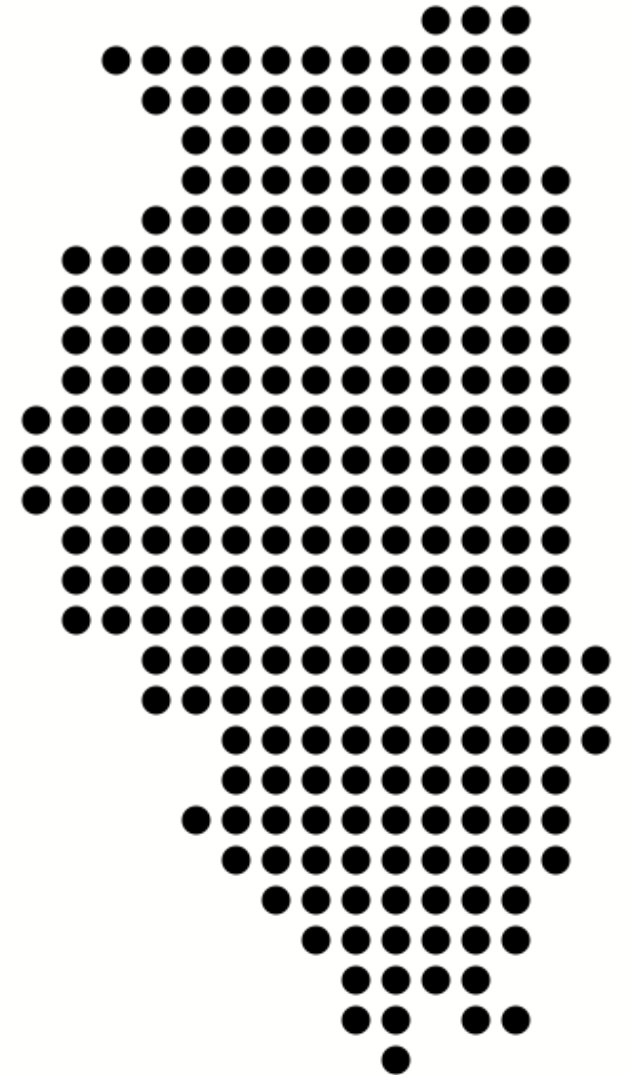


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# COVID-19 & Trauma



# Objectives



- To explore the individual and collective traumas associated with COVID-19
- To develop healthy coping mechanisms and self-care strategies
- To learn about the disproportionate impact COVID-19 has had on marginalized communities due to previously existing structures of oppression and internalized biases
- To recognize community collective care efforts such as mutual aid networks



- A medical overview of COVID-19 its signs and symptoms
- A list of nonprofit funding resources
- Overview of government policies and practices as related to COVID-19

# Meet the trainer



- Name: Jocelyn Vega
- Role: Trauma Specialist
- Contact: [Jvega@icoyouth.org](mailto:Jvega@icoyouth.org)

