



UNIVERSITY
OF ESWATINI

Dept. COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING

NEWSLETTER

1st edition | August 2021



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The Nuntius:

A New way of Thinking;
A Brighter future for Community
Health Nursing in Eswatini.

EDITOR'S CORNER

Mr. Siyabonga Mabuza
(MNSc)

A fortunate leader causing a lot of life transforming fortunes through leading amazing change agents that are for-tune in the community as a whole. The Department of Community Health Nursing Sciences is one critical and vital unit of the Faculty of Health Sciences. It is the Department that seeks to link the community of Eswatini and beyond with the unparalleled students of the University of Eswatini as the Premier learning institution of the land. This newsletter, "The Nuntius", therefore, aims to expose and disseminate information about what unfolds through this Department. The name Nuntius comes from the Catholic concept of 'Nuntio', a bearer and messenger of good news. Hence this first edition of the newsletter shall highlight the good news inherent in the Department of Community Health Nursing Sciences. It shall be continually published every end of semester of the academic year.

This edition of the Community Health Nursing Nuntius encompasses a lot of motivational and empowering cover stories. It also contains a number of inspirational and mind expanding articles based lesson as articulated by various members of the Department. Noteworthy are the wise words of one stalwart and iron lady who happens to have the hands that molded most members of the Department; that is, a preview on Professionalism in the field of Academia. The sole purpose behind every article is paradigm shift for possible behavior change.



The era of the COVID-19 pandemic is one that has no clear survival manual. It demands a lot of mental strength and community stability for possible overcoming. Members of various communities are either infected or affected by the virus, families are shaken and individuals are coerced to a baptism of uncertainty, fear and anxiety. This creates a gap and an opportunity for collaborative between medical experts, community health experts and mental health experts. This edition has coping strategies for individual students, community members as well families in general. Worth mentioning, there is no one size fits formula for survival, but everyone ought to find a piece of wood that can help surf and survive the wave. Undoubtedly, we all look up to the unfailing, cushioning and sustaining grace of the Almighty who is never surprised by any catastrophe or crisis of mankind. He alone remains our hope and reason to face tomorrow. No one knows what tomorrow may bring, it is therefore best to know Him who knows what tomorrow may bring. May the messages in this newsletter bring insight, joy, inspiration and courage in whatever state it finds you in.

Enjoy the rest of your reading.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT'S PRECINCT

By Dr. F. S. Shabalala,
(PhD)



Wow...it is finally here! The inaugural newsletter of the Department of Community Health Nursing Sciences – "The Nuntius" – and indeed the first newsletter to come out of the Faculty of Health Sciences is out!

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Department of Community Health Nursing Science newsletter. It is with great honour and appreciation that I share this newsletter with you. I am awed by the strides the Department has made amid very trying times of the past year due to COVID-19. The newsletter was borne out of a realized need to stay connected with ourselves and our client: the public. It is intended to provide a platform where we connect, educate and showcase our work as a Department.

The past year, 2020, has been marred with a lot of good work as well as a plateful of challenges. On the bright side, and drawing from the University's tripartite roles, and strategic plan 2018-2022, the Department was able to:

1) Put together two-year (2020-2022) workplan that acted as a blue print for its activities. Among the activities were the development of new programmes (two graduate, and one post graduate diploma) and two short term courses;

2) Developed a research agenda comprising of six key thematic areas of national importance. The department has also been able to an assessment on training needs for members, to enhance the quality of online teaching and learning. A lot of work has gone into the proposed activities with most having been completed while some are on track to be completed. The Department continues to seek meaningful professional partnerships within UNESWA and

linkages with relevant external institutions embracing our mission, as part of our drive to form a community of practice in research and teaching and learning excellence;

3) Implement various community service initiatives to needy individuals and families with support from students, faculty members and friends of the Department. The Department is grateful for contributions in cash and otherwise, without which we wouldn't have been able to carry out our mandate. We were also able to form strong collaborations with key stakeholders who added value to our work, in particular the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, The Epilepsy Association of Eswatini, and the Faculty of Science and Engineering at UNESWA. For more on this refer to the "Roving Camera" section of this newsletter.

