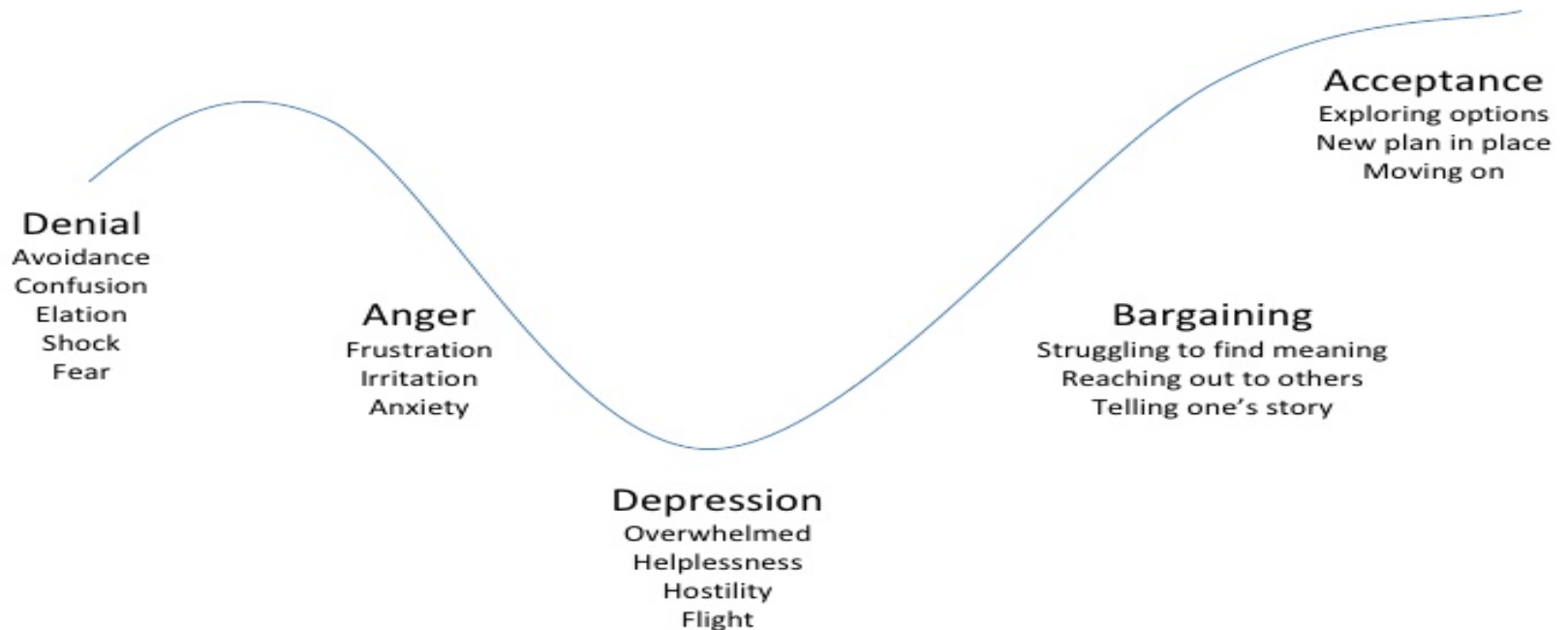


Supporting Staff during COVID

Dr Kirsty Williams
Clinical Psychologist

Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle



Information and
Communication

Emotional Support

Guidance and
Direction

Positions of Certainty

Dr Kirsty Williams Clinical Psychologist



SAFE
 Naïve perceived sense of peace of mind. *"I could be run over by a bus tmrw"*. Intellectualised but often not a felt/palpable sense of own mortality

CERTAINTY
 sense of being/feeling in control- that is derived from living with life being largely unchallenged by traumatic events

UNSAFE
 (feel vulnerable and in this position emotional resilience is low)

CERTAINTY
 Status quo – previous 'normal' is resumed – game face on- control is achieved but in non-adaptive often unsustainable ways as little processing of impact of trauma has happened

UNSAFE
 Psychological vulnerability as previous sense of **peace of mind** is absent

Existential distress, who am I? What will be? What's the point?

