Quarantined and Queer
LGBTQIA+ and Coping through COVID
Who Are We?

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Topics for Today

» Stressors unique to the LGBTQIA+ community
» Stress & Anxiety
» Loneliness & Isolation
» Grief & Loss
» Practical Skills to Cope
» Resources
Who Are You?

Name
Pronouns
On or off campus?
Favorite TV show or Movie
Stressors Unique to the LGBTQIA+ Community
What is different for our community?

» LGBTQIA+ people already face increased stress due to queerphobia
  ◆ Pandemic can exacerbate this

» Quarantine = isolation
  ◆ Can feel like the isolation we may have already felt as part of this community

» What have you noticed?
Why is this so hard?

» We are facing uncertainty and a lack of control
» We have lost structure / routine
» We have lost connection
» This can lead to stress and anxiety, but we can learn new ways to cope with our current situation!
Stress & Anxiety
Stress versus Anxiety

» Stress usually stems from an *external* cause, whereas anxiety generally stems from an *internal* cause

» Stress can *lead to* anxiety

» Stress tends to subside when the situation has ended whereas anxiety can persist

Stress is inevitable but we can learn to prevent & manage anxiety
Symptoms of Anxiety

**Physical**
- Heart pounding
- Flushing
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Dry mouth
- Stomach pains
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Muscle aches
- Restlessness
- Inability to relax

**Psychological**
- Excessive worry
- Irritability
- Impatience
- Feeling “on edge”
- Fatigue
- Vivid dreams
- Mind racing
- Mind going blank
- Indecisiveness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Decreased memory

**Behavioral**
- Obsessive or compulsive behavior
- Phobic behavior
- Avoidance of situations
- Distress in social situations
Isolation & Loneliness
What are you used to?

» Autonomy, independence
» Community of your choosing
» Being able to be out
» People using your correct pronouns
» Access to resources on campus (in person)
» What else?
What could be happening now?

» Lack of independence
» Experience of family members who are not accepting of your identities
» Inability to connect with friends and allies
» Exacerbation of existing trauma

All of this can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness
Grief & Loss
Loss

Being stuck at home has led to all of us experiencing loss, which can lead to grief

Examples of potential losses:

» Community, physical presence
» Routine
» Graduation

» Loss of loved one
» Financial loss
» Travel opportunities (such as study abroad)
How Do We Cope?
What can help?

» Learn skills to help our BODY and MIND

» Understand how to come back to the HERE and NOW
What is the Resiliency Zone?

» An overall state of well-being, in mind, body and spirit

» When we’re in our resiliency zone, we can still feel scared, sad, angry, annoyed, etc., but can still think clearly, handle our feelings and function okay

From Trauma Resiliency Model Workbook, Revision Written by Elaine Miller-Karas, LCSW (8/2014)
Traumatic/Stressful Event or Stressful/Traumatic Triggers

Bumped into Low Zone
Numb
Sad/Depressed
Isolated
Exhaustion/Tired
Disconnected

Bumped into High Zone
Edgy/Irritable
Short Fuse/Angry
Panic/Anxiety
Pain
Hypervigilent

We can get bumped out of the Resilient Zone and get stuck in the High Zone or the Low Zone or go back and forth between the two.
How can I stay “in the zone?” longer?

» Focus on what’s in your control
» Create a daily routine
» Social support
» Acknowledge your thoughts & feelings
» Come back to the present

» Honor your own values
» Limit news
» Walk outside
» Creative activities
» Use resources
» What else?
What can I do if I get “bumped out?”

» Breathing
» Mindfulness
» Notice 3 things you can see, 2 you can hear, 1 you can feel
» Slowly stretch
» Slowly press your fingertips together

» Press your feet into the ground
» Press your back against the wall
» Drink something cold
» Count backwards from 20
» What else?
Self-Compassion
## Self-Compassion [3 Components]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mindfulness</th>
<th>Common Humanity</th>
<th>Self-Kindness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>» Acknowledge what is, without judgement</td>
<td>» Suffering and feelings of inadequacy are part of the shared human experience</td>
<td>» Give yourself compassion instead of punishment, rather than ignoring the pain</td>
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<tr>
<td>» “This is a moment of suffering”</td>
<td>» “We all struggle in our lives”</td>
<td>» “May I be kind to myself”</td>
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Adapted from Neff, 2010. Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) Training Program
Resources
Resources

» Apps:
  ◊ UCLA Mindful (free)
  ◊ Headspace app (headspace.com/lacounty)
  ◊ What’s Up - A Mental Health App (free)

» Trans-Wellness Center (mytranswellness.org)
» LA LGBT Center (lalgbtcenter.org)
» TREVOR Project Lifeline (866-488-7386)
» CAPS (310-825-0768)

Financial / Food Resources

» CPO food closet (foodcloset/@cpo.ucla.edu)
» UCLA Economic Crisis Response Team (ecr@saonet.ucla.edu)
» CalFresh benefits (https://www.cdss.ca.gov/calfresh)
» Dail 211 for info about foodbanks/resources
Questions?