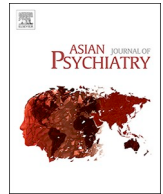




Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

Elsevier hereby grants permission to make all its COVID-19-related research that is available on the COVID-19 resource centre - including this research content - immediately available in PubMed Central and other publicly funded repositories, such as the WHO COVID database with rights for unrestricted research re-use and analyses in any form or by any means with acknowledgement of the original source. These permissions are granted for free by Elsevier for as long as the COVID-19 resource centre remains active.



Letter to the Editor

Current Mental Health Issues in the Era of Covid-19



Dear Editors,

It is undeniable that coronavirus disease 2019 (covid-19) has a tremendous impact on everyone's life around the world. This letter prompts a discussion about mental health issues that we may face today, tomorrow and beyond.

First, it is related to lockdown and quarantine policies with tags "stay-at-home", "work-from-home", or "work-at-home", and "social and physical distancing". These policies are necessary to decrease incidence rates of covid-19, but they remain challenging with added difficulties. Many people are unable to stay at home because the space is relatively small; in other cases, people with busy lives to earn daily money to keep family alive are now stuck at home and begging for supports. People with extroversion trait will have their mood drained due to lack of interaction with other humans, and other problems are also raised related to disrupted daily activities, exercises, programs, and businesses. A long-time quarantine however will be a nightmare, which consequently lead to stress, anxiety, frustration, boredom, and depression, and even suicidal idea and attempts.

Second, stigma among health professionals is another issue. Many nurses and medical doctors in Indonesia and Thailand where we live are rejected by the community because they are considered a source of viral transmission (Ariefana, 2020; Kristian & Arifin, 2020; Nernsai, 2020; Purisarn, 2020). The role of communicators and public health professionals are highly needed to help counter the stigma. Otherwise, many nurses or medical doctors will leave the jobs or even their professions because they are not well appreciated after sacrificing their lives to help others. In addition, feeling useless and depression will be another issue among them.

Third, it is related to cyberbullying among those with positive and recovered cases, those who are under monitoring for covid-19, and among those who had a family member with a positive case. They have

been a target for mental harassment in society due to the fact that many patients have a secondary attack of covid-19 although they have been firstly claimed as negative (Mcintosh, 2020). It is of note that cyberbullying has destroyed many lives, which majority of the cases associated with depression, anxiety disorders, suicide, and other health problems (Martínez et al., 2019).

Fourth is paranoia-related issue. People today are being paranoid to each other over covid-19, even with co-workers, family members, and close friends. Everyone is scrubbing their hands like surgeon and being more individualistic.

Fifth is related to complicated grief and feeling guilty after the deaths of beloved ones. Grief is normal, but complicated grief leads to depression. Feeling guilty is one of the stages of grief as we are unable to say goodbye. Without a support, that feeling will be overwhelmed. Additionally, loneliness is another issue, which is related to self-imposed quarantine or loss of a meaningful one.

Through this letter, in your reputable journal, we would like to encourage people who are still struggling at this time to enjoy their quarantine period, connect with family, friends, and others, contact health professionals, and accept that online therapy works. It is also needed to emphasize that those who are infected by covid-19 and their family members have not done anything wrong, which therefore they need our support and compassion. In addition, it is also suggested to the community to minimize watching and reading covid-19 related news that can increase anxiety, fear, and depression, and seek information from valid sources especially from World Health Organization and reputable journals. For health professionals, we also would like to motivate them in the battle of covid-19 and keep providing health care for the community with direct care or through virtual treatment models. There is no need to be disappointed with the stigma from the community, because being a hero is always challenging.

Financial Disclosure

The Second Century Fund (C2F), Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None Declared.

References

- Ariefana, P., 2020. Chronology of doctors and nurses who treat corona patients rejected by neighbors. Retrieved from. <https://www.suara.com/news/2020/03/25/152418/kronologis-dokter-dan-perawat-pasien-virus-corona-ditolak-tetangga>.
- Kristian, C., Arifin, 2020. Personal communication with Indonesian nurses.
- Martínez, I., Murgui, S., García, O.F., García, F., 2019. Parenting in the digital era: Protective and risk parenting styles for traditional bullying and cyberbullying victimization. *Computers in human behavior* 90, 84–92.
- McIntosh, K., 2020. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Retrieved from. <https://>

www.uptodate.com/contents/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR1RgCZKFEywtU6REGTqJPHBM-nPNXaGbi0E3gX8cuAiNyfVZo5WNrx2nuo.

Nernsai, P., 2020. Personal communication with a Thai medical doctor.

Purisarn, Y., 2020. Personal communication with a Thai nurse.

Joko Gunawan^{a,b,**}

^a Faculty of Nursing, Chulalongkorn University Bangkok, Thailand

^b Nursing Department, Politeknik Kesehatan Kementerian Kesehatan Pangkal Pinang, Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

E-mail address: jokogunawan2015@gmail.com.

Siripattra Juthamane

Faculty of Nursing, Shinawatra University, 99 Moo 10, Tambon Bangtoey, Amphoe Samkok, Pathum Thani, 12160, Thailand

E-mail address: ying.nu19@gmail.com.

Yupin Aunguroch*

Faculty of Nursing, Chulalongkorn University Bangkok, Thailand

E-mail address: yaunguroch@gmail.com.

** Corresponding author at: Faculty of Nursing, Chulalongkorn University, Borommaratchachonnani Srisataphat, Building, Rama 1 Road, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330, Thailand

* Corresponding author at: Faculty of Nursing, Chulalongkorn University, Borommaratchachonnani Srisataphat, Building, Rama 1 Road, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330, Thailand