



REMAINING RESILIENT



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RESILIENCE (NOUN)

re·sil·ience | 🗣️

Definition of resilience:

The ability to cope with tough times in life, unexpected changes and challenges.

The capacity to endure adversity such as physical illness and mental and emotional distress; to “bounce back” and be happy, healthy and successful once again.

It's not always possible to prevent stressful situations or avoid adverse events. But you can strengthen your capacity to deal with trying times – both physically and psychologically.

Resilience is the ability to cope with tough times through adaptability and perseverance. Developing resilience requires inner strength and outer resources.

Physical resilience is the body's ability to function well and recover efficiently from illness or other physical demands.

Psychological resilience is the ability to mentally and emotionally cope with challenges such as stress and uncertainty.



Resilience is
*“the core strength you use
to lift the load of life.”*

– Amit Sood

This booklet has been designed to educate and empower you to navigate stressful and uncertain times by cultivating, maintaining and restoring physical and psychological resilience at all stages.

Maintain a sense of control amongst the chaos by being educated and prepared with coping strategies and tools in your emergency kit. Knowing that you're equipped with the internal and external resources to take on trying times can give you the confidence to conquer them.

This booklet highlights key diet and lifestyle factors to focus on at each stage to optimise your wellbeing, along with noteworthy nutrients for immune support. There's no better time than the present to take up wholesome habits for holistic health!

For more healthy hacks and inspiring ideas to support you, check out the Bio Concepts blog – there are plenty of posts on ways to workout, sleep hygiene hints, rewarding recipes and meditation information.

It's important to remember that during times of uncertainty, first and foremost, be gentle with yourself. While you may not feel resilient today in this moment, one day you'll look back and see all that you overcame.



CONQUERING CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES

No one is immune to challenging circumstances and the stress and worry that so often accompany them. Sometimes life throws a curveball and you may find yourself facing an unprecedented event that feels like a threat to all that you value.

Such circumstances may threaten to compromise your physical health; job and finances; relationships; and mental and emotional wellbeing. You may even feel anxious about others during this time, such as elderly parents or immuno-compromised family members.

The implications of this type of event can be overwhelming; significantly altering the ways in which we live in the world – changing how we work and interact with one another; changing our usual routines, dynamics and environments. These changes are bound to bring up uncertainty around job loss and financial instability; fears for our health; the ability to stay socially connected; and the broader economic impact.

It's okay to feel scared, stressed, uneasy and off balance in such circumstances. Tapping into strategies to remain calm and focused will help prevent you from succumbing to overwhelm and helplessness, instead giving you the tools to withstand the challenges that come your way.

It's when we're unprepared for change that we can feel caught off guard and vulnerable. Taking swift action to prepare for changes and potential impacts, thinking ahead and establishing firm foundations through new routines and habits, can help you regain a sense of control and confidence.

Whilst everyone processes stress and uncertainly differently, generating a sense of gratitude, compassion, acceptance, meaning and forgiveness can help to cultivate and maintain resilience in trying times. Communities together can build resilience through their collective capacity to respond to and recover from adverse situations.

Like everything in life, this too shall pass. This season is only temporary. What life looks like on the other side may be unknown. But with realistic optimism, active engagement and involvement in taking positive steps to build a brighter future, trying times can also provide opportunity. They can be a call to dismantle old, worn out ways of being, and create new systems, structures and selves.

Take this pause and review what's most valuable to you. Are you making these things a priority in your life? If not, how can you make the necessary changes to do so now?

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity and change.”

– Brené Brown



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CULTIVATING RESILIENCE

In order to stay well during a stressful situation, it's important to be actively involved in laying a firm foundation of good health. If you do get sick, your state of health at the time of illness can significantly influence the severity of the illness and your recovery. Optimising your physical and psychological health every day with good habits is the best strategy to ensure you stay resilient.

The key considerations during this time are keeping your physical body in shape and supported and nurturing your nervous system – managing negative thoughts and emotions in order to remain calm and focused.