UNCERTAINTY
 Feel out of control, nothing is as it was, long to go back to how it 'used to be' realise that was never an actual reality – can't unknow what you now know. Real felt sense of own mortality "I've seen my bus"

The pillars of mental resilience

SELF-BELIEF – confidence in your own abilities and judgement

POSITIVE AFFECT – the ability to interact with life in a positive way

EMOTIONAL CONTROL – the ability to understand and express your emotions

MENTAL CONTROL – the ability to control thinking, attention, concentration, focus, self-awareness, reflexivity, problem-solving

SENSE OF PURPOSE – the motivation that drives you forward

COPING – adaptability, natural coping strategies you have learnt through coping in previous stressful situation

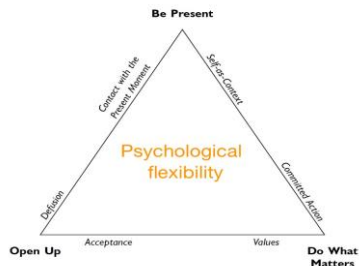
SOCIAL SUPPORT – the social network you have and the ways you use it

SAFE

Psychological resilience is **sustainably** nurtured via focus on well-being and achieving balance. Individual and relational resilience fostered – investment in personal goals, values – meaning making. Peace of mind derived from multiple sources and not only from **sense of control of the future**.

UNCERTAINTY

Safe uncertainty is not fixed and is always in a state of flow and exploration with multiple explanations for the problem and the solution. Finding a relationship with what is. Uncertainty as a given – finding a constructive relationship with it.



A brief note on post-traumatic stress

- Some degree of post-traumatic stress is inevitable in some health care staff post-covid
- Post-traumatic stress **DISORDER** however, is not inevitable and will only be a formal diagnosis in a much smaller %
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress are a normal part of the body's response to making sense of an abnormal life event/experience.
- Most people will benefit from a period of psychological convalesce whereby they appreciate that they may feel fatigued, emotionally labile, experience flash backs, and struggle with a sense of purpose.
- For most people these symptoms whilst distressing (usually because they appear 'after' the event, when emotional and physical resilience is low) will settle with a resumption of routine, connection and opportunities to talk.

Resilience/Debrief

- **Formal psychological support is proven not to be of benefit at this stage.**
- At the beginning of every clinical day, please delegate someone to lead for the day and maintaining social distancing, prior to seeing patients take a minute to acknowledge that we are all feeling fear of the unknown/ what is to come, stress both from work and home and to recognise we are thankful to staff for their hard work, adaptability, care, compassion and team work.
- Reiterate it's **ok not to feel ok.**
- At the end of the day, please meet again while maintaining social distancing and ask
What went well today?
What was difficult?
Are you ok?
- All staff should have the opportunity to share including the team leaders at this time. **It's ok not to be ok**, this is an opportunity to verbalise how you are feeling and a continuing process of ensuring we are all looking out for each other. Often just verbalising it is enough and these sessions are not designed to fix issues but allow people to voice worries.

PROBLEM FOCUSED COPING + EMOTION FOCUSED COPING



ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS
DON'T BOTTLE THEM UP

BE COMPASSIONATE -
YOU ARE DOING YOUR BEST!

BREATHING IN CALMS MY BODY • BREATHING OUT CALMS MY MIND

RESILIENCE

"THE ABILITY TO WITHSTAND AND REBOUND FROM ADVERSITY"
F. Walsh

INDIVIDUAL
RESILIENCE

RELATIONAL
RESILIENCE

OUR OWN
STRENGTH



STRENGTH FROM
RELATIONSHIPS



STRESS + CRISES CHALLENGE US,
BUT THEY DON'T NECESSARILY
DAMAGE US.

HOW TO KEEP ON, KEEPING ON...

