

# Psychological impact of COVID-19

الآثار النفسية لمرض كورونا  
(كوفيد 19)

By: Prof Ghufra Ahmed  
Jassim

RCSI Bahrain

# A little about me



# Content

Global perspective

Study from Bahrain

Languishing??

# Global perspective

**Initial response was, quite rightly,  
focused on the virus itself...**



**Overlooking the longer-term  
negative consequences of Covid-19  
on people's mental health would, for  
most, cause more distress and  
suffering than the virus itself**



# COVID-19 took over the world

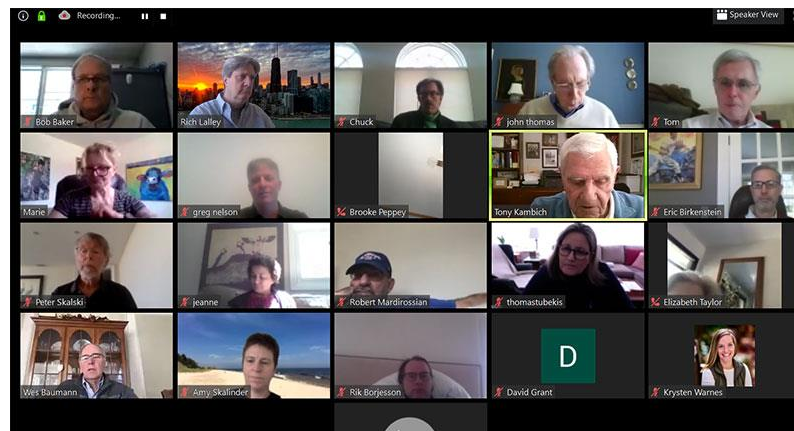




# Overnight



shutterstock.com · 1695269101



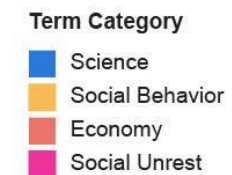


- Google has analyzed the billions of search requests it processes every day, and identified the terms that have had the highest spike in 2020 compared to 2019. Unsurprisingly, “coronavirus” topped the overall list.

#### Searches

- 1 Coronavirus
- 2 Election results
- 3 Kobe Bryant
- 4 Zoom
- 5 IPL
- 6 India vs New Zealand
- 7 Coronavirus update
- 8 Coronavirus symptoms
- 9 Joe Biden
- 10 Google Classroom

