

Psychological Well-being

HANDBOOK

**EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN UNIVERSITY
PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING GUIDANCE AND RESEARCH CENTER
EMU-PDRAM**

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EMU RULES

EMU RULES WHICH SHOULD BE OBEYED IN ORDER TO AVOID SANCTIONS

- Behave in a way, that will not cause trouble/disturb the social order of the university.
- Be respectful to the Board of Trustees, the President, Faculty Members, and the university personnel.
- Avoid using offensive language towards other students, or deliberately threatening or disturbing them.
- Do not tear the announcements and documents of the university, or put graffiti on them.
- Do not organize any meeting, conference or panel without the permission of the Rector's Office.
- Do not boycott or occupy the university campus.
- Do not organize political propaganda or strikes on the university campus.
- Do not misuse the equipment, tools, materials and buildings of EMU.
- Do not commit criminal acts or steal other people's property.
- Do not miss classes and exams without an excuse.
- Do not try to get exam questions before the exam.
- Do not cheat or plagiarize.
- Do not attend an exam in place of somebody else or make somebody attend an exam in your place.
- Do not withhold necessary information from the disciplinary board when asked.
- Do not make false statements to the university authorities.
- Do not commit shameful crimes.
- Do not gamble on the campus.
- Do not use or sell harmful or illegal substances and alcohol on the campus.
- Do not use or carry sharp objects, guns or similar dangerous objects which may harm others.
- Obey the traffic rules within the campus area and pay attention to the warnings of security officers.
- After the termination of any kind of suspension period imposed by the University Disciplinary Board, do not repeat the same behavior or do similar actions, or maintain the same attitude, which caused the original suspension.
- Do not attempt or make unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conducts of sexual nature on or off campus.

For more information about EMU Rules, please check EMU Rules and Regulations on EMU's website (<http://mevzuat.emu.edu.tr>).

Preface

Dear Eastern Mediterranean University Students and Staff,

Since its establishment in 1997, the Eastern Mediterranean University Psychological Counseling Guidance and Research Centre (EMU-PDRAM) has been providing psychological and research services within EMU, and it is determined to continue and improve its scientific, principled and human friendly approach. One of the indicators of this determination is the recently reviewed and improved EMU-PDRAM's Psychological Well being Handbook that you are reading right now. The range of our psychological services is expanding as revealed by close communication with students, parents and the EMU staff and by scientific research carried out on this target population. Our aim is to help individuals to live their lives with improved self-confidence and self-esteem in order to be independent and successful individuals who are at ease with themselves and others.

In the first few pages of this handbook, you will find information about the establishment of EMU-PDRAM, its development and the services it provides. You can also find the universal ethical principles for psychologists that are consistently observed by the EMU-PDRAM psychologists while providing these services. Next are short explanations of some topics and tips which we believe would be beneficial to EMU students and staff by helping them live a healthy, successful and happy adulthood. From time to time, everyone might need to consult a psychologist and to get the view and support of a specialist. As EMU-PDRAM psychologists, we are ready to listen to you within the framework of the ethical principles of Psychology, to share your concerns and to support you in the process of finding an appropriate solution.

Best wishes,
EMU-PDRAM Psychologists

AN OVERVIEW OF EMU-PDRAM

Eastern Mediterranean University Psychological Counseling Guidance and Research Center (EMU-PDRAM) was established and approved by the University Board on November 4th 1997 as a unit working in direct association with the Rector's office. EMU-PDRAM is a pioneer institution in North Cyprus that offers psychological services at the university level. EMU-PDRAM is located on the ground floor of the Health Center and psychological services have been actively offered since the Spring of 1998. Presently, the EMU-PDRAM team consists of Prof. Dr. Biran Mertan who is the founder and director of the center, one psychiatrist, six psychologists, one social worker, one administrative assistant, two research assistants and two student assistants.

EMU-PDRAM PSYCHIATRIST AND PSYCHOLOGISTS

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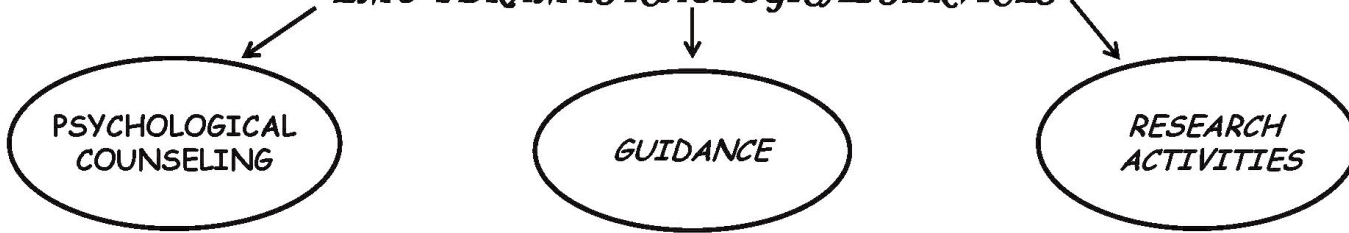
EMU-PDRAM's Objective

The objective of EMU-PDRAM is to provide psychological services to the individuals at EMU. It is aimed at helping EMU students to access psychological services suitable for their age and developmental stage without any discrimination in order to enable them to develop as healthy, successful and happy individuals. It is also aimed at providing support for the EMU staff so that they should live their lives as efficient, healthy and happy adults.

