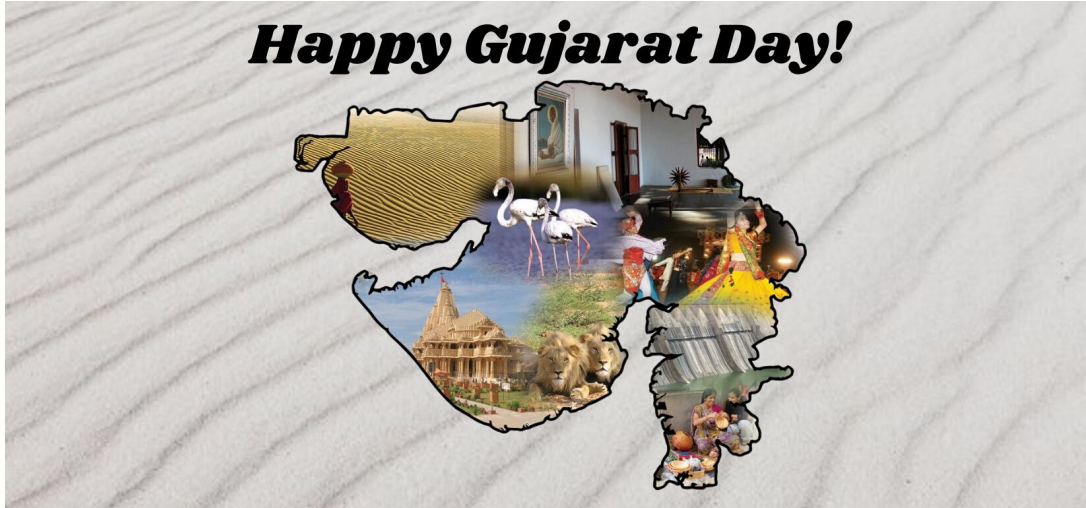


THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

GUJARAT PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF CANADA



Happy Gujarat Day!



President's Message

First of all, on behalf of the board, I wish you and your family a very healthy and safe 2020. In the wake of COVID-19, please make sure you take all the precautions suggested by the Municipal & Government authorities.

I am deeply saddened by the direct and sudden impact of the virus, but remain optimistic and have the utmost confidence in the global and Canadian effort to minimize the spread of this virus. We encourage you to subscribe and like our Facebook page - @GPACcanada and our twitter handle #gpaccanada to stay in touch. GPAC family members have and are doing whatever they possibly can to serve the Canadian, Gujarati, Indian and Global community with their donations, service, and support during this pandemic. There are examples of selfless service to mankind like never before – food distribution, grocery pick ups, cash & kind donations, masks & PPE, new software, apps, videos, information sharing, etc. This newsletter will provide information about the contributions of our GPAC family. This is also the time to celebrate our signature event, Gujarat Gaurav Divas where we honor the Gujarati stalwarts who have contributed to the betterment of our community. We had to unfortunately cancel the event planned on May 2nd at Chandni Banquet Hall, Brampton. We thank everyone who submitted their nominations already. We will extend the nomination period to May 31st 2020 so that we can get maximum participation. Please nominate people you think deserve this award as soon as possible!

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COVID-19 SUPPORT TEAM

One of GPAC members and a prominent personality of our Indian community, **Ms. Sharmishtha Joshi**, organized a COVID-19 support team. She was supported by **Nila Modi** (sewing team lead), **Chiman Mistry** (Mornelle Drug Mart), Silver Hotel Group, group of sewing volunteers, **Mudra, Premal, Hassu, Shalini** and many more. On a weekly basis they donate about 2000 home stitched masks to City of Toronto, Scarborough Health Network and health affiliations. For General public they have three pick up locations – Brampton, Scarborough & Stouffville – if you need any or want to donate, please reach out to Sharmiben and visit https://www.facebook.com/Covid19-Support-Team-101702401511936/?modal=admin_todo_tour.



WRITI Connecting Care

Sewa Canada & Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh are NFP organizations helping many International students and vulnerable in many cities like GTA, London, Kitchner, Barrie, Windsor, Saskatoon, Montreal, etc. by donating 2 weeks of groceries and cooked food to Corona infected patients with the help of 180 volunteers. Also educated students about precautions to take during COVID-19 and provided information about government benefits. Contact our **Nareshkumar Chavda** for any assistance registering students for this cause.



Parth Patel, our member who manages health startup, **Writ** is doing all it can to help stop the long-term care homes tragedy. The company's virtual healthcare platform fosters efficiency and communication (even in remote work) among healthcare professionals, so that they may focus on what matters most: saving their parents.



SEWA CANADA
International Aid Inc.



Jashbhai Patel, GPAC advisory council and member who owns ECI Technology Group Inc has successfully shifted production into manufacturing supplies that are essential for ventilators to help the Canadian government and other subsidiaries. As you know, Ventilators are needed when COVID-19 patients are admitted to ICU for acute respiratory and lung issues to save lives. This is the commodity in maximum demand all over the world, we are proud of you Jashbhai!

COVID-19 Support Team Cont'd



Our member, **Pankaj Dave** along with Hindu Federation & Canada India Foundation (CIF) have undertaken a massive drive to help International students, seniors, during COVID 19. By providing grocery, cooked meals, transportation, and in some cases, financial assistance, they have set a noble example. Besides, for the frontline health workers, pre-cooked fresh meals been served to hospitals.

