

My Lockdown Journey: A road to self-discovery

Counselling and
Career Development
Western Cape Region
May 2020



Define tomorrow.

UNISA



university
of south africa

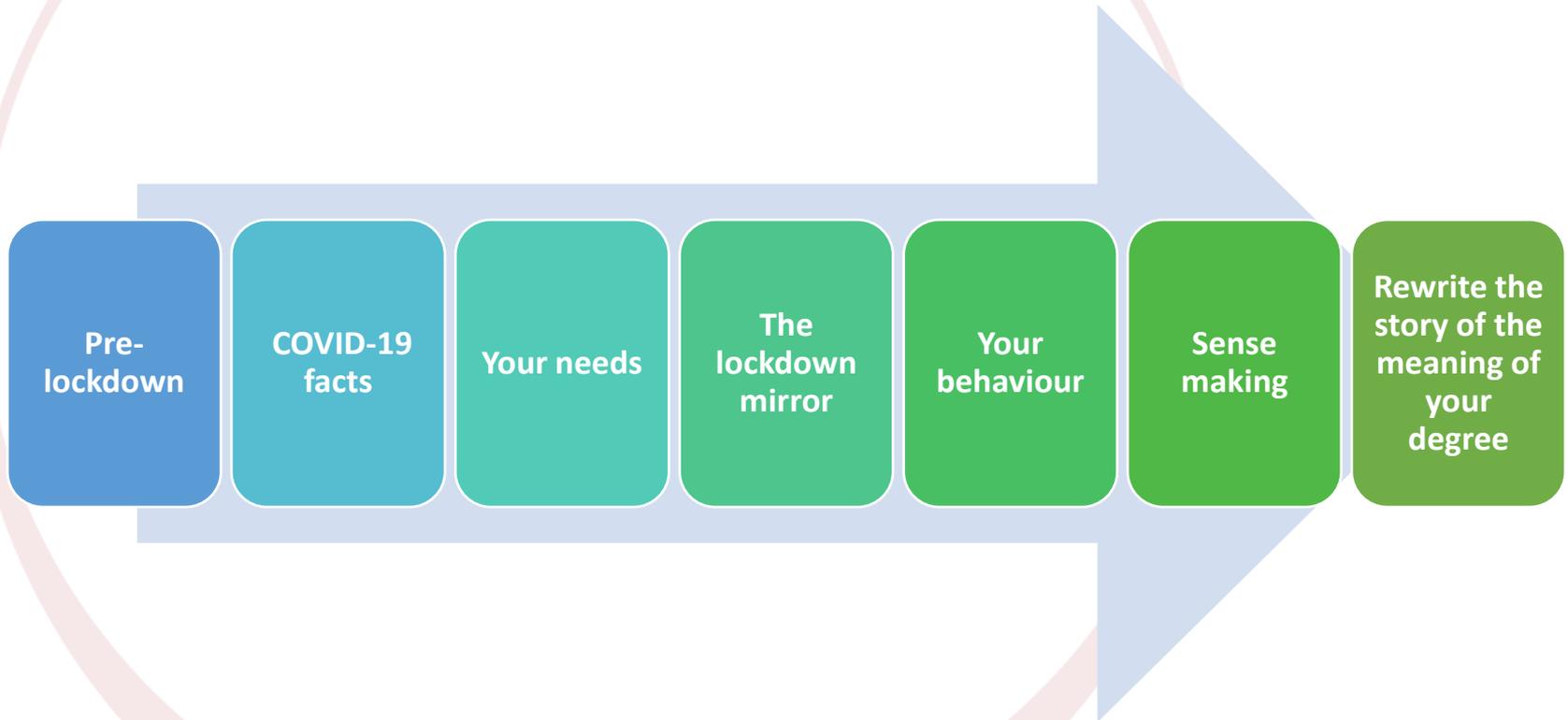
At the end of this presentation

You will be able to:

1. Understand your experiences related to COVID-19 and the lockdown
2. Gain insight into your unmet needs and how these link to the current pandemic
3. Understand yourself and your journey with greater meaning, understanding and kindness

We have limited space and time to spend with ourselves and process what we experience, how we react and how we can better manage ourselves during times of stress and overwhelming uncertainty. The points above are important as you begin to understand yourself and your unique journey with COVID-19.

Quick overview



Pre-Lockdown Reflection

Take time to reflect on your personal experiences before COVID-19 and the lockdown:

- What was your life like?
- How would you experience movement?
- How did life feel like before COVID-19?
- How were your needs met?
- How satisfied were you with your behavioural responses to experiences?

