

DO:

- ✓ Point out that there are other, better means to solve problem
- ✓ Give information on ways of seeking help, such as suicide prevention services, community resources, and hotlines

2. Helping to those with suicidal thoughts

First touch must be handled well. If someone is feeling suicidal and calls for help, ask them where they are, what they are doing, let them know you are with them, and try to meet them in a place where you both feel safe.

Be sure you have enough time, and be prepared to listen. Knowing that you are listening, and that you care, may already be a source of comfort for someone in despair.

Keep calm. Be open, respectful, and non-judgmental. Be genuine and sincere while you assess the level of danger the person is in.

DO NOT make false promises. You cannot promise to keep their secrets if you need to let others know about their troubles and keep them safe. Do not be afraid to ask them directly how likely they are to harm themselves. For example, are ways of harming themselves easily accessible? Is help close at hand?

If the person in need is NOT in immediate danger, then:

- ☞ Guide them to remember ways to combat suicidal thoughts (chatting with a friend, relaxation skills are some examples)
- ☞ Let them know of help available, such as suicide prevention services and hotlines
- ☞ Let them know that you will help them seek professional assistance (through social workers, psychologists and mental healthcare workers)
- ☞ Alert their families of your concern

If the person in need appears to be in **IMMEDIATE** danger, **dial 999 NOW**, then:

- ☞ Have a friend or family member to stay with them until emergency services arrive
- ☞ If the person in need is alone, maintain steady communication with them until help comes

When helping someone in danger, always bear in mind that you have your limitations. While you can do your best in supporting them and giving them hope, it may not always be possible to “solve” their problems. Do not face a difficult situation on your own. Get help from family, friends and mental health workers.

3. Support family and friends. Listen and care for one another

It is understandable for the older generation and the younger generation to hold different views and values, based on their own life experiences. Where opinions differ, stop for a bit, make space to listen, accept and understand. Do not let judgment and blame get in the way of your relationships.



Avoiding arguments with your family: DOs and DON'Ts:

DON'T:

- ✗ Force each other to hold the same belief
- ✗ Use imperative statements: try replacing “You should” and “You should not” with “May I suggest” and “Would you like to try...?” to let one feel respected

DO:

- ✓ Reach an agreement among yourselves whether to discuss politics within the family
- ✓ Engage in other, unrelated family activities that everyone enjoys
- ✓ Remember that even if you hold different views, you are still a family. Disagreement in views does not equate to lack of love. Let your family know this
- ✓ If you find that the views of yourself and your family are polar opposites, do not insist on changing their beliefs. Accept them for who they are

Tips to avoid confrontation with other people holding different political views:

DON'T:

- ✗ Stop them from expressing themselves
- ✗ Immediately share or forward news without first digesting them carefully and seeking verification from reliable sources



DO:

- ✓ Put your own political beliefs aside for a moment and place yourself in their shoes. Try to look at the issue from their viewpoint
- ✓ Respect the opinions of different people. True freedom of speech is where everyone has the right to express their opinions, even if they are different from yours
- ✓ Social media platforms often filter and show posts and news reports based on your preferences. Only receiving news from a singular political stance can cause our opinions to be biased. Try looking at the same news from different sources to get another perspective
- ✓ Think twice before “unfriending” friends and family whose posts caused you ill feelings. Consider “unfollowing” instead, and keeping a comfortable distance
- ✓ Use social media, forums, and group chats with care. Beware of politicalization among members

Short Animation Videos on Depression:

1st Episode – Causes:

bit.ly/depression-causes

2nd Episode – Symptoms:

bit.ly/depression-symptoms

3rd Episode – Treatments:

bit.ly/depression-treatments



Illustrations by Bonnie Pang



The Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists



Tips on Maintaining Mental Wellbeing



LOOK AT ME

The Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists expresses deep concern over the emotional disturbances experienced by some people in reaction to recent societal events arising in the context of the proposed amendment of the Extradition Bill. Distressful experience of scenes of conflict, whether directly encountered or through media, could possibly trigger symptoms of acute stress reactions. The College would like to remind the public to be mindful about our own mental well-being while following the latest development of the event. Please watch out for any emotional reactions, thoughts or bodily symptoms that may signify mental health concerns.

The Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists would like to bring to everyone's attention the following tips that will help you stay mentally healthy. Through looking after ourselves, we can strive for a better future. The College wishes to convey an important message to the public: While facing the current social situation, some may experience intense emotional reactions, and some may even have feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. Please be particularly vigilant of possible surges of suicidal or self-destructive thoughts. These emotional upheavals and thoughts usually subside over time. Please do not let them take over your actions and lead to irreversible damage to yourself and your loved ones, not to mention depriving you of further opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the society. The College appeals to all to cherish life and care for everyone around us.



