

Guidelines for Debriefing/Peer Support Groups for CUIMC Faculty and House Staff working at NYP

Thank you so much for agreeing to co-facilitate these groups. This is an important service to help support our colleagues providing medical services at CUIMC.

We are providing you with a **guide** for the groups – It is meant to provide you with an overall structure and approach. **It is not meant to be script- Feel free to use whatever feels appropriate for what is being brought up in your groups.**

The Overall structures for these 30 MINUTE sessions is as follows

Important to start with validation and end each session on a positive note.

- 1) Introducing and Framing the Session (5 min)
 - 2) Debriefing: Providing time for discussing challenges, stressors, difficult moments (10 min)
 - 3) Brainstorming on ways to maintain resilience/cope/create or maintain supportive communities (10 min)
 - 4) Wrap up (5 min)
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Guidelines

1. Introducing and Framing the Session: Setting up process and tone (5 min)

- 1) Introduce** facilitators and ask people to introduce themselves.
 - a. Ask, if participants are willing to add their email through the chat function to send a brief feedback survey following the group?
- 2) Validate**: Acknowledge/thank providers for their hard work-caring for patients in the context of this pandemic
- 3) Focus for the session- Team work**
 - a. Not psychotherapy- we are not recording, writing notes, billing, etc-
 - b. This is a space for us all to briefly debrief about the experience and focus on what we need to do to take care of ourselves and each other in this time of crisis.
 - c. This session will really focus on strategies for dealing with the challenges of COVID-19 and maintaining our own resilience.
 - d. This is a confidential space, we are not reporting who said what to any supervisors or anyone else at the medical center with the exception of the usual concerns related to safety and dangerousness (thoughts of self harm).
 - e. **We as facilitators are not going to tell you how to cope per se--we don't have one magic pill as much as we wish that we did, literally and figuratively. We don't have all the answers – we are facilitating this today so we can build on each other's resources, strengths, resilience for getting through difficult and challenging circumstance. Sometimes when we are so consumed or overwhelmed by scary and difficult circumstances- we forget or can't access what can help us manage and cope. We need to remember and identify what will be helpful now.**

- 2. Debrief (10 min)**: Open it up to brief discussion of what has been challenging/difficult to cope within the past few days. Tell participants they can share very briefly- or write it down if they want. Be clear we will keep this brief and then shift to strategies for coping.

3. **Brainstorming on Coping/Problem Solving/ Maintain Resilience (10 min)**

- 1) **TALK ABOUT WHAT WE CAN AND CAN'T CONTROL**- FOCUS today on what we can
- 2) **RESILIENCE**– Define resilience-
 - a. The capacity to bounce back, to withstand hardship, and to repair yourself
 - b. Positive adaptation in the face of stress or disruptive change
 - c. You all required resilience to become the physicians that you are. For many of us, our resilience is so woven into who we are and what we do that we don't recognize it as skills that we have.
- 3) **COPING with Anxiety**
 - a. COMMITTING to our values- (e.g. providing health care, family, relationships, etc)
 - b. ACCEPTING - WHAT WE CAN'T DO and also what is normal in this context- e.g., accept that some fear and anxiety is normal and appropriate. What many of us are experiencing in the context of the Coronavirus Pandemics is scary
 - c. Focus and Use strategies TO REDUCE stress and anxiety and HELP US RESTORE when we can
 - d. Stress management techniques- Breathing, exercise, mindfulness

4) **SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

- a. Which coping skills are working? Or What has been working for you this week or what has been helpful for managing stress/anxiety
- b. Which strategies seem less effective now?
- c. How can we support/augment the strategies that are working?
- d. How can we foster our sense of community and work together to build off of each other's strengths?
- e. How can they all help each other after this call- they are a team- how can they continue to support each other?

4. **WRAP UP (5 min)**

- 1) **End with appreciative inquiry**- VALIDATE WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN DOING and then quickly go around the room and identify one thing that went well this week at work or a good outcome or touching story.
- 2) **THESE are one time groups.**
 - a. What if anything else would be helpful from the department of psychiatry? Or In what ways was this helpful and what could be more useful?
 - b. Questions after group: Email Laurel Mayer, MD - lsm16@cumc.columbia.edu
 - c. 1:1 peer support calls - 646-774-5366 (Evelyn Valentin, Lou Baptista's assistant)

This guide was written by the CUIMC Department of Psychiatry Peer Support WorkGroup:

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