

The last 4 weeks have caused the maximum stress in so many of our friends and families. There are so many advisory posts going around. I have interacted with hundreds of people in this time, and wanted to share some of the learnings from them:

For people anywhere:

Show Sympathy/Empathy:

Emails and chats are great, but phone calls (with or without video) go a long way to share emotions. There are many in India, who are not near their dear ones in their hour of need. Even if you have not talked to someone in years, they will be able to talk to you, if they can. If they are under medical support and cannot talk, get in touch with someone nearby who is taking care of them, and who also would love to hear some friendly voices.

Support efforts financially:

There are many worthy causes listed [here](#). There are also many listings about smaller regional efforts like the one [here](#).

For people inside India:

Experience disaster response:

It is easy to get gloomy and mixed up in all the crazy statistics going around. But, to get a perspective, try to help actual cases - people looking for hospital beds, oxygen cylinders, concentrators, medicines like remdesivir, etc. It may seem like wild goose chases, with a lot of interactions with strangers and possible frauds, but will both help some people, and also give you a sense of the situation. There are so many life-and-death situations and everyone needs help.

Show at most discretion with Whatsapp forwards:

Every one of us wants to help in some small way, and forwarding Whatsapp messages may feel like doing a good thing, when it may not be. We will not have the time to dig into every forward, before deciding if it is worth passing along, but it is better to avoid the urge to press Fwd. There is too much wrong medical advice, suspect articles and phone #s of frauds that go around. For example, there is a well-meaning post on how the lungs of COVID +ve patients look if they had vaccination or not. It is [fake](#).

Please pass on personal experiences:

There is no shame in being COVID +ve. Somebody can benefit from hearing your experience. If you have procured important supplies from a reliable vendor, please share details. If you have suffered in the hands of crooks, or have had a bad experience with a hospital, please share. See [here](#) and [here](#).

Do not take progress lightly:

There have been many cases where patients show quick progress, and then take things lightly, and suddenly, their situation degrades rapidly. This disease has so many unknowns still, and it is best to be vigilant with care and caution for a longer period after initial symptoms. See [here](#) and [here](#).