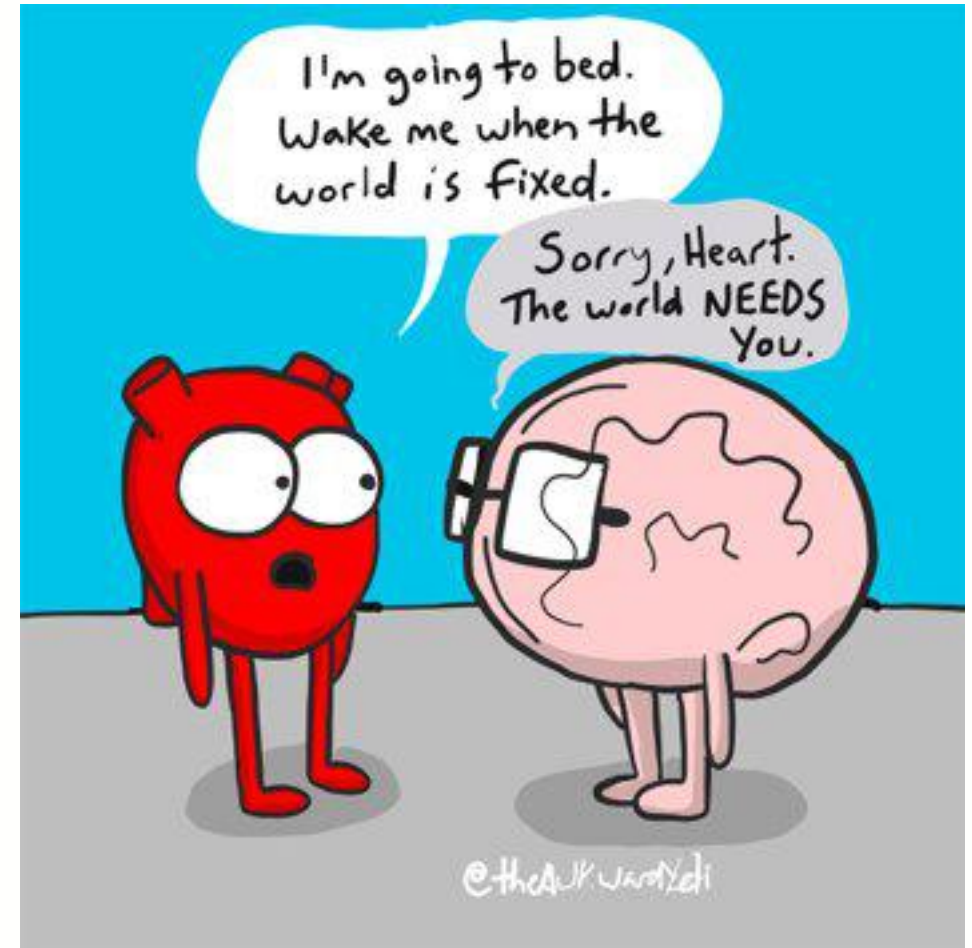


What are your objectives?

# Self-Care Check

COVID-19 is an ongoing crisis that impacts all of us which means this training can be highly triggering for many people.

- Give yourself grace
- Take a break or log off if you need – the session will be recorded
- Breathe
- Move your body
- Connect to someone you can debrief with



# Mindfulness Moment

# Vocabulary Check

## Coronavirus or COVID-19?

- Coronaviruses - a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans (ex. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS))
- COVID-19 – most recently discovered strain of the coronavirus
  - ‘CO’ stands for ‘corona,’ ‘VI’ for ‘virus,’ ‘D’ for disease, and ‘19’ for 2019

Source: World Health Organization (WHO)

### SELF-QUARANTINE:

This is for people who may have been exposed to the virus. They're required to be in quarantine for 14 days.



### ISOLATION:

This is for people who actually have the virus or suspect they may be infected. Those with the virus who need to be hospitalized will be kept in an isolation unit.

### SOCIAL DISTANCING:

This is deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. Staying at least six feet away from other people lessens your chances of catching the virus.



Source: [www.hopkinsmedicine.org](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org)



# Traumatic Impact of COVID-19



# Trauma



An ***event***, series of events, or set of circumstances that is ***experienced*** by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse ***effects*** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being



What are some of your concerns around COVID-19?

# Direct Impact (Personal & Family/ Friends)

- Health & Safety
  - Positive diagnosis
  - Stress
  - Discrimination
- Resource Access
  - Food, shelter, and supplies
  - Medical healthcare
  - Mental healthcare
- Professional
- Family cohesion
  - Caretaking
  - Increased time in contained space
  - Education of school-aged family members
- Routine Changes
  - Moral fatigue
  - Social life
  - Hobbies
  - Freedom

# Loss and Grief

- Loss without closure
  - Loss of a loved one
    - Unable to visit family members in the hospital
    - Unable to hold funeral or celebration of life gatherings
  - Unable to say goodbye to clients, program participants, or students
- Loss of job
- Loss of savings
- Grief
  - Way of life
  - Planned future
  - Life celebrations
    - Graduations
    - Birthday Parties
    - Weddings
  - Change of plans

