

Tips on emotional resilience, self-care and keeping a positive outlook

- **Focus on what you can control**, not what's out of your control. Be solution-focused, not problem-focused. Maintaining a routine can help you keep focus. Get up at the same time each day and do something: exercise (as per government guidelines), read, eat, do academic work, walk, run, craft, listen to/play/create music; and go to bed the same time each day.
- **Don't forget the basics**: Eat regular meals, drink plenty of water, regular showers, try to get enough sleep, talk to others, and if prescribed medication - keep taking it.
- **Use events as learning experiences**. The Chinese symbol for crisis is made up of the two characters meaning 'danger' and 'opportunity'. Use the time to develop a new skill - Learn a new language, a new recipe, something you have been meaning to challenge yourself with but couldn't find time to do before. Set yourself achievable daily/weekly goals - Cooking a meal, sorting out a wardrobe or drawer, going for a walk. Have an isolation bucket list. Setting a timeframe for completing a task will keep you focused on the goal.
- **Be flexible and open-minded**. Don't try to change others! It's OK to have a different opinion to somebody else. You can agree to disagree. Nobody is perfect! Give up the need to be right. Limit defensiveness. Forgive – both yourself and others. Limit the hostility factor. Holding on to the feelings of negativity and anger towards others is more damaging to the person who holds on to the resentment. Be generous and giving and avoid a negative focus.
- **Alter your perceptions**. It is not events which disturb us, but our view of those events. Enhance rational thinking to prevent negativity from spinning out of control. Try to look at it from a different perspective.
- **Accept limitations**. Let go of 'should' which makes one bitter. Don't compare yourself to others or feel pressured into who others deem you 'should' be. Who you are and what you can offer is enough.
- **Develop compassion**. Choose kindness over being right. Resist the need to be critical.

- **Develop good self-care habits.** Allow yourself ‘mental health breaks’ and ‘time out’ regularly. Relax and rest – Do some yoga, watch TV, read a book, have an early night. Take care of needs in mind, body, and spirit. Eat well, exercise (this could be finding a workout routine you like, or creating your own; or dancing to your favourite playlist), and get enough sleep. Pamper yourself, set limits, prioritise and delegate. Find the right balance for you.
- **Don’t isolate yourself.** Connect! (According to current Government guidelines in relation to COVID-19). Via social media, video calling, gaming, phone, write letters. Don’t shut yourself off from everybody. Talk to the people you live with - have a movie night, do a jigsaw, play board games, cards, look through pictures.
- **Look for the humour in things.** Lighten Up! Smile and laugh. Life is too short to be taken too seriously.
- **Develop mindfulness.** Practice calming breathing techniques. Learn to live in the present. Don’t ruminate on events which can’t be changed. Accept that life isn’t always fair!
- **Don’t over expose yourself to the news.** Sometime the news covers a lot of negative stories and events which can affect your mood. Remember to acknowledge all the good and positive things happening around the world too.
- **Talk** to someone you trust and feel safe with – ask for help.