It is well documented that nurses and midwives are the heart of every health system globally. In recognition of this, the World Health Organisation has recognised 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. The theme developed by the International Council of Nurses is "A Voice to Lead: Nursing in the World to Health". This theme was chosen long before the COVID-19 pandemic began – but the work nurses have put in managing the pandemic across the globe demonstrates that indeed they have a central role in "nursing the world to health". This inaugural issue comes at a time when we are experiencing unprecedented infections and deaths from COVID-19, and nurses are at the heart of managing the pandemic. Community Health Nurses, as experts in promoting, preserving and maintaining health, must be seen to be playing their role of educating prevention through behaviour change to the entire populace. We need to educate people so that they can make informed

choices and protect themselves and others from COVID-19, using our knowledge from nursing, and social and public health sciences. This resonates with the mission of the Department of striving for **“excellence in teaching and learning in the area of community and mental health nursing through developing and executing high quality, evidence informed educational programs, research studies and community service activities that will prepare graduates to serve in diverse socio-cultural settings within and outside of Eswatini, in the prevention of diseases and injuries, and promotion, maintenance and restoration of health of individuals, families and communities.”**

It is my sincere hope that “The Nuntius” will help promote a sense of belonging and act as a glue that binds us as a department and most importantly, serve as an informative internal, as well as external, branding document. Departmental interconnectedness is the sheet anchor that helps employees bond as one Community Health Nursing Science family. “The Nuntius” is an effort in that direction. After all, good families build trust and are mutually committed

— traits that are vital to meet the vision of being the **Department of Choice in Africa and beyond** in Community Health Nursing Science education, practice, research and community service.

As I end, I sincerely thank every member and friend of the Department for all that you do, every day, to contribute to our mission to teach, discover and care. Thank you for your critique, for challenging us, for keeping us in check and on our toes, and for your praises and support because that is what makes us desire to do a little more, a little better. As we go forward, we should continue to strive for excellence in all of our endeavors. Our past accomplishments should give us hope for the future and remind us of what we can achieve both individually and collectively. Until the next issue of “The Nuntius” next semester, keep well and protect yourselves and others from COVID-19.

Cheers,

Dr. Fortunate S. Shabalala
HoD-Community Health Nursing Science

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS



1. Occupational safety and health training in the context of COVID-19 pandemic

By Dr Sakhile Masuku (PhD)

The training took place at the University of Eswatini (UNESWA)-Luyengo Campus from Monday 25th May to Friday 5th of June, 2020. Participants checked in on Sunday 24th May and remained on the campus till the end of the training.

The specific objectives of the course were:

The University of Eswatini, Faculty of Health Sciences, Community Health Department, was engaged by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to run a 10 day training workshop on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in the context of COVID-19 targeting unemployed graduates on OSH both at degree and diploma level. An advertisement was run in the Times of Eswatini on the 20th May, 2020 and over 300 applicants responded out of which 40 participants were selected for the training course.

- 1) To acquaint trainees with the concepts of health and safety at work including their importance,
- 2) To describe work-related hazards that commonly cause accidents and ill-health particularly in the COVID-19 era,
- 3) To enhance the understanding of responsibilities for upholding health and



Food parcels donated to one destitute homestead in Mafutseni as a community project

safety by both the employer and the employees,
4) To discuss safety measures and procedures that are required to be in place especially in the time of COVID-19,

5) To explain the current Eswatini health and safety legislation as well as WHO and ILO COVID-19 guidelines,

6) To explain how to write a report, the importance of reporting and investigating accidents as well as to conduct monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

The purpose was to enhance participants' skills and understanding towards getting them ready to be foot soldiers in the enforcement of safety and health at workplaces in the era of COVID-19. To this end the training covered the following topics:

1. COVID-19(Epidemiology,pathophysiology and response);
2. Application of Health and Safety Practice Regarding COVID-19;
3. Principles of Occupational health and Safety;
4. Occupational Hygiene;
5. Risk assessment and management;
6. Toxicology;
7. Acoustics and health;
8. The Human Environment;
9. Disaster Management and Response;
10. Environmental pollution management;
11. Ethics in Health and Safety;
12. Principles of health and safety law;
13. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines;
14. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Guidelines;

15. In-country Guidelines;
16. Conflict management;
17. Investigations - Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); and
18. Report writing.

