

Resiliency “REBOOT” During COVID-19



As Covid-19 dominates world news, we have all been witnessing and experiencing worry, anxiety, instability, even hostility. And, when our mental state gets worse, it can become a major obstacle. How can we change it? Even without a constant barrage of bad news, your mind's natural tendency is to get distracted. During times of crisis — this tendency is exacerbated, and the mind can become even more hooked by obsessive thinking, as well as feelings of fear and helplessness.

When your mind gets stuck in this state, a chain reaction begins. *Fear begins to narrow your field of vision, and it becomes harder to see the bigger picture and be positive. As perspective shrinks, so too does our tendency to connect with others. It's important to remember that our emotional and psychological response to crises — are natural and very human.* But they can also clutter our minds and keep us from seeing clearly the best course of action.

The way to overcome this natural tendency is to build our mental resilience through mindfulness. Mental resilience is managing our mind in a way that increases our ability to face what is happening before it is upon us. Resilience is the skill of noticing our own thoughts, getting rid of the ones that are not contributing to our well being and then going in for a “rebalance.” Here are three effective strategies to help:

First, calm the mind. When you focus on calming and clearing your mind, you can pay attention to what is really going on around you and what is coming up within you. This calm and present state is crucial. Right away, it helps keep the mind from wandering and it reduces stress and worry that we can easily get stuck in.

Look out the window. Despair and fear can lead to overreactions. Often, it feels better to be doing something ... anything ... rather than sitting with uncomfortable emotions. Try to work less and spend more time looking out your window and reflecting. This will allow you to find clearer answers about how best to move forward, both personally and as a leader.

Connect with others through compassion. Unfortunately, many of the circles of community that provide support in times of stress are now closed off to us during COVID-19. Events have been cancelled and businesses have enacted work-from-home policies along with travel bans. The natural byproduct of this is a growing sense of isolation and separation from the people and groups who can best quell our fears and anxieties.

Meaningful connection can still occur, even during COVID-19 and it starts with compassion. Compassion is the intention to be of benefit to others and it starts in the mind. **How can I help this person to have a better day?** Sounds simple, but by asking that simple question, amazing things begin to happen. The mind expands, the eyes open to what is really in front of us, and then we see possibilities for ourselves that are rich with hope and opportunity.

Need help building your resiliency? EAP counselors are here to help. Counseling is confidential and FREE! Call the **COVID Counseling helpline 800-801-4182**, or **402-354-8000** or email eap@bestcareeap.org to schedule an appointment.