

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 on mental health and it's aftereffects on young minds

After almost two years of the world being under the clutches of COVID-19, mental health has become a vital concern that demands to be addressed. It was not possible for students to tackle the surge of the pandemic and attend school, which resulted in them spending a prolonged amount of time inside their homes. The whole situation has presented us with an atmosphere of stress and exhaustion, resulting in a lower attention span and short tempers.

With the introduction of online schooling, screen time skyrocketed. Limited scope of interactions in classes have made classes monotonous. Students are always surrounded by countless distractions, making it even more difficult for them to focus. Too many online classes have also resulted in physical ailments. It seems as if there is an enormous blank space among the youths of the society, which otherwise would have been filled with memories made in school campuses with friends and mentors. It is essential to interact with companions in order to not pile up negativities, but unfortunately, this pandemic totally hinders that aspect.

The biggest blow was to motivation. With so many uncertainties surrounding



students, they are always on the edge. The redundancy of life has become a constant, and this has created the lack of things to look forward to. What further disturbs the tranquillity is the concept of a pandemic itself. Sickness, deaths, misinformation, uncertainties — all these do not let people rest.

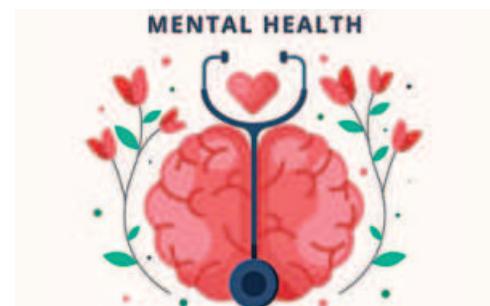
Being in a constant state of alert and frenzy hampers mental health. The after effects of this whole situation can be quite detrimental if things continue to flow as they are currently. Society does not look at mental health issues with a good light, but what must be understood is that mental health is as important as physical health. Without normalising medical health treatments and psychological aids, the youths are going to grow up to be closed off,

paranoid adults.

Research and surveys show that poor mental health results in loss of productivity. It is important for family members to spend time together and talk about how they are feeling, and what can be done in order to feel better.

Schools need to arrange counselling sessions where students will get the scope to open up to professionals. Most importantly, awareness about mental health concerns needs to be raised. In the current status quo, mental health tends to get looked over, but in order to increase productivity and to instil motivation back into the youths, it is about time this issue is taken seriously.

**By Progga Parmita Rupkotha**  
**Photo: Collected**



## Self-care for mental well-being

This year, I have taken a challenge on monitoring my mental and emotional wellbeing making things better. There are little things you can do daily that might help.

### Make sleep a priority

I was never a morning person and I noticed whenever I was not doing well mentally or emotionally, I was spending the majority of my time in bed. So, the first thing I did was change my sleep cycle. If you find yourself going to bed late and eventually waking up late, stop that immediately! Maintain a proper cycle, and ensure minimum 7 hours of sleep because your body needs that. You will notice you are feeling more energised and productive.

### Do some journaling

If you struggle with processing your thoughts and emotions, write them down. This worked like magic for me. It is not essential to write down on a regular basis because I know it might feel like a tedious job and further, cause anxiety. Do it when you are feeling too overwhelming. If you think a certain conversation caused you to overthink or is choking you from within, instead of "thinking" how the conversation should have gone, just write it down. Writing your thoughts down will help you realise the struggles you are facing and the things you can do to address them.

### Declutter

Take time to declutter, be it your home, work station or your mind itself. If things around you is a mess, your life would feel like a mess too. Organise that closet of yours, declutter your laptop/desktop display, delete/uninstall unnecessary photographs or applications from your phone and most importantly organise your thoughts too.

### Think about your thoughts

Pay attention to your thoughts. Redirect your thoughts if you find yourself constantly dwelling deep into the ocean of negativity. Choose your own thoughts, especially the ones that make you happy. Be the "glass half-full" person!

### Cultivate an attitude of gratitude

We, all, have a massive amount of reasons to be thankful for. Make a gratitude list. It can really prove helpful to look back on that list during your difficult times. Be grateful that you get to see and experience a new day and start a new beginning.

Finally, take one day at a time. There is no rush. Slow down. You are doing great. I know you are! Believe in that. It's a wonderful world.

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**Photo: Collected**