# Why The Coronavirus Is Triggering Mental Health Issues:

Despair

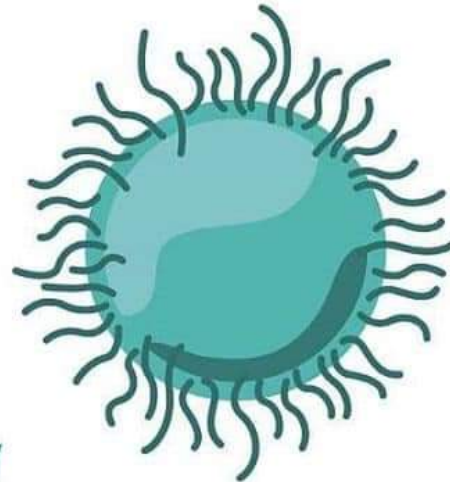
Mindset switch from "living" to "survival"

Triggers feelings of hopelessness

Increased health anxiety

Fear for loved ones lives

Decreased financial security



Decreased job security

Promotes social withdrawal

Loneliness

Quarantine makes it more difficult to distract oneself from existing mental health issues

Coronavirus isn't just threatening our physical health, but our mental health too. Look after it. Please share to raise awareness.



@RealDepressionProject



# Common Responses



- Worry, anxiety, fear of unknown in general
- Feeling of being “on edge” - irritable, cranky, short with people
- Feelings of being low - hopeless, sad, apathetic (just don’t care)
- Feelings of being detached or things feel surreal
- Feelings of anger – lack of resources, magnified impact of oppressive systems, lack of consideration for others (amplified discrimination)
- Wrestling with conflicting values - “do I visit my loved ones or stay home?”
- Existential stress - thoughts and feelings related to “what is the point of my life” etc.

# Resources

## ■ National Resources:

- National Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233; [thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org) or text LOVEIS to 22522

## ■ Illinois Resources:

- Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Hotline: 1-800-889-3931
- IDPH Text Alerts: text “COVID” to 312-500-3836 or “COVID ESP” (to the same number) for service in Spanish
- Call 4 Calm: free emotional support text line where you can speak with a mental health professional
  - Text “TALK” to 552020 or “HABLAR” (to the same number) for service in Spanish

# Professional Impact

“I feel like ‘essential’ just stands for exhausted and expendable” – a grocery worker interviewed on MSNBC



# Healthcare work statistics

- Learning from SARS in the early 2000's...
  - In the midst of the crisis healthcare staff experienced traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, and sleep problems.
  - In the longer term (3-5 yrs), healthcare staff did not show increased levels of mental health disorders, but burnout & general stress remained an issue.
- Early COVID-19 studies from China...
  - Healthcare staff reporting
    - Traumatic stress, anxiety, depression – at same levels as general public
    - Sleep problems (more than general public)
  - What is associated with more risk of stress / anxiety / depression?
    - Worrying about family members at home, past medical (chronic illness) or mental health history
  - What might protect against stress / anxiety / depression?
    - Being satisfied with: care provided by hospital and with PPE coverage (protective measures for nosocomial infection)

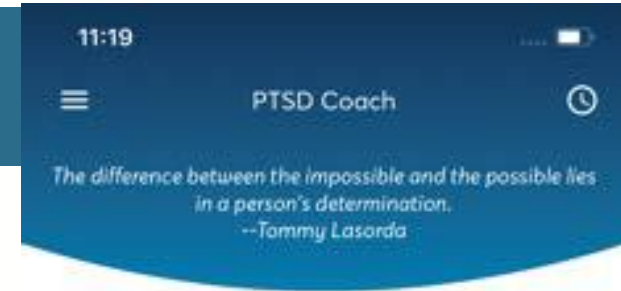
# Provider Resilience App

- Originally designed for health care providers working with military personnel, Provider Resilience gives frontline providers tools to keep themselves productive and emotionally healthy such as:
  - A reminder clock showing how long since the user last took a day off
  - Self-assessments for compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout
  - Compassion satisfaction tools (stretches, daily reflection)