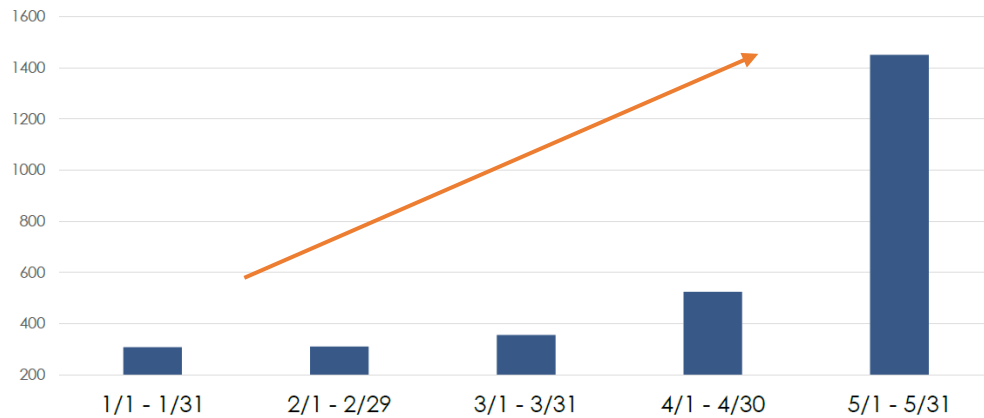
## March–May 2020





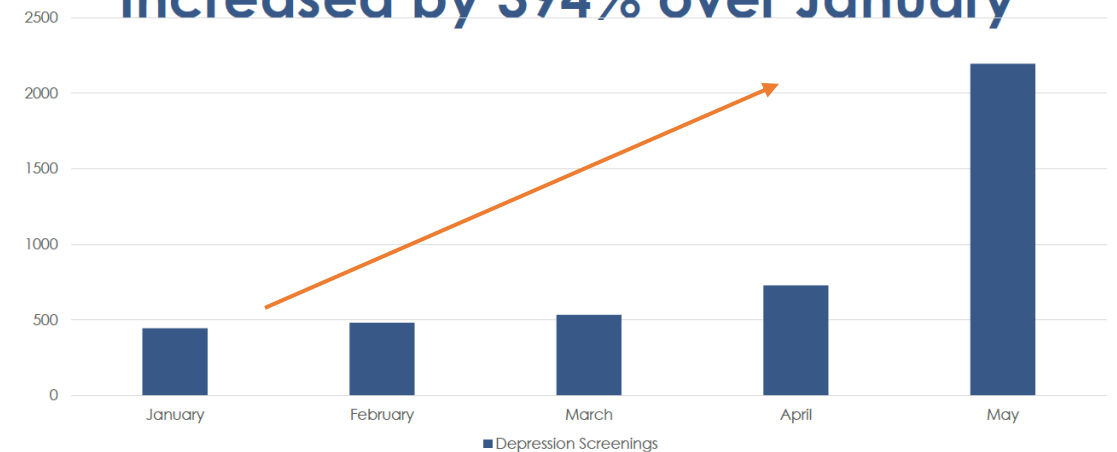
# Depression and anxiety rates

## In May, Per Day Anxiety Screenings Increased by 370% over January



MHA  
Mental Health America  
B4Stage4

## In April, Per Day Depression Screenings Increased by 394% over January



MHA  
Mental Health America  
B4Stage4

Source: Mental Health America Data  
<https://mhanational.org/MentalHealthInfo>

Not only  
depression  
and  
anxiety...

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Studies reported a higher prevalence of subjects with psychological symptoms, emotional disturbance, stress, mood alterations and irritability, insomnia, post-traumatic stress symptoms, anger and emotional exhaustion especially among those who have been quarantined.

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Long-term behavioral changes like vigilant handwashing and avoidance of crowds as well as a delayed return to normality even after many months after the quarantine were also reported.

# Results from Bahrain



- **Methods:** 502 Bahrainis aged >18 years who had undergone either isolation or quarantine.
- Measured depression, posttraumatic stress, stigma using validated translated scales.
- **Results:** 40% showed clinically significant depression,
- 20% had posttraumatic distress.
- 53.4% reported Perceived stigma.
- Scores were significantly higher in
  - females,
  - college students,
  - history of mental health conditions,
  - knowing a COVID-19 fatality,
  - experiencing social conflict.

## Psychological Impact of COVID-19, Isolation, and Quarantine: A Cross-Sectional Study

Ghufran Jassim<sup>1</sup>  
Mariam Jameel<sup>2</sup>  
Edwina Brennan<sup>3</sup>  
Manaf Yusuf<sup>3</sup>  
Nebras Hasan<sup>3</sup>  
Yusuf Alwatani<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Family Medicine Department, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland — Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain), Busaiteen, Bahrain; <sup>2</sup>Department of Medicine, Salmaniya Medical Complex, Manama, Bahrain; <sup>3</sup>RCSI, Busaiteen, Bahrain; <sup>4</sup>Psychiatry Department, Serene Psychiatry Hospital, Manama, Bahrain

**Purpose:** The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in mandatory isolation and quarantine. The objective of this study was to describe and compare the psychological impacts of COVID-19 isolation and quarantine.

**Methods:** This was a cross-sectional retrospective study. Participants were Bahrainis aged >18 years who had undergone either isolation or quarantine. Eligible participants were identified from the COVID-19 contacts (quarantine) and cases (isolation) database of Bahrain. Validated questionnaires for self-reported depression (Center for Epidemiological Studies — depression [CES-D]), posttraumatic stress (Impact of Event Scale — revised [IES-R]), and perceived stigma (Stigma Scale [SS]) were administered.