EMU PDRAM's Mission and Vision

The vision of EMU-PDRAM is to pursue psychological research and applications according to the European Union (EU) standards. EMU-PDRAM's mission is to make services that improve performance, cognition and behavior available to all individuals at EMU. Additionally, EMU-PDRAM conducts and publishes psychological research in certain branches of psychology. The aim of these research projects is to prepare programs which enhance EMU students and staff's understanding and awareness of their social, emotional and cognitive potentials and which helps them to utilize resources available to them to become healthy, successful and happy individuals.

EMU-PDRAM PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES



Individual Counseling Services

- Psychometric Measurement and Assessment

Group Counseling Services

- Psychoeducational programs for EMU students and staff
- Psychoeducational programs offered to community

Group counseling topics;

- Developing effective communication skills
- Effective study skills
- Effective time management programs
- Coping with stress
- Exam anxiety and coping with exam anxiety
- Coping with sleep problems
- Anger Management
- Coping with interpersonal violence

Awareness Raising Programs

- To enhance an individual's objective insight of his/her personality
- To help individuals better understand their personality and potential, through the use of various psychometric methods
- To guide the students to understand how to use their existing potential.

Information and Guidance Services

- To support the students in coping with potential academic difficulties
- To inform the students about specialized fields of education which are suitable for them
- To guide the students in their future vocational and career fields.

EMU-PDRAM Handbooks, Leaflets and Newsletters

Research Fields

- Attitudes toward getting psychological help among university students
- Attitudes toward domestic violence
- TENTS Project-European Network for Traumatic Stress
- Emotional literacy
- Concept development in childhood and adolescence
- Parenting school project
- Differently developing children
- Specific learning disorders
- Life satisfaction in old age
- Healthy divorce

UNIVERSAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS

Psychologists are aware of their professional and scientific responsibilities to individuals/societies in which they work.

Psychologists respect, seek to safeguard the rights and welfare of those whom they interact professionally.

Psychologists seek to promote accuracy, honesty and truthfulness in the science, teaching and practice of psychology.



Psychologists are aware of and respect cultural, individual, and role differences including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socio-economic status, etc..

Psychologists recognize that fairness and justice entitle all persons to access to and benefit from the contributions of the discipline of psychology and psychological services.

FIRST TIME AT EMU-PDRAM

Making an appointment to receive psychological services from EMU-PDRAM

Individuals, who would like to get psychological services from EMU-PDRAM, initially fill out an application form and then an appointment is made to meet with a psychologist.

It is important to make an appointment to be provided with psychological services in order to avoid waiting. Individuals may make appointments either by coming to EMU-PDRAM in person or by calling extension 2251. The same number can be used to inform the center about rescheduling or cancelling an appointment. If the person cannot attend his/her session, then he/she is required to cancel or reschedule for another day and time. It is important to inform the center about a cancellation in order to show respect to others who may need these services as well. Psychological services provided by EMU-PDRAM are free of charge.



I am new in Cyprus. I need to talk with someone who will understand me without passing judgments.

Hey friends!
We are having difficulties in time management.
Let's go to EMU-PDRAM and ask if there is any group discussion session on this subject.



PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and related psychological, social and biological processes in both human and nonhuman animals. The discipline of psychology has only been around for the past 136 years. Despite being a relatively new discipline, the subject matters of psychology are diverse, spanning from biology all the way to sociology. Biology studies the structures and functioning of living organisms. Sociology examines how groups function in society. Psychologists make their services available to individuals to improve their performance, cognition and behavior.

Psychologists study the intersection of two critical relationships: one between brain functions and behavior, and one between environment and behavior. Psychologists develop theories and test them through research and publish their findings to promote further research and implementation of the results. Furthermore, they develop new approaches from established knowledge to meaningful models to explain the adaptation of people and societies to change. Psychology is a tremendously wide field. Psychologists conduct both basic and applied research, serve as consultants to communities and organizations, diagnose and treat people and advance in academic careers. They assess intelligence and personality through objective methods and tests. They study how human beings relate to each other and also to machines and technology. They work to improve these relationships and offer advice and help to improve psychological wellbeing.

Many psychologists work independently. They can also team up with other professionals such as doctors, lawyers, school personnel, computer experts, engineers, legislators, the police and army to contribute in every area of society. Psychologists work in laboratories, hospitals, courtrooms, schools, universities, community health centers, mass communication centers and prisons. For example they work with business executives, performers and athletes to reduce stress and improve performance. When requested, they give advice in court depending on their expertise and collaborate with educators on school curriculum, with doctors at neurology and oncology clinics and with psychiatrists at psychiatry clinics. Immediately following a disaster, such as a plane crash or bombing, earthquakes or tsunamis, psychologists help victims and bystanders to recover from the trauma or shock of the event. They team up with law enforcement and public health officials to improve the quality and extent of services provided after such events.

Career opportunities in psychology are expanding in number and scope, especially for those with postgraduate degrees. Indeed, many of the problems society faces today are behavioral problems, for example, drug addiction, poor personal relationships, violence at home and on the street, and the harm we do to our environment. It is important to develop preventative strategies as well as diagnose problems in the society. This approach leads to the development of programs that promote healthy behavioral patterns in everyday life.

