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Nursing School During a Pandemic: Navigating the Unknown

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Objectives

- Describe different types of grief from a nursing student perspective
- Identify strategies for responding to loss amidst the COVID-19 pandemic
- Develop mechanisms to prioritize competing challenges and uncertainties
- Explore methods to ensure continued academic success in a time of unpredictable change





Change is Flooding in...

- Online learning
- Technology
- Clinical hours
- Due dates
- Future semester plans
- Friendships
- Faculty relationships
- Housing
- Independence
- Financial stability



The Pull from the Front Lines...



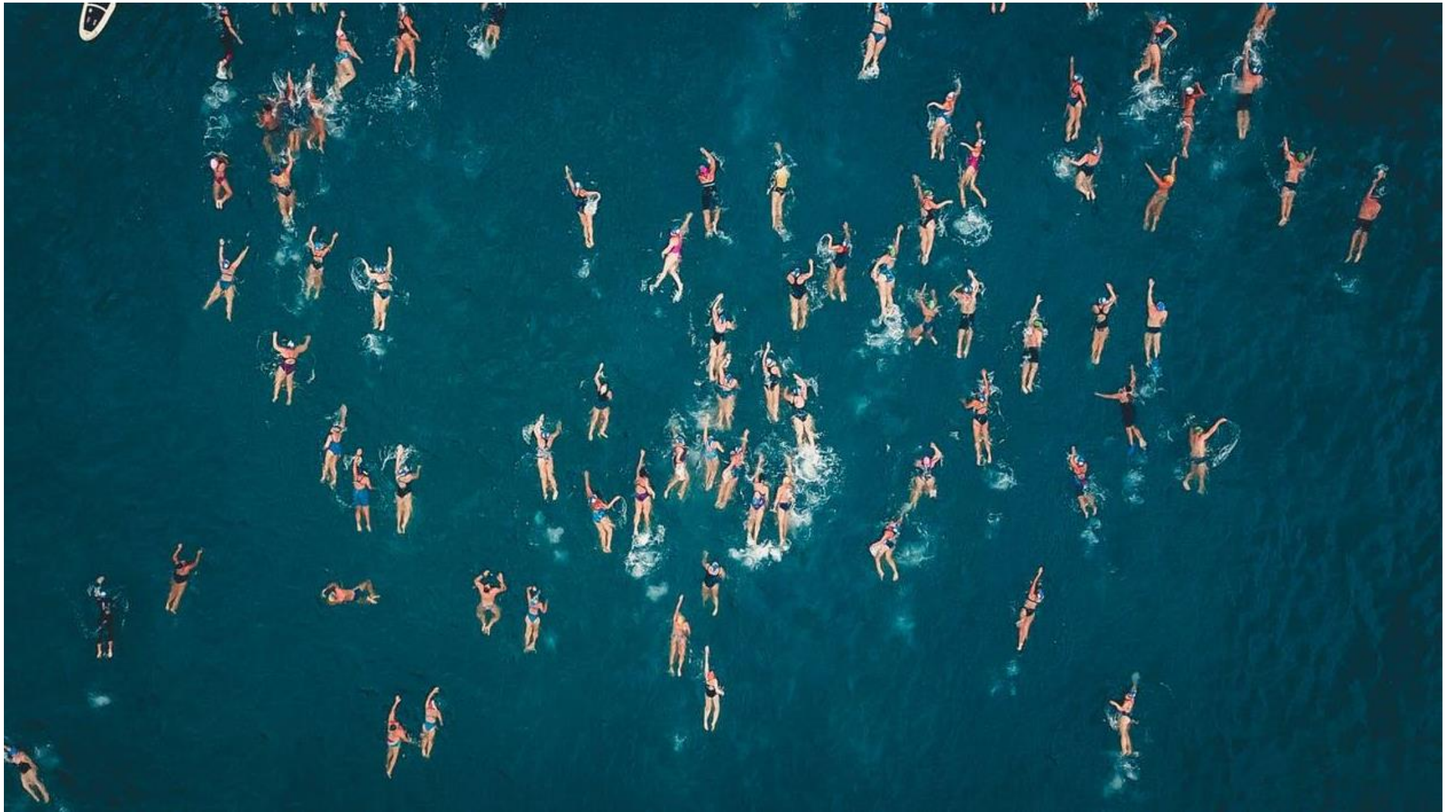
That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief



The Broken Bridge and the Dream, Salvador Dalí, 1945



(Berinato, 2020; Corless et al., 2014; Corless & Meisenhelder, 2019; Doka, 2002; Hamilton, 2016; Shear, Frank, Houch, & Reynolds, 2005)



(Corless et al., 2014; Rogalla, 2020; Stroebe & Schut, 2010)



(Corless et al., 2014; Rogalla, 2020; Stroebe & Schut, 2010)

Through Grief and Coping we find Growth



(Corless et al., 2014; Rogalla, 2020; Stroebe & Schut, 2010)

Stages of Grief

Denial

“This is only temporary. The university may still change their plans and we’ll be back on campus soon.”

Anger

“I’ve worked so hard to make it into the nursing program. Is this how I’m supposed to learn to be a nurse?”

Bargaining

“Maybe if I start working now then things will get back to normal faster.”

Depression

“I’m sad and stressed. I miss my old life.”

Acceptance

“What are my options? Let’s get busy.”

Meaning

“What can I take away from this?”

- (Kessler, 2019)



Fostering Resilience

“The ability to bounce back, adapt to stress and adversity, and thrive after being involved in particularly stressful situations...”

- Inherent, protective factors
- Coping strategies/mechanisms

(Turner & Kaylor, 2015)



Navigating the Turmoil

- Find balance
- Be mindful of the present
- Let go of what cannot be controlled
- Stock up on compassion
- Keep trying

Berinato, 2020



Finding your Path



- Arm yourself with the facts
- Be innovative
- Stay connected
- Find joy
- Stay motivated
- Keep studying
- Set a schedule and stick to it

Self-Care is Critical!

- Thick Skin, Strong Mind, Open Heart
- Build your resource toolkit
- Advocate for yourself
- Care for yourself before all others



Questions or Discussion?

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