

Mental Health Care relevant to Covid-19

Due to the spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), people are forced to live differently than they used to, and society is undergoing major changes, making it difficult to predict the future. Under these circumstances, you may be more likely to experience the following anxiety and stress. Please refer to the following tips for keeping your physical and mental health.

Psychological stresses

Under the current circumstances, feeling anxiety and stress is not a special thing, but rather a natural reaction. For example, assume the following:

• Covid-19 Relations

- I feel fear and anxiety that I may be infected with the new coronavirus, or that I may infect others without knowing it.
- Become hypersensitive to symptoms (such as coughing and low-grade fever) that you have not noticed in your daily life. I feel anxiety and fear that I may have been infected.
- I am worried that I have no idea when this infection will end.

• Life Related

- I understand the purpose of refraining from going out, but I feel frustrated that my actions are restricted.
- My feeling of loneliness has increased as the time I spent at home increased, and my mood have been dropped.
- Since the amount of activity has decreased, my sleep rhythm has become worse, and I stay up late. My life rhythm has disturbed and that made me feel even more stressed.
- I no longer have an appetite. / I started to eat a lot, such as sweets, even if I was not hungry.
- The more time I spend with my family, the more likely it is that I have conflicts in my family relationships.
- I often have stiff shoulders and headaches which caused by anxiety and stress.

• Student Life Related

- Since there was no entrance ceremony due to the spread of new coronavirus infection,

I don't feel like being a university student.

- I'm worried because I don't know what kind of people to study with in my classes and seminars.
- I'm worried whether I can successfully tackle online classes.
- I can't do experiments in the laboratory or fieldwork, so I'm rushed to know how to proceed with my research and thesis writing.
- Because I can't participate in classes and club activities, I can't make friends, so I feel lonely.
- I am worried if I can continue my study in the university since my parents' income has decreased and I lost my part-time job too.
- It has become economically difficult to continue for me to live in Tokyo. However it is also difficult to return home town. I am wondering what I should to do.

• **Carrier Relations**

- Job hunting process is changed on the web. I have to deal with different methods than before, which makes me confused.
- The industry I was hoping for was greatly affected by the new coronavirus infection, and I had to reconsider my course from scratch.
- The hiring test has been postponed, but since the implementation time has not been decided after the postponement, I am worried whether I can continue studying while keeping my motivation.

Tips for Stress Management

• **Regular Life and Moderate Exercises**

- Try to keep regular life cycle especially for meal and sleep.
- You may use sleep related APP which tracks and analyzes your sleep patterns to obtain better sleep quality.
- When exposed to sunlight in the morning, the body clock is reset, and a neurotransmitter called "serotonin" is secreted in the brain to stabilize the mind. Try to be exposed to the sun in the morning. In addition, diet is important for adjusting the body clock.
- It may be difficult to switch moods as you spend more time at home. Even if you can't attend university, try to maintain daily activities (such as changing from pajamas, dressing up, studying, etc.).

- Avoid alcohol, smoking, or drugs to deal with anxiety and stress.
- Create opportunities to exercise as much as possible. Stretching and gymnastics in the room is recommended. There are sites for various exercises that you can easily do.

▪ **Take time to relax**

- Let's have time to relax and have fun in the day. Do whatever suits you best, such as listening music, reading books, watching fun videos, watching movies, playing games, taking a leisurely bath etc.
- You may clean your room to create a relaxing space. When room is clean, you may feel refresh.

▪ **Stay connected with people**

- It is difficult to meet your friends and family right now, let's contact them via social media, online video call, telephone, etc. You may feel calm when you share your thoughts and feelings with the other person.

▪ **Get accurate information**

- Get accurate information about new covid-19 infections.
- If you get a lot of information and news, it may increase your anxiety. If you feel that you may consciously reduce the time you spend with the information.
- Act calmly so as not to behave in a way that is based on prejudice or discrimination.
- Please consider the financial support measures offered to students by Waseda University or by the government which can be used for your situation.

In conclusion

You may feel anxious sometimes because you have no prospect of when your normal student life will return. What you can do is to focus on "what you can do now" in the environment where you are. Please stay healthy in physical and mental. We are looking forward to the days you can stay on campus.