Subfields of Psychology

Evolutionary Psychology
Developmental Psychology
Social Psychology
Media Psychology
Educational Psychology
School Psychology

Clinical Psychology
Experimental Psychology
Health Psychology
Family Psychology
Sport Psychology
Traffic Psychology

Art Psychology
Counseling Psychology
Rehabilitation Psychology
Consumer Psychology
Personality Psychology
Law and Psychology
Neuroscience and Psychology



For further information about Psychology:

<http://www.psikolog.org.tr>

<http://www.apa.org>

<http://www.bps.org.uk>

<http://www.sfpys.org>

<http://www.cpa.ca>

<http://www.efpa.be>

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Most people come across with the question “How are you?” many times during their daily routine. Most of the time, people tend to answer this question by considering only their physical health. Beyond physical health, well-being is a broad concept that involves the physical, psychological and social state of an individual. The World Health Organization has defined health as “A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

During our lives, we might come across certain challenging life situations and external factors that might influence our wellbeing. Some of these factors can be the loss of a loved one, separations or natural disasters that are beyond our control, or sometimes these challenges can be related to our physical health such as a chronic disease which needs medical treatment, conflicts in interpersonal relations or difficulties in our academic life.

Because it is not possible to completely remove the challenging situations from our lives, these challenges can be used to strengthen our resilience. The Psychological Well-being Handbook looks at the effects of some of these challenging life situations on our psychological well-being. You can find short definitions and tips that we believe will be beneficial to the readers when they face such challenging situations and which will help them live a healthy successful and happy life.

CULTURE SHOCK

Thousands of students choose to study abroad for their university education every year. This is a good chance for discovering lifestyles in other places of the world. Having new friends and learning about new cultures is a great experience. However, coping with new situations may sometimes be a bit tiring and hard. The main symptoms of 'Culture Shock' are homesickness, stress, fear and confusion. Living in an environment different from your usual setting may be the reason of culture shock. You can sometimes feel the urge to run back home as soon as possible. This is normal. Be patient and give yourself some time.



There are 4 stages of Culture Shock.

- 1-The Stage of Excessive Enthusiasm (Honeymoon):** During this stage everything is going well and you are having a great time in your new environment.
- 2-The Stage of Shock:** There are many unfamiliar things in this new country and you do not know how to deal with them. You are unhappy and anxious.
- 3-The Stage of Transition:** You start to cope with your problems and harmonize your new experiences with the ones you have had before.
- 4-The Stage of Acceptance:** You start to adapt to your new environment and you become happier.

The Symptoms of Culture Shock

- Excessive anger towards small issues
- Making an effort to stay away from people you consider as 'different'
- Excessive homesickness
- Excessive appetite or lack of appetite
- Dullness and boredom
- Excessive need for sleep
- Headache
- Gastric disorders
- Depressive mood
- Unwillingness to study
- Bouts of crying
- Excessive cleaning
- Feeling sick and exhausted



Some Hints for Coping with Culture Shock

- Do not expect to be perfect in this new environment. You may have some difficulties even though you have had some prior knowledge about North Cyprus in general and EMU in particular.
- Do not judge this new culture before getting to know it better. Do not consider this culture as 'better' or 'worse' than your own culture but do consider it as 'different and interesting'.
- Be an active participant in activities. You can learn the culture of EMU and North Cyprus by living it. For example, you can start from the local foods or student clubs of EMU.
- Keep in touch with your family and friends in your country while you continuously integrate the Cypriot culture.
- Be involved in groups that have members from different cultures, just like you.

**Studying abroad is a special experience and will hold a unique place in your life.
As EMU-PDRAM psychologists we are always ready to help you with this experience.**

SLEEPING PROBLEMS

Sleep is one of the vital needs of human life. Just as it is impossible to live without eating or drinking, it is impossible to live without sleeping. Sleeping shouldn't be regarded as a break from being awake. Today, it is accepted that sleeping is an active process and a biorhythm with its unique structure and function. Human beings spend approximately 1/3 of their life sleeping. Sleeping has an active role in the development of the organism, memory and learning processes as well as in resting, maturing and cell repair. The daily sleeping time differs from person to person as a result of the genetic factors. It is known that the sleeping period ranges between 4-11 hours and in adults, it is an average of 8 hours. Sleeping problem is a subjective phenomenon. The amount of sleep a person needs varies.

What are the signs of sleeping problems?

- Some people have difficulty in falling asleep,
- Some people can easily fall asleep but they can easily wake up with a little noise and have difficulty in getting back to sleep,
- Some people wake up too early in the morning and have difficulty in getting back to sleep,
- Some people have no problems in sleeping but they still feel tired after waking up,
- Some people complain about never falling asleep.

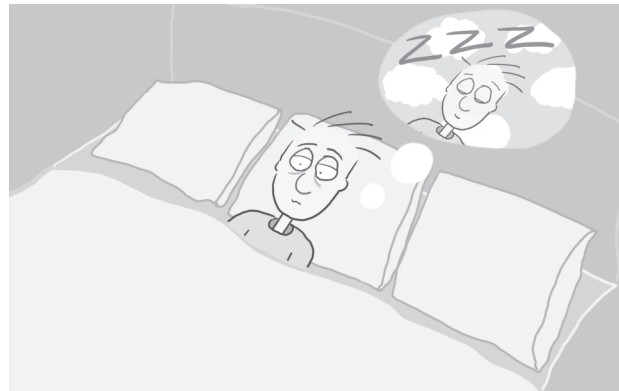
What can be the results of sleeping problems?

- feelings of fatigue and anger,
- hurting other people's feelings,
- a decrease in physical, cognitive and emotional performance and memory,
- loss of concentration.
- headache, irritation in the eyes and blurred sight.



What habits promote a good night's sleep?

- Pay attention to your sleeping habits and try to determine the amount of sleep your body needs in order to feel rested.
- Try to go to sleep at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning. So, regulate your sleeping and waking times.
- Avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, coke), nicotine (cigarettes, cigar, shisha) and alcohol before going to sleep as these are stimulants which can keep you from falling asleep.
- Going to sleep with an empty stomach makes it difficult to fall asleep. Try to avoid that.
- Eating food that contains too much carbohydrates and protein can keep you from falling asleep. So, light meals and herbal tea are preferable.
- Have a bath in order to relax before going to bed
- Get regular exercise during the day.