# PTSD Coach App

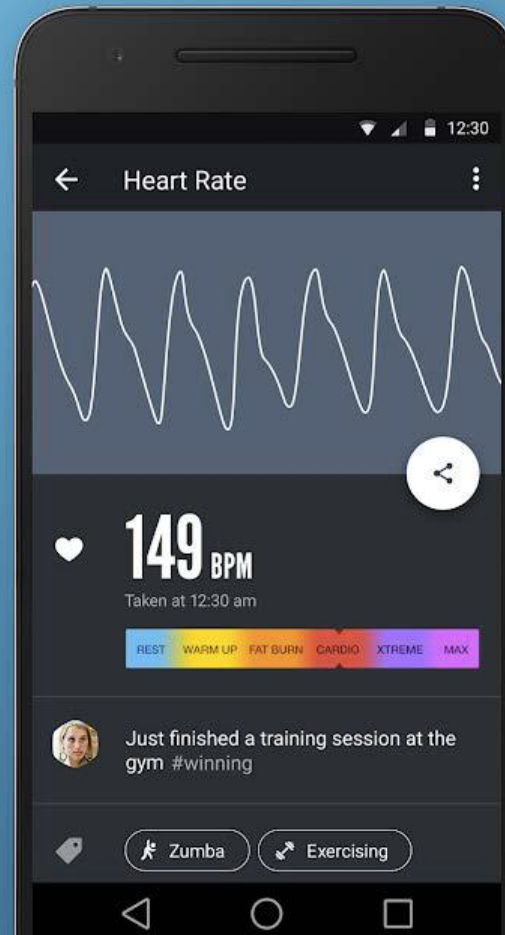
- This app provides you with education about PTSD, information about professional care, a self-assessment for PTSD, opportunities to find support, and tools that can help you manage the stresses of daily life with PTSD. Tools range from relaxation skills and positive self-talk to anger management and other common self-help strategies.



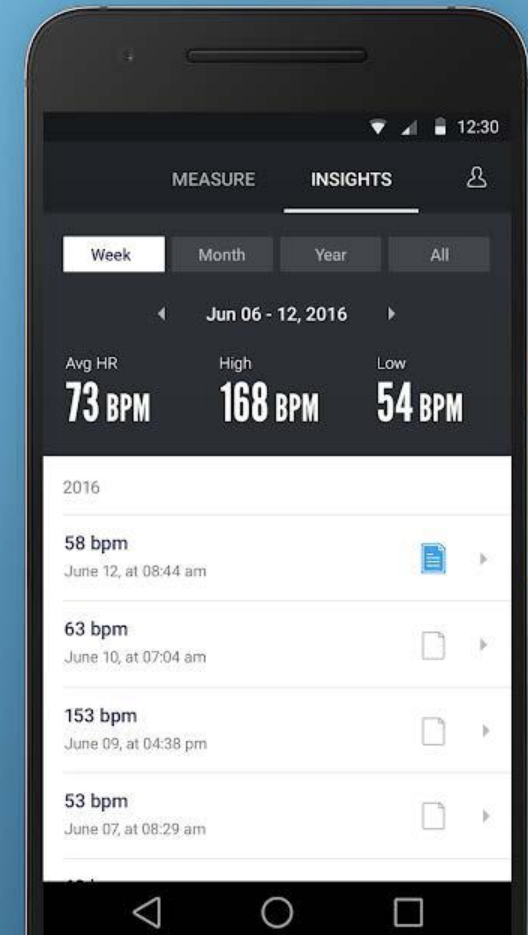
# Heart Rate Free (Instant Heart Rate) App

- Allows you to accurately your pulse and heartbeat

View your pulse wave,  
add tags, and add notes.



Track your progress  
and monitor your heart.



