

Fact Sheet:

Carer Resilience Hints and Tips



This fact sheet is intended as a guide only. It was developed to assist carers with information on Carer Resilience. Every effort was made at the time of printing to ensure the accuracy of information.

“You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have”
Bob Marley

Coping with difficulties

Resilience is your ability to cope with tough times by applying your inner strength and engaging support networks. (1) Life deals everyone a different set of difficulties and how each person copes with them depends on a number of things. Caring for a loved one can often be all consuming and consciously being aware of the demands placed on ourselves is a starting point to address wellbeing.

Wellbeing

The World Health Organisation defines wellbeing as *“the state in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community”*. Wellbeing involves having positive self image and esteem. (2)

Wellbeing and resilience are important in preventing the onset of mental health problems as well as potentially lessening the severity of existing mental health problems.(2)

Wellbeing and resilience are vital to developing efficient problem solving skills, building and maintaining interpersonal relationships and realistic goal setting, all of which greatly enhance an individual’s ability to perform and contribute meaningfully in daily life.

What Helps

Here are some things to keep in mind when coping with life’s hurdles.

1. Setting realistic goals and celebrate achieving them
2. Avoiding negative self talk
3. Developing interpersonal skills
4. Taking time out to relax
5. Exercise and meditation
6. Keeping a journal
7. Thinking about the big picture.

Positive psychologists Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman have identified 24 personality strengths. All of these strengths can be developed. A great deal of research has gone into how they can benefit happiness and wellbeing. (4) Look at the table below. Which strengths might apply to you? What strengths can you use to help you get through difficult times?

Curiosity	Bravery	Kindness	Fairness
Love of Learning	Persistence	Leadership	Gratitude
Open-mindedness	Integrity	Self-Control	Hope
Originality	Zest	Prudence	Sense of Humour
Social Intelligence	Ability to love/be loved	Modesty	Spirituality
Perspective	Teamwork	Appreciation of beauty	Forgiveness

Taken from www.reachout.com working out your strengths (5)

The experience of negative emotions is also one which can teach us a lot about ourselves. "Distress tolerance," say the authors of *The Power of Negative Emotion*, "is important because it allows you to become stronger, wiser, mentally agile and, most important, happier in a more resilient, and therefore durable, way."(6)

The National Carers Counselling program enables Carers to develop their ideas about wellness and resilience. Counselling can focus on areas such as: managing stress , emotional support , practical problem-solving techniques , coping skills , health and wellbeing , transition issues , grief and loss. (7)

Call Carers Queensland on 1800 242 636 for a referral to make an appointment. Resources

1. <http://www.mindhealthconnect.org.au/resilience>
2. <http://au.professionals.reachout.com/wellbeing-and-resilience>
3. <http://www.mindhealthconnect.org.au/partner-content/www-mycompass-org-au>
4. <http://makethechange.com.au/introducing-the-24-character-strengths/>
5. <http://au.reachout.com/working-out-your-strengths>
6. The Power of Negative Emotion by Todd Kashdan and Robert Biswas-Diener
7. http://www.carerlifecourse.com.au/pdfs/fact_sheets/Caring_for_the_carer-counselling.pdf

About Carers Queensland

Carers Queensland Inc. is the state wide peak body dedicated to improving the lives of all unpaid and family carers. Carers Queensland provides information, support and services, researches and advocates for carers' needs to government and promotes awareness of carers within the community. There are approximately 500,000 unpaid carers in Queensland.

Learn more about Carers Queensland at www.carersqld.asn.au