

## BUILDING RESILIENCE IN ADULTS

We are living through an uncertain, scary, and incredibly stressful time. During these times, there are steps you can take to build resilience to buffer the impact of trauma and stress. Resilience is the ability to overcome serious hardship. Developing resilience actually protects us from physiological and behavioral changes due to traumatic and chronic stress, and enables us to function in a positive manner after adversity.

The development of resilience involves thoughts, behaviors, and actions that can be learned and improved over time. Have you ever noticed that some people, even though the odds may appear to be against them, are able to “bounce back” from change or hardship? These people have developed **resiliency**. The capabilities that support the development of resiliency can be reinforced and strengthened at any age.

Practicing healthy activities can greatly improve the odds that you will recover from stressful experiences. Regular exercise and stress-reduction practices can improve a person’s ability to adapt to, cope with, and prevent adversity.

**Here are a few tips to help build your own resilience during this incredibly stressful and uncertain time we are all living through.**

- 1 Connect virtually with others.** Social connection protects us against feeling isolated. Sending a text, an email, or making a phone call to a friend, family member, or colleague helps you feel connected during a time of isolation.
- 2 Focus on your wellness.** Exercise regularly, getting adequate sleep, making healthy food choices, and staying hydrated.
- 3 Practice stress-reduction techniques.** Deep breathing, yoga, or a short mindfulness practice all help to reduce stress. There are many free digital apps to guide you through each of these steps. Journaling is another way to practice mindfulness. Focusing on gratitude for what you have, even in times of trial, can also relieve stress.
- 4 Keep a positive outlook.** This may seem impossible right now, but try replacing fears and worry with a positive thought. Little by little, you will begin to notice subtle ways in which you feel better as you deal with difficulties.
- 5 Accept change.** Grieving what has been lost is a natural response to extreme adversity. Try to recognize this grief and allow yourself to feel what you feel. When so many things are out of your control, accepting what you cannot change and focusing instead on what you can do, helps to relieve stress and anxiety.

Adapted from:

American Psychological Association. (2020). Building your resilience. <https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>

Center on the Developing Child. (2017). Resilience. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/>