A participant-centred approach was used in the training to give the participants a better position to deliberate on existing OSH weaknesses and strengths as well as identify the need for change as it would pertain to COVID-19. The training was conducted in compliance to country guidelines for gatherings during COVID-19 emergency regulations. That is, since 40 participants were admitted into the training program, they were divided into 2 groups of 20 candidates each, with one class virtual and the other conventional. The classes were in close proximity to allow for the facilitator to also visit the virtual class since it was only the voice and power point content which was virtual. Group assignments were administered for all sessions followed by comprehensive plenary sessions. As part of their training, participants developed an OSH inspection tool which they used to conduct inspections during their practical session of the training. Inspections were conducted by participants, supervised by facilitators in a Government establishment, Retail outlet, Construction site and Textile Manufacturing. The aim of the field session was to give participants practical experience in applying what they learnt during theory and, in particular, writing sound reports. The reports generated from the practical inspections were presented at the closing ceremony, which was graced by the presence of the Minister of Labour and Social Security, the Principal Secretary (PS) in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Eswatini who all underscored the appropriate timing and relevance of the training and implored participants to go and make a difference with the newly acquired skills. Employers were encouraged to use these skills in enhancement of safety and health standards at the workplace. Out of the 40 participants 39 successfully completed the training and were awarded certificate of competence.



THE SNACK ZONE

Nursing Delegation

S	E	C	D	D	K	O	U	T	C	O	M	E	S
V	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	C	A	T	E	T	L
L	E	G	A	L	E	T	O	A	T	N	E	D	T
S	U	G	C	A	P	O	I	W	N	N	P	E	A
U	E	P	P	S	P	P	U	E	L	A	O	A	N
P	T	O	A	U	E	N	S	I	S	E	U	G	O
E	G	L	U	T	T	T	P	A	I	G	D	S	E
R	N	I	L	P	U	L	H	A	G	E	W	G	E
V	I	C	E	N	P	S	S	I	T	E	C	U	E
I	N	I	A	N	U	G	L	A	C	I	N	C	S
S	I	E	I	U	U	R	O	S	A	A	E	C	E
I	A	S	U	M	G	U	S	O	R	A	L	N	Y
O	R	I	N	G	O	W	I	E	P	K	S	A	T
N	T	L	L	N	O	I	T	A	U	L	A	V	E

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/87170/>

AGENCY
KNOWLEDGE
POLICIES
DUTIES
LEGAL
COMMUNICATE
OUTCOMES
NURSE
TRAINING
NPA
UAP
TASK
PATIENT
ETHICAL
EVALUATION
SUPERVISION

Health Care Word Search

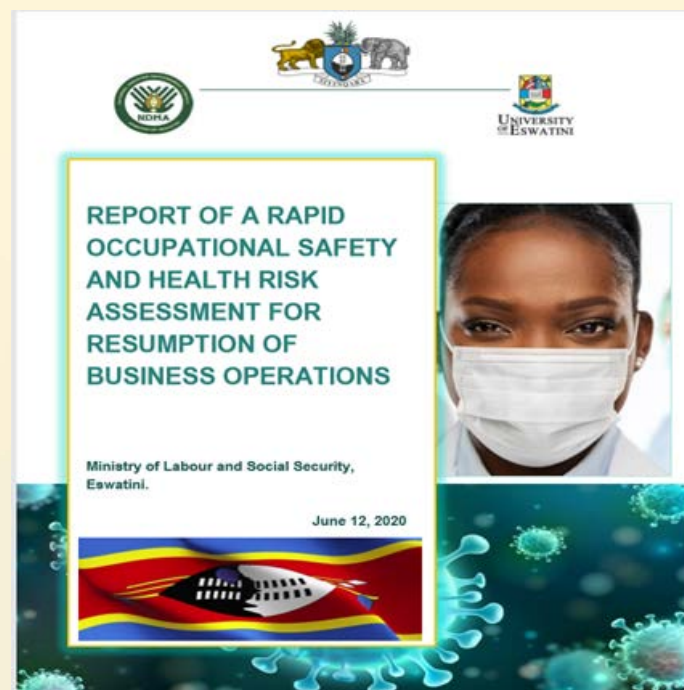
e f j g m k r c d t p e r m g
c u r e c e i o n a a s e e m
n c a i o i d e t z w r c p n
a z s i q l m i r c h u o i s
l j h m d t e x c w o n v t i
u u z f a n w u s i l d e h j
b j f e t w h z j r n m r v y
m z r h o s p i t a l e y o c
a t y h t l a e h y o i i v o
w k q f p h j j n t h o c r x

aid
ambulance
cure
doctor
healthy
hospital
medicine
nurse
patient
recovery
sick
treatment