**Results:** Mean CES-D, IES-R, and SS scores were 16.76±5.65, 13.50±14.67, and 25.29±7.99, respectively. In sum, 40% (205 of 502) of participants showed clinically significant depression, and <20% (98 of 502) had indications of some posttraumatic distress, with greater depression and distress in those isolated than those quarantined. Perceived stigma was reported by 53.4% (268 of 502) of participants, more prominent among those quarantined. Depression and posttraumatic stress scores were significantly higher in females, college students, those with a history of mental health conditions, knowing a COVID-19 fatality, and experiencing social conflict. Age was a significant variable correlated with all three scales, with younger participants indicating more distress, depression, and stigma. Duration of segregation was significantly correlated with CES-D, score showing more depressive symptoms as the duration of isolation increased. Significant predictors were



## Recommendations

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Bahrain like many other countries is currently prioritizing medical resources for the containment of COVID-19 and the treatment of patients with COVID-19, and hence there may be limited resources available for psychological services and interventions.

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Therefore, improving knowledge, awareness, and self-coping strategies is critical in this situation.

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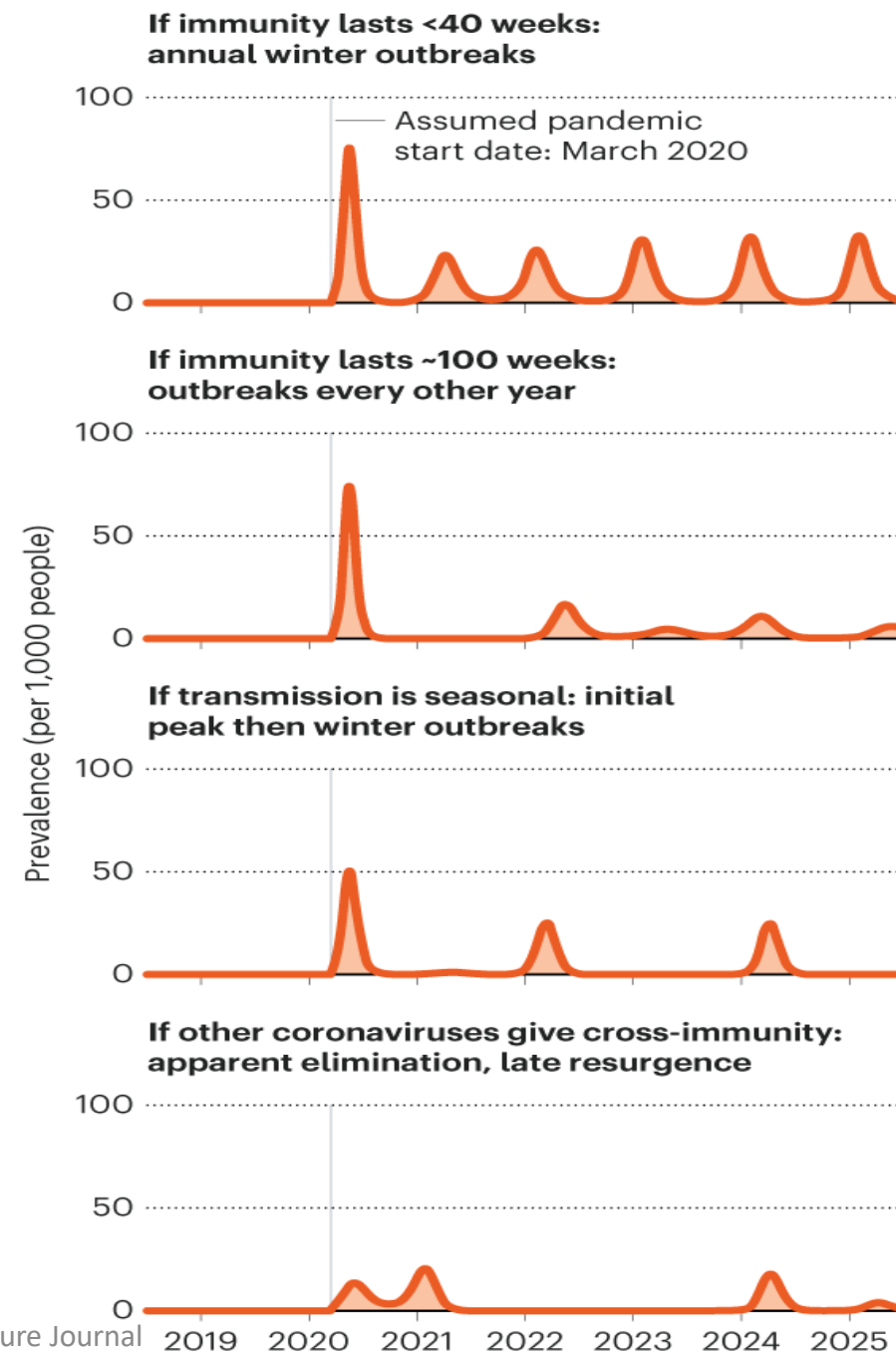
Psychological interventions identifying and targeting people with different-severity psychological burdens are urgently needed.