COVID-19 Facts

- Belongs to a family of corona viruses. Corona means crown because it looks like a crown when you look at it under a microscope
- Can infect humans and animals
- The current virus is a new virus we have never seen before. Symptoms can range from mild experience like a common cold or severe respiratory damage and may result in death
- The trajectory of the virus is different in different countries
- The virus is spread through droplets of infected saliva or contact with contaminated objects and surfaces

Lockdown Impact

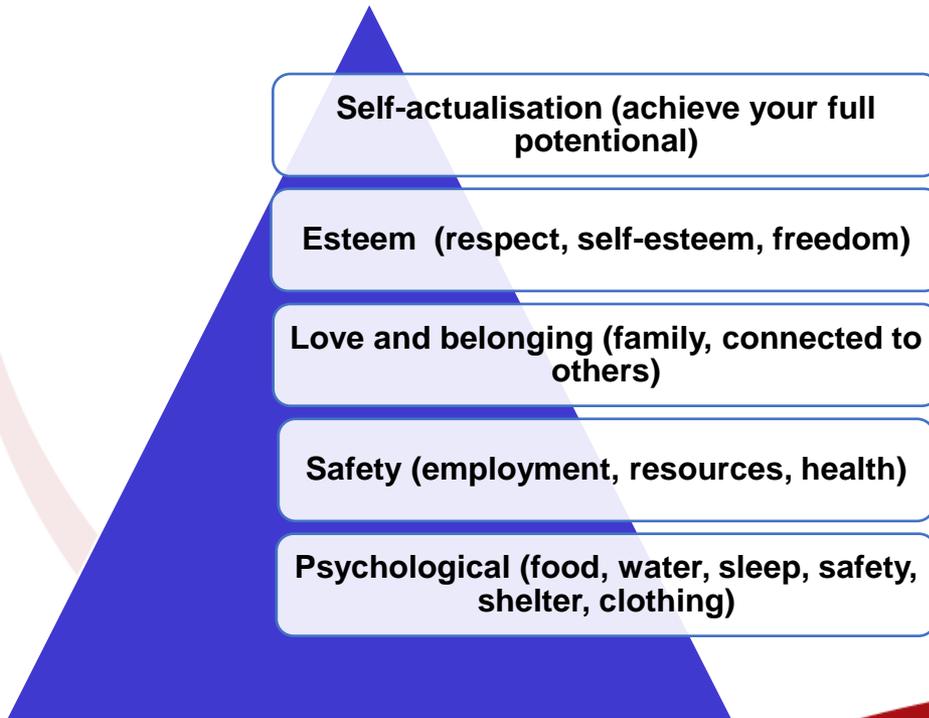
- To curb the spread of the virus the President announced that the country would go into lockdown for 21 days
- At the end of the 21-day lockdown a further announcement was made that we would continue to be on lockdown. Government introduced a risk adjustment strategy to manage lockdown regulations by means of various levels of lockdown from level 1 (ease of movement and lockdown-5 (extreme lockdown limiting movement)
- The country moved from level 5 (three weeks) and we are currently in level 3 (the level indicated here may change – note the date of publication)
- We all find ourselves in unique situations as we must work from home, manage households, run single headed families, fulfill other roles such as being a teacher and chef. We may find it hard to find time for our studies or feel completely disconnected to your student role
- We do not know how the virus will run its course in our country. We do not know how it will affect the world of work and careers of the future.

Reflection – Making sense

- How has COVID-19 and lockdown impacted your life?
- What have you noticed about yourself, your feelings and experiences during the first 21 days of lockdown? How has these changed over time?
- What have you learnt about yourself during lockdown?
- How are you thinking differently about your studies, your future career and role in the world?

Our needs: that which drives us

- Our behavior and actions are driven by needs (conscious or unconscious)
- American Psychologist, Abraham Maslow (1908 -1970) developed the hierarchy of needs to describe human behaviour



Which needs are not being met as a result of COVID-19?

What does lockdown mean to me – curbing my freedom and movement

- The reality is that lockdown restricts our movement
- In the past we could spend our time as we pleased, we could go out, socialise, take our children to play dates at the park, celebrate birthdays with huge parties etc.
- Lockdown means that we now spend most of our time at home with the people we live with
- Being forced to spend time with people we live with everyday is experienced differently by everyone

What do I see when I look in the “lockdown mirror”?

