

# The Genesis Therapy Center

SPRING 2022

## Living in an Unstable world: Honest take from a millennial therapist

Ariana Romero, LPC

Historically speaking, our world has *never* been stable. When we think about what stability means, we think about steadiness, safety, and security. In the past couple of years, the world has been ever changing, as it always has. Laws and policies are constantly changing and fluxing.

As someone who falls under the scope of being a millennial, it is hard to imagine what stability looks like. In one lifetime, I have experienced the trauma of 9/11 and the war thereafter, the hardship of the recession, war on drugs, a global pandemic, bearing witness to overt racism as well as experiencing it myself as a Brown person, ICE raids in the community I was raised in, police brutality, the BP oil spill, the denial of women's rights, the disregard for the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community, and the attack of Ukraine. The pessimistic side of me can certainly continue to add to this list. Some of these events are directly personal to me and others, I have had the privilege of not directly experiencing. However, the empathetic side of me feels heavy, sad, and hopeless that my children, should I have any, will grow up in a world that is different.

In school, therapists in training are taught to provide hope to clients. As I have gained experience, I am not so sure that is true or valuable for a lot of my clients. Asking my clients to embrace the hopelessness seems like a radical idea.

But how am I supposed to provide hope to a Black mother with a Black teenage son? How am I supposed to instill hope in an undocumented person? How am I supposed to provide hope to a trans client trying to gain access to inclusive treatment?

The answer? I am not sure. And that is the point. As a therapist, I ask my clients to extend permission to themselves to be unsure. The perspective I take might sound cynical or pessimistic. I find it to be quite realistic—it is fundamentally important to normalize, and not pathologize, the feelings of hopelessness, anger, and sadness.

Am I always this doom and gloom? Not exactly. Although there is an incredible amount of hopelessness that I share with my clients in terms of change, there is a sense of faith. I say this because I have faith in my community—that we are always there for one another in times of hopelessness. As a Mexican American, I know I can rely on my community. They have *always* reminded me how united we are with our strength and resiliency. I encourage folks to get connected with their communities and lean on one another with their collective hopelessness. From the words of Cesar Chavez, “We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community.”

Like us on Facebook

## The Power of Perspective

Jessica Krakowsky, MA, LCPC, CCTP

After a tumultuous couple of years, it has become evident as a professional in the mental health field that between the impact of the pandemic, the political unrest, and the war and chaos abroad, that issues with anxiety and depression are on the rise in unprecedented numbers.

According to Scientific American's article Pandemic Year One Saw a Dramatic Global Rise in Anxiety and Depression, figures for both depression and anxiety usually remain stable from year to year, but since the onset of the pandemic, anxiety disorders have jumped up 26 percent and depressive disorders jumped 28 percent. These figures certainly are reflected by the increased need for mental health services we are seeing at Genesis Therapy as well as other mental health organizations in the area.

How does a person begin to manage the feelings of fear and uncertainty as well as the increase of negative thoughts that is a natural response to such a stark reality? First, it needs to be understood that it is normal to grieve the losses which come from all these negative experiences and changes. With grief comes denial, anger, bargaining, sadness, /depression and acceptance. Journaling about how you have been impacted by these events will give you a platform to express, review and process your feelings, thoughts, and experiences. This is a healthy way to manage what you are feeling without resorting to repression and denial of what is happening to you and to those you love.

Secondly, value your time and energy enough to pay attention to what you are choosing to focus on. There is a finite amount of time in the day, and outside of work, school or other regular occurring responsibilities that go along with daily functioning, we have a limited amount of time to choose to focus on things that interest us. The mind has a way of magnifying what it focuses on. For example, when a person watches news a great deal, outside of work and sleep, spending as much of their time doing this activity with their free time, a common response to this constant exposure is to feel like the world is a dangerous place and that people cannot be trusted. This would be a logical conclusion because this individual would come to believe that this represented what the world was like, causing the person watching to feel fearful, powerless, and overwhelmed. Choosing to focus on a negative set of circumstances, the more out of control and miserable a person is likely to feel about it. Seek out positive and life affirming news or spend time developing hobbies which enrich your spirit and mind.

Thirdly, **empower yourself by choosing to focus on what you can control in life.** This includes managing your emotions, thoughts and behaviors in healthier ways and making healthy decisions whenever possible. Avoid minimizing what you have been through, find ways to strengthen yourself by deepening your insight and choose how you spend your free time carefully. It is helpful to have affirming and encouraging people in your corner and to share how you feel and think as you navigate the difficulties which lie ahead.

Anyone interested in supporting our testing services may make a designated donation to The Genesis Therapy Center and make clear that the amount donated is to go towards providing an assessment service for a child or adolescent. For further information, please contact our Executive Director, Catherine Fairfield, at 708-535-7320, ext. 11.

### The Genesis Therapy Center

Administrative Office  
6006 W. 159th Street  
Oak Forest, IL 60452

Phone: (708) 535-7320  
Fax: (708) 535-7571

We are on the Web!

Visit us at: <http://www.genesistherapy.org>

E-Mail: [info@genesistherapy.org](mailto:info@genesistherapy.org)

### Other Locations:

Schaumburg, IL  
200 W Higgins Rd  
Suite 205

Oak Brook, IL  
2625 Butterfield Rd  
Suite 1385

Oak Park, IL  
1010 Lake St  
Suite 603B

Evergreen Park, IL  
9730 S. Western  
Suite 335