2. Report of a rapid Occupational Safety and Health Risk Assessment for resumption of business operations in Eswatini

By Dr. S.K.S. Masuku, (PhD)



This report is a presentation of findings of a rapid assessment conducted countrywide to determine the preparedness of businesses/workplaces with regards to COVID-19. The Research team of this vital exercise was headed by Head of Department - Community of Health Nursing Science, Dr. F.S. Shabalala and Dr S.K.S Masuku who provided overall technical leadership and coordination of the project. COVID-19 is by far the greatest threat not only on public health, but also has the potential to significantly slow down and possibly negate the economy of the country. Preventing and mitigating the risk of COVID-19 transmission in businesses/workplaces can be daunting, and require effective processes of risk assessment and risk management. A cross-sectional rapid assessment was conducted among 817 businesses/workplaces to determine the level of compliance to COVID-19 guidelines during partial and eased partial lockdown as well as the extent to which risk analysis was conducted and mitigation measures developed.

Rearrange the following words as relating to the Community Health Nursing Department:

- Mnumytoic _____
- tmnegange _____
- cpyshe _____
- jiildlnuva _____
- mmnuitoziain _____

individual, immunization, community, psyche, engagement

To determine the level of compliance, a mean (average) of a composite score computed using variables with a total score of 74 was used. All businesses/workplaces that scored below the mean were classified as having below average compliance while those that scored above the mean were deemed as having above average compliance by region, type of business and during the periods of partial and eased lockdown. Similarly, the mean for a composite score was used to determine level of risk analysis and mitigation strategies put in place.

Findings suggest that 517 (63%) of the 817 businesses/workplaces assessed are below compliance to COVID-19 preventive measures and 37% are above average. Fifty-two percent (52%) of businesses/workplaces were found to have not conducted a risk analysis and had not developed mitigation strategies. The Manzini region had the highest (42%) proportion of non-compliant businesses/workplaces followed by Lubombo (21%) and Shiselweni (20%). The Hhohho

region had the least (16%) non-compliant businesses/workplaces. Similar observations were made with regards to businesses/workplaces that did not conduct risk analysis and develop mitigation strategies where the Manzini Region had the highest proportion of businesses/workplaces that had not conducted risk analysis and did not have mitigation strategies in place.

In terms of compliance during the partial and eased lockdown, out of 517 businesses/workplaces that were below average, 67% operated during the partial lockdown. An improvement was observed during the eased partial lockdown as 32% were non-compliant. The types of businesses/workplaces that were the least compliant included financial sector (75%), Government offices (65%), food outlets (67%), retail (64%), manufacturing (60%) and other services such as mortuary, consultancy, waste management facilities, motor mechanics (63%).

LECTURERS' SECTION

It calls for Revitalizing Community Based Health Care to curb COVID-19



By Ms. Nompilo Dlamini (MPH)

In developing countries like Eswatini, handling the exacerbating COVID 19 cases in the era of limited resources, existing high burden of other communicable and none communicable diseases which has already overwhelmed health care system might be a nightmare. To handle the pressure of the demands of COVID 19, most countries have shifted focus from other health problems and given COVID 19 a priority which might lead to an increase

in morbidity and mortality from the non COVID 19 health problems. Revitalizing community based health care can be a solution to ease the burden in the already suffocating health care system and successfully curb COVID 19; while giving the health care system to breath and also religiously give attention to other non COVID 19 health issues (1). This calls for investing in community health systems by capacitating community health workers (CHWs) and community based organization (CBOs) so that they are better positioned to fight against COVID 19 by providing services at community level. Well informed, equipped and supported CHWs can play a vital role in control of any pandemic especially in developing countries with compromised health care system (2, 3). By providing services at community level, CHWs will relieve the already overwhelmed and under resourced health care system and prevent interruption of services provision for other health problems.

CHWs will interrupt the spread of COVID 19 by performing the following roles to pursue the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSa) (4):

1. Prevent

Community health care workers should:

- Provide timely, accurate health information on disease transmission, prevention and control measures in a culturally acceptable manner
- Address misinformation and dispel myths which can have negative impact on the already implemented efforts.
- Provide support to high risk population.
- Mobilize, support and reinforce the establishment, use and adherence to community based infection prevention and control measures

2. Detect

Monitoring and surveillance of the COVID 19 cases at community level:

- Improving surveillance in communities at risk, contact tracing for early identification and prevention of spread of the disease.
- Identifying the signs and symptoms of COVID 19 among community members, facilitate collection and transportation of sample to health facility. This will reduce risk of nosocomial transmission.