- Some people are faced with abuse, substance use and abuse, multiple children, single parent households, loss of employment and income and a whole host of other issues
- We are also forced to spend a lot of time with ourselves, faced with our imperfections, behaviours and decision-making patterns
- The lockdown may mirror experiences of our past (loss, trauma, displacement) that is being brought up again. You may be feeling emotions that you have previously experienced in a similar situation.
- **Write about your lockdown experience:** Where do you live, what is happening in your community, who do you live with, how does who you live with impact you? Are there any identified unresolved issues that have become prominent?

Changing what does not work

- You may be satisfied with your responses to the pandemic and lockdown and you may not. Think about your needs and motivations behind your actions.
- Our subconscious mind makes stronger connections about negative experiences (loss) than about positive (opportunity) experiences. Think about your past experiences and how it informs your current behaviour.
- Be thankful for experiences of the past – they have made you who you are today. You have applied many approaches to resolve challenges that may have had positive outcomes or not.
- Reflect on your underlying beliefs and the stories you tell yourself about yourself as this drives future behavior. How do the stories that you tell yourself need to change?
- Monitor document and compare experiences and outcomes and identify what are the most useful strategies to achieve the desired outcomes.

Reflecting on my behaviour

- Reflect on those aspects of your behavior that has not led to the desired outcome.
- How do my behavioural experiences from the past influence my belief and actions of today?
- What do you need to change?
- How can you move towards a more positive outcome?
- Visualise positive outcomes and trace how you will need to adapt to achieve such outcomes. Changing your behaviour takes time, you need to explore different ways of responding and behaving. Keep track by writing down what you wish to change, how you will change and then track the changes. The visualisation technique including steps to take can be found when you visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XA_m2_uKlJo

To be brave is to try something new

- Behavioural patterns that motivate behavior have been carefully molded over time and may take time to try out something new
- Change is scary and trying out something new may be overwhelming. Be kind to yourself and take your time. Identify smaller goals and work towards bigger goals.
- How we establish ourselves as individuals and within a group has shifted. COVID and the lockdown is largely beyond our control. How can you shift your focus to things you can control?

Making sense

- We absorb the information fed to us about the pandemic through our senses (read, see, how we touch). Various organisations and systems are finding ways to respond, for example, by feeding the poor, giving to the community, donating where they can.
- Government has developed strategies to combat COVID-19 and assist businesses across the country.
- The trick is to find the balance between saving lives and saving our economy.
- The information you are absorbing may shift the way you think about your qualification, its purpose, the meaning of your future career and how to navigate the future.
- Yes, there is a lot of uncertainty and we need to keep a close eye on how the pandemic affects prospects and means for survival.
- How is your qualification related to opportunities for entrepreneurship that fits the needs of the future?

Alternative Resources

Read through the **Entrepreneurship at Unisa brochure** available at <https://tinyurl.com/y7tlh7fw> because:

1. It will assist you to explore opportunities for entrepreneurship.
2. You will construct an alternative story around your future career that is meaningful and motivate you to complete your studies at Unisa.

Also read through **The psychological impact of COVID-19 and your Unisa studies** available at <https://tinyurl.com/yc28yegb> because:

1. You will gain a deeper understanding of the psychological affect COVID-19 has on you
2. Assist you to find ways to manage yourself more effectively and find resources to help yourself make sense of what you are experiencing

Useful resources

- Further online self-help resources can be found when you visit the Directorate for Counselling and Career Development site at www.unisa.ac.za/counselling
- Corona virus (COVID-19) 24-hour hotline: 080 002 9999
- COVID-19 connect (WhatsApp): 060 012 3456
- Suicide crisis line: 080 056 7567
- Lifeline: 086 132 2322
- Domestic violence helpline: 080 015 0150
- Childline: 080 005 5555
- Unisa Covid-19 resources and messages: [https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Announcements/Coronavirus-\(COVID%E2%80%9319\)-update](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Announcements/Coronavirus-(COVID%E2%80%9319)-update)
- The SA Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) offers online resources related to your mental health and COVID-19. Learn more about managing stress and anxiety as well as living with a mental illness on their website at <http://www.sadag.org/>.

Contact us

We are available by e-mail:

- Send an e-mail to counselling@unisa.ac.za should you need to discuss any needs you may have in terms of further support.
- Contact Counselling and Career Development at a [regional centre closest to you](#).