

BUILDING RESILIENCE TO COPE WITH ADVERSITY





Resilience is the ability to bounce back from a difficult situation or to cope with stress or adversity. Stress can come in many forms: relationship struggles, sickness (your own or of a loved one), drastic change in your environment, isolation, or uncertainty.

A resilient person is more likely to:

- Take action when faced with challenges or problems
- Seek support and assistance when needed
- Have a sense of purpose
- Form and maintain positive, healthy relationships
- Choose healthy ways to cope with difficulties
- Thrive in difficult situations (not just to survive)

Many people are dealing with stress and anxiety in this time of sheltering-in-place and quarantining due to the COVID-19 virus so we wanted to provide some tips for building resilience.

#1 FIND WAYS TO CONNECT

Social connection is an important part of building resilience. During this time of separation, find other ways to connect with people.

Here are some ideas (for both you and your kids):

Facetime with family or friends

- Look into their eyes
- Ask questions and take the time to listen

Unplug and interact with the people you are sheltering with:

- Play board games
- Go for walks
- Cook
- Clean or declutter something

Set up a regular meeting time for friends

Write a thoughtful email or letter

Practice random acts of kindness





#2 TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Taking care of yourself means that you have to know yourself. Build your self-awareness. Knowing what motivates you. Knowing your strengths and your weaknesses. Knowing what helps you thrive and what drives you crazy.

Taking care of yourself also means that you take the time to do the things you know will keep you strong, for yourself and for those around you.

Here are some tips for taking care of yourself:

Get rest, eat well, and stay active.

Exercise is good for lowering stress and so is sunshine. As an added benefit, you can also use that time to let your children run off some of their energy.

Avoid obsessing over news coverage.

Accurate and timely information helps us deal with fear and anxiety, but it's easy to get sucked into despair if you spend too much time on social media. Stick with credible news coverage sites and limit your time (ex. 30 minutes a day).

Maintain as much of your old routine as possible and create new routines as needed.

Stick to as much of your old routine as you can. And when you can't, having a new plan in place is good for both you and your family. Routine helps you create a sense of normality. It's especially beneficial for children, who crave the stability and predictability of a routine. It's also helpful for staying on top of distance learning.

Reframe the negative into a positive.

Focus on the good things that can come of this situation. For example:

Change "I'm stuck at home" to "I finally have a chance to tackle that project I've been putting off."

Change "My kids won't leave me alone" to "Time goes so fast, I'm glad I have the chance to spend some time with them."

Manage your stress levels.





#3 MANAGING STRESS

First, acknowledge that this is a stressful time. Acknowledge that it's OK to feel stress, that it's normal.

Identify things that help you lower your stress levels.

Identify favorite activities - walking the dog, watching a movie, taking a long bath, journaling or writing, listening to music - and build those things into your day.

Use your senses to quickly reduce stress.

Sight

- Look at photos a souvenir of a favorite memory
- Look out the window
- Take a walk and enjoy the outdoors
- Surround yourself with colors that lift your spirits
- Close your eyes and picture a peaceful, rejuvenating place

Sound

- Sing or hum your favorite song
- Listen to fun music
- Turn on a soundtrack of nature – crashing waves or birds singing
- Find a quiet place and just be silent
- Hang wind chimes near an open window

Smell

- Light a scented candle or burn some incense
- Smell your favorite flower
- Take a deep breath of clean, fresh air
- Take a deep breath of your favorite cologne or perfume
- Make coffee; inhale deeply

Touch

- Put on comfortable clothes
- Pet a dog or cat
- Hold a comforting object (a stuffed animal, a favorite memento)
- Soak in a hot tub or take a hot bath
- Give yourself a hand or neck massage
- Rub lotion onto your hands





Taste

- Chew a piece of gum.
- Indulge in a small piece of dark chocolate.
- Sip a steaming cup of coffee or tea.
- Enjoy a refreshing cold drink.
- Eat a perfectly ripe piece of fruit.
- Enjoy a healthy, crunchy snack (celery, carrots, or trail mix).

#4 MORE TIPS FOR KIDS

Lots of the tips that work for you will also work for your children.

Here are some things that are just for them:

Talk to your children about what's happening.

A lack of information can be more frightening than a clear explanation of the facts. Provide enough information, but don't overload them. Reassure them that they are safe and well taken care of.

Limit access to the news or social media.

Children can easily become overloaded with too much negative information and may have a hard time telling fact from fiction. It's better for them to get the news they need from you.

Show children how to deal with stress by example.

Children take their cues from the adults in their lives. Let them know it's OK to feel scared or upset or stressed. But also teach them positive ways to deal with those feelings.

Help your children identify the ways they deal with stress and then help them build them into their daily routine.





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