

GROUP THERAPY IN LONG COVID: THEMES, CHALLENGES, AND LESSONS

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Yochai Re'em, MD, is a psychiatrist in private practice and voluntary faculty member at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital / Weill Cornell Medical College. He is a contributor to Patient-Led Research Collaborative for Long COVID, where he co-authored one of the first comprehensive articles describing the clinical phenomenon of Long COVID at the patient level. He is author of Psychology Today blog “Long COVID Lessons,” was a contributing author to The Long Covid Survival Guide, has written several opinion pieces on the topic of Long COVID, and co-authored the “Mental Health Disorders” chapter with Dr. Padda in Understanding the Behavioral and Medical Impact of Long COVID: An Empirical Guide to Assessment and Treatment of Post-Acute Sequelae of SARS CoV-2 Infection. He provides both individual and group treatment for those with Long COVID.



Karan Padda, MD, is a consultation-liaison psychiatry fellow at the New York University Langone Health and a psychiatrist in private practice at Continuum Psych. He specializes in treating mental health conditions in medically ill populations, with special interest in neuropsychiatric sequelae in Long COVID. He co-developed a group psychotherapy for patients with Long COVID with Dr. Re'em while in psychiatry residency training at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center. He presented two posters on the topic of Long COVID at the Academy of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry and was awarded the Nathaniel Wharton Best Trainee Paper Award by the Society for Liaison-Psychiatry for a paper titled “A Case Series: Psychiatric Comorbidities in Long COVID.”



ABOUT THE TALK:

This talk will explore the role of group psychotherapy in Long COVID. Common themes include alienation in the form of invalidation and lack of understanding in the medical community, envy of those with mild or asymptomatic COVID-19 recovery, disruption of attachments, identity diffusion as it relates to chronic illness, lack of faith in conventional medicine, information sharing of possible treatments, coping with uncertainty, and hope in the face of suffering. Themes will be discussed in the context of emerging evidence about pathophysiologic mechanisms in Long COVID, pulling from the speakers' experience running a long-term Long COVID group psychotherapy.