To appreciate the services of Doctors, Nurses and entire staff of Emergency ward staff of Brampton Civic Hospital, Our members **Don Patel & Pathik Shukla**, along with other volunteers served pizzas and burgers donated by Boston Pizza. To help the seniors, students and normal Canadians, free food distribution was organized at Brampton & Etobicoke. The food was sponsored by Jayshil Patel, Gujarati Food – About 1500 food packets were distributed to many in presence of Mayor of Brampton Patrick Brown & MPP Amarjot Sandhu.



CGI, Toronto office requested GPAC President to create an informational video to help International Students to understand CERB, EI benefits. **Piyushbhai Mody**, CPA, CA created this video which was posted on twitter #gpaccanada which was retweeted by High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria, CGI Toronto Apoorvaji which received 7000 impressions and huge engagements. Many other members **Naresh Chavda**, **Bharat Chavda**, and **Bhavik Parikh** have also participated in such knowledge sharing live events.

Many community members donated their talent, time and cash by organizing live music programs. GPAC members **Lalit Thaker** (live Lata night - Meri Awaaz Meri Pehchaan with Prabhaji), **Jitendra Joshi** (& his son **Mehul Joshi** – Live Gujarati Jalso) and **Harkant Patel** (Yeh Sham Mastani) organized & hosted live music programs on TV Chaar & Facebook live. Jaymin Thakkar (Apano Gujarati) started Live Instagram chat show with Gujarati Singer **Aishwarya Majmudar & Jigardan Gadhvi**. Jaymin also arranged online Tambola for families and donated \$500+ to William Osler Hospital.



Taking Care of Your Mental Health During Covid19

By Krishna Vora, Registered Psychotherapist

Covid19, a public health emergency, has caused a lot of stress worldwide. We are all scrambling to protect our physical health which requires us to isolate from our loved ones and our social connections. This is in stark contrast to what we experience in our daily lives and has caused much stress, anxiety, and fear. This article will focus on some strategies that you can adopt to understand and take care of your mental health. It also includes some community resources towards the end.

-Understand that it is very normal to be emotionally affected by this situation. You can become sad, withdrawn, anxious, angry, overwhelmed, agitated, distant, irritated, relieved, or a combination of these things. There is no one right way to respond to this.

-Create a new schedule for yourself which includes setting time for waking up, showering, eating, sleeping, working, or doing household chores. Being able to predict what is going to happen next gives you a sense of control which will reduce stress.

-You are no longer moving as much as you did before. Find some time to engage in movement activities for 30 minutes a day. Goal is to simply move- any activity such as dance, rigorous cleaning, exercise, yoga, sweeping, climbing steps should do the trick.

- You may experience exhaustion and be hungry all the time. This is because your body is in a fight or flight response and is directing the blood flow away from digestion to your muscles. Which means you may not be getting enough nutrients even if you eat well. So, engaging in activities that help you calm down may in turn help you improve your physical health.

-Reduce technology use. It is important to stay on top of news, but not all the time. Spend 2 hours a day staying on top of news or 30 minutes 4 times a day. If you live with others, distribute the task of following news to reduce constant exposure to frightening news stories.

- 'Postpone your worry' Explore your relationship with worry. Thoughts that focus on worst case scenarios can cause a lot of anxiety. Set aside time each day to focus on your 'hypothetical worries' so that you have the rest of the time to focus on other aspects of your life. The goal is not to stop worrying at all. You still have real problems that need to be focused on such as employment, safety, travel, friends and families and their health. The key is to differentiate between 'real problems you can do something about' versus hypothetical worries 'that are not in your control' and schedule time for unrealistic worries instead of focusing on them all the time.

- With the current situation you can either be too isolated or you can be too crowded if you are living with a lot of people in the same household. If you are too isolated, make conscious efforts to connect with people virtually. If it is hard to connect with people for some reason, become a part of online forums that focuses on common interests such as cooking, gardening, music, or other interests. If you are living 24/7 with someone, focus on setting up some boundaries. It can

be hard to be in each other's faces all the time so set up physical spaces that belong to you at certain times. If space is restricted, set up a certain time where you ask your family/roommates to not talk to you and give them the same space. This would help avoiding treading on boundaries which may lead to unnecessary conflicts.

-Don't downplay your accomplishments. We are in the middle of a pandemic and it is exhausting and an overwhelming change for all of us. Things that you normally took for granted such as cooking, cleaning, working, all count as accomplishments.

-Finally, seek support and provide support to another while practicing physical distancing rules. There is no shame in seeking help and no pride in giving it. Be open to people talking about your feelings and be open to listening to others talk about their feelings without judgement.

This article does not replace therapy, if you in crisis, please use the community resources listed below to seek professional help.

Community Resources

If you are in crisis or you are suicidal call 911.

For 24/7 emotional support or crisis intervention, call 416-408-4357

Kids aged 5 to 20 can call Kids Help Phone, which is a 24/7 online and telephone counseling helpline at 1-800-668-6868

Good2Talk is a free confidential, anonymous helpline for post-secondary students aged 17-25. Call 1-866-925-5454

Call 211 or 1-877-330-3213 for information and referral for community health services.

About the Author

Krishna Vora is a Registered Psychotherapist and a Consultant. She provides mental health counseling both in person and remotely in Ontario. To book a free 30-minute consultation, send an email to krishnavora8@gmail.com.

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Prevent the spread of COVID-19 in **7 STEPS**

- 01** Wash your hands frequently
- 02** Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- 03** Cover your cough using the bend of your elbow or a tissue
- 04** Avoid crowded places and close contact with anyone that has fever or cough
- 05** Stay at home if you feel unwell
- 06** If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early — but call first
- 07** Get information from trusted sources



SOURCE: WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION