



Taking care of yourself and reaching out for help are important at times like this. Like a natural disaster it is more difficult when everyone else around you is going through the same thing instead of just one or two people grieving.

**We need one another at times like this even as we keep physical distance.**

## How Do I Develop Resiliency to Help Me Get Through This?

First of all remember that, while many things may never be quite the same, they will not always be this stressful for most of us. Be kind to yourself and to others, your family, your friends and strangers. We are all stressed, but it's no one's fault. While mistakes have been made along the way, most, even government leaders, have never been in a situation like this before and so they are guessing and trying to figure things out as they go.

### *1. Stay connected with your support system and build an even bigger one.*

This will mostly be virtual unless you have made it home and with your family. Think of several people to talk to and check in on every day. Who can you reach out to and encourage? Who encourages you that you can connect with? Physical isolation is necessary, but emotional isolation is not necessary or helpful.

### *2. Exercise*

No matter how small your room figure out how to move...it will help you physically stay healthy as well as emotionally. If you can get outdoors and take a walk, a jog, sit in the sun...these are healing and refreshing activities. (During the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, the patients in hospital tents who were taken out in the sun during the day had a much higher rate of recovery and survival than those who were kept inside all the time.) We need vitamin D (a supplement can help if there is not sun available) and the enjoyment of nature. If you

can only sit at a window and look outside, spend a few minutes doing that each day even if it is looking up at the sky.



### *3. Process your emotions, don't stuff them.*

Some people say "Don't think about it and it won't bother you so much" but that can make it worse, not better. We often start with shock: many of us are shocked at the speed with which our world has changed and all of our security and routine has been taken away from us. Acknowledge your pain, your fear, your anger, your sadness. Grief can trigger many different emotions and each person experiences change and loss differently.

Write, talk or draw about your emotions...get them out instead of holding them in. Psychiatrist Elizabeth Kubler-Ross said, "Grief needs to be witnessed in order to be healed." It needs to be shared in order to be witnessed.

### *4. Anxiety is a normal response. Calming is possible.*

How do you reassure a child who is anxious or upset. Talk calmly, quietly and reassuringly to them. You can do that for yourself as well. Self talk is so important. "We will get through this." "I can grow through this" "Most people are going to be ok". Truthful statements to counter statements that are extreme. Other ways to manage anxiety are deep breathing, listening to peaceful music, drawing, playing with a child in your family, enjoying nature, etc. Do your best to calm yourself and those around you and let others reassure you.

### *5. Limit screen time and information overload.*

Too much news can be overwhelming. Some information is necessary, too much is overwhelming and anxiety producing. Find a good book to read, play games with roommates and/or family, play music, sing or listen to music, etc.

### *6. Develop a daily routine.*

It is easy to waste time, stay in bed, spend too much time playing video games or watching TV.



Plan times into your day for as many varied activities and necessary activities as possible: cooking and eating healthy food, cleaning, gardening if you have a yard, exercising, reading, interacting with family and friends. Keep living as much as you are able to.

### *7. Spiritual practices.*

Worship and prayer, faith in God and trust in Him at difficult times can bring immeasurable peace and hope. If you are a believer in the God of the Bible He is your hope and He tells us, not only to expect trouble, but also that He will be with us and guide us in the midst of it: John 14:26-27; Matt 28:20b; Phil 4:6-9; Prov 3:5-6.

If you would like prayer or have questions about any part of this please reach out to the person who shared it with you. As we walk together we can not only survive, but grow and hopefully thrive again. We don't have to go this alone.

## Resources Related to Resiliency During COVID 19 Pandemic

### *For Children:*

- Julia Cook, Children's author, has just (the other day!) come out with a new book, especially for young children, on the coronavirus, [available on Youtube](#).
- Excellent resource, including [a comic for older kids](#) on understanding COVID19.

### *For Adults:*

- [Inspiring article for adults](#) on how to maintain our spirit, our sanity, and our physical bodies, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### *For University Students:*

- [How to handle anxiety](#) during COVID19.
- An article on the [emotional impact of campus closures](#).

### *Details related to Grief:*

- An article about [coping with grief and loss](#).

### *Very Important Information for Leaders:*

- [How to lead](#) through rapid unexpected change.

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