Sleeping is important for both your physical and psychological health. Take it seriously. If you have difficulties in sleeping, ask for professional help from the psychologists at EMU-PDRAM.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress

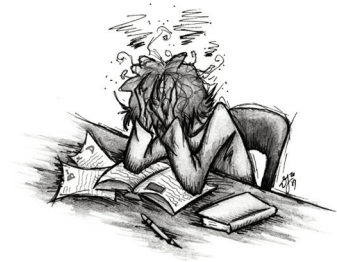
In the modern world, regardless of age, religion, language and socio-economic status, stress is experienced in the face of challenges. Stress is a feeling we experience when we face a challenging life situation or a new situation that we are not used to. Intense and long term stress has negative effects on well-being.

What are causes of stress?

Environmental and social factors can create a basis for stress. However, self-perception and the way of thinking are as influential as the environment in creating stress. Each individual experiences and copes with stress differently. A given incident may be stressful for one person but may not be stressful at all for another person,

Some causes of stress;

- **Role Ambiguity:** Inability to find meaningful and balanced roles for ourselves.
- **Interpersonal conflicts:** Difficulties in communicating with others.
- **Responsibility:** We can be confronted with high stress levels when we take on more responsibility than we can manage. We have to make priorities and take on responsibilities at the right time and for the right reasons. However, procrastination may also produce more stress as a result of feelings such as aimlessness and meaninglessness of life.
- **Extreme Workload:** Too much work or work that exceeds our capabilities etc.
- **Unexpected situations:** Unexpected negative incidents such as natural disasters, accidents, harassment, loss of a loved one etc.
- **Other problems:** Problems related with health, finance or academic life.



Do not forget causes of stress are not always negative;

- Life changes such as moving, starting university, new job, graduation etc. may also cause stress.

The ways of thinking that can lead to stress are listed below:

1. **All or nothing thinking:** Thinking everything within the category of black or white. For example; the thinking that “Do nothing, unless you can do it perfectly”.
2. **Overgeneralization:** Developing negative thoughts about everything, because of a single event. For example; “My best friend didn’t understand me, so no one understands me”.
3. **Mental filter:** Concentrating only on the negative details. For example; “I have an exam this weekend so I can’t visit my family. Also, I can’t concentrate on my studies; life is going badly for me”.

4. **Ignore the positive:** Always seeing the negative by turning a blind eye towards positive events. For example; “I managed to get this grade only by studying with my friend; I couldn’t have managed it by myself”.
5. **Catastrophizing:** Making general conclusions from single events. For example; “I received a bad grade on the first exam, it is going to be impossible for me to succeed in this course”.
6. **Labelling:** Creating stereotypes to explain your mistakes or the mistakes of others instead of understanding the reasons for their mistakes. Such as; “He is such an egoist” or “I am worthless”.

Recognizing and dismissing or rejecting these types of thoughts, will help to reduce self-created stress.

Effects of Stress:

When we are faced with a stressful situation we feel anxious. Anxiety is a feeling which includes fear, worry and physiological arousal. Effects of anxiety can be categorized in four groups.

Physiological Effects: Loss or increase in appetite, difficulties in falling asleep or excessive sleeping, pain in different parts of the body, difficulties in breathing, increase in heartbeat etc.

Emotional Effects: Pessimism, fear, panic, anger, suspicion etc.

Cognitive Effects: Indecision, difficulties in expressing oneself, disorganized thinking etc.

Behavioral Effects: Alcohol and other drug abuse, denial and repression of stress.



Healthy stress management techniques can be categorized into three areas:

1. **Techniques for the body:** Breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, aerobic, gymnastic, balanced and healthy nutrition, getting enough rest and sleep.
2. **Techniques for the emotions and thought processes:** Having a realistic point of view, critically analyzing events without stereotyping, instead of considering the stressors as a threat, interpreting them as a “testing of skills”, learning to be

For more information about stress and stress management, please apply to EMU-PDRAM for individual counseling.

ANGER

What is Anger?

The dictionary defines anger as; “A fairly strong emotional reaction which accompanies a variety of situations such as being physically restrained, being interfered with, having one’s possessions removed, being attacked or threatened, etc.”. Anger is a normal and usually healthy emotion which can appear occasionally. Anger is an emotional clue that reminds us of what we like or dislike. Anger is not an emotion that only belongs to humans, it is also found in many kinds of animals.

We May Get Angry When;

- we feel offended,
- we are provoked,
- we are disappointed,
- we are under stress,
- we think that we are treated unjustly,
- we can’t express ourselves.

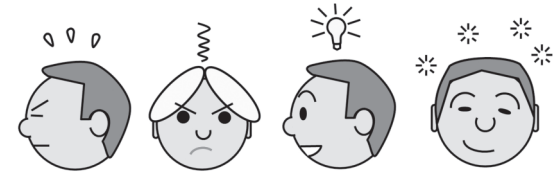


Why Do People’s Expressions of Anger Differ?

- **Inborn traits/Temperament:** There is evidence that some children are born with irritable and impulsive characteristics. Such children easily get angry.
- **Sociocultural Factors:** Anger is often regarded as an unwanted, negative emotion rather than a natural feeling. As a result, from very early on, individuals are taught to either suppress anger or express anger through violence or abusive behaviors. Some abusive behaviors are encouraged by various social factors such as the media, schooling, and family settings. However, it is possible to start learning how to express anger in a healthy manner at a very early age in the family environment, at preschool etc.

