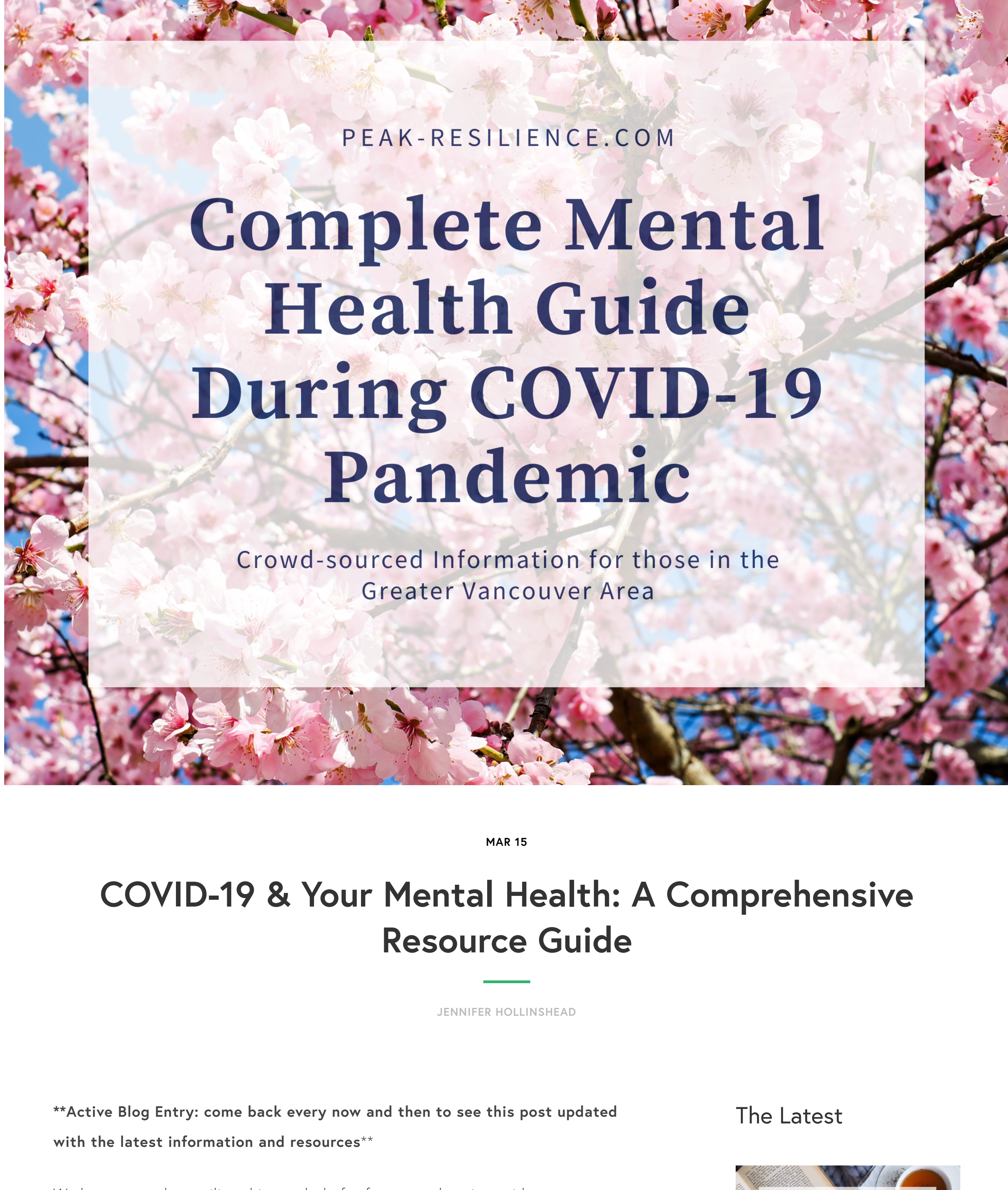
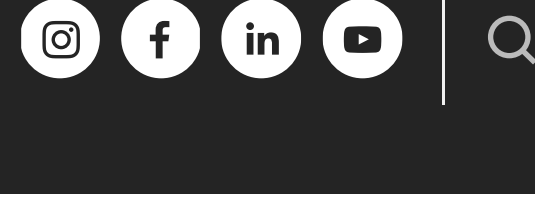




MAR 15

COVID-19 & Your Mental Health: A Comprehensive Resource Guide

JENNIFER HOLLINSHEAD

****Active Blog Entry: come back every now and then to see this post updated with the latest information and resources****

We have started compiling this rough draft of a comprehensive guide to support your mental health during the COVID-19 Pandemic. But we need your help! **Please share this resource list with anyone who might benefit.** We will continue to update this list, so please do [contact us](#) if you have additional resources we can add! We haven't found a comprehensive guide for mental health during COVID-19 yet so we decided to start this one and we know it's incomplete without ideas from our community.

