

24 January 2024

## Event Description

### **Lecture + discussion: “Mental health in times of crisis”**

Climate change, various wars and conflicts, (post-)pandemic transformations, and many other global happenings and human-caused disasters impact our mental health significantly. Whether directly or indirectly affected, nearly everyone also experiences the emotional consequences of these collective crises. However, we often lack the time and don't prioritize reflecting on them daily. So, in this event, we want to answer questions regarding what these crises have in common. Which psychological processes are activated within these crises? How do these crises affect us as individuals? How can we deal with them long-term without becoming numb to or separated from the world? While dealing with the characteristics of these various crises and complex questions, we will explore psychological concepts such as climate anxiety, loss of control, crisis management, resilience, global solidarity, adaptivity, and community power. We are looking at the psychological and, therefore, health consequences of various current crises and long-term approaches, aiming to balance individual and collective needs. While it's evident that there is no exact solution for everyone, a collective-care approach integrated into our daily lives may serve as a support system during these unstable times.

### **Workshop: “Coping with crisis: mental health strategies and resources”**

Global conflicts, environmental disasters, and (post-)pandemic transformations may not only challenge our emotional well-being but also decrease our mental health in general. Simultaneously, mixed feelings of anxiety, panic, helplessness, loneliness, and sensory overload may appear while we're trying to catch up on the news. It is difficult to switch off from these crises due to the constant availability of media consumption and the desire to stay informed and in touch with the world's happenings, as we often (naturally) don't want to look away. And despite all this, many industries promise self-care in unstable times by investing in and consuming products or streaming services. But how do we look after ourselves? Which strategies can improve not only self- but also community care when looking after ourselves and others (in the long term)? What opportunities do the current times offer us to imagine our future perspectives while facing instability? We want to spotlight these various questions (and many more) with the help of evaluated and best-practice techniques from psychology and psychotherapy and create our guidelines for coping. We will talk about concepts such as “radical acceptance” (DBT), different types of stress responses, creating boundaries, or value-based approaches (ACT). This workshop contains an interactive search for coping strategies on individual and collective levels. Although this workshop doesn't offer clear-cut solutions for current crises, it provides suggestions for an action plan. In a joint exchange, we will create a "safer space" to share our feelings, needs, worries, and wishes about the current times while listening and supporting others simultaneously. While we can't change and control the current circumstances directly within this seminar, we may exchange ideas about our mental crisis management and shape our stress response. Let's develop some resilience and hope in these unprecedented times.