



Wellbeing Resources

The Disabled Police Association

Resilience Factsheet

Resilience

The number of people who are being diagnosed with a long term condition or disability is steadily increasing, worldwide it is estimated that 15% live with some form of disability of whom 2-4% experience significant difficulties in functioning. More locally in the UK, there is around 13.3 million people who have a disability which is almost 1 in five of the population. In terms of the workforce 18% of working age adults are disabled.

As you can imagine the impact of physical and more hidden conditions such as dyspraxia, diabetes, dyslexia leads to people with disabilities twice as likely to develop emotional wellbeing issues such as depression and anxiety. A lot of this is due to individuals feeling inadequate around friends, family and peers, as well as struggling to adapt to changes or new situations in the same way as someone without a disability.

Self-doubt is a major factor when it comes to increased risk of feeling anxious and depressed, when individuals



no longer believe in themselves especially when they are struggling to try and keep up with the rest of society. It's a massive ask and something that only be improved by looking at your mindset and resilience levels, as well as your own self-belief. It does takes planning and organizing, two things which may not always come

naturally. On way in which this can be achieved is by looking at your resilience levels. So what is resilience? Resilience is a process, it's not a trait of an individual or an event. It takes preparation and sometimes even practice to develop and maintain emotional resilience. Being resilient doesn't not mean a person will not experience difficulty or stress.



Resilience is an individual's tendency to cope with stress and adversity as a result of their processes, behaviours, thoughts and actions. This results in an individual 'bouncing forward' to a more normal state of functioning in the midst of adversity and challenging times.

A resilient person has the capacity to find resources they need, apply strategies, and make plans to overcome challenges, allowing them to function effectively for their business, family, workplace or community. As you can imagine environments can be volatile, good things and unfortunate things will occur. It is not whether these things will happen or to what extent, it is just a matter of when. Resilience is about how we deal with these events.

Let's break it down, resilience is your ability to

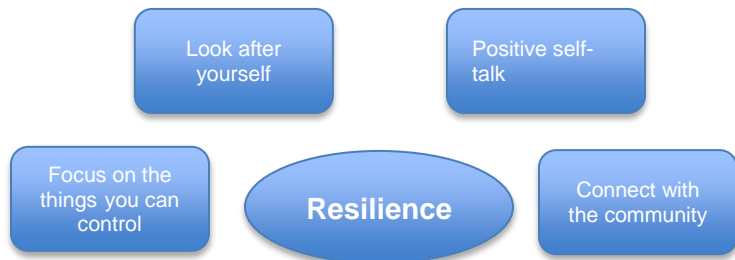
- ✓ Recognise and accept challenging times in life
- ✓ Recognise your own reactions and symptoms to challenging situations
- ✓ Having strategies in place to enjoy life's ups and downs so you stay well, in control and feel energized.

If you lack resilience or strategies to respond appropriately, you may display flight, fight or freeze behaviours.

- Flight – avoidance behaviours where individuals do not talk about the situation, deny the nature of it, and even lie about the seriousness of it
- Fight – individuals get annoyed or angry and often ‘shoot the messenger’ rather than addressing the message
- Freeze – individuals feel overwhelmed and don’t know what to do.

The way individuals react, and what they need to manage their reaction in a positive way, will vary from person to person.

Five Key Strategies To Build Resilience



Look After Yourself

By looking after yourself you increase your capacity to handle the challenges around you.

Physical health – exercise, a balanced diet and rest are crucial factors. Make it a priority to see your doctor and your dentist.

Emotional Wellbeing – de stressing and quality of sleep. Think about whether you get a good night’s sleep, are able to wind down and de stress. If not consider why.

Connectivity and social networks – stay connected with your friends, family and in your community through local groups, clubs and online social networks.

Spirituality – this will mean something different for each individual. It is about what you believe and your values, and could involve spending time in nature, meditating, appreciating music, art or prayer.

Feeling good doesn’t just happen. Living a balanced life requires taking the time to renew yourself and improve your personal wellbeing.

Remember every day provides a new opportunity to recharge and look after yourself. Give yourself a break. Taking time away from work can be a source of stress and potential conflict, however even during busy times

consider taking a break to recharge and increase your effectiveness when you come back to work. Remember, if you can’t look after yourself, you can’t look after your family, your friends or your work.

Positive Self Talk and Listening To Your Inner Voice

When challenged, what is your self-talk? What do you hear yourself saying when you face a tough situation? If you have negative self-talk, does it influence your actions and how people interact with you?