Tips on Maintaining Mental Wellbeing

1. Take note of our feelings and reactions, as well as those around us; are we having an acute stress reaction?



Witnessing or encountering a confrontational event (even within the context of social media or through other platforms) may cause us to experience what is known as an acute stress reaction within a few days.

Symptoms may include:

- Thinking about what happened, or having images of the scenes in our head
- Having nightmares
- Finding it difficult to relax, as if you were constantly on alert
- Finding it difficult to sleep, and feeling restless
- Avoiding anything or anyone who may remind you of what happened

These are all normal reactions and you need not be too worried.

Should you suspect that you are experiencing an acute stress reaction and this is upsetting you, we hope the following DOs and DON'Ts can help:

*** DON'T: Follow the development of upsetting news minute by minute, second by second**

Audiovisual reporting, such as podcasts or live streaming may worsen our distress and anxiety. Instead, consider simply reading about it if you wish to keep yourself updated, or, if you are feeling really upset, take a break from the news for a while, until the feeling passes.

✓ DO: Things that you enjoy or find relaxing

Give yourself time and space to calm down. If your friend or loved one is feeling emotional, angry, down, or frustrated and bleak, help them find someone they can trust to talk to. Letting the heavy feelings off their chests can make them feel much better.



If you, or your friends, have persistently experienced symptoms of acute stress for more than 4 weeks, and that they have been getting in the way of your work or even your day to day life, you may have developed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In that case, seek professional help and support as soon as possible.

2. Watch out when Depression comes knocking!

On the other hand, some people feel sad or depressed after watching upsetting news.

What's the difference between feeling sad and having Depression?

Sadness is a normal emotion. The feeling can last for hours to a few days, but it will pass eventually.



Depression however, lasts a lot longer. Feelings of gloom, rage or distress may persist for 2 weeks or more. You may also feel changes in your body, such as loss of appetite, weight loss, and insomnia while feeling tired throughout the day. Your thoughts may also be consumed by negativity, and you may feel useless, helpless, and hopeless. In severe cases, depression may affect your school, work, social life, and may even lead to suicidal thoughts. If you do have any of such symptoms, please seek professional help as soon as possible.

For more information, check out the videos via the hyperlinks at the end of this document.

3. Hotlines and Where to find Help

If you worry that you, or your friend, have the following conditions:

- 1) Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or any condition that has evolved from Acute stress reaction
- 2) Depressive symptoms
- 3) Suicidal thoughts

Get professional help (from social workers, counsellors, clinical psychologists, general practitioners, or psychiatrists) as soon as possible.

You may also call the following hotlines to seek help or ask for a referral to professionals

Hotline Name / Hotline Organisation	Contact Details	Service Provision Hours
Open Up (Emergency emotional support services) The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust	9121 2012 FB / IG: hkopenup	24 Hours
Suicide Prevention Services	2382 0000	24 Hours
The Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong	2389 2222	24 Hours

Hotline Name / Hotline Organisation	Contact Details	Service Provision Hours
Hospital Authority Mental Health Direct	2466 7350	24 Hours
Social Welfare Department Hotline	2343 2255	24 Hours
Tung Wah Group of Hospitals CEASE Crisis Centre	18281	24 Hours
Baptist Oi Kwan Service Child and adolescent psychiatric health	3413 1543	09:00-18:00 (Mon to Fri)
關心一線 The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups	2777 8899	14:00-02:00 (Mon to Sat)
Hong Kong Red Cross Psychological Support (English and Chinese)	3628 1180	10:00 - 22:00
Stewards	2635 7709	10:00-17:30 (Mon to Fri)
Hong Kong Youth Women's Christian Association	2711 6622	Monday to Friday 14:00-16:00 (Female Hotline)
The Boy's & Girls' Club Association of Hong Kong - Parents Hotline	2866 6388	19:00-21:30 (Counselling Hotline)
Tung Wah Cares Hotline Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	2548 0010	14:00-16:00 (Mon to Wed)
Division of Counselling Psychology Hong Kong Psychological Society	https://www.facebook.com/DCOPHKPS/	



How do we keep ourselves and our loved ones mentally well?



1. DOs and DON'Ts when sharing the news of a suicide:

In the age of smartphones and social media, it is inevitable that everyone has more or less become an amateur reporter. However, please think twice whether it is necessary before you send or share any news relating to a suicide. If you must share news or information related to a suicide, then please note the following:

DON'T :

- ✗ Forward or share pictures and contents of the deceased's suicide note
- ✗ Glorify, romanticize, or sensationalize the suicide
- ✗ Simplify the reason for the suicide
- ✗ Take advantage of the suicide to criticize or blame others

