

What is *Crisis Fatigue* and are you being impacted?



(suggested image from

Microsoft stock images)

The last 18 months have been harrowing for most people. As we are navigating the easing of lockdown 4.0 (which we will continue to see the impact of for months to come) many people are feeling a new level of exhaustion.

With a constant barrage of bad news, yet another lockdown, more cancelled events, etc., many people may be experiencing, what is being labelled, “crisis fatigue”.

According to Dr. Petros Levounis, professor and chairman at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, people go through 4 phases when responding to a crisis:

First, there is the heroic phase, where everyone with the same views come together and take action during a crisis.

Second is the honeymoon phase, where individuals who took action — whether verbally (expressing their stance on social media), physically (joining protests), or through other means (making donations) — feel good about being part of the community.

Then comes the disillusionment phase, which is when individuals begin developing an “everyone for himself or herself” mentality as a result of delays and problems common with disasters. People usually experience *crisis fatigue* during this phase, and the feeling can last for several months or until the crisis passes. This phase can last several months, with people feeling very bad during this time until they begin to work on **recovering and rebuilding after the crisis passes**, which is the fourth and final stage. (Sourced from <https://www.freddabranyon.com/blog/crisis-fatigue-affecting-more-people-than-covid-19/>)

How to manage crisis fatigue?

I'm sure much of this is resonating. So, how do you manage crisis fatigue? Whilst crisis fatigue might be unavoidable in the current environment, there are things you can do to help alleviate some of the impact it has on you and to help improve your mental health during the pandemic.

Some of the things Dr. Petros Levounis recommends are:

- Focus on the four pillars of wellness - nutrition, exercise, sleep, and sex.
- Make a concerted effort to stay connected with your loved ones (both virtually and face to face where possible). Stay in touch with close friends, loving family members, and society at large.
- Try to preserve your routines where possible to create a sense of normalcy in life.
- Try to limit your exposure to news and media
- Make time to do things that bring you joy
- Try mindfulness, meditation or yoga to reduce stress and improve your mental wellness
- Seek help from a mental health professional if the strategies above are not helping to reduce your stress and improve your mental well-being.