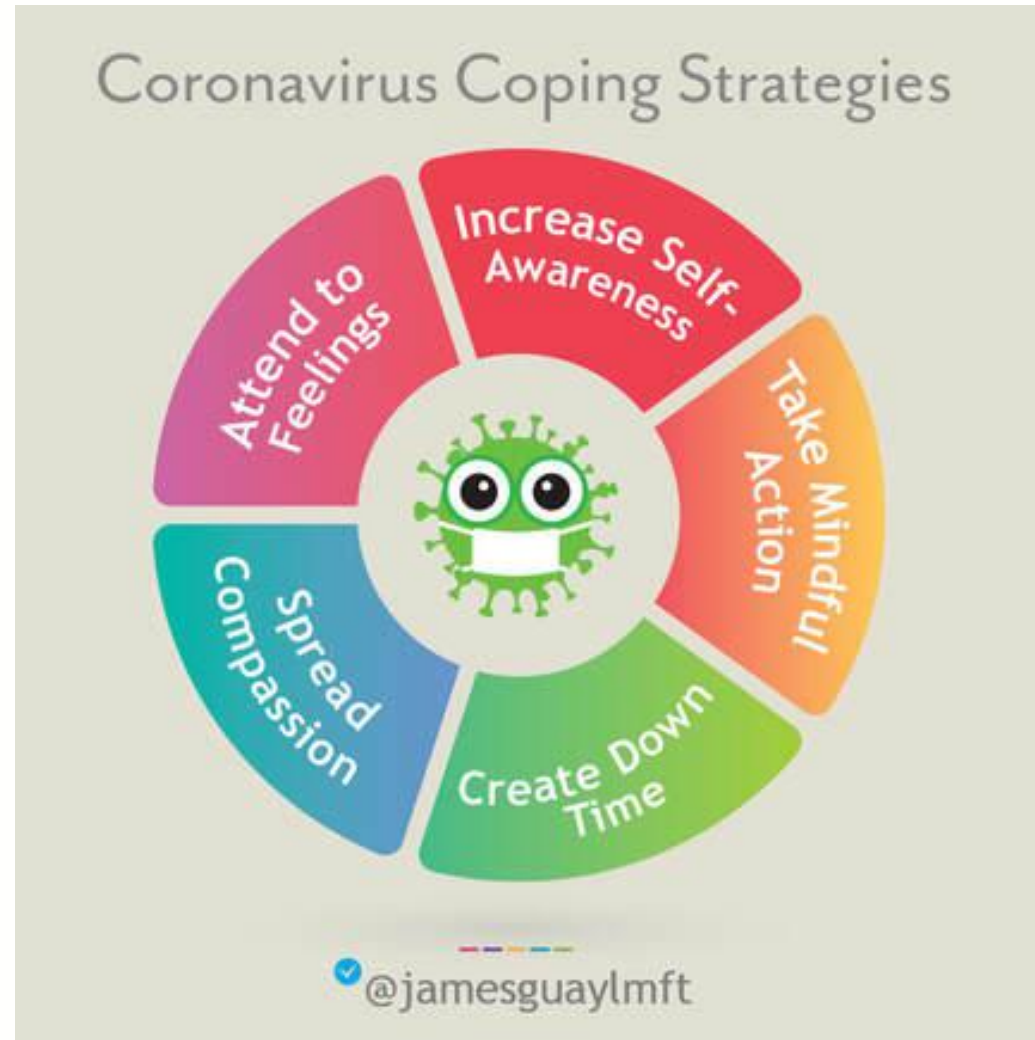


# Coping Mechanisms & Self-Care

# Coping Mechanisms and Self-Care

- Coping Mechanisms – strategies we use face of stress and/or trauma to help manage painful or difficult emotions
  - Daily go-to tools
  - Help to relieve stress and improve mood
  - “Quick fixes” that remedy the situation
- Self-Care - any intentional actions you take to care for your physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional health
  - Regularly scheduled holistic maintenance
  - Goal is to prevent and restore oneself from stress
  - Keeps you going