3. Respond

- Training of HCW on COVID 19 response, ensuring that Community Health Workers are equipped with necessary skills and PPE.

- Follow up and supporting of asymptomatic patients and those with mild symptoms by ensuring that they have basic needs and monitoring them for any deterioration and arrange referral to hospital.

Covid-19 came as a scourge with a clear need for collaborative efforts and management. Everyone is a frontliner. However, much appreciation and salutation are accorded to our doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, politicians, police army, paramedic personnel and all who directly manage Covid-19 infected and affected individuals.

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2. Ballard M, Bancroft E, Nesbit J, Johnson A, Holeman I, Foth J, et al. (2020). Prioritising the role of community health workers in the COVID-19 response. BMJ Glob Heal. 5(6):1–7.
3. Bhaumik S, Moola S, Tyagi J, Nambiar D, Kakoti M. (2020). Community health workers for pandemic response: A rapid evidence synthesis. BMJ Glob Heal. 5(6):1–20.
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PROFESSIONALISM



By Prof. N.A. Sukati (PhD)

Professionalism can be described in a number of ways. I like the description of professionalism by the Merriam-Webster.com dictionary (n.d) that refers to professionalism as *a skill, judgement and behaviour expected from a person trained to do a job well*. From this description, we can consider professionalism to be the integration and blending of a variety of skills or competences that are expected of a professional. These skills/competences should characterise or mark a profession or a professional person.

Why is professionalism important?

It is important because it is an outward display of one's attitude toward her/his job and the institution he/she works for. In nursing professionalism means providing top quality patient care while honouring the values of respect, advocacy, responsibility, accountability, integrity (being honest and having strong moral principles) or moral uprightness, confidentiality, continuity, compassion, trustworthiness and adhering to a set of standards, code of conduct and accepted practice underpinning the trust the public has on the

professional. The professional nurse should undertake to perform accepted practice within a particular area of activity by adhering to a set of standards and code of conduct.

Personal qualities and behaviours that characterise professionalism include:

- Commitment to effective performance in a given job
- Dependability or being reliable
- Being a team player because healthcare is multidisciplinary
- Being respectful
- Being ethical
- Being the best, and
- Being positive
- Taking responsibility for your actions

In addition, professionalism requires one to know his/her stuff (not necessarily everything), stand for something, keep your word, support others and communicate effectively and appropriately.

It is important to always apply the code of professional conduct to guide your behaviour and practice in providing patient care or teaching others. The code of conduct is a set of standard principles and behavioural expectations considered binding to any person who is a member of a particular group (the free dictionary .com, n.d). The code of conduct requires you to provide safe, competent and ethical practice to ensure the protection of the public; respect the inherent worth, right of choice and dignity of persons; maintain the health, mental health and wellbeing of your clients and render quality practice (Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Canada, 2010). Furthermore, the Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Canada (2010) urge, as part of professionalism, that nurses meet standards of practice that include building therapeutic interpersonal relationships; apply and integrate theory-based knowledge; assume professional responsibility and uphold professional ethics that support the values of the profession.

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THE MIND ENGINEERING CORNER

Ask Dr. J.S. Siphepho, (PhD)

Q:
I am a 20 years old student who has been struggling lately with my self-concept. I seem to struggle to take charge of my emotions and relationships. How can I best understand myself?

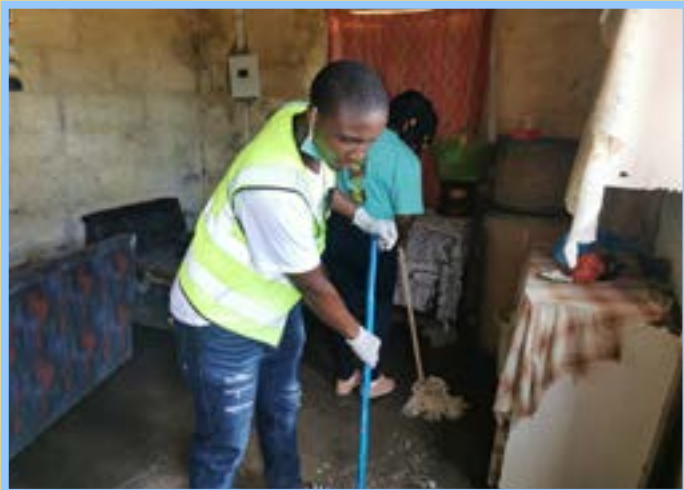
A:
That's a very smart question. I hope it the struggles you are going through will not weigh you down. Always know this: you are a complete individual, nothing is missing in who you are. Only embrace that you have a physical body and you must accept and love it to take care of it. You have thoughts which you must regulate in order to harness your emotions. You thought control will influence your philosophical inclinations and subsequently enhance how you relate with people. Start by seeing yourself as a complete whole individual with five entities that work together to help you survive.

