Social Isolation During a Pandemic, and After

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## List the Challenges

- Stigma (free and reduced lunches, physical appearance, socio-economic status)
- Technology challenges
- Parent/caregiver fatigue and burnout
- Housing and food insecurity
- Some kids have childcare and household duties (much as an adult)
- Transportation concerns, can't afford bus ticket or don't live close to bus line
- Mental healthcare needs, limited access, stigma, not enough providers to meet the need
- Language differences
- Widening economic gap between wealthy families and families that are struggling
- Students not getting adequate exercise or sleep, increasing anxiety and depression
- All manner of abuse and neglect



Shannon Fisher, M. Ed.
Special Education Teacher, Mathematics

## Common Scenario in Post Acute and Long Term Care Settings

- Rising patient acuity
- Disproportionate reimbursement
- Results in dissatisfaction and high staff turnover
- Impacts quality of care
- Adding to discouragement and demotivation:
  - Federal survey processes that only focus on deficiencies with compliance
  - Media reports biased toward publishing poor outcomes
  - Negative processes (e.g. legislative hearings and lawsuits)
  - All focusing on mistakes



Arif Nazir, MD, FACP, CMD, AGSF
Immediate Past President
American Medical Director's
Association (AMDA)



## We can still affect change!

## Micro – individual resident/family level

- Staff to screen for trauma
- Providers to screen for trauma
- Refer for assessment and treatment when necessary

#### Mezzo – facility level

- Facility commitment to operationalize trauma-informed care principles
- Train, mentor and coach staff on TIC practices
- Collaborate with community professionals/experts to provide TIC assessment and treatment
- Affect sustainable culture change

### Emotional and Psychological Trauma

"Result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter your sense of security, making you feel helpless in a dangerous world. Often involve a threat to life or safety, but any situation that leaves you feeling overwhelmed and isolated can result in trauma, even if it doesn't involve physical harm. The more frightened and helpless you feel, the more likely you are to be traumatized."

(emphasis added)



# **Dr. Van der Kolk**Psychiatrist, trauma researcher, and author of The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma

## The Virus is a Pre-Traumatic Condition: Two Core Variables

- **1. Immobilization** cannot move (quarantine, shelter-in-place)
- **2. Unpredictability** not knowing what is going to happen next, cannot say tomorrow will be a different day or the day after

When the world is unpredictable and you cannot move, then the vulnerability to become traumatized is very great.

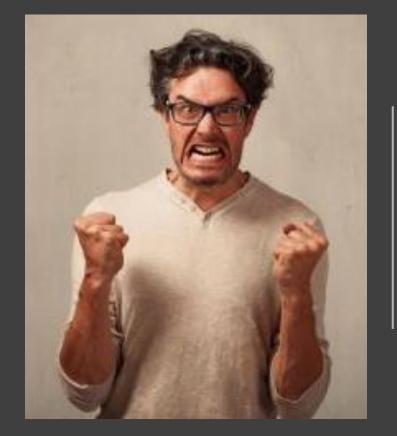
### Social isolation or Loneliness?

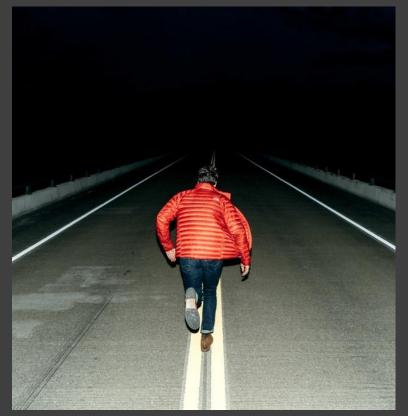
Social isolation is the objective physical separation from other people

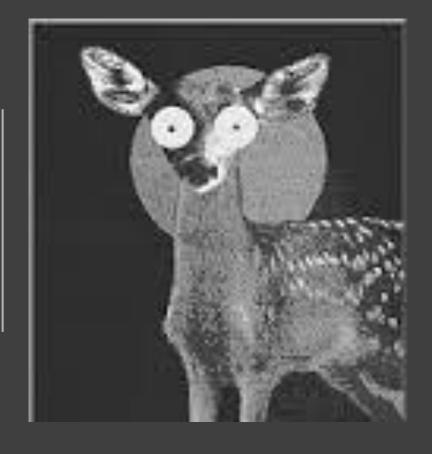
Loneliness is the subjective distressed feeling of being alone or separated

They are different and can exist independently from each other

Losing sense of connection and community changes a person's perception of the world - may feel threatened, mistrustful – which can trigger the biological defense mechanism







