

FACING PANDEMIC FATIGUE WITH YOUR TEAMS: THE POWER OF DIALOGUE

RECIPIENTS OF THE TOOL

HR and managers
Guide for employees

GOALS OF THE TOOL

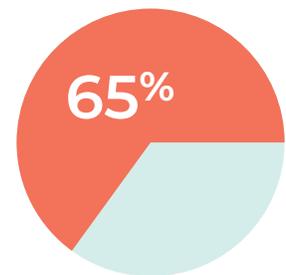
To provide opportunities to express oneself and talk/to actively listen and normalize each other's experiences in a caring way.

To help employees regain a sense of coherence and make sense of what is happening, and to help people better understand the current situation.

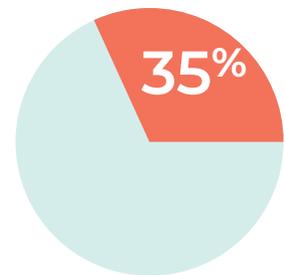
A Consequence of an Ongoing Crisis: Pandemic Fatigue

It goes without saying that the ongoing pandemic is taking a toll on everyone's morale. A comprehensive Quebec survey revealed that 65% of Quebec adults are tired of hearing about COVID-19 (information fatigue).

More worrying still: More than a third are tired of following health measures and of making sacrifices for the more vulnerable (behavioural fatigue).



INFORMATION FATIGUE



BEHAVIOURAL FATIGUE

This fatigue is more present in certain groups, such as young adults (18 to 34 year-olds), parents and those working in person.



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IMPACTS ON PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOUR WHEN FACED WITH THE PANDEMIC

Those living with pandemic fatigue are two times more likely to have psychological health issues (ex.: anxiety, depression, trouble sleeping and concentrating).

This fatigue is also reflected in their decision not to adhere to health measures, not to keep informed about COVID-19 and not to have their child vaccinated.



2X MORE

PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES



2X LESS

ADHERENCE TO HEALTH MEASURES

OPENING A DIALOGUE: A SIMPLE AND POWERFUL METHOD

In the context of the pandemic, talking about stressful situations as a team has many benefits.

→ Regaining a sense of coherence:

Recent studies show that there is an important protective factor in mental health in a context like the pandemic: a sense of coherence. This is the **capacity to understand and make sense of a stressful situation**. A person can then **take ownership of their power to act** and identify resources to deal with the situation. In other words, talking as a team allows us to have a more nuanced understanding of the situation and to find creative solutions when faced with difficulties.

→ Calming negative emotions:

Stress and emotion management studies show that the simple act of putting feelings into words (**a technique called "affect labelling"**) makes these feelings less intense. In addition, having a **social support** network is essential to one's well-being and mental health.

In short, this is the goal with which the following guide will assist you so that you can open a dialogue with your teams and cope with pandemic fatigue.



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Preparatory guide for a team discussion in the context of pandemic fatigue

Here are some suggested questions to open a dialogue with your team and to regain some control over the situation together.

In only one (1) word, how do you feel right now?

What do you find particularly hard at the moment (health measures, family obligations, isolation, etc.)?

What can the team do to better help you in this situation? Realistically, together, how can we change our daily work life to ease this stressful period?

Name one positive thing being in this pandemic has done for you.

What do you do on a daily basis to take care of yourself? What ideas could you share to inspire your colleagues?

LET'S TALK ABOUT PANDEMIC FATIGUE AS A TEAM

The ongoing pandemic is proving difficult for many people's morale. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Then, we will share your answers with the team.

In only one (1) word, how do you feel right now?

What do you find particularly hard at the moment (health measures, family obligations, isolation, etc.)?

What can the team do to better help you in this situation? Realistically, together, how can we change our daily work life to ease this stressful period?

Name one positive thing being in this pandemic has done for you.

What do you do on a daily basis to take care of yourself? What ideas could you share to inspire your colleagues?

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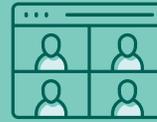
TIPS FOR AN EFFICIENT DISCUSSION:

- ➔ Announce in advance that this topic will be on the agenda of one of your meetings so that each team member is prepared and open to discussion. You can even choose to send the questions in advance so that they can start thinking about them individually.
- ➔ You can of course add, modify or remove some questions according to your specific team's situation. What would be most useful for you to address in this situation?
- ➔ Explain in your own words why this topic is important to you and what your goal is in addressing these questions as a team. For example:
 - *The pandemic is not easy for anyone. It is even more important to listen to and help each other.*
 - *Let's take a few minutes together to vent about these difficult moments and release the pressure.*
 - *During this meeting, I would like us to share our tips and tricks for maintaining our well-being while working remotely.*
- ➔ Arrange for someone to write down the key points from the discussions in advance. You can then have everyone share their tips and follow up on the action points discussed.
- ➔ Lay out some golden rules to create a good atmosphere for this discussion. For example:
 - *All emotions are valid, as long as they are expressed respectfully.*
 - *Let's hear out each person who wishes to express themselves fairly.*
 - *What's shared with the team stays with the team.*
- ➔ Depending on the size of your group, you can suggest going around the table for the first question. The participants who are involved more formally at the beginning of the meeting will naturally become more engaged throughout the discussion.
- ➔ Don't try to act as a psychologist.
The idea is simply to show your employees that they are not alone and to identify courses of action that you can take. Then, direct them toward specialized resources that will be able to provide them with individual support if necessary.
- ➔ Send the guide to participants to give each person a concrete tool to use. Don't forget to write down the information of available resources in your organization or your region.





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Guide for employees: 15 actions to take care of your physical and mental health

Recipients of the tool
Employees

Goals of the tool

Regain a sense of coherence, make sense of what is happening, take care of oneself.



Guide

Here are the tricks listed most often by experts to take care of yourself on a daily basis. Keep them on hand, with your colleague's tips, to inspire you when you need it!

Practice a physical activity regularly	Adopt a healthy diet	Get good quality sleep
Practice relaxation techniques	Keep your brain busy	Have a good social support network
Be optimistic, keep a positive and realistic attitude	Have a model of resilience	Develop a sense of humour
Have a goal, give it purpose to what we are doing	Be organized and plan well (in both your personal and professional life)	Refocus thoughts related to the difficult event
Develop your moral compass (your life values and beliefs)	Do not hesitate to ask for help	Cultivate your spirituality



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In this stressful and trying time, it is important to not be alone, to confide in trustworthy people and to not hesitate to ask for help.

Here are some resources available to you:



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References

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5. Sonia Lupien: Express yourself to reduce stress (concept of affect labelling)
6. Global-Watch and Dr. Mélissa Généreux: *Les impacts psychosociaux de la pandémie : qu'en savons-nous et comment y faire face?* Event on December 1 (PPT and guide)
7. Global-Watch: *Evaluation of well-being during remote working and preparation/follow-up for hybrid work mode*
8. Global-Watch: Acting to reduce stigma among your team
9. Global-Watch: Helping to develop the resilience of managers
10. Global-Watch: Taking care of yourself and building physical and psychological resilience