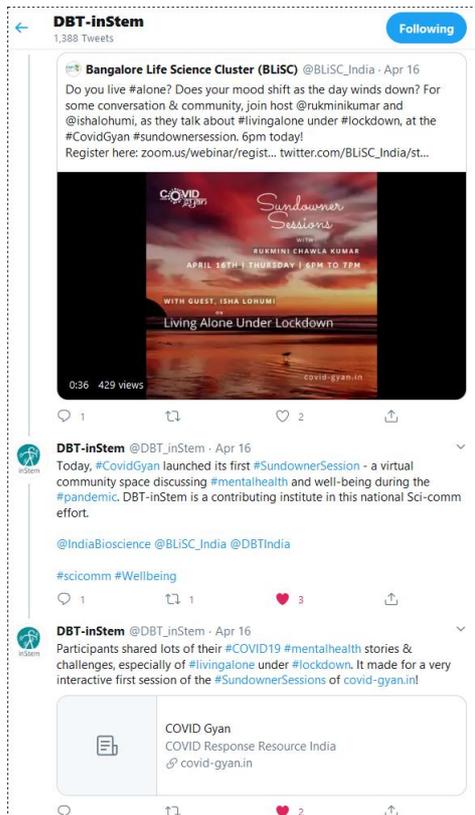


DBT- inStem, Bangalore

1. 'Sundowner Sessions' focusing on Mental Health during National Lockdown

During the current COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown, one's well-being is emerging as one of the top priorities from a mental health perspective. With physical distancing as one of the key tools to flatten the curve, one can feel boycotted and isolated, mentally and emotionally drained. Global survey suggest that this has been affecting the general well-being resulting in decline in mental health with



increase in suicide rates and severe trauma for many. Concerted team efforts with the COVID-Gyan website through a consortium of institutions is to not just create awareness about COVID-19 for the general public (through infographics, posters, research articles, podcasts/videos etc.) but also to bring in a holistic approach of support during this crisis time.

With evenings being the special periods of vulnerability, [COVID Gyan](#) has planned to bring a series of interactive 'Sundowner Session' with Rukmini Chawla Kumar (Author and Editor at Penguin Books). These sessions will focus on discussion of topics of relevance to the lockdown, readings from books/poems and most importantly some friendly conversations with 'humane' touch. The idea of these Sundowner Sessions is to create an engaging platform with a community, share challenges that one might be facing, get some tips on these, and spend some time in the company of others while maintaining physical distancing.

The first session was held on April 16, 2020 with the key topic of focus revolving around 'Living Alone during the lockdown' with guest, Isha Lohumi a mental health

researcher with an M.A. in Social Work in Mental Health. This is especially important for those who are living alone at this time and have to face a day of complete physical isolation. During this one hour session, participants expressed their trauma, shared their personal stories and coping mechanisms during this lockdown while the panelists addressed some of the concerns and suggested some tips to deal with this ordeal. This session was one of its kind because it made most of them feel that 'everyone is in this together'. We are hoping that such community sessions would be helpful for common man, in general. The video recording of this session will be available on the COVID-Gyan website soon.

2. Well-Being Section on COVID-Gyan Website goes LIVE. The initiative is the brainchild of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), and Tata Memorial Centre (TMC). Several other prominent partners have since joined this noble effort including Vigyan Prasar, IndiaBioscience, and the Bangalore Life Science Cluster (BLiSc), which includes **Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (InStem)**, Centre for Cellular And Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP), and National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS)

The brand new 'well-being' section of COVID-Gyan went live recently. Dedicated to several resources on well-being, including ways to deal with isolation, how to keep busy during this trying time, and more, this page of the website is going to bring in 'all round' approach in dealing with this pandemic.

PANDEMIC? YES. PANIC? NO!

- **Find an outlet** - Read, draw, write! Or do yoga, play scrabble online, or listen to a podcast. No? How about catching up on movies, dancing, or singing in the shower? Look to these outlets to help you manage emotions during this challenging time.
- **Take care of your body** - More than ever it is important to get enough sleep, eat well-balanced meals, and exercise regularly.
- **Communicate your feelings** - Talk to people you trust, share your feelings, and maybe even keep a journal.
- **Get the facts** - Filter information and get your updates from verified sources only. Beware of rumours and myths - always check the facts.
- **Seek help** - If you're feeling overwhelmed, don't stress further. It's normal. Consider positive ways to deal with your emotions. Talk to someone, consider helplines and online counsellors as soon as possible.



Check out the page <http://covid-gyan.in/well-being> for interesting articles and infographics.