# How the pandemic might play out in 2021 and beyond

- Around the world, epidemiologists are constructing short- and long-term projections as a way to prepare for, and potentially mitigate, the spread and impact of SARS-CoV-2
- Although their forecasts and timelines vary, modellers agree on two things:
  - COVID-19 is here to stay,
  - the future depends on a lot of unknowns

**We don't really know what's going to happen**

- What happens next?  
(Projections)



Source: Nature Journal

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02278-5>

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# How your mental state might play out in 2021 and beyond

- Have you felt mentally fatigued?
- Are you struggling to find energy to do the things you used to love to do even through last year's lockdown?
- Are you watching movies or matches that you actually don't have any real interest in watching?
- Well,
- you aren't alone



# Languishing, Adam Grant

- *It wasn't burnout — we still had energy.*
- *It wasn't depression — we didn't feel hopeless.*
- *We just felt somewhat joyless and aimless.*
- *It turns out there's a name for that: languishing.*
- *Languishing is a sense of stagnation and emptiness.*
- *It feels as if you're muddling through your days, looking at your life through a foggy windshield. And it might be the dominant emotion of 2021.*

# Languishing.....feeling Blah!

- The trouble with languishing is that it is an in-between mental state – midway between ‘flourishing’ and ‘depression’: “Languishing is the neglected middle child of mental health. It’s the void between depression and flourishing — the absence of well-being.
- You don’t have symptoms of mental illness, but you’re not the picture of mental health either. You’re not functioning at full capacity.
- Languishing dulls your motivation, disrupts your ability to focus, and triples the odds that you’ll cut back on work.

Source: NY times

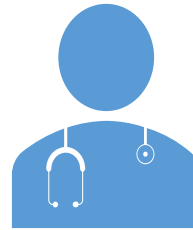
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/19/well/mind/covid-mental-health-languishing.html>



# Physiology behind languishing



*In the early, uncertain days of the pandemic it's likely that your brain's threat detection system — called the amygdala — was on high alert for fight-or-flight.*



*But the pandemic has dragged on, and the acute state of anguish has given way to a chronic condition of languish*



The fact is, the brain is only wired to function optimally under short bursts of stress. With chronic stress, especially the kind with no real roadmap to normalcy, the body begins to break down.

# How people describe it:

Mentally, I haven't necessarily felt good *or* bad, but I'm not as present as I used to be, and this lack of focus can make every task much more draining than before.

I didn't feel like talking to anyone. I didn't feel like I was myself. I'm a very bubbly, energetic, happy person usually, and I felt just neutral

Life is at once too overwhelming and not engaging enough. Each task I do requires a search for motivation beyond anything I've ever known. I'm tired, burnt out, and not often excited, but also restless, eager to engage, and trying.

# So how can you and I deal with this?

## Firstly, don't ignore it

- *"We still have a lot to learn about what causes languishing and how to cure it, but naming it might be a first step."*

## Take Time Off When Possible

- The brain is like a machine, and when we hit burnout, it's overheating. To 'fix' it, we have to shut it off

## Give Yourself Permission To Enjoy

## Exercise

# PERMA model



The best way to move from languishing to flourishing is to maintain the five aspects of the PERMA model



