



Develop your mental resilience.

People who appear to deal well with pressure tend to lead more balanced lives, employ positive and proactive coping strategies and feel comfortable talking to and seeking help from others when it's needed. They try to find the potential and opportunities in challenges they face and don't let difficulties keep them down for long.



Live a more balanced life.

Balance is important in everyone's life – if we focus all our energy only on one area of our life, the other areas will suffer. Make some time for the other areas of your life:

- Delegate or share your responsibilities at work and at home
- Learn to be more assertive and don't feel guilty about saying 'No' when you really have to
- Don't take on more than you know you can cope with
- Learn to ask for and accept help when you need it
- Prioritise what you do by its importance – do the urgent things first
- Make time for short frequent breaks throughout the day
- Make time for your friends – even if it's just to send a quick email to "touch base" until you're less busy
- Schedule time for you, find an activity that helps you unwind at the end of a working day
- Make sure you always have something to look forward to, plan a lunch out, a movie night in or a trip away
- Cultivate new interests and hobbies, these are fun ways of developing new skills and meeting new people

Develop positive coping skills.

While it may seem that some people naturally cope and "bounce back" better from adverse situations than others, the good news is that with patience and determination, resilience is actually a skill that can be learnt and something that everyone can work on.

Use the following tips to help you build up your resilience.

- Don't expect too much of yourself, or others. Be realistic about the commitments and workload you take on - shed the Superman/Superwoman image
- There is no point worrying about things you have no control over, it won't stop them from happening. Instead focus your energy on how best to react to the situation
- Retrain your brain - look for the silver lining in negative situations. There are positives to be found in even some of the worst of circumstances

- could the situation be a learning experience or an opportunity to problem solve?

- Be more flexible – be ready to adjust and adapt to changes as and when they occur
- Rehearse and plan for situations that you find difficult – when we're better prepared, we feel less stressed
- Try to avoid taking work problems home, or home problems to work
- Step out of your comfort zone from time to time – this is good practice for when you end up in situations outside of your control
- Make time for relaxation, taking a break from the stresses of life can stop you feeling overwhelmed
- Keep cool in heated situations and don't let emotions cloud your judgement. Be prepared to give in and "let go" from time to time
- Use your sense of humour - when we laugh, our brains release endorphins and dopamine, this helps us to better cope with stress and relieve tension

Talk to others.

One of the most effective things we can do when we are feeling under stress is to talk to a friendly listener who remains calm and listens in a way that makes us feel understood. Think of individuals who care about you and with whom you can share personal thoughts. Develop a network of friends and family members to turn to when things threaten to get too much.

There have been many studies undertaken looking at the importance of friendships on our wellbeing: a ten year study in Australia, for example, showed that people aged 70 and older with a large circle of friends were 22% less likely to die during the same period than those with fewer friends.



Research shows that the way people view negative life events (as fixed and unchangeable versus temporary and subject to influence) can predict their physical health years many later.