

An illustration of a person's torso and arms, rendered in shades of orange and peach. The person is holding a large, black, rounded rectangular sign with white text. The sign is the central focus of the image.

Five Ways Counselors Can Help Asian American Clients

from the Counseling Today article
"The Psychosocial Impact of COVID-19 on Asian Americans:
Counselor Interventions and Considerations"

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Share Experiences Among Peers

Encourage individuals of Asian descent to reach out to one another to share experiences and feelings related to these fears and exposure to aggressive acts. It would be helpful to suggest joining an Asian American online community or advocacy organization to build feelings of self-agency and empowerment.

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Introduce Mindfulness

When clients notice sensations such as a tightening in the chest or quickened heart rate, observation can help build insight into the triggers, which can help develop awareness and a heightened sense of mind-body connection. Introducing mindfulness activities such as breathing, body mapping, and concentration can help clients focus on emotional balance.

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Address Mental Health Symptoms

Directly address symptoms related to depression, anxiety and hypervigilance. Discussing these symptoms and suggesting evidence-based practices to aid in restoring rituals, connecting with family and friends, and incorporating spirituality may offer critical tools to prevent symptom-related impairment.

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Provide Literature to Improve Understanding

Prompt clients to lean into literature, such as Grace Lee Boggs, Maxine Hong Kingston and Thich Nhat Hanh. Understanding how others of Asian descent have persevered through pain and difficulty is emboldening in a time of isolation and disenfranchisement.

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Provide and Share Resources

Be ready to discuss and disseminate resources on financial help, vocational disruption or academic distress, and maintenance of a cohesive family environment. As the pandemic goes on, it's critical that Asian American clients have multiple resources on which they can rely for a sense of needed safety and security.

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“The American Counseling Association has a long history of speaking out against discrimination. Our advocacy for the profession and those served by our members must remain vigilant, especially in the face of murders such as these. Any type of hate, including that which is race-based, cannot be tolerated. Our association and its members are saddened by this latest episode, and we will continue to work in partnership with those who envision a just, safe and caring world.”

-American Counseling Association CEO Richard Yep

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