PERSONAL LEADERSHIP IN UNCERTAIN TIMES:
READING THE ROOM IN THE NEW NORMAL

Jennifer L Johnson, MBA, PhD, FAAPM
DISCLOSURES

Chair, MPLA
READING THE ROOM

Communication

Verbal

Non-verbal

Life’s Stressors

Normal
READING THE ROOM

COVID-19 + Life’s Stressors

Communication

Verbal

Non-verbal

IN THE

NEW Normal
READING THE ROOM:
Verbal and Nonverbal Communication
LEARNING BEGINS AT 8 MONTHS OLD

Growth spurt in the brain (memory to form attachments)
Show some personality
Express maturing emotions maturing (e.g., fear)
Link words with meanings
**Read and respond to facial expressions**
**Read body language (follow gaze to where pointing)**
LEARNING SOCIAL CUES

Learning generally is founded in ostensive signals

• Attention cues that are socially based (e.g., a face addressing an infant)

Ostensive signals often precede social cues

Forms of communication that help us to “read” other people and react appropriately

The ways in which beings convey information about their emotions, needs, intentions, attitudes, and thoughts without the use of verbal language.

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS

Expressing emotions
Conveying interpersonal attitudes (e.g., friendliness, insult, or dominance)
Regulating affect
Regulating turn taking between people in conversation
Facilitating one's own speech production

VISUAL CUES

Facial expressions
Eye movements
Gestures
Dress
Hair

AUDITORY CUES

Tone of voice
Pitch
Speed and pace of speech
Volume
Melody (some sources)

Paralinguistics
The aspects of verbal communication that is not words
Add emphasis or shades of meaning

**VERBAL**

Precise
Intentional

- Active voice
- Concrete nouns
- Specific verbs
- Vivid adjectives
- Express using short words

**NONVERBAL**

Spontaneous
Not intentionally communicated

NONVERBAL RELATIONSHIP TO VERBAL BEHAVIOR

FUNCTIONAL

• Repeat
• Augment
• Illustrate
• Accent
• Contradict

SEQUENTIAL

• Anticipate
• Coincide with
• Substitute for
• Follow
• Unrelated

COVID-19 IMPACT:

Additional Life Stressors
COVID-19 IMPACT:

Professionally
PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES

Working on site

- Teams & shifts (where applicable)
- Patient census
- Physical distancing
- PPE availability
- Communicating through masks
- Food / drink options
PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES

Working from home

- Connectivity
- Lack of access to information
- Lack of face-to-face interaction
- Social isolation
- Distractions at home
7-38-55 RULE

Concept concerning the communication of emotions

When verbal & nonverbal communication are incongruent

AUDITORY CUES

Leading with Your Voice

I need for you to tell me what happened
I need for you to tell me what happened
I need for you to tell me what happened

Auditory cues

- Tone
- Pitch
- Volume
- Speed & pace
- Melody
I need for you to tell me what happened
I need for you to tell me what happened
I need for you to tell me what happened.

Auditory cues:
- Tone
- Pitch
- Melody
- Volume
- Speed & pace

Practice BREATHING & VOCAL exercises

Dr. Wendy LeBorgne, TEDxUCincinnati
LEADERS USE AUDITORY CUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tone of voice</td>
<td>Speak only when exhale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>Lower is better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed &amp; pace of speech</td>
<td>Slow down when making a point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Increase and vary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody (some sources)</td>
<td>Use inflection (e.g., verbs)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

COVID-19 IMPACT:

Individually
COVID-19 MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT

Potential mental health pandemic in general population

Published studies on healthcare workers

The World Health Organization (@WHO) needs to urgently increase investment in services for mental health to prevent a massive increase in mental health conditions.

World Health Organization (WHO) 🌍️@WHO · May 14

#COVID19 is already having a serious impact on people's #MentalHealth

Larger Share Now Reporting Negative Mental Health Impacts

<table>
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<th>March 11 - KFF Poll</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Yes - severe impact</td>
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<td>Yes - minor impact</td>
<td>Yes - minor impact</td>
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<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Figure 7: Larger Share Now Reporting Negative Mental Health Impacts

COVID-19: 'Striking' Rates of Anxiety, Depression in Healthcare Workers

Megan Brooks
March 26, 2020

Doctors and nurses are risking their mental health for us

As they treat coronavirus, health care workers report high rates of depression and anxiety, a new study shows.

By Sigal Samuel | Mar 26, 2020, 8:09am EDT
STRESS VS. ANXIETY

Share physical symptoms:
  increased heart rate, muscle tension, or rapid breathing

**Stress** is a normal, proportional reaction to a stressful situation or external pressures.

**Anxiety** is a condition characterized by feelings of apprehension or unexplained thoughts of impending doom.

How long do your feelings of stress last?

Anxiety: stress ~ days or weeks, & prevents day-to-day activities

An emotion that you feel when you’re worried about something

- **General anxiety**: tend to feel frightened, distressed, and uneasy for no apparent reason or in ways that are not proportional to their circumstances
- **Social anxiety**: anxiety as a reaction in social settings
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**: develop in response to both acute incidents as well as chronic, ongoing trauma

https://screening.mhanational.org/content/what-anxiety. Accessed May 2020
DEPRESSION

An emotion that goes beyond ordinary sadness

• **Major depressive disorder (MDD)**
  • Experience symptoms of depression almost all day, nearly every day.
  • 2 weeks < episode < 6 months (often) – years (sometimes)

• **Persistent depressive disorder (PDD)**
  • Less severe episode
  • Experience symptoms most days for at least 2 years

• **Post-partum depression**: after birth, 2 weeks < episode < 1 year

• **Seasonal affective disorder**: depressed during a season (e.g., winter)

[https://screening.mhanational.org/content/are-there-types-depression](https://screening.mhanational.org/content/are-there-types-depression), Accessed May 2020
ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

Doctors evaluate a patient’s condition using nonverbal communication

- Facial expressions
- Vocal cues

Both are based in brain functions

-> Results in changes in the physical and behavioral aspects of the individual.

**ANXIETY**
Heart & lungs works faster
Muscles become tenser
Increased sweat production

**DEPRESSION**
More subtle ways
Changes in
- Voice
- Facial expressions
- Body language

SELF-CHECKING ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

AAPM COVID-19 Information for Medical Physicists »
COMP-OCPM COVID-19 updates
Mental Health America screening tools
READING THE ROOM:

In the New Normal
CONSIDERATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION

Determine what is the origin of the issue
Be fully present; avoid distractions
Manage stress in the moment
CONSIDERATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION

Use emotional awareness
  • Emotions impact voice tone
  • Tone has much stronger impact than words alone
  • Choose carefully the emotion and motivation when speaking
WRAP-UP:

Closing Thoughts and Discussion
WRAP-UP / DISCUSSION

• Unlikely life will go “back to normal”
• Life’s stresses are greater
• We are all in this
• The bizarre, collective experience of tragedy
• Lead the change to make work about caring for the whole person