesses, nail biting, crying.

Older: Crying and depression, sleep problems, poor concentration, restlessness, anxiety and fear, aches and pains, regression, aggression, repetitive play is very common, not eating properly.

Over 12 yrs old: Risk taking, withdrawal, apathy, pain, hopelessness, suicidal ideas, self-destructive behavior, irritability.

### **#Chronic Stress**

Mild level of stress is good but if the stress response is elevated for a long time, the stress response itself can cause more damage than the original stressor.

### **#When the world seems out of control...**

Focus on what you CAN control

Practice positive ways to cope

Soothe, focus attention on positives

Seek help if needed

### **#Positive Coping is Support and Structure**

Stay connected to a support system

Experiment with technology; old and new (snail-mail/telephone calls/online)

Listening vs Solving; Focus on listening, without really seeking solution

Maintain structure and routine

Limit news, use reliable sources

### **#Positive Coping is Nature and Nurture**

Nature can provide enough stimulation for us without really overwhelming us

Nurture physical health, Natural daylight, Regular bedtime, sleep, Balanced diet, Exercise, Movement; helps release buildup of stress hormone

Compassion; being grateful of things

### **#Positive Coping is the Search for Meaning, Joy, and Gratitude**

Take action: purposeful, meaningful, creative, fun

Help others

Mindfulness meditation

Spiritual practice

Look for joy and express gratitude

### **#When to Seek Help**

If you feel the stress is harming your health

If you have panic attacks, are feeling desperate, hopeless

If you are using negative coping strategies (drinking, drugs, violence to self or others)

If you are feeling overwhelmed and can't cope

### **#Seek help if you need it.**

If you or your loved one had a broken leg...

Seeking help from mental health specialist is not different from seeking help for physical matters.

### **#Mission Statement of TELL**

TELL is a not-for-profit organization

dedicated to providing world-class, effective support and counseling services to Japan's international community as well as helping to address the country's growing health care needs.

### **#Positive Coping Strategies**

You can control things that will give you a sense of **safety** and **hope**

Soothe and calm body and mind

(social support, structure, limit news, exercise/diet/sleep, daylight, nature)

Focus your attention on positive things

(Action, search for meaning/joy/gratitude, help others)

**#When one door closes, another one opens.**

**#We Can Get Through This Together**

Resilience is bouncing back after trauma by practicing healthy ways to cope.

**#You are not alone.**

You matter, and we are here to listen.

**TELL Lifeline: 03-5774-0992**

**TELL chat: [telljp.com/lifeline/](https://telljp.com/lifeline/)**

**Teletherapy: [telljp.com/teletherapy/](https://telljp.com/teletherapy/)**

TELL is dedicated to providing effective support and counseling services to Japan's international community and its increasing mental health needs. TELL is a certified NPO and their service is heavily dependent on your donations. More about TELL Japan click here (<https://telljp.com/>) If a donation is possible, please see click here (<https://telljp.com/help/donate/>) for credit card and other methods. Thank you for your support!