



## **COVID-19 UPDATE: ONLINE PERSONAL COUNSELLING SERVICES AVAILABLE DURING THE RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT ORDER**

**25th March 2020**

Dear Students,

The university will be extending our support and commitment to the APU community as we navigate this difficult time in which so many individuals and communities are being impacted by COVID-19. There may be a variety of reactions including (but not limited to) fear, anxiety, stress, confusion, isolation, uncertainty, and depression during this period so we urge you to reach out and get our online support through the channels included.

**We are pleased to introduce the Online Talking Helps Services, an online personal counselling service available for all students and staff during these trying times.**

Here are some FAQs about this service:

### **1. What is Online Talking Helps Services?**

The Online Talking Helps is a platform for our licensed/registered counsellor to provide counselling services to our students during the COVID-19 Government Restriction of Movement Order. This is available to all students and staff of APU/APIIT whether you are currently located within the and/or outside the country.

### **2. How do Online Talking Helps services work?**

You may reach out to the counsellors by emailing them or setting up meetings using Microsoft Teams. Their contact details are as follows:

- Ms. Emily Octavia Mathius – Email: [emily.octavia@apu.edu.my](mailto:emily.octavia@apu.edu.my) | Teams: Emily Octavia
- Ms. Cynthia Shoba Thanaraj – Email: [Cynthia.shoba@apu.edu.my](mailto:Cynthia.shoba@apu.edu.my) | Teams: Cynthia Shoba

### **3. How long can I expect a reply from the Counsellor?**

Counsellors will respond to you within 24 hours if not instantly. For an online session with the Counsellor, you can schedule a meeting using Teams at an agreed date and time. Online sessions will be held from Mondays to Fridays between 8.30 am to 6 pm.

### **4. Do I have to pay for Online Talking Helps services?**

All Services are free of charge. You will not have to pay for this service.

### **5. Can Online Talking Helps replace face to face therapy experience?**

The therapists who are on this platform are fully credentialed to provide mental health services to the clients whom they consult. While services provided through this platform may share similarities and may provide similar outcomes, this platform would not be able to replace traditional face-to-face therapy.

Your mental health service provider would not be able to provide a diagnosis, to fulfill requirements from the authorities (i.e. court order), or to provide a prescription.

### **6. Will my discussion with the counsellor be confidential?**

Yes. Mental health professionals are required to practice strict confidentiality ethics. All counseling information is considered private information under Lembaga Kaunselor Malaysia and APA Professional Practice Code of Ethics and laws covering privileged communication between a client and a counsellor. However, the online platform has its limitations and there is no guarantee for the full confidentiality of electronic transmissions.

### **7. What happens if I have an emergency, for example, suicidal thoughts or anxiety attacks?**

If you are at risk of harm to yourself or others around you, or if you are in an emergency, the services provided through this platform is limited for you, and the counsellor will refer you to seek further help at a mental health provider closest to you (please refer to our resources). This is a required agreement by every client on Online Talking Helps before starting the use of this platform.

## **8. What do I do if I am told to self-isolate? How can I look after my mental health in this situation?**

If you're not well or have been in contact with someone unwell, you may be asked to 'self-isolate'. This means staying away from other people to prevent the potential spread of illness. There are a number of things you can do to look after yourself when self-isolating.

Some self-care strategies include:

### **Keeping in Touch**

Staying in touch with your family and friends - you can still contact each other over the phone, on social media or through video calls.

### **Keeping it Interesting**

Continuing the things that you enjoy or use the time to discover a new hobby. You could try reading that book you've been meaning to start, watch that new series or try a new skill.

### **Keeping updated**

Keeping up to date with new information can help you feel more in control but do take a break from social media if you feel like the updates are getting too much. Check-in with your university and student services and follow their procedures. This will help you understand what arrangements you need to make, who you need to contact.

### **Be Healthy, Be Happy**

Get into a daily routine that prioritises looking after yourself. Plan your day with something new or interesting that is fun and has its health benefits so you have something to look forward to. Look after your environment and create a space that you can enjoy and feel comfortable in.

The following information can benefit you and others when in distress:

### **24-hours hotline**

Befrienders

- 03-79568144 or 03-79568145
- Website: <http://www.befrienders.org.my>

## **Community & Online Resources**

- ❖ Emergency Number: 999
- ❖ Malaysian Mental Health Association (MMHA): <https://www.facebook.com/MMHAOfficial/>
- ❖ Malaysian Psychiatry Association (MPA): <http://Psychiatry-Malaysia.org/>
- ❖ Malaysian Society of Clinical Psychology (MSCP): <http://malaysiaclinicalpsychology.com/>
- ❖ Buddhist Gem Fellowship: <https://www.facebook.com/bgf.org.my>
- ❖ Archdiocese Mental Health Ministry: <https://www.facebook.com/mentalhealthAMHM/>
- ❖ Women's Aid Organisation (WAO): <https://wao.org.my/>
- ❖ Wysa Chatbot: <https://www.wysa.io/>
- ❖ Woebot: <https://woebot.io/>
- ❖ Youper Emotional Health Assistant: <https://www.youper.ai/>
- ❖ Clear Fear: <https://www.clearfear.co.uk/>

*Disclaimer: The above are samples of online resources and the use of them does not imply any affiliation with or endorsement by them.*

## **Need further assistance? Contact us:**

Counsellor: Ms. Emily Octavia Mathius

E-mail: [emily.octavia@apu.edu.my](mailto:emily.octavia@apu.edu.my)

APU Emergency Hotline: 017-3791700 (7am – 7pm) | 017-238 1300 (7pm – 7am)

*There is no need to suffer silently and there is no shame in seeking help. – Catherine Zeta-Jones*

*You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. Please remember that your difficulties do not define you. They simply strengthen your ability to overcome. – Maya Angelou*

Stay Safe, Stay Healthy. Stay at Home, Stay Connected.

## **APU/APIIT Welfare & Safety**