BE FLEXIBLE - ABLE TO CHANGE, REORGANISE
+ FIT CHALLENGES OVER TIME

RESPECT INDIVIDUAL (+ YOUR OWN) NEEDS,
DIFFERENCES + BOUNDARIES. PAY ATTENTION

KEEP CONNECTED - MUTUAL SUPPORT +
COLLABORATION

**KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOUR VALUES + WHAT
IS IMPORTANT TO YOU**

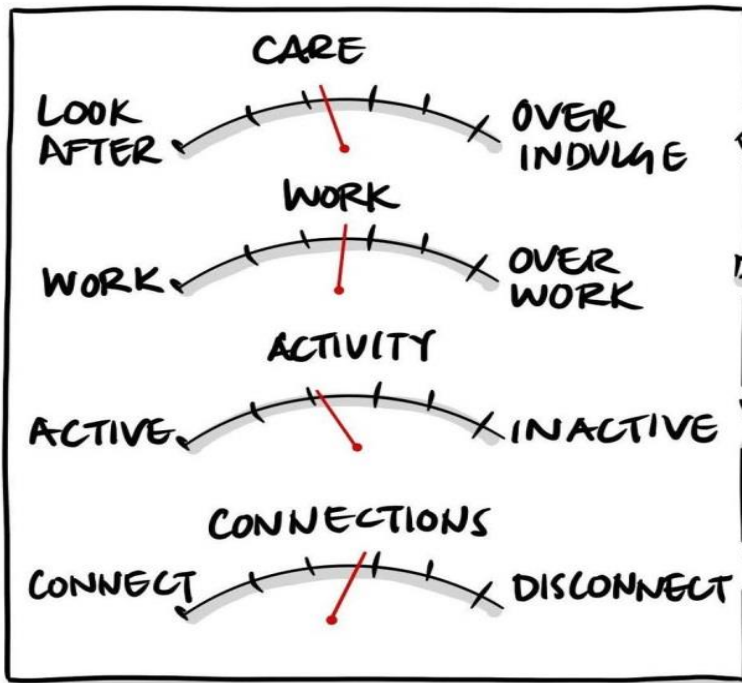
**DON'T FORGET THERE IS A WHOLE WORLD
OUT THERE - AND YOU ARE PART OF IT**

COMMUNICATE - TALK TO PEOPLE

REST - DO SOMETHING COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT

SEEK HELP IF YOU NEED IT

FIND YOUR WAY ALONG THESE CONTINUUMS



CARE FOR YOURSELF + OTHERS. AVOID EXCESS - JUNK FOOD OR ALCOHOL

WHEN WORKING HARD - YOU NEED TO DECOMPRESS

FIND WAYS TO MOVE, CONNECT WITH NATURE + REST

CONNECT TO YOUR VALUES + TRUSTED INFORMATION USE TECH. POSITIVELY + VALUE DISCONNECTION TOO!

Useful Links

[Living with worry and anxiety amidst global uncertainty](#)

[www.psychologytools.com › assets › covid-19 › guide to living wit...](http://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide_to_living_wit...)

PDF About this guide **Worry and anxiety** are common problems at the best of times, and when it takes over it can become all-encompassing. At Psychology Tools we have put together this free guide to help you to manage your **worry and anxiety** in these **uncertain** times.

[Coping with death and grief during Covid-19 | BPS](#)

[www.bps.org.uk › coronavirus-resources › public › coping-death-and...](http://www.bps.org.uk/coronavirus-resources/public/coping-death-and...)

27 Apr 2020 - ... cope with **death** and **grief**, at a time when many people are experiencing the **loss** of a friend or family member due to the Covid-19 **pandemic**.

[Grieving at a social distance | The Psychologist](#)

[thepsychologist.bps.org.uk › grieving-social-distance](http://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/grieving-social-distance)

29 Apr 2020 - Angelina Archer on **bereavement** during the coronavirus **pandemic**. It was a ... However, unlike **loss** in normal conditions, government rules on ...

[Read our guidance on death and grieving in a care home ...](#)

[www.bps.org.uk › sites › www.bps.org.uk › files › Policy › Death an...](http://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Death_an...)

PDF

5 days ago - Supporting yourself and others: coping with **death** and **grief** during the Covid-19 **pandemic**.

[https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/ ...](https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/)