

Resilience in lockdown

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As our current lockdown conditions extend, we can find ourselves running on auto-pilot, especially as many of the aspects of our “new normal” daily lives feel like we’re caught in an infinite groundhog day loop. This moment is a good time to take your emotional temperature. Consciously pause and ask yourself, “How am I coping?” If you’re not travelling as well as you’d like to be, you could consider dedicating some time to building up your resilience.

Stress and difficult life events are inevitable, and we all manage adversity differently, with varying outcomes.

People who tend to bounce back from painful experiences have higher levels of resilience, which is defined as the capacity to recover from stressful life events. We build up a set of skills over time as our life experiences interact with our unique characteristics and genetic makeup. Resilience won’t solve your problems, but it will help you see past them and recover on the other side. The good news is that resilience isn’t something you are born with but includes behaviours, thoughts, and actions that you can change and improve.





Common themes across models of resilience focus on self-awareness, self-care, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and having a sense of purpose. But it's hard to build up your skills and engage in self-help when you feel depleted. Many of us haven't had a holiday or proper break from work for a long time and have long since expended the adrenaline we initially had around the pandemic. So it's understandable if the motivation for self-improvement is low to non-existent. However, there are some small actions you can take to build resilience with minimal effort and maximum pay-off:

- **Address the body basics.** You don't need to be a health guru to make small changes that will impact how you feel. Get decent sleep. Alcohol affects your ability to achieve deep, restorative sleep, so moderate the lockdown liquid diet by ensuring you have at least a few alcohol-free days (and nights!) per week. Move your body regularly to stimulate the feel-good neurotransmitters endorphins, dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin, responsible for regulating your mood. Similarly, your diet impacts your mood and general wellbeing, so look for opportunities to balance Uber Eats with healthy meals.
- **Take breaks.** Even though we can't go anywhere, you could still keep a few days booked in if you had annual leave planned, or maybe this is a good time for a staycation at home. This decision could give you a well-needed break from the pressure of balancing homeschooling with work, and Zoom fatigue.
- **Establish routines and boundaries around work.** Though there are undeniable positives, the working from home model can impact your work-life balance, with start and finish times creeping into personal time. Set a routine with a clear beginning and end to the working day, and build in regular breaks away from your screen.
- **Connect with people.** Make contact with those who uplift you and with people who are outside your lockdown bubble. You can still catch up via phone, online chat or video calls to diversify the people you interact with daily. It's not the same as getting together, but it could break up the day and remind you about what's most important to you.
- **Keep your perspective.** We are in unpredictable circumstances. Ruminating on how, when, and if this will end will not help the outcome and only heighten anxiety. Take one day at a time, and if that feels too hard, take one hour at a time.
- **Look for the wins.** Positive psychology is underrated. Focusing on some of the good aspects of lockdown doesn't mean you're in denial. It means that you're making the most of the hand you've been dealt. Weekend sports, training, structured activities are all on hold. The pace of life has slowed, and there are opportunities there for downtime. Smiling Minds is a popular mindfulness app, and there are a wealth of resources at actmindfully.com.au to help train your brain to focus on being in the moment.
- **Get help if you need it.** Reach out to someone if you're not doing okay. If your home environment is not safe during lockdown, or you feel like you need additional help at this time, there is immediate 24/7 support available.
Visit www.rosewoodcentre.com.au/need-help-now

However you go about it, it's more important than ever to load the scales towards wellbeing and resilience, so you have the physical and psychological endurance to get through lockdown and bounce back once we are out of it.

The Rosewood Centre is also open for appointments, please contact the team on **1800 613 555** or visit www.rosewoodcentre.com.au.