**Fight** 

**Flight** 

**Freeze** 

## Biological Defense Mechanism



Risks Associated with Isolation and Loneliness

High blood pressure

Heart disease

Obesity

Weakened immune system

Anxiety

Depression

Cognitive decline

Alzheimer's disease

Death





## Touch Starvation (skin hunger)

- Physical contact is limited or eliminated
- Instinctively, we want to touch someone, but we can't do it because of the fear associated with the pandemic
- Touch starvation increases stress, depression and anxiety, triggering a cascade of negative physiological effects
- Can increase heart rate, blood pressure, respiration and muscle tension, and suppress the digestive system and immune system leading to increased risk of infection
- Can lead to PTSD





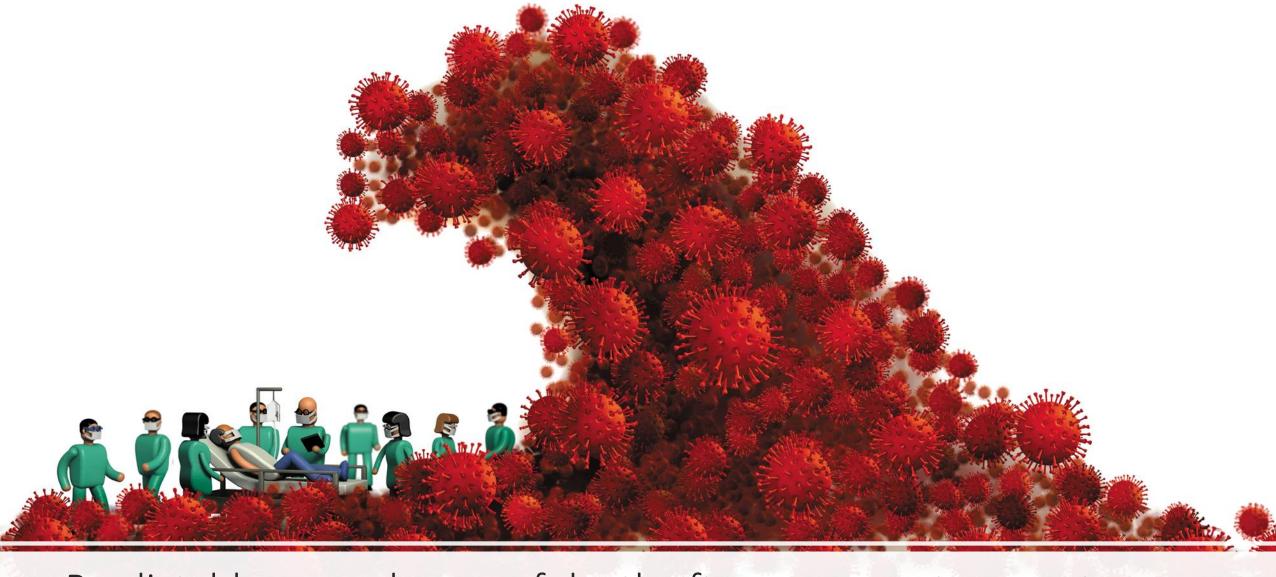
"My framework for thinking about this is that there are two pandemics – one caused by the virus and the other caused by the trauma and stress associated with the pandemic."

https://www.chcs.org/how-the-covid-19-pandemic-is-highlighting-the-importance-of-trauma-informed-care-qa-with-dr-edward-machtinger/

### After a Disaster, We See Increased...

- Morbidity and mortality
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Suicide
- Substance use
- Overdose
- Violence
- Heart attacks
- Strokes
- More...





Predictable second wave of death after exposure to mass trauma.

## Primary Care PTSD Screen for DSM-5 (PC-PTSD-5)

#### In the past month, have you ...

	Total score is sum of "YES" responses in items 1-5.	TOTAL SCORE	
5.	felt guilty or unable to stop blaming yourself of others for the event(s) or any problems the events may have caused?	YES	NO
4.	felt numb or detached from people, activities, or your surroundings?	YES	NO
3.	been constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled?	YES	NO
2.	tried hard not to think about the event(s) or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of the event(s)?	YES	NO
1.	had nightmares about the event(s) or thought about the event(s) when you did not want to?	YES	NO

### Supplement to the PC-PTSD-5

Provided courtesy of Barbara Ganzel PhD, LMSW Director, Gerontology Institute Ithaca College