Cultivate resilience with:

- ✓ Preparation
- ✓ Exercise
- ✓ Sound Sleep
- ✓ Mood and Mindset
- ✓ Eating for Good Health
- ✓ Nurturing Nutrients

Be Prepared

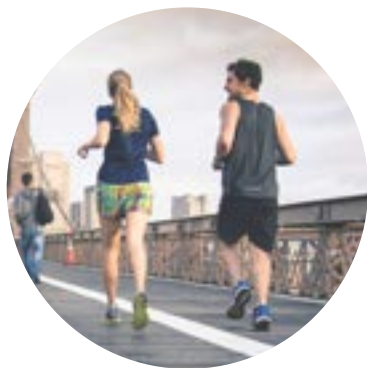
Familiarise yourself with the signs and symptoms of the illness, and the hygiene and social distancing practices to best prevent it. Know what healthy habits can support you. Compile a nutritional medicine first aid kit, including nutrients mentioned here.



Exercise

Maintain regular exercise or get started! Exercise keeps your body functioning well and aids the immune response when you get ill – reducing inflammation and supporting infection-fighting cells. The endorphins from exercise also help soothe stress.

If you're working out at home, there are plenty of ways to sweat it out – body weight movements like push ups, lunges and burpees provide a full body workout with no equipment.



Support Yourself with Sound Sleep

Sleep is a time when your body relaxes and restores itself. Poor sleep can have a negative impact on your immune system and increase the risk of illness. Restful sleep before, during and after illness can build your resilience. Follow sleep hygiene recommendations to sleep soundly.



Manage Your Mood ——— and Mindset

In a climate of uncertainty, it's important to protect your mental health, particularly as stress can significantly impact your immune system. This means managing fears about the circumstances.

Exposure to a constant stream of negative news can fuel fear, anxiety, hopelessness and even OCD, particularly for those with pre-existing mental health conditions. While it's important to stay informed, it can be useful to find a healthy balance around media coverage. Set limits on news and social media; seek accurate information from credible sources; and stay away from hype and panic.

Pay attention to your body, both physically and emotionally, and learn to recognise the signs and symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression. Actively manage stress and support your wellbeing at this time by implementing strategies to maintain a calm and practical perspective, such as relaxation, mindfulness, meditation and breathing techniques.



Eating for Good Health ———

Now is the time to make a habit of eating a healthy, balanced diet, rich in nutrients necessary for nourishing your immune system and overall wellbeing – particularly prior to winter months and changes in season.

There are many nutrients involved with normal immune system functioning, so ensure you're eating a variety of whole foods – vegetables, fruits, lean sources of protein, whole grains and healthy fats. You may like to add some fresh garlic and ginger to your meals for an immune boost!

A healthy, balanced diet will also help to keep your gastrointestinal tract and its resident microbiota happy – also critical for optimal immune function. In addition to diet, the composition of the gut microbiota is influenced by factors such as stress, sleep and medications, so consider a holistic approach.



NUTRIENT TOOL KIT

FOR CULTIVATING RESILIENCE:

Zinc

Vitamins A, C, and D

Selenium

Lactobacillus rhamnosus GG

Quercetin

Magnesium, taurine, glutamine & B6

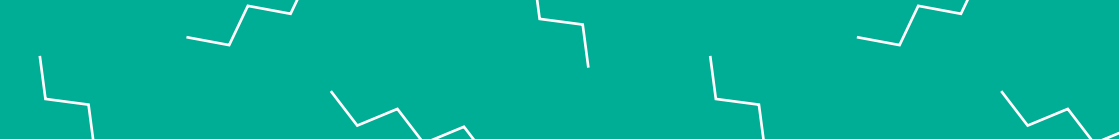
Rutin

Melissa officinalis & *Withania somnifera*

One of the best ways to afford yourself protection from infection is to support the innate immune system. For our innate immune system to respond immediately and efficiently it requires a vital orchestration of micronutrients each with individual and synergistic roles.

Antioxidants and optimal microbiome health also play an imperative role in bolstering immune function and, since stress can cause suppression of vital immune cells, it is crucial to safeguard the stress response.

While a healthy and varied diet may offer some of these nutrients, certain population groups may not have adequate intake or may have underlying medical conditions or stress which can increase the body's demand.



{ during }

MAINTAINING RESILIENCE



If you get sick and think you have symptoms, seek medical advice. During illness, increased nutritional support, rest, and a positive perspective can help you to maintain your physical and psychological resilience.

