

Helping the Elderly through the Pandemic

--- P. E. A. C. E.

Taiwanese Society of Geriatric Psychiatry

Within 3 months, COVID-19 has spread from China to across the world. The global death toll has gone well over 30,000, most of which are elderly patients and those with pre-existing chronic conditions such as CVDs and diabetes. The elderly's weaker immune system and slower cognitive response render them more susceptible to the pandemic. In these unusual times, we should be mindful of our own health while paying more attention to the seniors around us. The Taiwanese Society of Geriatric Psychiatry recommends the use of "P.E.A.C.E" to better aid the elderly in fighting this pandemic.

P (Peace, Plain language)

Describe the unusual situation by coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and preventive measures to the elderly with **plain** language in a **peaceful** manner. Gentle and repeated explanation reduce anxiety and upset.

E (Everyday routine, Emotional balance)

In face of the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, vulnerable elderly, especially people with dementia would experience emotions such as anxiety and dysphoria. In the pandemic period, maintaining **an everyday routine and emotional balance** as much as possible can help with coping.

A (Alter, Alternative)

Instead of focusing solely on the pandemic, **altering** attention to other aspects of life can help relieve anxiety. During an infectious disease outbreak with some restrictions in life, **alternative** activities (such as table game, singing, reminiscence) should be provided.

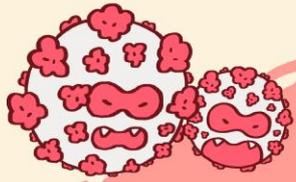
C (Care, Concern, Consideration)

Show **care, concern, and consideration** to the elderly, especially those with anxiety, depression, and dementia. They may have a more difficult time during the pandemic. Pay special attention to those with dementia as they may have great difficulty remembering the proper precautions and instructions. A little kindness, such as delivering a meal or essential medicine, can go a long way and be truly helpful for

those quarantined or living alone.

E (Exercise, Expand connections)

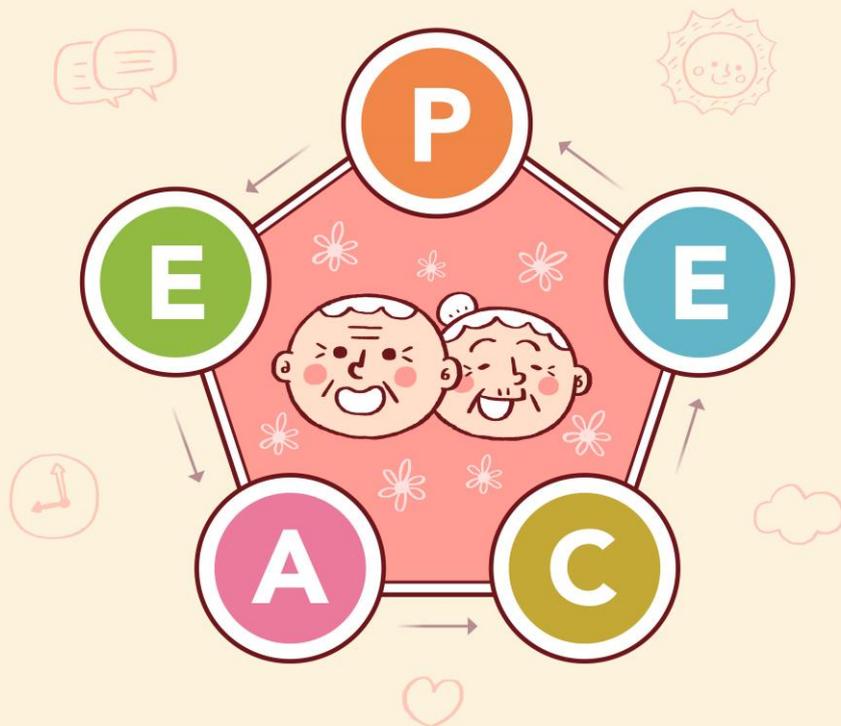
Many are forced to be at home. Although this reduces the odds of transmission, staying indoors over longer periods could potentially cause mental disorders and disuse syndrome. A better option would be to avoid areas with congestion and poor airflow while maintaining **exercise** and outdoor activities where possible. **Expand your connections** to interact with friends/relatives via phone, video chat or social media can improve your mental health.



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through the Pandemic-

P > E > A > C > E

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Explain with **plain** language
Make clear in a **peaceful** manner



Keep an **everyday** routine
Maintain **emotional** balance





Alter attention to other aspects
Provide **alternative** activities



Show **consideration** to the elderly
Care for those with dementia





Exercise and stay active
Expand connections via 3C devices

