

A person wearing a red hooded jacket and dark pants stands on a dark, rocky beach, looking out at a massive, powerful waterfall. The waterfall is shrouded in mist, and a vibrant rainbow is visible in the spray of water. The scene is dramatic and evocative, symbolizing resilience and hope.

**‘IT’S OKAY TO NOT  
FEEL OKAY’**

**IMPLICATIONS AND  
IDEAS FOR SUPPORTING  
STAFF WORKING WITH  
PEOPLE LIVING WITH  
BRAIN INJURY DURING  
THE CORONAVIRUS  
PANDEMIC**

Dr Jenny Brooks, Consultant  
Clinical Psychologist

Dr Keith Jenkins, Consultant  
Clinical Neuropsychologist

I am Jenny, I am a Consultant Clinical Psychologist working with people with brain injury, mainly in the community.

I worked for many years with people with brain injury in hospitals and residential units.



I am Keith, I am a Consultant  
Clinical Neuropsychologist.

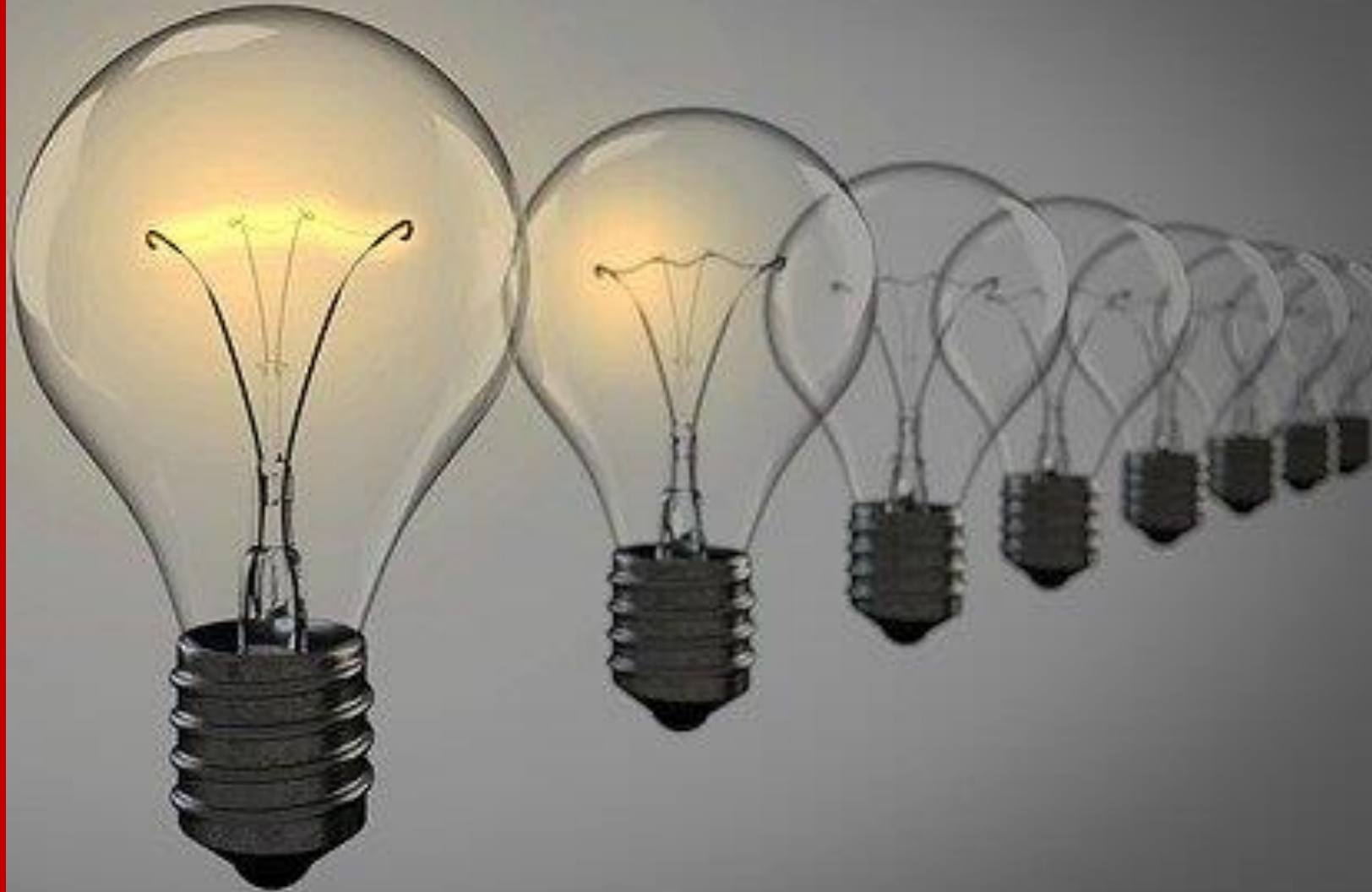
I have worked with people with  
brain injury for many years.

I am also the the Chair of  
Headway East Northants and  
ABIF Northants



**We will be sharing ideas on:**

- **What psychological reactions are triggered by the Covid-19 Pandemic?**
- **Coping strategies**
- **What may the future hold?**
- **Useful contacts and resources**

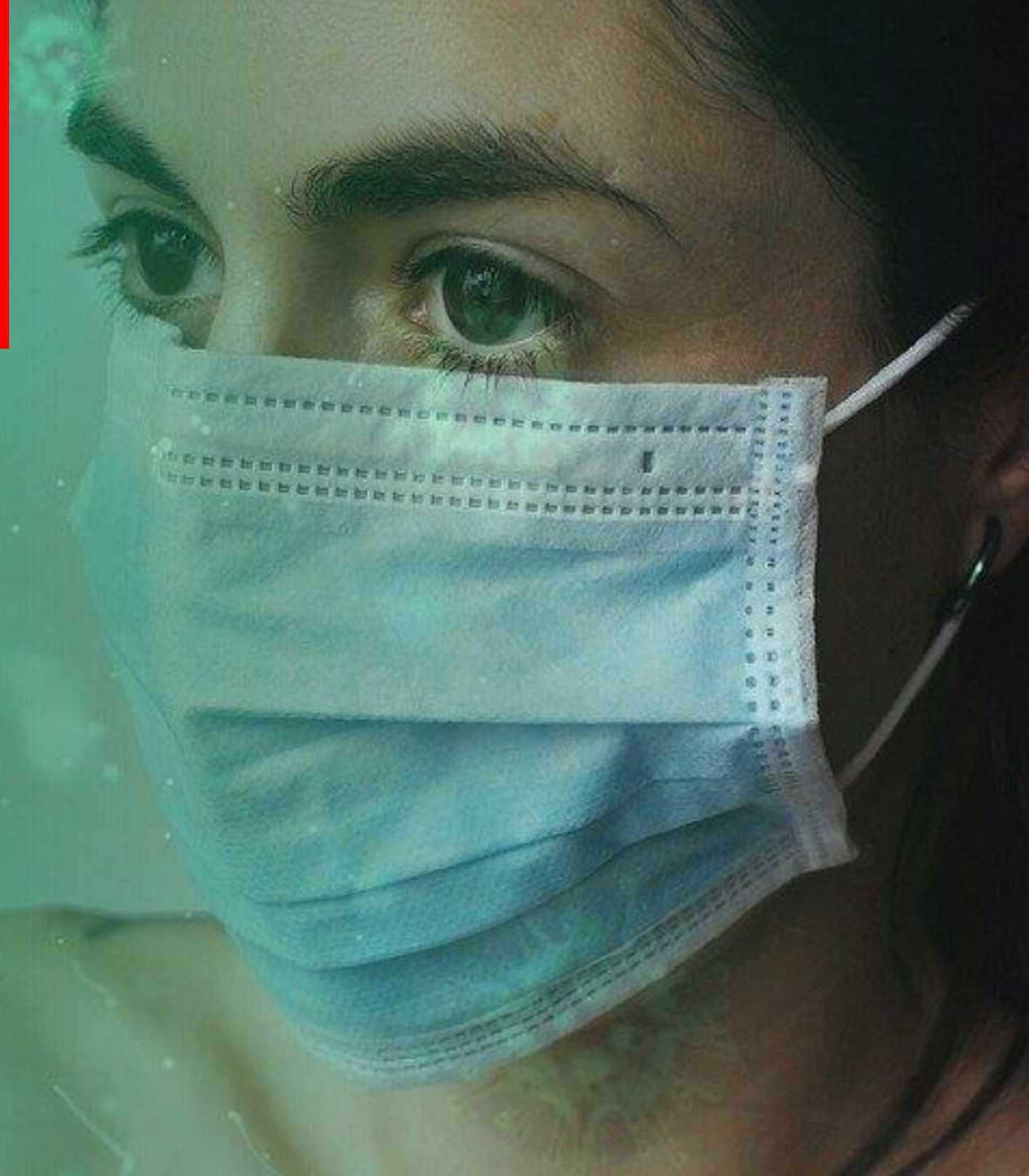
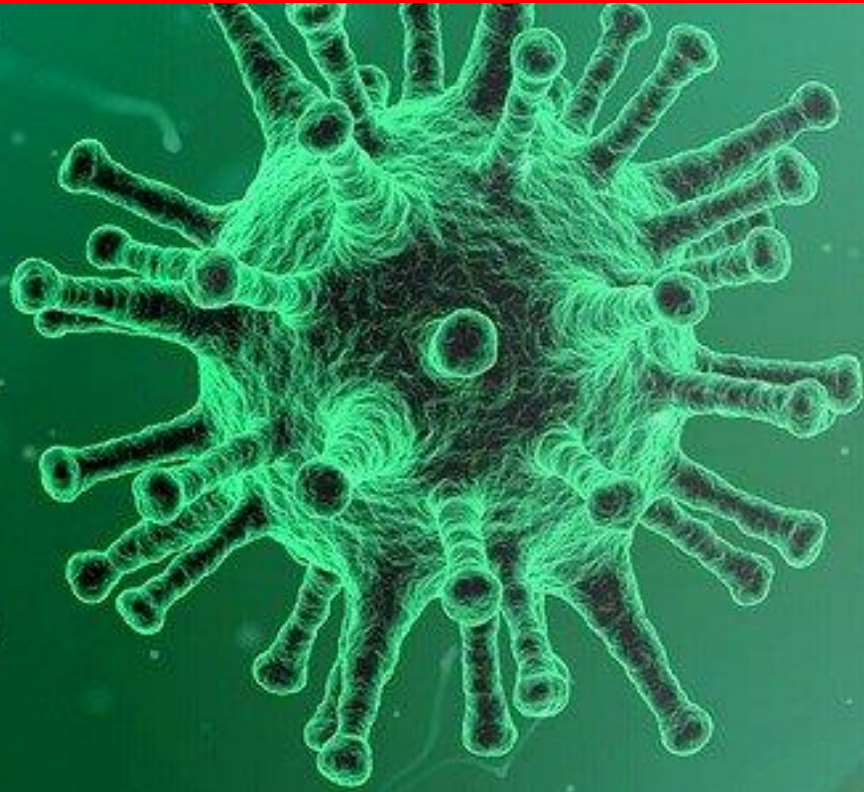


**Thank you for sending us your questions related to issues about working and living through the COVID -19 pandemic.**

**We will read out and answer these towards the end of the webinar.**



**What psychological reactions are triggered by the Covid-19 Pandemic?**





# Anxiety



## Uncertainties:

- Am I safe here?