Mental health is just as important as physical health when it comes to responding to COVID-19. Caring for our mental health as individuals and as a community translates into a more effective pandemic response and fewer costs to humans and society as a whole.

Thank you from [Jennifer](#) and the [Peak Resilience Team](#)

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Common reactions during this time

Humans generally love certainty and control (my husband might say that I love it more than the general population). When things feel out of our control it can increase feelings of fear. This reaction is normal because it is our body's natural, biological response. What matters is how we respond to our reactions.

Here are some common reactions you or people you know may be experiencing:

- Worry, anxiety, fear of unknown in general
- Financial concerns and fears
- Fears around your health or the health of your loved ones
- Feelings of being "on edge" - irritable, cranky, short with people
- Feelings of being low - hopeless, sad, apathetic (just don't care)
- Feelings of being detached or things feel surreal
- Wrestling with conflicting values - 'do I visit my grandma?'
- Existential stress - thoughts and feelings related to 'what is the point of my life' etc

Key ways to maintain your own mental health and promote the mental health of those around you:

- Recognize that fear and uncertainty are normal and these feelings make sense - sometimes people can be anxious about being anxious- you can imagine this doesn't decrease anxiety
- Continue to remember that **'panic sells and calm saves'**- consuming media that has been designed to be addictive and attention grabbing is not always helpful in times like these. Continue to try practicing a calm, helpful attitude and limiting your information gathering to [reputable sources](#) during a difficult time
- Focus on taking [small, concrete steps](#) every day to prepare and educate yourself. For example- looking through your cabinets to take inventory of your home supplies and food will allow you to go out to get anything you're missing the next day. Calling an elderly relative will help you focus on helping others who might be struggling more than yourself
- Recognize what is in your control (hand-washing) and what is out of your control (quarantine measures) and try to focus on what you have control over
- Set boundaries with friends or family by telling them what you can currently take on
- Try [practicing mindfulness](#) and being in the present moment. Some helpful apps are [calm.com](#) and [Insight Timer](#)
- Access virtual mental health care services such as Peak Resilience video counselling or visiting a general practitioner through [Babylon Health App](#) - mental health is just as important during this time and cannot be ignored. (more resources below)
- Shop local and support small businesses
- Look out for each other and keep connected! Talk with your neighbours, friends, and family to share your needs and what you have capacity for when supporting others

Updates and Basic-Needs Resources

Here are some helpful links to keep you in the loop and aware of any updates related to our basic needs and health:

Reputable Sources

- [City of Vancouver](#)
- [Health Link BC](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease and Control](#)
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) - Global Information

Essential Needs

- Health
 - [Canada's responses to COVID-19](#) - including travel advisories, drug and medical device supply monitoring
 - [BC COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#)
 - [BC Psychiatric Medications Plan](#) (Plan G) - How to get coverage for Psychiatric Medication from the government during a crisis
- Financial:
 - [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#) - financial support for Canadians and businesses
 - [The Vancouver Rent Bank \(VRB\)](#) - City of Vancouver
 - [Financial Assistance Guide and Summary](#) - information gathered by Women Who Freelance, but applicable to all Canadians
 - [The Trauma of Money: Managing Financial Scarcity](#) - free Zoom video webinar on March 25th hosted by Mindful Money expert, Chantel Chapman and Psychotherapist Hiroko Demichellis on

Contacts

- **8-1-1** - Health-Link BC
- **CALL 1-888-COVID19 / 1-888-268-4319 or TEXT 604-630-0300** - For non-medical info regarding COVID-19 (7:30am-8pm, with over 110 languages available)
- **1-833-784-4397** - Toll Free number across Canada for COVID-19 updates

Mental Health Resources

As Canadians and humans in general, now is a great time to step up and support one another and use our collective resilience to move past this pandemic. Acknowledge the strengths you have and harness them to support yourself, your loved ones and your community. Our strength is in providing mental health support- so if you need extra support, here are some options:

