

Panic Management and Panic Buying

After confirming a number of infected citizens with COVID-19 virus in some districts after having contacted other infected persons abroad, the State of Palestine was announced as a State of Emergency.

As a result, people were purchasing supplies and food in large amounts despite the calls from officials to stay calm and not panic in such a crisis.



Motive for Purchase

Money spending... False hopes to regain control

The ideal reaction- as Government and medical authorities insist - is to stay at home as much as possible, to avoid gatherings and to wash hands very well and maintain hygiene. However, for some people these procedures are insufficient for such a situation. Some people believe that hand washing is an intuitive and normal procedure that is not an appropriate measure for the disaster taking place. That is why they prefer to spend money on buying products that they hope will protect them from the disease.

Fear of missing out on opportunities that may not happen again

Another important reason for the motive of purchase is the fear of missing out on opportunities. We could get worried or afraid that we missed out on purchasing a product that is only available for a limited time. Due to these thoughts our mind will give this issue a bigger weight than it actually has, pushing us to purchase the product before it runs out.

It should be noted that shopping during panic and fear has its disadvantages, including the increase in prices due to increase in demand, irrational shopping in great amounts that exceed our needs, which may lead to unavailability of products to meet the needs of the community. The rule is simple and clear, the shortage and insufficiency of a product in the market will lead to the rise in prices. When the prices double, the consumer will consequently get a feeling

that the products will run out, hence the feelings of anxiety and panic will increase.

This behavior is driven by the way our brains function.

In a modern society, many dangers are just around the corner. When people witness an emergency or see someone hurt, their brains tend to respond in a certain way. In times of doubt and uncertainty, a part of the brain that deals with feelings and the cognitive system tend to analyze the behavior. This may lead to panic and groupthink behavior, which consequently leads to a situation of fight or flight, or survival mode.

7 ways to focus on when managing individual's response to fight or combat mode

1. Acknowledge that we are part of this crisis, and give value to our feelings and fears.
2. Respect one another, and emphasize the feeling of discomfort and anxiety when going through a situation that is difficult to control, as well as noticing the feeling of discomfort and anxiety of others and respect their desire not to discuss the matter if necessary.
3. It is our responsibility to purchase what we need only.
4. Individuals should expand their sources of information and avoid unreliable sources.
5. Avoid spreading others' complaints, especially on social media and the Internet, since it creates additional stress.
6. When you feel that someone needs professional help, ask for help from specialists. Let us take care of our mental health and the society we live in just as much as we care for our bodies. Together we can play an important role in building a more resilient society in the face of crisis.
7. Direct individuals into paying attention to quality of food consumed, not the quantity to boost the immune system.