# Coping Strategies

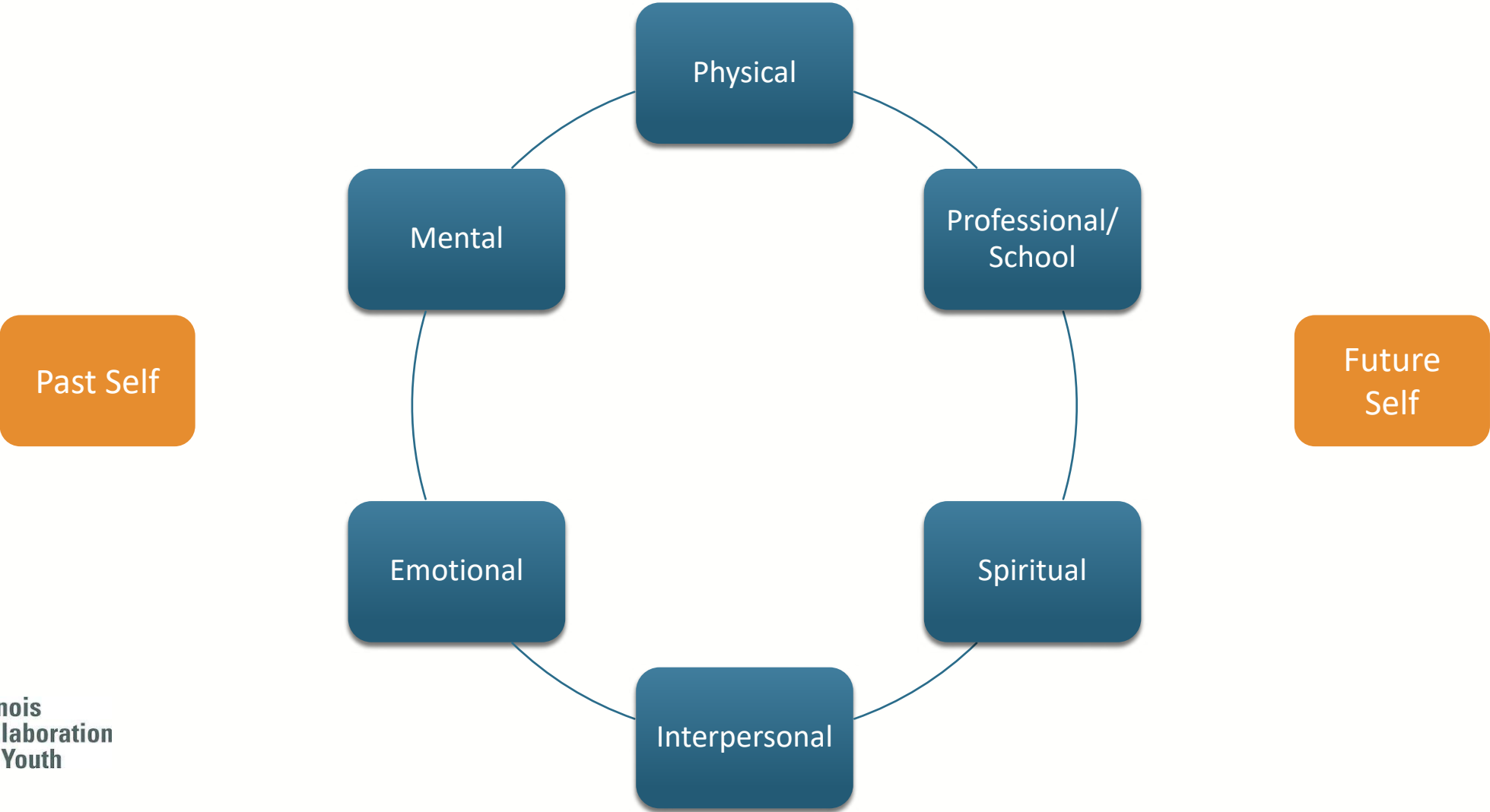


# Coping Strategy Pitfalls

- Avoidance
  - Not taking recommendations of health professionals because doing so would acknowledge the gravity of the situation
  - Pushing away distress through continuous or repetitive distractions such as being immersed in social media, online gambling, gaming, or shopping
- Numbing & withdrawal
  - Things we do to escape uncomfortable emotions
  - Examples include excessive drug or alcohol use, binge eating, excessive sleep
- Anger
  - Blaming certain groups for the current pandemic (ex. calling the COVID-19 a “Chinese Virus”)
  - Having outbursts at friends, family members, and coworkers (short tempered)
  - Blaming marginalized groups for not complying with social distancing without recognizing the systemic oppression that prevents them from doing so (ex. poverty, homelessness)



# Self Care



# Radical Acceptance

Radical Acceptance is accepting the present without an intense desire to change it. It is recognizing what is and where we can act and respond accordingly. It also takes into account what is in your control and what is out of your control. Here are the five stages of acceptance:

- Resisting – struggling against what comes
- Exploring – turning toward discomfort with curiosity
- Tolerating – safely enduring, holding steady
- Allowing – letting feelings come and go
- Befriending – seeing value in difficult emotional experiences



# Collective Trauma

# Collective Trauma

**Collective Trauma** occurs when the experience of trauma reaches a level where entire groups of people and society collectively suffer from the exposure.