## Loss of control:

- Restrictions & new working practices

## Fear:

- Fight or flight response

## Am I / we doing it right?:

- Concerns about approaches taken to clients/patients



# Loss

## Loss of loved ones

- Family/colleagues/clients/patients/friends
- Coping with ambiguous loss

## Loss of well-being

- New physical and emotional concerns





## Loss

### Loss of familiar work routine

- New restrictions & concerns about infection control
- Working at home

### Loss of self

- 'Moral injury'
- Guilt



# Stress

## Post Traumatic Stress (PTSD)

- Shattering experiences
- Flashbacks

## Chronic stress

- Compassion fatigue
- Physical health effects

## Anger / resentment

- Feeling unsupported
- Frustrations
- Stigmatisation

# Getting the stress balanced





# Growth

## Work

- Increased camaraderie
- Team development
- Insights about others

## New personal horizons

- Relationships, insight, lifestyle
- Resilience

## Society?

- Improved appreciation for keyworkers
- Not taking it all for granted

# Coping strategies for psychological reactions

and it's okay to not feel okay, at least for a while .....



**Solution**

**Problem**

# Psychological first aid



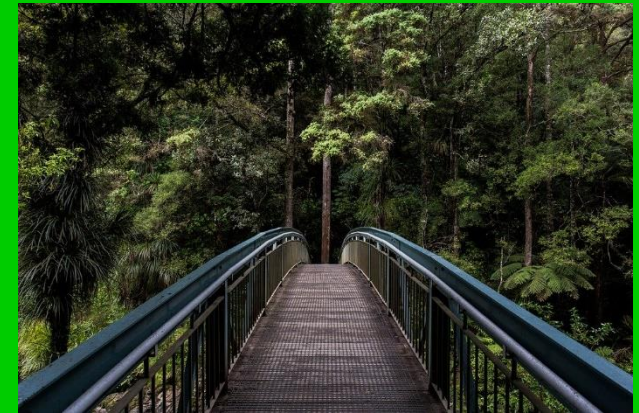


# Psychological First Aid



# A Model of General Psychological Adjustment/Coping

- Shock / Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance / Moving Forwards







## FACE COVID

**F** = Focus on what's in your control

**A** = Acknowledge your thoughts & feelings

**C** = Come back into your body

**E** = Engage in what you're doing

**C** = Committed action

**O** = Opening up

**V** = Values

**I** = Identify resources

**D** = Disinfect & distance



## **More on loss issues**

### **Bereavement support**

- informal (colleagues, supervision)
- formal (counselling/therapy services)

### **Working changes**

- at work (PPE, leadership, teamwork)
- at home



# Moral injury and health

## Moral injury

- at work (leadership, teamwork)
- at home (contact, role preservation)

## Physical and emotional health

- at work (PPE, breaks, 'space', team)
- At home (structure, routine, exercise)



## **Social contacts and routine**

- **Distancing challenges our well-being**
- **Technology can connect us**
- **Make time for others**
- **Beware too much ‘false news’ and unhelpful web-based chatter.**
- **To maximise well-being look to trusted/official sources**

## Interacting with the world



- Consider limiting or controlling watching news about COVID-19, too much news can lead to a lower mood and more worries for some people
- Consider being careful with your social media diet





## Working at home

- Daily routine
- Work space Vs home space
- Interaction with colleagues

If you are worried about your mental health

- ✓ talk to your manager/supervisor if you can, or use your employer's well-being services if they have them
- ✓ speak with your GP
- ✓ If you are feeling unsafe or at risk to yourself you should go to A+E or call 999.

There are helplines you can call:

- ✓ Samaritans on 116 123 (24/7)

For more helplines visit

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>





## **You may have noticed your sleep pattern has changed**

- **Sleep may be affected by changed patterns of life**
- **Sleep may be affected by worries**
- **Sleep may be affected by additional use of alcohol**



- ✓ **Go to bed and get up at the same time**
- ✓ **Daily exercise, but not close to bedtime**
- ✓ **No caffeine or nicotine close to bedtime**
- ✓ **Alcohol can reduce the quality of your sleep**
- ✓ **Avoid upset or stress just before bedtime**
- ✓ **Reduce your exposure to blue light**
- ✓ **Have a 'wind down' routine**
- ✓ **Have a cool dark bedroom**
- ✓ **Keep your bedroom tidy so it feels more relaxing**



