

The Post-Pandemic Fatigue

Fall is just around the corner, and there is still confusion; we cannot ignore the post-pandemic fatigue experienced inexorably by the population.

Psychological distress is present and greatly worries our businesses, government, and community organizations. Whether it was the Université de Sherbrooke investigation team in October 2021, the Réseau Global Watch last May, or others, they all confirm the attrition of our coping mechanisms and the increasing presence of pandemic fatigue. This latter results from fear and the social constraints caused by the imposed measures in the past two years.

Pandemic fatigue is a generalized sense of fatigue, either physically or psychologically. We have trouble making decisions, feel great tiredness, a loss of interest and motivation, marginalization, or even hopelessness. Since the beginning of 2020, we have been afflicted by complex, tragic, and sometimes frightening information overload about COVID-19. On the other hand, we were exposed to burdensome behavioral measures: masks, social distancing, hand washing, deprivation of liberty, loss of community life, and much more. The more these contingencies remain, the more these factors exhaust us.

Facts to remember about the investigation made by the Université de Sherbrooke:

- More than half of adults suffer from pandemic fatigue
- Some groups show higher levels of pandemic fatigue:
 - Young people (aged 18 to 34): 64%
 - Parents of children aged 0 to 11: 59%

- Less-educated people: 55%
- People living in rural areas: 55%
- Workers, especially those who cannot do teleworking
 - In-person work: 61%
 - Mixed: 54%
 - Teleworking: 48%
- Some categories of employment are most likely to develop it:
 - Workers: 65%
 - Sales: 60%
 - High-level management: 56%
 - Services: 55%

Many consequences have been increasingly felt in the different facets of our world. There is more and more present anxiety, depression, sleep or focus disturbances, suicidal thoughts, isolation, or others.

Pandemic fatigue impacts our psychological health, daily efficiency, and relationships with others, our spouse, family members, and ourselves.

We must look for solutions

Many studies recommended that businesses create safe and shared dialogue spaces for employees and managers. They specify the importance of expanding and evolving support programs that can become essential in attracting and retaining employees.

However, right now, everybody can firstly...

- Take care of our physical well-being: alimentation, sleep, physical exercises, and simple pleasures.
- Reconnect with family and friends. Break the isolation triggered by the pandemic.
- Re-establish a rewarding daily routine that has a sense of control.
- Disconnect from social media and all types of media.
- Live positive moments that make you feel good.
- Laugh.
- Explore new activities.
- Try meditation or yoga: these activities are associated with stress reduction and well-being improvement: Petit Bambou, Calm, Insight Timer, RespiRelax, etc.
- Talk with professionals from your Brio EAP employee assistance program (1.888.799.0303). Put into words what we feel or have felt. Do not accumulate anger, sadness, or impulsiveness inside you.

When we experience pandemic fatigue, everything becomes heavier. We have less energy for planning activities or events. However, we can still plan small projects... the time we recharge our batteries.

The human being is at the center of our concerns!

