



# Hope and Resilience in the times of COVID-19 Crisis

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## ABSTRACT

In India, the monstrous second wave of corona virus has contributed to the grief burden in the country both in number and in intensity. Due to the present COVID-19 crisis; the humanity is going through an exceptionally challenging and painful period. The pandemic has adversely affected not only physical health of people but traumatized emotional & mental health and blemished their overall well being. The fear relating to the Covid-19 infection causing major mental health issues like stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, insomnia, denial and anger (Roy et al.,2020). There is a definite need to address the issues of mental damages and specialized psychological interventions for the same along with strategies to control the disease and this pandemic at large. The present article is a humble attempt to highlight strength of hope and resilience as important psychological factors to protect the mental health and well being and suggest few ways to be hopeful and resilient to face and overcome the threatening impact of COVID-19 and enhance good mental health.

Keywords: Hope, Resilience, COVID-19 crisis

## Introduction

Globally, the outbreak of novel corona virus has brought lives to standstill mode. It forced people to stay at home, restricted their social relationships and imposed isolation to inhibit the spread of the virus. The pandemic and consequent lockdown is leading to helplessness, pervasive anxiety, frustration, boredom, sadness and uncertainty among people of every age as reported in various magazines and newspaper articles. The fear relating to the Covid-19 infection is causing loss of hope, feeling of dejection, aimlessness, extended monotony and loneliness. Roy et al. (2020) reported that the major mental health issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic are stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, insomnia, denial, anger and fear. In India, the unannounced second wave of coronavirus has brought more panic, fear, worries, emotional distress, insecurity and uncertainties. As tragedies and trauma become more common than ever in the wake of second and more deadly wave of COVID-19 across India, it threatened people in various aspects and distressed many into grief as people lost their loved ones before any intervention resulting rise in emotional- psychomotor reactions and adverse psychological effects with its severe impacts on overall well being of individuals. This pandemic has contributed to the grief burden in the country both in number and in intensity, due to the present crisis of deadly second wave of coronavirus, the humanity is going through an exceptionally challenging and painful period. There is a definite need to address the issues of mental damages and specialized psychological interventions for the same along with strategies to control the disease and this pandemic at large.

### Hope and Resilience as protective factors of Mental Health

Human being is blessed with capacity to deal with sudden crisis and is able to cope up with life's odds. In the present pandemic situation, among the most important prerequisites to overcome the adverse conditions of trauma and grief burden are: hope and resilience. Both hope and resilience are the protective factors which may help people to emerge out from this darkness and to make them internally vigilant about how to remain sane, how not to be overwhelmed by the fear for those we love, how to not deluge into sorrows, how to give away the deceased's belongings and how to acknowledge our losses and frustrations.

A hopeful individual, even under challenging life conditions, has the strength to find alternative solutions and to apply them. Hope is the belief that the paths to reach one's goals can be found and the motivation in trying out those different paths (Snyder et al. 2002). Hope encompasses positive expectations for the future (Snyder, 2000). Hope can be seen as a protective factor in mental well being in relation to difficult conditions created by COVID-19 (Satici et al. 2020). Moreover, Resilience can be viewed as the ability to stay strong during challenging times. It is a process of adapting well in the phases of adversity, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress. Resilience is the speedy recovery and the ability to return to daily functioning, after having experienced stressful life events that have resulted in functional breakdown (Carver, 1998). Resilience is not just about handling pressure; rather it is about building our own strengths and helping others to build their strengths too.

Research over the years has shown that generating hope is very powerful phenomenon for survival. It is rather an antidote to stress and an effective way to rebuilt internal strengths. Hopeful individuals possess positive thinking that is reflective of a realistic sense of optimism (Goleman, 1996). Such individuals perceive obstacles as challenges to overcome and are able to utilize their optimism to plan alternatives to achieve their end goal (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, Peterson, 2010). Hope can exist even in the context of a life-threatening health condition and can perhaps lead to better outcomes. Researchers have found that resilience correlates strongly with health and longevity, success, interpersonal satisfaction, and happiness (Schneider, 2001). Hope and resilience are closely aligned constructs, as they both include a tendency towards maintaining an optimistic outlook in the face of adversity. From this perspective, hope and resilience can be considered as significant in coping with the fear, panic, anxiety, and stress resulting from COVID-19 which consequently protects individual's well being and motivates to do better efforts regarding both the present and the future.

## Ways to be Hopeful and Resilient

- **Expand your vision:** To be hopeful and resilient we need to expand our vision to accommodate the well being of a larger cross section of society. When we think beyond ourselves, we become calm, creative and productive.

- **Be empathetic:** Empathy is an ability to understand other person's perspective. Empathetic understanding help people to share relationships, free expression of feelings boost their self-esteem
- **Practice gratitude:** We should be grateful for all that we have been blessed with. Studies showed that taking time to reflect on what we are grateful for improves our quality of life.
- **Move over languishing:** Sometimes people develop sense of stagnation and emptiness out of life traumas. They look life through a foggy windshield. To move over languishing learning new skill, pursuing hobbies, making connections, quick chat with a stranger etc. may be helpful to find a purpose and happiness; which may consequently recharge emotional batteries to spark a sense of worth and fulfillment.
- **Celebrate small things:** Acknowledging and celebrating small moments is important for well being. Any activity to appreciate an event, notices good things around you and sharing tiny targets will foster a sense of happiness and satisfaction.
- **Stepping towards flourishing:** Flourishing concerns with people's physical, mental and emotional fitness. It means living in a state in which all aspects of a person's life are good. Research has found that flourishing comes from daily routines when we assess ourselves, work on a new skill, complete a simple impactful task, reach out small moments of mastery and notice the good things around us.
- **Awaken your spiritual senses:** Spiritual strength help us to overcome the calamities of life effortlessly. Our internal spiritual resources, set of principles, believes and values help us to sustain and encounter adversity, stress and trauma. Meditation can play a significant role in awakening our spiritual senses and attaining spiritual strength.

## Conclusion

The present article highlighted the importance of hope and resilience as protective factors to prevent the fear, anxiety, stress and other COVID-19 related mental health issues. The positive psychology approach speculates that both hope and resilience is alternative route for enhancing psychological strengths (Peterson, 2006) and predicts positive subjective happiness (Satici, 2016). Moreover, suggested ways to be hopeful and resilient, to

maintain the optimistic outlook and enhance physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being may be helpful in the present COVID-19 crisis.

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