What Kind of Strategies Keep Anger at Bay?

- **Relaxation:** When you feel angry, simple relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing and relaxing imagery can help you to calm down your angry feelings.
- **Cognitive Restructuring:** When you are angry, generally your thinking can get exaggerated and overly dramatic. Try replacing these thoughts with more rational ones.
- **Problem Solving:** When you get angry the best attitude is not to focus on finding the solution, but rather on how you can handle and face the problem. Make a plan and check your progress along the way. Resolve to give in your best, but also try not to punish yourself if a solution doesn't work right away.
- **Better Communication:** When people get angry they usually say the first thing that comes into their mind and they also tend to jump to conclusions. The first thing to do if you are in a heated discussion is to slow down and think through your response.



At the same time listen carefully to what the other person is saying and take your time before answering.

- **Changing Your Environment:** Sometimes it's your immediate surrounding that causes irritation and fury. When this happens, give yourself a break, and make sure you have some "private time" to reexamine the stressful situation.

If you realize that your anger is out of control and it hurts you or other people around, you should think of getting professional psychological help. By doing this, you can learn how to manage your anger. You can change your anger response from negative to positive. If you believe that you can benefit from getting professional psychological help, get an appointment at EMU-PDRAM.



EXAM ANXIETY

Anxiety is a state of fear or worry experienced by individuals facing a stressful situation. It is essentially a healthy feeling as it gives us the motivation we need to deal with the stressful situation. However, intense forms of anxiety can have negative effects on an individual's everyday life. Exam anxiety is an intense form of anxiety about exams which affects students' effective learning and academic performance. Some of the causes of exam anxiety are the students' own false beliefs about their capabilities, poor time management and family's expectations of student's performance.



Exam anxiety has several effects on students.

- Physical Effects: Headaches, nausea or diarrhea, excessive sweating, shortness of breath, or dry mouth, etc.
- Emotional Effects: Feelings of helplessness, fear, disappointment, anger or sadness, etc.
- Behavioral Effects: Excessive caffeine consumption, avoiding studying, etc.
- Cognitive Effects: Difficulty in concentrating, negative self-talk, comparing oneself to others, difficulty in organizing thoughts, difficulties in recalling what has been studied, etc.

What can you do about exam anxiety?

Suggestion 1: Exam Preparation

Plan your schedule by organizing your time and using self-discipline to stick closely to your study program.

- When it's time to study, do study; don't delay or alter your schedule to avoid studying.
- Maintain a reasonably regular schedule for revision studies, eating, sleeping and relaxing.
- Start your study schedule at least two weeks before your exams begin.
- Be realistic about your capacity.
- Don't attempt to study 24 hours a day, because, your efficiency and capacity to retain material rapidly decreases.
- Include recreation time in your schedule.
- Enjoy your free time; avoid continuously thinking about your exams and your study.
- Arrange the space in which you study in a way that is attractive and encourages your studying ex: fresh air, tidiness, fresh flowers, low music and optimum room temperature.

Suggestion 2: Before the Exam

- Avoid consumption of alcohol.
- Avoid excess consumption of caffeine and/or nicotine.
- Get enough sleep.
- Have a balanced meal.
- On the exam days allow yourself enough time to get prepared and have breakfast quietly and without rushing.
- Make sure you have prepared your pen, pencil, rubber etc.
- Get to the exam place early.
- Do not talk about exam material just before the exam.
- Avoid spending too much time with other anxious students, anxiety is contagious.



Suggestion 3: During the Exam

- Think positively: Maintain a positive dialogue with yourself : “I can do OK in this exam”.
- Do not compare yourself with other students.
- Do not think about your parents and friends or what they might say about your exam result.
- Do sit in a location in the exam room where you will be distracted as little as possible.
- Do the relaxation exercise whenever you feel anxious.
- Do read questions and the instructions carefully and slowly.
- Do focus only on the exam, not on what the other students are doing.
- If you find the exam to be more difficult for you than anticipated, “focus and just do your best” at that point. It might be enough to get you through even with a reasonable grade.

Relaxation Exercise:

For deep breathing, sit upright. Slowly inhale through your nose and feel your breath in your abdomen. Exhale through your mouth slowly. Deep breathing will help you to lower your heart rate and blood pressure. Practice this 2-3 times until you can focus on your exam again.

If you want more information or advice on exam anxiety, please call or drop in to see us at EMU-PDRAM.

DEPRESSION

Depression is a mood disorder that can be seen very often in every culture. Everyone can feel sad sometimes. However, a healthy individual overcomes this sadness after a while. Depression can be described as a persistent and long term influence of negative thoughts and feelings on a person. These feelings can be sadness, disappointment, emptiness, hopelessness, worthlessness, pessimism and helplessness. Depression has serious negative effects on a person's life and it lessens the joy of life. In order to diagnose an individual with depression, the negative feelings have to continue for at least two weeks. The depression can be in mild, moderate or severe forms, it can also be continuous or in repeated cycles.

Depression can be seen in people from every walk of life and from different age groups.

