

# MENTAL HEALTH IN THE TIMES OF THE PANDEMIC

By Dr Paul Valent

Dear Reader,

Into the third year of this pandemic its mental health consequences have been increasingly recognised. However, without an acknowledged framework for stress, a great variety of stress responses beyond anxiety and depression have been difficult to pinpoint and contextualise.

In the first chapter *Mental Health in the Times of the Pandemic* puts the pandemic in context with previous ones. Chapter two makes sense of common stress related symptoms such as anger, guilt, shame, helplessness, sense of injustice, all ranging from individual to national levels. Chapter three demonstrates how eight evolutionary stress responses (survival strategies) make sense of the wide-ranging fluctuating and contradictory biological, psychological, social and moral mental health distress. The last chapter describes treatments for persistent stress related symptoms.

Previous generations of this booklet have been distributed widely by the Red Cross and other organisations following fires, floods, and other disasters. Here specifically applied to the pandemic, the principles in this booklet are nevertheless applicable to disasters generally.

Australian Scholarly Publishing presents free electronic versions of this booklet. Please pass on links below to any individuals or groups who you think might benefit from the booklet.

Paul Valent MBBS, FRANZCP

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