



Increasing YOUR Resiliency

Any life is a life of change. We experience transitions in work and relationships, changes in our physical and mental health, and new events in our school communities and even in our world. Sometimes we know a change is going to happen, while other times it comes suddenly and unexpectedly. Maybe it is a disappointment, or maybe it is a wonderful surprise. As we start to re-adjust from isolation, and physical distancing to a "new normal", it is important to come up with effective ways to deal with and bounce back from these situations.

Here are a few healthy practices for increasing your level of resilience and coping with change and disappointment.

Activities to build resilience:

- **Storytelling Activity:**
 - Re-creating storylines we tell ourselves.
 - Consider a situation that produces worry or anxiety in your life. Try writing out a new version with a more positive interpretation. Recognize how you feel in the process.
- **The Upside of Stress Anxiety:**
 - It is not all about differentiating if it is all good or all bad. It is about how choosing to see the good in stress how you can use strengths to deal with challenges.
 - Think of one of the most difficult events of your life. How you can use this story to help others. How can you leverage it to impact someone in a positive way?
- **Perform Acts of Kindness**
- **Reflect on your individual talents and strengths and consider how you can make a difference using them.**

- **Engage in Gratitude Activities:**
 - Every day for the next week, write down 3-5 things each day that you are grateful for.
 - Start a gratitude blog/group text with friends.
 - Write a letter of gratitude to people who are special to you.
 - Tell people you see every day what you appreciate about them.
- **Engage in the Three Good Things Activity:**
 - Consider ending your day by reflecting on and writing down 3 good things that happened today. Be intentional about reflecting on your experiences, noting how you felt, and what was the best thing about the experience.
- **Doors Closed - Doors Open:**
 - Shift your perspective from focusing on what is not there anymore, to seeing the potential of the future.
- **Using Values to Build Resilience:**
 - Manage stress by knowing what you value.
- **Change your internal dialogue:**
 - Everything starts with your thoughts. Simply by switching your language from 'I can't do this' to 'I can do this' can be really powerful.
- **Change your external language:**
 - Once you've changed your internal dialogue it's time to change your external dialogue. Start conversing with people using more positive language. For example, avoid using phrases such as 'I'm no good at this' and instead reframe your external dialogue and use more empowering language to build a growth mindset. Get into the habit of focusing on the good things in your life instead of complaining and talking about your problems.

Tips to Coping with Uncertainty:

Focus on what needs to be done next.

When we get caught up thinking about the future or reliving the past, we often increase our levels of anxiety and uncertainty. If we shift our focus to what we need to do today or next, then we're able to take meaningful steps forward. This helps us stay present and grounded. Ask yourself, 'what do I need to do next?' and then get to it.

Challenge your expectations.

Take a few minutes to reflect on the expectations you have for yourself and those around you, particularly in the current environment. Are these expectations attainable? Do they support positive relationships with yourself and others? Try identifying the actions and behaviours that will lead to fulfillment of your expectations and use them to create small achievable goals.

Use growth mindset to guide your self-talk.

Keeping this in mind allows us to speak to ourselves in a more supportive and encouraging fashion. Consider the following re-frames: Change "This is too hard" to "This may take some time and effort" Change "I made a mistake; I am bad at this" to "Mistakes help me learn; with practice I can get better."

Use 'and' instead of 'but'.

When we use the word, 'but' we often invalidate the part of the sentence that came before it. However, when we use the word 'and' we allow both parts of the sentiment to exist together. Think about how the message of this sentence changes when read with an 'and' instead of a 'but': "I'm having a really hard time try to keep all these balls up in the air, 'and'/'but' I know I'm lucky to have a job."

Everyone has limits, and certain experiences really challenge our ability to cope, our ability to overcome. Each one of us have and will face personal loss, disappointment, and failure, and yet we survive; we adapt. We all have that resilience within us. We need to be reminded of it during times of uncertainty and times resulting in disappointment.

Developing resilience is a personal journey and it takes practice and self-awareness. Engaging in any of the above resilience activities are ways you can further develop the skill. The key is to identify ways that will work well for you as part of your own strategy for fostering resilience.