Your self-talk reflects how you feel and think about yourself. During difficult times it can be hard to remember all the skills and abilities you have. Rather than focusing on the negatives, consider the vast array of attributes and skills you have that can be used in the workplace including negotiation, practical problem solving, high work ethic, technological skills.

Change your self-talk so it is positive. Try and describe the situation in another way. Reframing your self-talk will not make the problem or challenge go away, but it may move you away from the flight – fight – freeze responses into problem solving behaviour.

Planning

It can be difficult to adapt in the face of adversity or significant sources of stress, so it is important to plan and have mechanisms in place to apply in difficult times.

Begin by understanding what ‘pushes your buttons’ and might threaten your resilience. Knowing what reaction you have when your ‘buttons are pushed’ enables you to make plans to counter any adverse reactions, and adopt a different strategy or approach.

Create a plan, find out what works for you and build on it continually.

Time management is also important to help create a stable and certain environment so you can better handle any surprises. Simple time management will help you get in control and create a sense of certainty. Having a plan, even a simple to do list will remind yourself of the steps you are taking and the progress being made.

Focus On Things You Can Control

Be clear as to your ‘why’ and have a plan to achieve it. Those who are clear as to this ‘why’ will be clearer in their aspirations and intentions, which can make it easier to accept the good with the bad. Those who are uncertain as to their ‘why’ will struggle to endure the more challenging times and will become unclear as to where to put their energies.

Become adept at knowing what you can control as opposed to wasting energy on the things you can’t. Be

realistic. Ask yourself, 'what can be done about this, or at least part of this. It might be overwhelming but consider if there are parts that can be addressed to get some positive return.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know the difference between things that can be controlled and those that cant. Do not ignore the things you can't control, acknowledge them, and then focus energy and time on the things you can control.

Connecting With The Community

It is essential to stay involved with family, work and the community for many positive reasons such as being able to contribute, to be valued and critically to maintain perspective. The more people you interact with, the greater the likelihood that you will meet people who have experienced, survived and grown through similar experiences.

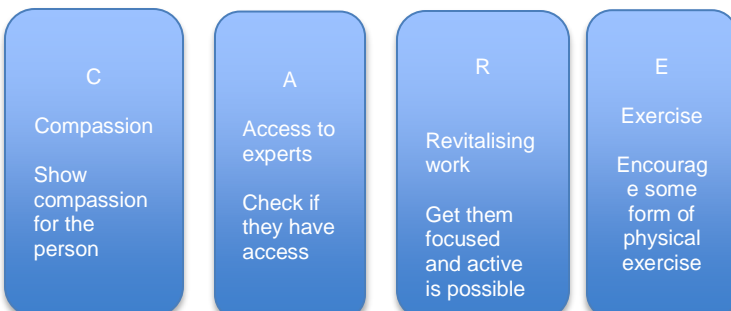
Look for ways to connect with the community through work, volunteering, sporting clubs, charity clubs, and get your friends involved in the activities too. There is scope for positive engagement through the virtual community. Social media such as Twitter, and Facebook are valuable tools to stay connected and engaged both locally and further afield.

Some individuals have the ability to build people up or drag them down. Positive people attract positive people and all the benefits that come with that. Negative people attract negative people and everything that goes with that. Make the choice to be positive, surround yourself with positive people and reap the benefits.

Spotting The Early Warning Signs

People go through changes that can put emotions and feelings out of balance. If they remain so for an extended period of time they can cause significant impairments affecting your ability to function, and can become a clinical condition. It is important to be able to recognise the signs and symptoms that indicate your resilience is slipping. They can be different for each individual.

If you are worried about someone you CARE for, remember:



Symptoms of Resilience

Emotions

- > Sadness
- > Anxiety
- > Guilt
- > Anger
- > Overwhelmed
- > Irritable
- > Mood swings
- > Lack of emotions
- > Helplessness
- > Hopelessness
- > Lacking confidence
- > Indecisive

Thoughts

- > Frequent self-criticism
- > Self-blame
- > Pessimism
- > Impaired memory and concentration
- > Indecisiveness and confusion
- > Tendency to believe other who see you in a negative light
- > Thoughts of death and suicide

Behaviours

- > Withdrawal from others
- > Worrying
- > Neglecting responsibilities
- > Loss of interest in personal appearance
- > Loss of motivation
- > Not doing usual enjoyable activities
- > Unable to concentrate
- > Crying spells

Physical Symptoms

- > Chronic fatigue
- > Lack of energy
- > Sleeping too much or too little
- > Overeating, loss or change of appetite
- > Constipation
- > Weight loss or gain
- > Irregular menstrual cycle
- > Loss of sexual desire
- > Unexplained aches and pains.