Maintain resilience with:

- ✓ Nourishment and Hydration
- ✓ Mood and Mindset
- ✓ Isolation and Rest
- ✓ Nurturing Nutrients

Nourish and Hydrate

Any significant physical illness induces a systemic inflammatory reaction and elevates the metabolic rate, increasing demand for nutrients. Consuming a nutrient-dense, anti-inflammatory diet may help to reduce inflammation and optimise nutrient status at this time, improving resilience to illness and speeding up recovery. Choose more veggies and less refined, processed foods.

It's likely that your appetite will be low as you fight off infection, so you might prefer easy-to-digest yet nourishing, nutrient-dense soups such as chicken and vegetable or miso. Toss in some garlic and fenureek to help break up dense mucous congestion and nourish mucous membranes, particularly in the lungs and other parts of the upper respiratory system.

Keep your fluids up. Sip on warm water with lemon juice and Manuka honey to soothe a sore throat, or chamomile and peppermint tea (with some fresh slices of ginger) for their calming, anti-inflammatory properties. Gargling warm water with salt can also help ease a sore throat.



Manage Your Mood in Isolation

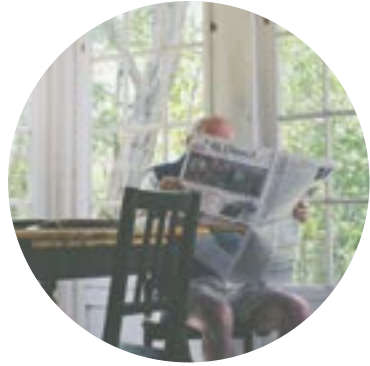
You may be distressed if you're sick or in self-quarantine. You might feel disconnected and anxious about your health in this enforced isolation. Maintain social connections with friends and family by phone or online. Practice mindfulness and meditation to manage stress and discomfort. Alternatively, focus on healthy distractions like a conversation with a friend, reading a book or watching an uplifting television program. Humour and laughter relax the body, relieving physical tension, stimulating diaphragmatic breathing and promoting lymphatic flow. Try to maintain a sense of optimism – take it day by day.



Isolate and Rest Up

If you fall ill, make sure you're observing self-quarantine guidelines and isolate yourself. It's important not to spread infection to others while you recover. Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home where possible; use separate bathrooms and household items (such as dishes) if you can; and clean down all "high touch" surfaces twice daily.

While you don't need to stay in bed, make sure you get plenty of rest during this time. Sleep, in particular, gives your body a chance to repair itself and restore all your systems. Also try to get outside and see the sunshine, as this helps to encourage your body's natural melatonin production to regulate sleep and other biological functions, including supporting your immune system.



"On the other side of a storm is the strength that comes from having navigated through it. Raise your sail and begin."

– Gregory S. Williams

NUTRIENT TOOL KIT

FOR MAINTAINING RESILIENCE:

Vitamins A, C, & D, Selenium, Quercetin, Rutin, Zinc

Lactobacillus rhamnosus GG

N-acetylcysteine

Combined *Salix alba* & *Curcuma longa*

Once we have an infection, our innate immune system goes to work as our first line of defence. Nutrients such as Vitamins A, C and D, Quercetin and Zinc are the heroes when it comes to fighting infections.

In fact, the synergistic actions of these nutrients enhance the proliferation of natural killer cells, increasing our immune cell response and communication. As the name suggests, these cells detect infected cells to terminate them immediately.

However, if the immune system cannot stop the invader from replicating, it goes into overdrive and ramps up inflammation, especially in the lungs. When part of the lung is damaged, oxygen cannot reach the blood efficiently, causing further debilitation.

Curcumin, N-acetylcysteine and Willow bark (*Salix alba*) all regulate natural killer cell activity and are used together to ease mild pain and muscle aches.

{ after }

RESTORING RESILIENCE

An infection can leave you feeling physically and psychologically depleted, but don't despair. You can and will regain energy and physical strength – and recover from any financial set back that may have been caused from time away from work.

Restore resilience with:

- ✓ Food as Fuel
- ✓ Exercise for Energy
- ✓ Mood and Mindset
- ✓ Nurturing Nutrients

Food as Fuel

Energy depletion starts at a cellular level, so you need to feed your mitochondria – these are the powerhouses of your cells that fuel all your body's processes. Protein is needed to rebuild enzymes and neurotransmitters so incorporate lean sources of protein alongside plenty of fresh vegetables, fruit, whole grains and healthy fats. In addition to diet, cold showers can stimulate mitochondrial function.



