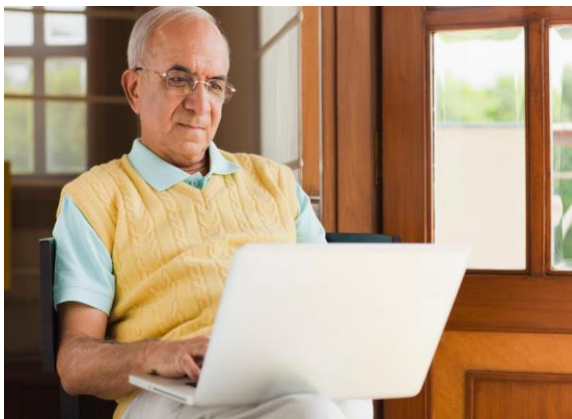


PROVIDING PSYCHOSOCIAL ASSISTANCE IN PANDEMIC CONDITIONS



ERNA, Regional webinar, January 21st 2021
Ciril Klajnscek, Senior Officer for Health and Aging, SRC



Introduction

During the Covid 19 lockdown, we humanitarian workers (both employees and volunteers) are much more overloaded than before, but **no one helps us when we burn out.**

The reason is naive humanitarian metaphysics, which assumes that we are humanitarian by the nature. In accordance with such a belief, **we are expected to be able to respond unconditionally** to ever new and new challenges.

While helping people in need, we must also take care of ourselves and operate at the level of our own capabilities.

We cannot help a person in need if we are alone in need.

What helps another helps us and vice versa.

Content

- **Four challenges** and **response to them** in the form of four didactic materials.
- These materials are an integral part of our curriculum of the **Active and Healthy Aging Program**.
- They were distributed and disseminated:
 - among the employees and volunteers of SRC
 - within the Association of Diabetic Societies of Slovenia
 - within the National Society for Cardiovascular Health
 - among Slovenian nursing homes and
 - among Red Cross national societies worldwide

Unfortunately, **the circumstances did not allow us** to carry out the planned training, monitoring and evaluation on a project basis.

What are the didactic materials based on?

- 1. Decades of experience in disease prevention, health education and health promotion**
- 2. Decades of experience with existential and holistic gestalt therapy and coaching based on it**
- 3. Decades of inter- and multi-disciplinary study of development processes and the systemic functioning of our common world**
- 4. On an in-depth experiential and theoretical understanding of the origins and essence of humanity and humanitarianism**
- 5. On the understanding of man as an essentially relational (social, cultural, spiritual) being**
- 6. The need for each individual (objective and subjective) concern and co-responsibility for a common world**

1. Emergence of extraordinary circumstances

February 2020

1. The appearance of the invisible **Corona virus** and its visible effects
2. The threat of new wave of **refugees / migrants**
3. Change of **government** - new right-wing administration

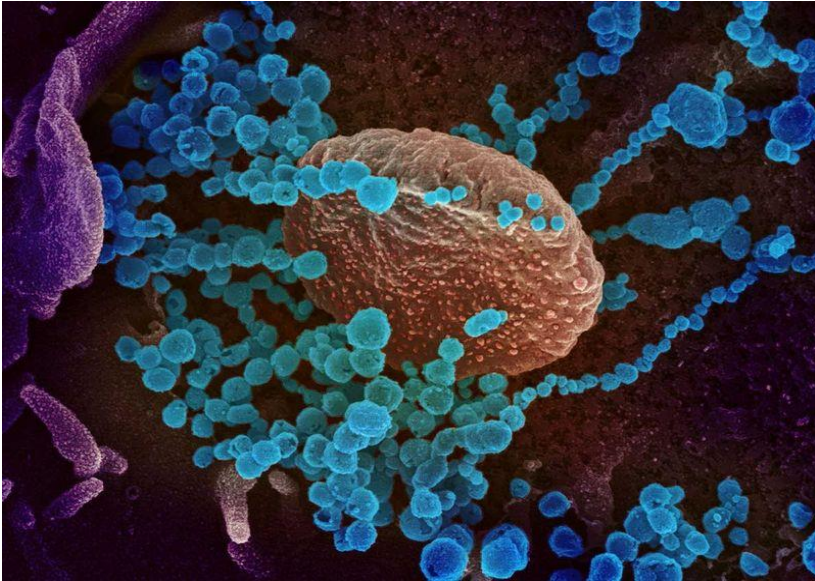
First signs of extraordinary circumstances :

- misinformation and fake news began circulating
- uncertainty, anxiety and fear began to appear
- negative attitudes towards unwanted others were growing stronger

SRC found itself facing new challenges.

1. HUMANITARIAN ACTION NOW

What we need to know about ourselves in addition to the agreed tasks and protocols in order to be effective and credible
(How to avoid stigmatization)



Covid 19



refugees / migrants



Ciril Klajnscek, March 11th 2020

2. The emergence of quarantine

March 13th 2020

- Under the influence of Corona Virus (SARS-CoV-2), normal life **stopped**
- The previously stable world **has suddenly changed**
- The **invisible hand of market** lost its power, and **the faith in it** faded overnight
- The time has come for **crisis management** by the authorities
- CRISIS MEASURES to stop the virus required **SELF-ISOLATION - QUARANTINE**
- Humans as beings of relationships had to **PHYSICALLY ISOLATE** themselves from others

THREE FACES OF QUARANTINE:

- the possibility of improving relationships within the family
- the possibility of deterioration of relationships within the family
- the possibility of increasing loneliness in those living alone.