MAIN TRIGGERS OF DEPRESSION:

There can be many reasons of depression to emerge. Some of them are:

- Family predisposition and hereditary features can provide a basis for depression.
- A problem with the amount and/or the level of the chemical messengers that carries the messages in the brain can cause depression (neurotransmitters).
- Research has proved that personality characteristics such as independency, self-confidence, assertiveness and optimism have a protective effect against depression. Therefore, individuals not having these characteristics can be more prone to experiencing depression.
- A chronic illness which lowers the quality of life and causes weakness, hopelessness and pain, can also lead to depression.
- It is also possible to observe depression as a side effect of a pill which is used to treat an illness.
- Alcohol and some chemical substances can have depressive effects on some people.
- Negative events that happen in the life course (for example, loss of work, termination of a relationship, loss of a loved one, diagnosis of an illness).
- People who experienced traumas such as bullying, abuse, etc. are more prone to experience depression.



MAIN SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION:

- Feeling tired and weak all the time,
- Lack of interest in the environment and reluctance,
- Anhedonia – not enjoying life,
- Lack or increase in appetite,
- Feeling worthless and/or inadequate,
- Pessimism,
- Sleeping problems (Insomnia or Hypersomnia),
- Suicidal thoughts and attempts,
- Decrease in movements and talking,
- Depressive feelings,
- Crying.



The following example shows how negatively depression can affect an individual:

22 years old student X has not been feeling well since the last one month. X became reluctant to do the things that s/he used to enjoy and s/he began to spend all her/his time at her/his dormitory room where s/he stays alone. S/He does not have the strength to get up from the bed and s/he also doesn't want to. Although s/he feels tired, s/he has difficulty falling asleep. S/He therefore cannot go to her/his lectures and s/he is falling away from her/his group of friends. Initially, X's friends were calling and inviting her/him to spend time with them. However, as s s/he distanced her/himself from them, they stopped calling X as well. X started to feel guilty, worthless and empty. S/He felt like s/he was hopeless and could not solve her/his problems. X gave up eating and drinking.

A friend of X who was concerned about her/him, went to EMU-PDRAM and explained X's situation and asked for advice. Later X's friend persuaded X to go to EMU-PDRAM in order to get professional help. X described her/his situation to her/his psychiatrist and psychologist as "being in a deep and dark well from which s/he can't escape".

Depression lowers the quality of life. However, it is possible to cope with depression. If you or someone around you have symptoms of depression, please consult a psychologist at EMU-PDRAM as soon as possible.

TRAUMA

What is Trauma?

Traumatic events are situations that are perceived as a threat to one's own or a close friend/relative's life or to physical integrity. They occur suddenly and cause a lot of stress for the people affected.

Traumatic events can be divided into two groups:

1- Stressful situations that we all might experience in life.

Example: Traffic accidents, sudden deaths or news of a serious illness, rape, fire, etc.

2- Natural disasters which are not controlled by humans.

Example: earthquake, storm, flood, etc.



Different people react to traumatic events in different ways. After a traumatic event, some people may have immediate reactions while some others have delayed ones. Some people may show intense levels of emotions whereas for some others, it could be experienced in a milder way. All of these reactions are NORMAL. One crucial thing is that; for a certain amount of time after experiencing a traumatic event, people have some trouble continuing with familiar routines of their lives. The same traumatic event might influence different people in different ways. The intensity of experiencing 'trauma' varies. Different factors such as the severity of the traumatic event, the destruction it caused in the survivor's physical life and psychological well-being, the survivor's maturity level and capacity to cope with the stress, emotional and financial support provided to the survivor by others around and the government's psycho-social support system all influence how the survivor experiences the traumatic event.

Thoughts, Feelings & Behaviors after Experiencing a Traumatic Event:

- Sorrow and shock,
- Anxiety, fear and anger,
- Numbness,
- Guilt, shame and helplessness,
- Change in belief systems (traditional, cultural, religious, etc.)

- Hatred and hostility (toward world, life, destiny, people etc.),
- Obsessiveness, compulsiveness,
- Alcohol and drug misuse,
- Self-harm,
- Not enjoying life,
- Conflict and break-ups in close relationships (friendship, intimate, family, etc.),
- Difficulties in concentrating and memory problems,
- Decrease in sexual desire or abstinence,
- Sleep and eating disorders.

Mistakes While Helping a Trauma Survivor:

- Underestimating the trauma and its stressful outcomes.
- Expecting the survivor to recover easily and quickly.
- Blaming and criticizing the survivor as being 'weak' if it takes long for her/him to recover.
- Trying to persuade the survivor that s/he has to forget about the traumatic event and that it is best not to think or talk about it.
- Excessive protection and avoidance of all kinds of stimulus that may remind the survivor of the traumatic event.

How to help the trauma survivor?

- Reassure the trauma survivor on the fact that s/he has nothing to feel guilty about for the occurrence of the traumatic event.
- Be compassionate.
- Encourage the trauma survivor to express and share her/his emotions. Provide a secure and warm atmosphere and be a good listener.
- Explain to the trauma survivor that the stress s/he is going through is normal.
- Encourage the trauma survivor to get professional psychological support, if needed.
- When the trauma survivor starts pulling her/himself together, keep being supportive and be there for her/him.

EMU-PDRAM psychologists are ready to help. If you experienced or witnessed a traumatic event and need to talk and share or if you want to get support on the ways to help a loved one who has experienced or witnessed a traumatic event, please visit EMU-PDRAM.



BEREAVEMENT & GRIEF

Bereavement is a personal experience and each person copes with it in her/his own way. There is no 'normal' or 'right-wrong' way of coping with the death of a loved one. Grief affects you emotionally, physically and mentally. Death, expected or unexpected, is one of the most unbearable experience that a person can go through.

Initial Reactions

Denial: It is too difficult to believe that someone close to you is gone and will never come back. Many people refuse to believe this at the beginning.