Mood and Mindset

Post infection, you may feel drained – physically weak and mentally disparaged. Experiencing illness can extend well past the condition itself, having a flow-on effect to other areas of your life such as work. You may be feeling the financial effects of having taken time off work which can add to stress, sleep disturbances and strained relationships.

Focus on how you can improve your situation day-to-day, to return to where you were prior to illness. Where possible, take small actions daily to make sure you're where you want to be when this is over. Be kind to yourself and talk to family or friends to let them know what you need. Ask your healthcare practitioner for advice on coping strategies and skills, or for a referral if you think you need professional support for your mental health.

Exercise for Energy

When you're experiencing fatigue and low energy post-illness, exercise is likely to be the last thing you feel like doing! It may seem counter-intuitive, but the exercise that you think is going to further wear you out, can actually help to improve your energy levels.

Exercise will help you to regain muscle tone and strength, re-conditioning your body, whilst also producing mood-boosting "happy hormones". Just make sure you don't overdo it and go in too hard, too fast. Start slow and steady and gently re-introduce activities. In time, you will regain the strength to return to your daily tasks and usual physical activities. If you find gentle exercise leaves you exhausted or breathless, seek medical advice before resuming a gentle progressive regime.



***"After the rain, the sun will reappear. There is life.
After the pain, the joy will still be here."***

– Walt Disney

NUTRIENT TOOL KIT

FOR RESTORING RESILIENCE:

Acetyl-L-carnitine, alpha lipoic acid and
coenzyme Q10

Multi vitamin and mineral formula including
taurine, magnesium and glutamine

Vitamin E, zinc, selenium, biotin,
magnesium and vitamin B6

Probiotics:

B. longum BB536, *L. rhamnosus* HN001,
B. lactis HN019, *L. paracasei* Lpc-37

Ensuring adequate intake of micronutrients is just as important in recovery as in prevention. Mitochondrial support that can aid energy production and rebuild immunity is key. Nutrients that may have become depleted during illness will be required, along with those that nourish the nervous system, heal the gut and re-populate the microbiome.

Oftentimes, pressures from illness and the impact it has on finances and relationships can affect mood and the combination of magnesium, zinc, selenium, biotin and Vitamins E and B6, along with acetyl-L-carnitine have been found to support mental wellbeing.

CHECKLIST TO REMAIN RESILIENT

During stressful and uncertain times, the list below is a quick reference guide to everything you should have in your emergency tool kit to remain resilient.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, working through this list to ensure you're well prepared can help you regain a sense of confidence by focusing on what is within your control, rather than on external forces.

✓ **Education about the circumstances, planning and realistic preparation. This may include:**

- A two-week supply of food and household items (focus on dry and canned foods, and household hygiene products)
- First aid kit, including household medical supplies and nutritional support
- Entertainment items for your mental health

✓ **Make your physical and psychological health a priority by:**

- Eating and hydrating for good health
- Exercising for energy
- Sleeping soundly
- Maintaining mood and mindset
- Nurturing with nutrients

✓ **Seek social support and cultivate your connections by communicating with family, friends, community groups and organisations (over the phone or online if you have to observe social distancing)**

✓ **Keep things in perspective**

✓ **Take breaks from sources of stress**

✓ **Identify ways you can help others**

✓ **Nurture a positive mindset and self-image by identifying your strengths and believing in your ability to handle the circumstances**

✓ **Acknowledge your feelings and apply coping skills to help regulate potentially overwhelming emotions, such as techniques to reduce stress and anxiety or seek assistance to work through them**

✓ **Accept change and challenges as a part of life, allowing yourself to be flexible and adapt**

✓ **Be kind to yourself, practice self-care and create a sense of comfort**

✓ **Maintain a daily routine where possible**

✓ **Reframe your goals to be more immediate and identify a sense of purpose that aligns with your values**

✓ **Take advantage of free time to discover new things and pursue hobbies and enjoyable interests**



"Joy, collected over time, fuels resilience – ensuring we'll have reservoirs of emotional strength when hard things do happen."

- Brené Brown

For more information, check out all our related resources on the Bio Concepts Facebook page and blog, updated regularly:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bioconcepts

Blog: info.bioconcepts.com.au/blog_articles

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