# How collective is the collective trauma?

“We’re all facing the same storm, but we’re not all in the same boat – some of us are on yachts and some only have dinghies with holes in them”

– Brittany Packnett Cunningham, activists, educator, and MSNBC contributor

STORMS OF  
CRISIS

GLOBAL  
PANDEMICS

PRIVILEGED



- EASILY ABLE TO WORK FROM HOME
- EXTRA TIME FOR FUN ACTIVITIES
- BEING ABLE TO HOME SCHOOL THE KIDS
- ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HEALTH CARE

MARGINALIZED



- LARGE PERCENTAGE OF ESSENTIAL WORKFORCE
- LIMITED ACCESS TO CHILDCARE
- MORE LIKELY TO BE IMMUNOCOMPROMISED
- HOUSING AND FOOD INSECURITY

DESTITUTE



- UNABLE TO PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING
- NO FINANCIAL SUPPORT
- LOW ACCESS TO WATER AND DISINFECTANTS
- NO SHELTER OR ASYLUM

# Marginalized Populations & COVID-19

- Black & Brown communities
- Folks living below or at the poverty line
- Undocumented immigrants
- Unhoused people
- Incarcerated people
- Seniors/ Elderly
- Disabled People
- Survivors of (ongoing) Domestic Violence



# Collective Care



# Mutual Aid Networks

- What is a mutual aid network?
  - Mutual aid is when people get together to meet each other's basic survival needs with a shared understanding that the systems we live under are not going to meet our needs and we can do it together
  - Solidarity not charity
  - An understanding that it is the system, not the people suffering under it, that creates poverty, crisis, and vulnerability
  - Transparency
    - Funding (many mutual aid projects are not funded and are all volunteer run)
    - Open meetings and pathways for new people to join and participate
  - Commitment to dignity and self-determination of people in need or crisis
- It's important to recognize that these networks have their roots in collectivist culture, activism, and grassroots organizing. In the US, these groups have been especially important for communities that have faced structural and interpersonal oppression such as the disabled community, communities of color, and the LGBTQ+ community.

# Mutual Aid Hub



Map

Table View

Guides and Resources

About

Search

Select all

General

Request Support

Offer Support

Community

Rogers Park Community  
Response Team  
Chicago, IL

[LINK TO FORM](#)



mapbox

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# Mutual Aid Networks in Practice – Rogers Park Community Response Team

- The Rogers Park Community Response Team is an action-oriented group created in response to the COVID-19 outbreak
- Created by 49th Ward Alderwoman Maria Hadden in coordination with local service providers and community organizations
- Partners include:
  - IL State Representative Kelly Cassidy,
  - Protect RP, Northside Community Resources,
  - Devon Bank,
  - Loyola Community Nursing Center, and
  - Community volunteers

# RPCRT by the numbers

## Rogers Park Community Response Team

### Weekly Hotline Report



3rd Week Report - April 4th, 2020

Call Increase = 47



# How can you give back?

# Questions



# Further Reading

- [Complete Mental Health Guide During COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Coping skills vs Self-care – is there a difference](#)
- [COVID-19 Mental Health Survival Guide](#)
- [Decolonizing Community Care in Response to COVID-19](#)
- [How Collective Is the Trauma of COVID-19?](#)
- [Responding to the Coronavirus/Covid-19 Pandemic: Toolkit for Emotional Coping for Healthcare Staff](#)
- [Solidarity not Charity: Mutual Aid & How to Organize in the Age of Coronavirus](#)
- [The Reason You're exhausted is 'Moral Fatigue'](#)
- [The Working Mind: COVID-19 Self-Care & Resilience Guide](#)
- [Tolerance for Uncertainty: A COVID-19 Workbook](#)
- [Trauma of Pandemic Proportions](#)