Numbness: Because of the shock, it may seem like you 'do not feel anything' as if you have neither negative nor positive emotions.

Anger & Rebellion: Death can seem unfair. People very often find it cruel and start questioning 'why'. Anger and rebellion are experienced very frequently, especially when the deceased is a young individual who had many dreams for the future.

Deep pain: This can be both physical and psychological and you may think it will stay with you forever.

Guilt: The 'if only' scenarios are numerous. You may start blaming yourself for the things that you have or have not said or done. It is important to remember that we can't always foresee things and we always have our own good reasons to act in a certain way.

Depressed mood: You are so sad and hopeless. Everything seems meaningless and you feel there is nothing worth living for in your life.

Mood swings: These can seem very frightening but they are normal at the beginning. You may switch from feeling sad to angry or all of a sudden you may find yourself crying your eyes out.

Longing: You may find yourself thinking about the events leading up to the death over and over again. Hearing the voice of the deceased or seeing her/his image is also common.

How to cope with low mood and stress after the loss of a loved one?

Grieving is such an individual process and so are the coping strategies. Age, personality characteristics, educational level, lifestyle and socio-cultural background are some of the factors that change one person's experience from another.



- Talk to someone about your loss, the deceased, and your special memories with her/him. Not everyone will understand but many will... Besides, if people know what you are going through, they are more likely to understand why you act differently and it might help you feel more understood and accepted.
- Talk to people who have already been bereaved and have gone through similar experiences. You may learn a lot from them.
- Cry...It is healthy and it is a very important part of the grieving process.
- Write, read, paint, take photos...Do anything that calms you down.
- Don't give yourself a time limit. This would stress you even more. When it comes to grieving, it is impossible to say how long it will take. Everyone grieves for different lengths of time.
- Be tolerant to your mood swings and allow yourself to have enjoyments. This does not mean that you have forgotten the person who has died. It is just a sign that life goes on and things get easier with time.

How to Help a Grieving Person?

- Approach with empathy.
- Provide a secure and warm atmosphere, encourage the bereaved to express and share her/his emotions, and be a good listener.
- Explain that the stress s/he is going through is normal.
- Encourage her/him to get professional psychological support if needed.
- Being around a bereaved person can also be overwhelming, even if you never met the deceased person. It may trigger your own personal painful memories. Therefore, do not forget to take care of yourself too and seek professional psychological help if needed.



EMU-PDRAM psychologists are here to listen and help you to deal with the pain in a healthy manner.

EPILEPSY

What is Epilepsy?

People with epilepsy are just like everybody else, except they sometimes have seizures. A seizure is caused by a sudden burst of excess electrical activity in the brain, causing a temporal disruption in the normal message passing between brain cells. The person may appear to behave differently (loss of consciousness, irregular breathing and movements, etc...), however s/he will not remember anything about the seizure. Seizures can happen at any time and they generally only last for seconds or minutes, after which the brain usually returns to normal.

Who can have Epilepsy?

Epilepsy can affect any of us, at any age and from any walk of life. Brain damage caused by a difficult birth, a severe blow to the head or an infection of the brain such as meningitis can cause epilepsy. Sometimes the tendency to have seizures runs in the family.

Types of seizures

The main thing to bear in mind is that seizures can be of two types: Generalized and Partial.

1. Generalized seizures involve the whole brain. There are several types, including – tonic-clonic, absence and myoclonic.
2. Partial seizures, as the name suggests, start in just one part of the brain. They can be either simple partial seizures or complex partial seizures but either way the electrical discharge may stay in one spot or may spread to the rest of the brain.

Possible Causes of Seizures

- Most seizures strike unexpectedly. However, some people can pinpoint certain factors which spark them off. These include:
- Stress – Periods of anxiety or stress may disturb sleep patterns.
- Patterns of light – Watching TV or spending a lot of time on electronic devices.
- Late nights and lack of sleep – Too many late nights or going without sleep.
- Food – Skipping meals and having an unbalanced diet.
- Alcohol – excess alcohol consumption.
- Illegal drugs – taking illegal drugs or smoking illegal substances.



Medical Treatment of Epilepsy

Once you have been diagnosed as having epilepsy, a carefully planned use of drugs will be designed by your doctor in order to control your seizures. It is vital to take your medicine correctly as prescribed by the doctor.

CAUTION

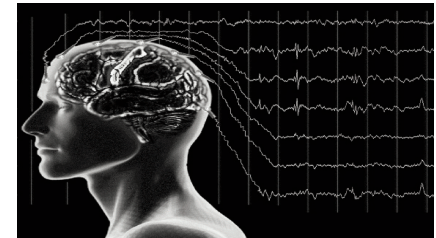
- **Anti-epileptic medication work by establishing a constant balance of the medication in your system—missing doses or taking the medication at irregular times may prevent the medication from having a positive effect on your seizures.**
 - **Stopping your medication suddenly could cause uncontrolled seizures, so it's vital to do it under your doctor's supervision.**



Tests For Epilepsy

Currently, there is no one test available which can say if someone does or does not have epilepsy. If your doctor suspects epilepsy, s/he will refer you to a doctor who specializes in brain disorders. This specialist will ask you to go through a few tests (EEG, CT, MRI) in order to find out whether you have epilepsy and identify what type it is.

