I’m Worried about the Psychological Toll on Health Care Workers. They Need Help.

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To help address the emotional toll of COVID-19 on health care workers, experts offer tips for coping. Support groups are critical for those working on the frontlines of the pandemic, according to Michael F. Myers, professor of clinical psychiatry at SUNY-Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn. Myers led support groups for doctors during the AIDS crisis and is helping to facilitate weekly groups for those treating patients during COVID-19. “What we’ve noticed so far is the huge sense of solidarity and connection with each other in the group,” he said. Experts also recommend workers set boundaries to protect their own physical and mental health. Many health care professionals are working in circumstances that prevent them from providing optimal care, such as lacking personal protective equipment. That can lead to feelings of moral distress, say experts, which peer and professional support can help reduce.


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