Q:
Help me deal with continuous fear of the unknown and continued anxiety all day, even without any basis.

A:
Fear is a common phenomenon that everyone experiences. It matters to take charge of it before it takes charge of you. Most of the fears you have end up not manifesting. However, always create observe the 'contingency of disappointment' principle. Live life with no fears but always live some room for disappointment. Anxiety may be a good thing if it helps you to prepare for negative things. However, continuous anxiety may be unhealthy. Therefore, make sure that you remain responsible and accountable. Those two will keep your anxiety in check.

Q:
I am a 19 years old student who is facing a lot stresses and challenges in my family while I happen to be in some relationship problems. I know it affects my school and sometimes I feel like quitting school and life as a whole. I will never commit suicide because of my future aspirations, but I need strategies to cope.

A:
It is so commendable to not that through it all you have a clear focus on your future and the best that tomorrow can bring for you. Resilience is your best strategy! Do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason with the right person. Sometimes you need to sit on your problems; put them under the chair of your progress. This means that keep fighting the urge to quit, press forward. Once you survive this phase, good things will come. This fire should ignite a new fire for success within you. Find people to cool you down when you are overwhelmed, develop a good network with your colleagues, i.e. people who will propel you forward. I can tell that you are pregnant with lots of greatness, make sure you don't abort it!



ROVING CAMERA



Dr J.S. Siphepho and Mr S.F. Mabuza representing the Department at a training held at the Eswatini College of Theology in Ezulwini.



Community Health Nursing Dpt HoD alongside Mafutseni Member of parliament (centre) with the champion student who pioneered the community project, Ms Sibandze

STUDENTS' AVENUE

POETRY

If I Don't Make It To Dawn — by Mthobisi Ntjane

If I don't make it past midnight, tell my mom I've been battling my demons for far too long - I've decided to give in. If I don't make it to dawn, tell the sun it wasn't my intention to set before it rose. Tell my Grandma I wasn't a lunatic, it just took me more sanity to maintain my sanity. If the night takes me with it, beat the drums, send me away with loud bangs, maybe they will shut down the voices lingering in my head as I lay lifeless on the floor.

If I don't make it past midnight, tell my sister I'm sorry I let her down. I'm sorry I wasn't as strong as she assumed I was. Tell my younger brother that he should look within, that's the role model I entrust to him. Tell him I held on for far too long, there's nothing to hold on to anymore. Tell my mama the path I took was inevitable. Tell her not to shed a tear for me, I couldn't standby bearing witness to her suffering in the name of love. Tell my dad that I tried but I couldn't live up to his expectations. Tell him I'm sorry if what I'm about to do doesn't seem manly.

Tell my step-dad that I couldn't stand seeing dried tears on my mother's cheeks every morning. Tell him I was exhausted of witnessing my mama drooling blood and tears from the daily bashings. Tell him I loved him but I hated his insecurities, the emotional burden he exerted on my mama. I wanted to stay but I couldn't stand the fact that my mama forgave him even when he wasn't sorry for what he did. Tell my step-dad I had to take the way out, because if I stayed longer I would eventually snatch his breath away.

Tell society I wasn't the bubbly kid they assumed I was. Tell them I smiled only to avoid answering too many questions of why I was gloomy even though my life seemed to be intact. Tell society I'm sorry for turning from 'saint' to villain...I'm sorry I could no longer be the kid parents told their kids to emulate, it was exhausting. Tell society I was looking for a universe where I could stop acting and start living, I hope I will locate it on the other side.

