

What clergy can do in  
 the era of covid-19  
  
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Issues that have emerge due to covid-19

1. The requirement of social distancing is taking clergy out of our comfort zones.
2. The clergy and the church are no longer THE centralizing source of comfort for church and family members when they experience a loss.
3. Not being able to meet collectively as a church family, is a loss.

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Issues that have emerge due to covid-19

4. Church finances have never been this bad.
5. Fear and grief are co-existing much more frequently now.
6. Everything happening largely through the filter of a computer screen.

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Cognitive overload leads to Mental fatigue

Mental fatigue:

- Decreased ability to think clearly
- Makes it difficult for us to compare and choose among differences

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Emotional responses to mental fatigue

- Depressed
- Anxious, feelings of dread
- Pessimistic
- Apathetic
- Detach
- Angry
- Hopeless
- Difficulty concentrating

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Physical responses to mental fatigue

- Headaches
- Body aches
- Tired
- Appetite and weight changes
- Insomnia
- Our physical response includes a depressing of our immune system

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Behavioral responses to mental fatigue

- Withdrawn
- Unable to keep personal/work commitments
- Impatient and irritable

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Responses that overlap with grief

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Responses that overlap with grief

<p><b>Mental fatigue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depressed</li> <li>• Anxious, feelings of dread</li> <li>• Pessimistic</li> <li>• Detached</li> <li>• Apathetic</li> <li>• Angry</li> <li>• Hopeless</li> <li>• Difficulty concentrating</li> </ul>	<p><b>Grief</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depressed</li> <li>• Anxious, feelings of dread</li> <li>• <del>Pessimistic</del></li> <li>• <del>Detached</del></li> <li>• <del>Apathetic</del> → Lack of energy</li> <li>• Angry</li> <li>• Hopeless</li> <li>• Difficulty concentrating</li> </ul>
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Responses that overlap with grief

<b>Physical</b>	<b>Behavioral</b>
• Body aches	• Withdrawn
• Tired	• Unable to keep personal/work commitments
• Appetite and weight changes	• Impatient and irritable
• Insomnia	
• Stomach problems	

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What clergy can do

- Self-care
  - Reducing your own decision-making strain by delegating where you can
  - Taking shut-down breaks—let your mind wander
  - Take a moment to stare at nature—out the window or during a walk
  - Practice a self-soothing activity—i.e. meditation (time alone with God), or deep breathing
  - Rest!

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What clergy can do

- Prioritize your immediate family time and care over to the broader church needs.
- Cry. There is healing in your tears.
- Don't try to be a fixer.

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If I can't fix, then what?

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Shift from wanting to fix to what you can do:

Provide a sense of:

- a) Safety
- b) Calm & Comfort
- c) Connectedness
- d) Self-Empowerment, and
- e) Hope

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What clergy can do

- 5. Pay attention to the positive new normal patterns emerging.
- 6. Keep things simple.
- 7. Maintain your faith practices, though you might need to simplify them for a season; and bring back the knowledge and skills of the lament and the lamentation to the church.

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Closing

**Butterfly hug**

Simple adaptation of Dr. Jarero's butterfly technique:  
<https://youtu.be/iGGJrqscvtU>

- Dr. Jarero's Self Care Video for Frontline Workers:  
<https://youtu.be/BGI5QOFHtbE>

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*Thank you*

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