- **EEG** stands for Electroencephalogram. This test involves placing around 20 pads on your head while you sit or lie down. These pick up the electrical activity of your brain cells and transmit it to an instrument which produces a print-out of your brain waves. The test is performed while you open and close your eyes, take deep breaths and during exposure to flashing lights. The whole test usually takes about an hour.
- **CT** stands for Computer Tomography. This test involves you lying on a mobile couch which slides your head into the scanner, which looks like the drum of a washing machine. X-rays are taken of the brain at different angles and passed through a computer to produce a picture of 'slices' of your brain. This is done to look for areas of damage to the brain that could account for the seizures.
- **MRI** stands for Magnetic Resonance Imaging. This provides a high-quality image of your brain without using x-rays or other radiation. The drum-like scanner contains a powerful magnet that picks up signals from your brain. These are fed into a computer which creates a 3-D image of the area being scanned and displays it on a screen.



If you have any concerns about Epilepsy, please feel free to see a psychiatrist at EMU-PDRAM. If you need more detailed information about the condition, the psychologist can also direct you to the right addresses.

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

Throughout our lives we are confronted with several adverse situations. These may include:

- Illnesses
- Bad exam results
- Accidents
- Natural disasters
- Frustrations
- Separation/Divorce
- Culture shock

Experiencing such negative environmental adversities may have severe physical, emotional and social influences on an individual. One may be feeling sad, angry, frustrated and helpless or in pain. Eventually the individual will realize that life must go on in spite of these events. Over a period of time the individual begins to readjust to the new situations in her/his life.



Why are some people able to go through this adjustment period successfully while others fail to do so? Why do such individual differences exist?

Individuals who are psychologically resilient are able to cope with the difficulties of life. However, those lacking in resiliency will resign and/or surrender. It is possible to strengthen your resiliency.

FACTORS PREVENTING PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

1. In some circumstances the social conditions do not give youngsters the opportunity to “mature.” Instead, they are treated as children in need of protection, unable to take on responsibilities, and furthermore, incompetent. Research suggests that individuals, who are not given the opportunity to mature, behave in a child-like manner.
2. Modern societies endorse extreme viewpoints such as black/white, good/bad, beautiful/ugly, stupid/clever, hence not giving room for change. The opposite of success is inevitably failure and this perspective goes unchallenged.
3. Success, right NOW! A common misperception is that success, prestige and wealth should be readily obtainable attributes. Such a mentality can prevent one from exerting extra effort and trying harder. When expectations are not easily or momentarily met, this may be perceived as failure, causing the individual to give up.
4. Parents are often quite possessive of their children and try to protect them from life’s difficulties. This prevents youngsters from learning to confront and effectively cope with these difficulties.

5. In order for their children not to feel sadness, anger, frustration, disappointment, embarrassment or guilt, parents often protectively prevent their children from experiencing any of these negative emotions. However, experiencing such emotions from time to time will make youngsters more resilient and less vulnerable.
6. The media often presents images of perfection in individuals. The perfection represented is often unobtainable and it creates a sense of incompetence and failure in youngsters.

These are factors that prevent a youngster from being psychologically resilient. Sometimes you may need to get professional help when you face challenging situations.

BUILDING PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

1. Have high expectations. You have enough experience to obtain the realistic expectations you set for yourself. Work hard towards achieving your goals.
2. You may be at the center of your parents' world; however you are not at the center of the real world. Accept this fact and pay attention to the outside world. Offer help and assistance to others, this will increase your self-esteem.
3. Everyone has certain inborn characteristics. Intelligence and personality traits can be improved. Several important personalities overcame challenges; improved themselves and achieved self-fulfillment.
4. Failure is not the end of the world. Everyone is bound to fail at some point in their lives. What matters is that you do not surrender to the failure and continue to strive. Failure is often the motivating force on the road to success.
5. Just as happiness, love and satisfaction are natural feelings, so are anger, disappointment, and sadness. Experiencing these emotions is part of being a human being. None will endure; they will occasionally come and go.
6. Life is full of ups and downs. Do not try to avoid facing your problems. Identify the problem, define it, think of alternative solutions and choose the most suitable one for you. If that solution fails to work, there are other options. Don't forget there is no such thing as "perfect." Your philosophy should be doing the best you can, not being the best.
7. Try to enhance your experiences and learn new things through extracurricular activities at the university setting, at home and beside your lectures. Be open to new information and skills and improve yourself.

**Dealing with certain adversities may require professional support. This too is quite normal.
Visit EMU-PDRAM and share your problems with us. You will obtain the tips you need.**

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2: Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4: No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6: Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7: All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8: Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10: Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11:

1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed

than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13:

1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14:

1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15:

1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16:

1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17:

1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others

2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18: Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this

right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20:

1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21:

1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22: Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural

rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23:

1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24: Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25:

1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26:

1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27:

1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28: Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29:

1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only

to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30: Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

EPILOGUE

As the psychologists of EMU-PDRAM, our main aim in compiling this handbook is to inform you about some coping skills that are useful for dealing with the daily challenging situations and lessen their negative effects which may cause anxiety, sadness, stress and the likes.

Our life experiences are very diverse to fit into the scope of this handbook. In addition, every individual can have different perceptions and coping strategies towards the challenging situations. As it was mentioned in the introduction, it is not possible to have complete control over the things that we have experienced or might experience in the future. However, handling the challenging life situations with healthy coping strategies, improving psychological resilience and developing healthy problem solving skills are in our control.

From time to time, everyone might need to consult a psychologist and get professional advice. As EMU-PDRAM professionals, we are ready to listen to you objectively, to understand your issues and to empower you in the process of finding an appropriate solution.

Best wishes,
EMU-PDRAM Team



Personal Development Handbook

“Addiction Free” Living Handbook

Healthy Relationships Handbook

Stop Violence Handbook

Healthy Sexuality Handbook