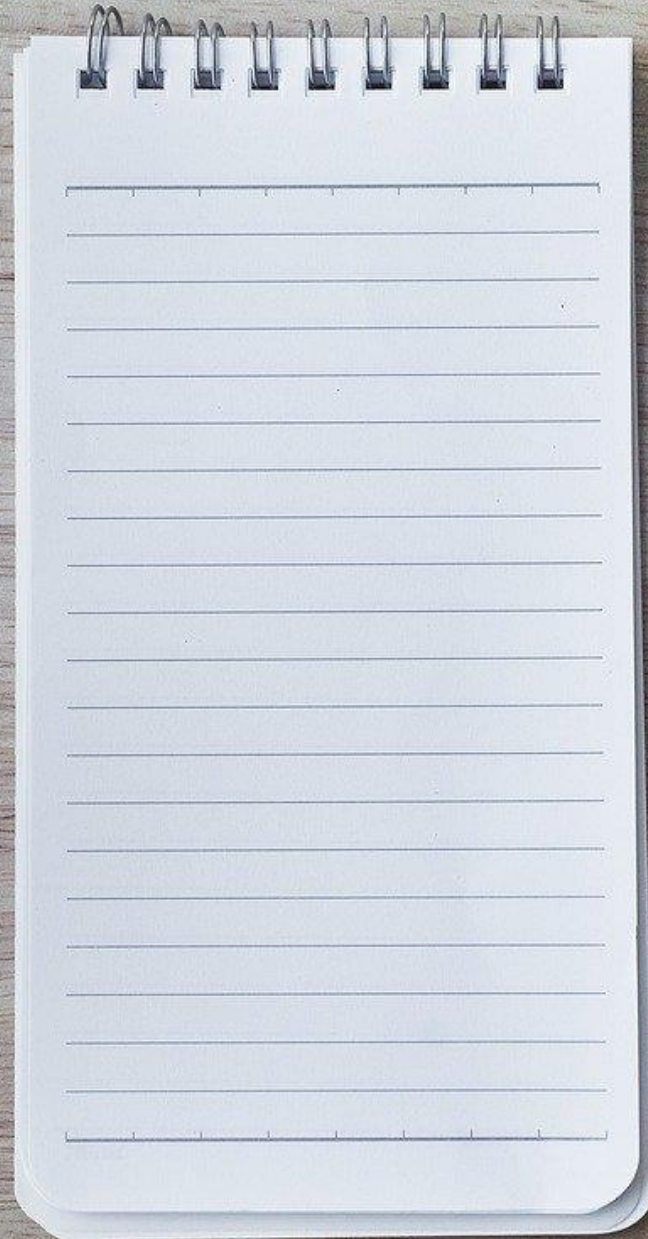
**Your bedroom is mainly for sleeping in.**

**Some people are spending more time in their bedrooms.**

**Consider something to sit on rather than lying on your bed during the day.**

**Try to come out of your bedroom for meals.**





**If your worries are waking you in the night, you could**

- ✓ **write down your worries**
- ✓ **allocate another time to address the worries**
- ✓ **consider a person you could talk to about your worries such as**
  - ✓ **family**
  - ✓ **friend**
  - ✓ **Colleague / professional**
  - ✓ **GP**

**If you are awake for a long time**

- ✓ **get out of bed**
- ✓ **do something else**
- ✓ **return to bed when you are feeling sleepy**



For more information on sleep:

Go to <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/>

OR

type 'how to get to sleep NHS' into your search engine

If you have significant concerns about your sleep, that self-help is not fixing

✓ Consider speaking with your GP

It is important we all still understand what COVID-19 is and follow the government set rules

- Visit government website for up to date advice  
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- There are daily updates on BBC 1 at 17:00
- As decision making is made more individualised , you can still discuss and problem solve with trusted others



Further details of the resources and approaches we have talked about in this presentation will be available using the bibliography in the downloadable script from today's webinar on the ABIL website [www.abil.co.uk](http://www.abil.co.uk)





Your Questions



**Thank you to:**

**Irwin Mitchell,  
ABIL,  
Dawn Baker**