Box 3.9 DELAYED REACTION TO TRAUMA			
Signs & Symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress			
Possible Delayed Emotional Reactions YES/NO source			
Possible Delayed Physical Reactions YES/NO source_ Nightmares; sleep disturbance; Hypervigilance/Heightened startle; Persistent fatigue; Changes in appetite or digestion or cortisol levels; Lowered immune function/more colds and infections; Focus on aches and pains			
Possible Delayed Cognitive Reactions YES/NO source_ Intrusive memories; Flashbacks; Exaggerated self-blame or blame of others about the event(s); Difficulty concentrating; Belief that avoidance or other behaviors will protect them from trauma; Avoidance of trauma-related feelings or memories or preoccupation with the event; Panic & phobia-like behavior in response to trauma triggers; Inability to remember key features of the trauma			
Possible Delayed Behavioral Reactions YES/NO source_  Avoidance of event reminders; Decreased interest in activities; Risky or destructive behavior; Isolation/withdrawal; Disrupted social relationships; History of abuse of alcohol or drugs			
Possible Delayed Existential Reactions YES/NO source  Questioning ("why me"), disillusionment, cynicism; Loss of purpose or faith; Hopelessness; Also potential adaptive responses such as re-establishing priorities, redefiniting meaning and importance of life, reviewing life assumptions to accommodate trauma.  Adapted from HHS (2014). TIP-57, pp. 61-62.			



#### Needs

#### Physical well-being

air food water shelter protection (emotional) safety movement rest sleep touch sexual expression health comfort warmth

#### Harmony

peace tranquility relaxation beauty order ease predictability familiarity stability balance completion wholeness

#### Autonomy

choice

freedom time space independence

#### Power

self-esteem confidence dignity inner power empowerment competence effectiveness

#### Pleasure

to celebrate to mourn flow humor laughter vitality challenge stimulation

#### Connection

collaboration reciprocity communication company to belong durability continuity to give to receive to see / to be seen to hear / to be heard to understand to be understood

#### Liveliness

to discover adventure passion spontaneity play

#### Authenticity

honesty integrity transparency openness self-expression

#### Meaning

to learn growth to contribute to enrich life hope creativity inspiration purpose clarity awareness liberation transformation to matter participate to be present simplicity

#### Love and attention

love compassion care attention acceptance appreciation reassurance affection trust involvement respect care support nearness intimacy tenderness softness sensitivity friendliness



#### Feelings when my needs are not fulfilled



**Physical** feelings

re axed comfortable energetic centered balanced big soft strong lively in flow full free

Satisfied fulfilled satisfied

content

Cheerfu

amused

cheerful

delighted

ecstatic

joyous

happy

Thankful grateful moved touched

Amazed

surprised

Hopefu

flabbergasted

Physical feelings

sick

Sad

disappointed

melancholic

depressed

down

gloomy

desirous

nostalgic

Regret

guilty

dispirited

pain limp empty small smothered short of breath tense wretched

Pain hurt onely wretched

mourning

Vulnerable

uncertain

sensitive

fragi**l**e

Desperate helpless hopeless power ess uncertain

Skeptical

torn lost bewildered perplexed

Tired

defeated burnt-out exhausted sleepy weary

bored detached iso ated alienated apathetic cold numb impatient

**Ashamed** guilty embarrassed

confused

Scared

afraid suspicious panic paralyzed startled anxious

Uncomfortable

troubled nervous restless uncertain insecure

**Envious** jealous

Shocked

startled upset surprised disturbed alert panic overwhelmed

**Frustrated** 

irritated annoyed impatient embittered irritable

Rage

angry mad upset furious resentfu

Hate

hostile aversion bitter loathing contempt

#### Well-rested

refreshed restored recharged awake alert

Peaceful

calm quiet bright zen at ease relieved serene carefree unconcerned Enthusiastic excited

adventurous playfu lively eager passionate thri**ll**ed radiant

Loving

tender warm openhearted compassionate friendly sympathatic touched

heartened encouraged desirous optimistic

Curious

fascinated interested engaged involved inspired

Confident

resolute confident powerful open proud safe

Withdrawn

Worried

repentance

tense nervous anxious

shy

https://cupofempathy.com/get-the-empathy-toolkit/



# Social Isolation Needs to be Included in Ongoing Disaster Planning

- Emotional, psychological and physical distress will continue, even when the pandemic "ends"
- Adopting and sustaining a culture of TIC is crucial
- What issues/challenges can we anticipate as we begin re-entry into "usual" community life?
- What do we need to be prepared for?



## Process Improvement Project (PIP) Idea

#### Video calls and other technology

- What is the process in your facility?
   Scheduling? Oversight? Devices? Infection control?
- What are the barriers?
- What works?
- Conversation starters to help facilitate a rewarding experience (name the grief and elicit smiles, laughter, new shared experiences)
- What to do if the resident becomes distressed or confused?



The pivotal change we are talking must be INGRAINED culture change, not just adding a screening tool to a list of tasks or putting a generic care plan on the chart.

We need sustainable culture change, not just the "culture of the pandemic."

#### Invitation to Brave Space



Micky ScottBey Jones "The Justice Doula"





Thank you for your time.

Paige