Positive emotions **Create a gratitude practice**



Engagement



Relationships **Connect with others**



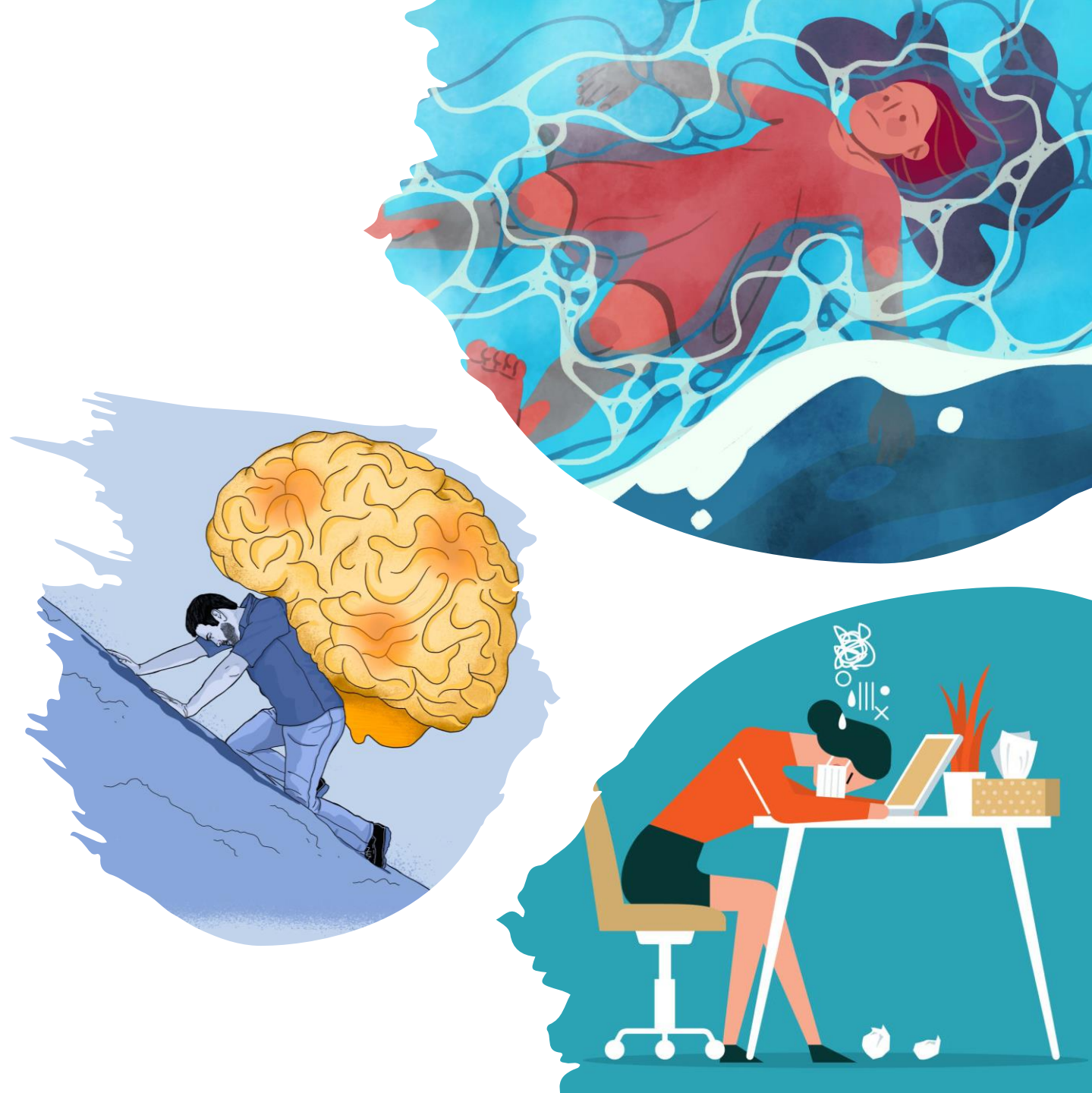
Meaning **Give yourself grace**



Accomplishments **Find a new way to challenge yourself**

# Conclusion

- There is so much we still don't know about this virus.
- Quarantine, isolation, lock downs and social distancing resulted in significant psychological impact.
- If it sounds like you're languishing, you are far from alone.
- It is a product of the uncertainty and limits brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic





# La Luna storta





Thank you  
Q&As

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