- Less direct communication and social contact increases **LONELENESS**, triggers **ANXIETY** and can lead to **DEPRESSION**
- Covid 19, loneliness, anxiety and depression present **the largest risk for the ELDERLY**
- The Elderly in Quarantine need **additional SUPPORT and ASSISTANCE**
- Loneliness, anxiety and depression are also challenges **HUMANITARIANS** face!

2. LIFE IN QUARANTINE - I

COPING WITH ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION IN SELFISOLATION



Ciril Klajnšček, March 22nd .2020

3. New reality required new responses

April 2020

- The epidemic and the associated quarantine have led us to look for alternative ways of coexisting. One of these is **keeping in touch with others remotely**.
- We decided within our working group for Active and Healthy Aging to add to the topic „Lifelong learning“ - **learning simple ways of providing psycho-social support and assistance** to people who have found themselves in distress or crisis. We called this **lay psycho-social assistance**. If we are the FIRST to come to the rescue, this is a **lay psychosocial first aid – LPSFA**
- Two materials on the net: **Responses in a Crisis Situation** (Slovenian Public Health Institute) and **Recommendations of the project team Living Healthy** (Croatian Public Health Institute)

3. LIVING IN QUARANTENE - II

REMOTE LAY PSYCHO-SOCIAL ASSISTANCE



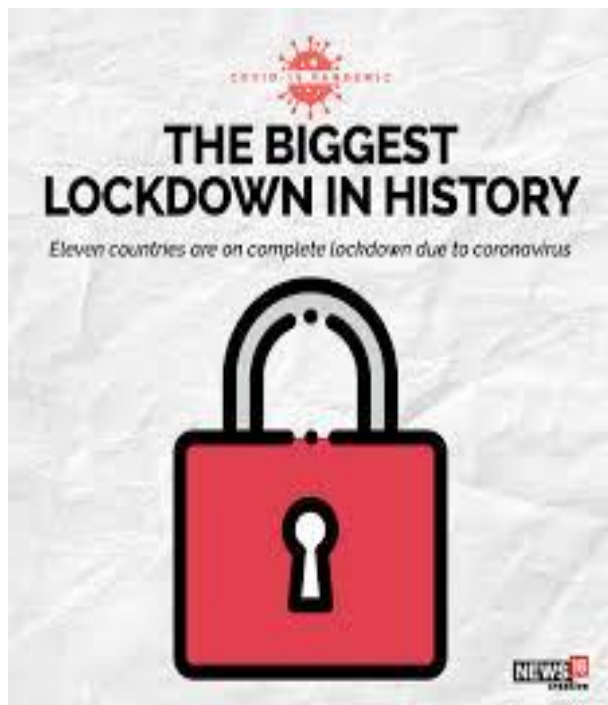
Ciril Klajnscek, April 30th 2020

4. The new reality became a new normality

Autumn 2020

- **The first wave** of the epidemic, together with many negative (human, economic, social and psychological) consequences, was accepted as a **NEW REALITY**.
- The summer break was followed by **the second wave**, in which many began to accept a **NEW NORMALITY**, which included:
 - equalization of direct and online relations and communication
 - growing number of social restructuring measures
 - the erosion of democracy, the rule of law, human rights and dignity
 - growing nationalism, populism, authoritarianism, totalitarianism
- **Maintaining humanity, compassion and solidarity in such circumstances is only possible through POSITIVE THINKING !**

4. COPING WITH THE NEW REALITY AND POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING



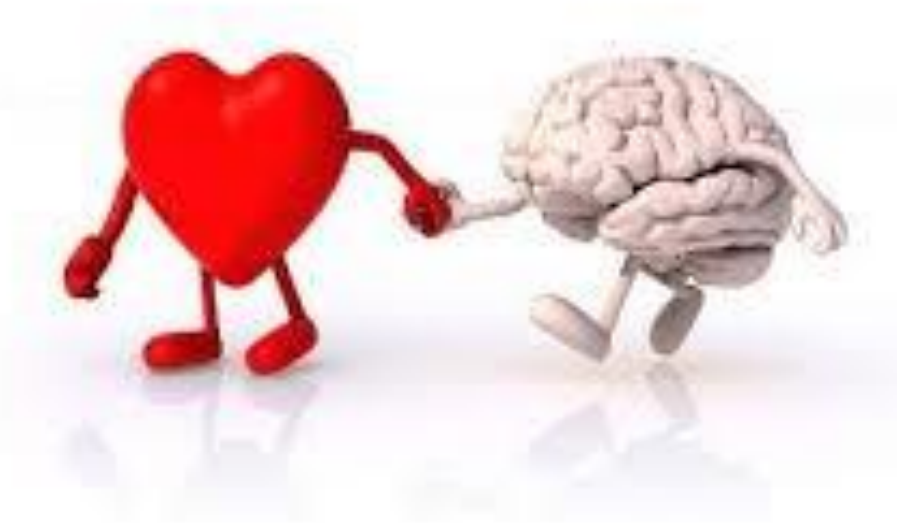
Ciril Klajnsček, November 29th 2020

Conclusion

- **HUMANITY AND HUMANITARIANISM** are not a naturally given, but a result of compassionate and solidary co-existence
- **They do not exist in themselves**, but can only be put into practice on a daily basis
- Putting them into practice on a daily basis requires constant:
 - self-reflection
 - **self-control** and
 - self-correction

There is no future without humanity, compassion and solidarity!

**FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION ARE ALWAYS ENOUGH
SITUATIONALLY SUITABLE AND SINCERE
THOUGHTS - WORDS - DEEDS**



THANKS YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION