Why Physical Distancing is crucial for everybody now

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The corona virus is a threat which affects our life in every way. For most of us an epidemic like this never happened in his or her entire life before. So this is a totally new situation for you, as well as for almost everybody in Germany, but also for all the people around the globe. Everyone of us is now in a situation, where he or she has a responsibility to act properly. To act properly means that the way how we act as a person may save your life, the life of the ones you love and the life of everybody around you. This totally new and in a way dangerous situation may affect your feelings in a bad way. But realize what it means that you can read or hear this information. It means you are still alive and hopefully in a good health condition. To be alive means that your immune system has been working well from your first breath as a baby until now.

From the very beginning of your life until now your immune system fought day by day succesfully against thousands of bacterias and viruses. Sometimes you became ill, but at the end of the day your immune system works well.

Good enough to be healthy again. Covid 19 is now a new and a really hard challenge for your health. For most of us, for those of us who are in a normal health condition, an infection with covid 19 will be a disease but you will survive this disease like other diseases before. But for some older people or people who are not in good health Covid 19 is a really dangerous disease. Usually in situations where other people around you face a dangerous threat being helpful means to come closer to these persons. For example: When your house is on fire you surly will inform your neighbours in the house that it is burning and when there is an old person or a child you will take his or her hands and take them with you to find a safe way out of the burning house. Now in corona times solidarity, helping each other also means something else. Solidarity now means not to come closer if you can avoid it. Why? You could be infected and be contagious without knowing or feeling this for up to two weeks, two weeks without symptoms, two weeks feeling well, spreading the virus and infecting other people.

It means to keep physical distance and it means to take responsibility for all of your actions as a person. The idea behind this attitude is to „buy time“ - for all the scientists around the world, who start developing new medicaments or vaccines - and for the hospitals: When we do not act in the described manner many people will die, because the virus spreads faster and our hospitals cannot treat everybody at the same time. When we take these actions, when we keep physical distance less people will be infected and the german health system hopefully will have the capacity to treat everybody who will be infected in an outstanding manner. Meanwhile scientists can do their job and find a solution. Be responsible, take the right action as described below and things will turn out well.

COVID-19 can cause flu-like symptoms typically including a dry cough and fever. An infection develops for up to 14 days before symptoms show and even can pass unrecognized without clear symptoms. Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people being severely ill and dying. After approximately one week after symptoms develop shortness of breath can occur Treatment in hospital is required for up to 20% of the affected patients.
People at risk of developing severe symptoms are elderly people and those with underlying health conditions (e.g. hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease and cancer). In these patients initial symptoms can turn into pneumonia, with pain and tightness of the chest and shortness of breath. Notably, the COVID-19 infection rarely seems to cause a runny nose, sneezing, or sore throat (these symptoms have been observed in only about 5% of patients). Sore throat, sneezing, and stuffy nose are most often signs of a cold.

What to do: Keep physical distance!
- Escape social gatherings and being around people, escape public transport
- Avoid direct contact with other people, keep physical distance, at least 1.5-2 meters
- Stay at home as much as possible: go out for walks and grocery shopping only

Necessary hygiene precautions: COVID-19 is transmitted by airborne infection only. When people speak, cough or sneeze they may spread the virus towards other people’s mucous membranes and infect them.
- Sneeze and cough into your elbow
- Wash your hands using soap after contact with people or public facilities for at least 20 seconds
- If you have to be in public places cover your mouth and nose, this reduces the danger of contagion for you and others

For psychological well being it is necessary to control fear, maintain social contacts and find ways to give meaning to what you do.
- Establish and keep a routine: doing household stuff, moving
- Singing, making music, laughing and moving are great ways to control fear.
- Find entertainment: use your creativity to think of activities for yourself, your children.
- Find benefits: how else can this time be used, what skills, what interests can be developed
- Keep social contact with friends and family by phone, video chat, internet
- Control your use of social media and news, separate some limited time during the day to check social media and mass media
- Prioritize facts from trustworthy sources (symptoms, risk groups, mortality rate, numbers of recovered cases)
- Identify the things you can control and those you cannot control to be safe.
- Get occupied with beautiful things. Fill the time with your own action and narratives, so fear cannot conquer you.
- Smile and breathe. Smiling at each other from a distance is safe and supporting and gives a sense of connectedness. Let this connectedness be the reality. Let nobody drag your spirit down!