Tell society all I ever bled was never poems, it was suicide notes sent to the world, searching for someone to tell me I should fight till dawn breaks. Tell the preacher I hope hell will have less judgement than what I endured in this life. Tell him I was a lost son who couldn't be found, so I found solace in losing my breath before I lost my sanity. Tell the congregants to speak the love language before they bubble in tongues.

I've been told multiple times that there is light at the end of the tunnel... but what if that tunnel has blinded me, how will I visualise the light when it approaches? If I don't make it to dawn, dig me two graves; one to bury my corpse and the other to bury who I wanted to be. If I don't make it past midnight, tell those who didn't care to save their condolences. Tell them not to mourn if they couldn't even wipe my wounds when I bled in their midst. If I don't make it to dawn.



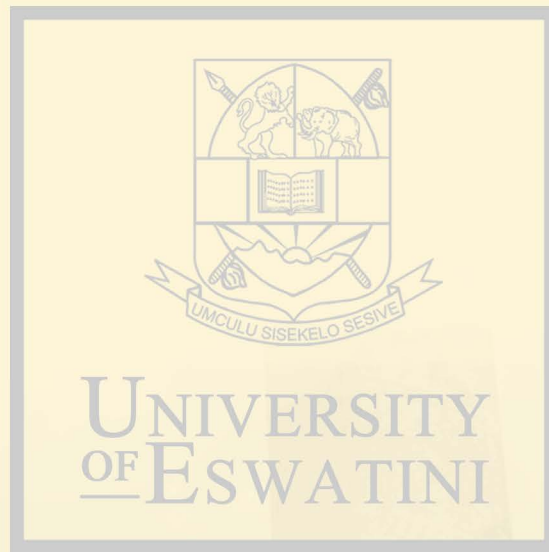
Mental strength during a pandemic — Ngozo Amanda & Wandile Msibi

Mental strength is one's ability to deal effectively with pressure, stressors and challenges, and is a vital aspect of our lives if we want to live fulfilling lives of success. When looking into the impacts of a pandemic like the current Covid-19, people lose their loved ones and this causes stress and even worse depression. If one is mentally strong, it would be much easier to accept the situation and be able to cope with the losses without getting into intense stress or depression. With mental toughness, people are better equipped with the confidence in their ability to deal with the calamities presented by the pandemic and more especially the grief that comes with losing their loved ones. Mental strength helps one to efficiently regulate their emotions even in sorrowful times, this in turn helps them to make sound decisions other than just making them out of their current overwhelming emotions. Stress is capable of causing serious physical conditions like stroke, hence preventing it is important to avoid additional sicknesses.

We cannot control everything that happens in our lives, but only the way we respond to it. Lots of people have lost their jobs and businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this means that there are people out there without a source of income, and that is very sad. Mental strength is vital at such times, because most people may give up and do nothing about the situation, or maybe feel like it is the end of it all when that is not the case. This is when the person should focus his/her efforts and energy on the things that matter most, or even try and think of an alternative way to raise income and behave productively, only mental strength can help in that. People may work on this by changing the challenges they are facing into opportunities of self-growth in order to live satisfying lives.

During self-isolation or in self-quarantine, a mentally strong individual will feel positive and want to fight the challenges ahead. He will not succumb to panicking but instead he will want to strengthen his immune system, take enough bedrest, take Panadol when having headaches, and know that COVID-19 is just like any other flu virus (but a highly contagious one). A mentally fit individual will know that whatever disease that comes, it will not strive when people have a strong immune system, and that a strong immune system looks physical but it's actually begins mentally. After mastering the latter statement, the mentally tough individual will do by all means to strengthen his immune system (physical exercise, inclusion of vitamin C fruits in diet ...etc). He acknowledges that once you lose mentally, you have really lost in life since that will be a gate for infections to attack the weakened, depressed immune system.

Also, having mental strength helps in dealing with the loss of a loved one in the sense that you will understand and appreciate that the loved one is gone and it was her time, and you will not put the blame on neither yourself nor anyone else, instead you will want to heal and prevent acquiring the COVID-19 infection to stay safe. It is important to be mentally healthy, especially now during a pandemic because mostly in previous infections like HIV, people have been deteriorating not because of the disease process nor the pathology, but because of the fact that the people could not accept being positive. It is same case with COVID-19 for mentally unfit individuals, whereby upon hearing that she is positive she will think she is dead, thus the immune system goes down. Mental strength seems to be our first line defence in this Covid-19 pandemic.



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