Distance Counselling

- If you're interested in accessing services at [Peak Resilience](#), feel free to check out our [services page](#) for more information
 - Fill out our [finding the right counsellor form](#) to get matched to a counsellor that is right for your specific struggles, goals, personality and schedule
 - Your counsellor will send you a [zoom link](#) if you'd like a video session- it's [completely secure and confidential](#) and approved for health use
- If you're interested in **lower cost or free options**, [here is a list of lower cost or free mental health resources in Vancouver](#) that we keep updated regularly
- [FACITBC's \(Federation of Associations of Counselling Therapists in BC\) press release on protecting mental health](#) during times of uncertainty

Organizations and Support Groups

- Peak Resilience is in the process of hosting a free Support Group. Stay tuned and we will add new information!
- [Vancouver Coastal Health Mental Health and Substance Use information](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association](#)
- [Anxiety Canada](#) - coping with anxiety for youth, adults, and children
- [The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health \(CAMH\)](#) - guide for coping with COVID-19 crisis
- [Postpartum Online Support Meetings](#) - Postpartum Support International offering weekly support meetings online
- ["Body Stories" Support Group](#) - meeting on Zoom exploring relationship with our bodies through feminist narrative enquiry (Wednesdays starting March 18th, 5:30pm-7:30pm)

Crisis Lines

- [Crisis Centre BC](#)- if you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts or a mental health crisis

Supporting Others

Supporting Children

Children might experience more:

- Stress-related reactions due to tension modelled by adults and media
- They may be more anxious and display more clingy behaviour
- They may experience more [health anxiety](#)
- They may be withdrawn, irritable and some may experience younger behaviours like bedwetting even if they haven't wet the bed in a while

How you can support them:

- Role modelling is biggest priority- staying calm as a parent/caregiver
- Be conscious about how much news you have on at home
- Be aware of how you're talking to each other as parents/care givers - children often overhear or can infer your "tone" of anxiety/fear
- Relay age appropriate information from reputable sources like the World Health Organization or HealthLinkBC.
- [PDF on how to support kids](#)
- [How to talk to kids about COVID-19](#)
- [Info on anxiety in kids](#)
- [A supportive opinion article for parents during the pandemic by Kristen Thompson](#) - (article, Today's Parent)

Supporting the High-Risk Population

Elderly People or those with Other Chronic Health Conditions May Experience:

- More anxiety, fear and isolation in general
- [Health Anxieties](#) that are normally present may increase
- Feeling down, depressed, hopeless
- Existential angst such as thinking "what is the point of life" etc

Supporting Elderly People or People with Other Chronic Health Conditions:

- Create a schedule of connecting through video or phone (including reminders of when you're going to call)- put these meetings into your schedule and if you can involve more family members- even better
- Discuss mental health as openly as possible. Ask them how they've been feeling emotionally or how they're feeling about the pandemic
- Validate and normalize their fears. Practice [active listening](#).
- Some may want to process the information through remembering other times they've faced struggle- this is a great time to listen and learn. [Story telling is a huge part of connection and healing](#).
- Capitalize on their strengths- do they have a great sense of humour? Maybe you can try to find anything humorous about what's happening (such as the mass buying of toilet paper)
 - In general, seniors and people who manage chronic health concerns have been through a lot! Generate conversation about how they've remained resilient throughout their lives and how they've gotten to this point. Ask them about their favourite times, favourite activities, people, etc.
- Maybe now's a good time to take the [Senior's Mental Health First Aid course here](#).
- Check out the [Mental Health Commission of Canada's resource site for senior mental health](#)

Other Coping Strategies and Helpful Links

- [F.A.C.E C.O.V.I.D coping strategy by Dr. Russ Harris](#) - (PDF)
- [Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Uncertainty](#) - (article) American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- [What to do if you're anxious or worried about coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) - (article) Anxiety Canada
- [Emotional Autoimmunity by Kerry Jeffrey](#) - (blog) how to manage stress and fear for those with or without chronic illness
- [We're all in this together: facing the coronavirus crisis by Edie Weinstein](#) - (article)
- [Managing working remotely from home](#) - (article) CBC
- [Continuing Everyday](#) - (website) "a website dedicated to keep our community connected in times of uncertainty..." Studio Faculty

COUNSELLING, COVID-19, MENTAL HEALTH, SELF-CARE, VANCOUVER, BC

action, Resilience, Coping, self-care, Stress, Mental Health

Show 2 comments

Address (Get directions) Peak Resilience Unit 601 - 808 Nelson St. Vancouver, BC, V6Z 2H2	Contact Phone: 604-682-PEAK (7325) Email: resilience.com@peak- resilience.com	Information Services FAQ Press	BOOK AN APPOINTMENT
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