

## COVID-19: Change and Resilience

Change and resilience seem to be buzz words at the moment in the way stress was a while back.

When we talk about change today, we mean to be able to adapt, to be flexible and willing to look at new ways; whether those ways refer to our thinking, feelings or behaviour, or perhaps all three? Change also implies movement to a present and future and away from the past.

It is often easier to stay as we have been for a long time, to be “set in our ways” whatever that means to you? COVID-19 has stopped that because now we are faced with changes in a way none of us could have imagined. We have been through and are continuing a long journey into the “unknown” and into a “new World”.

Back in March, as the Coronavirus was given Pandemic status, the World and our lives changed quickly from our usual day to day routines, to something none of us had experienced before. Many moved from office work to home working and the challenges that brought. Schools and universities locked-down and children had to be home educated or entertained within the home environment and for those with children, “home schooling” became the new norm.

Companies furloughed thousands of people and new ways of coping and managing needed to be found. Our contacts and regular social activities had to be changed and we had to adapt to those many changes.

For some, this radical change brought on emotional distress as the usual routines we all knew had to undergo a radical change and yet, we did it. We managed to a greater or lesser degree as we realised there was nothing we could do to maintain the “old” and so we moved, we adapted and we changed.

In order to change so much of our lives, we need to be adaptable and resilient. How? Well, resilience comes from coping with our life experiences. We fall, we usually get up and we move forward again. However, the Pandemic has raised so many issues, feelings and concerns for many, mainly because things have been outside our control. Key to managing, is self-awareness and that means we need to know how we react to situations, and how our life experiences have influenced that reaction.

Resilience is about knowing how to cope in spite of setbacks, or barriers, or limited resources. Resilience is a measure of how much **you** want something and how much **you**

are willing, and able, to overcome obstacles to get it. It has to do with **your** emotional strength.

We may have all hoped and believed that within the UK, the lockdown had in part “sorted the problem” and many longed to return to the World they left behind in early March. Sadly, what many failed to realise, was that our “normal” World that we left behind, was no longer there. It had changed beyond imagination. We queue to enter shops, we wear face masks, we can no longer shake hands or hug people on meeting and for many, this has and remains, a real challenge and adjustment.

So, into week 29 of the Pandemic and the country once again is having to adapt to change and to once more dig deep to find our resilience. Large parts of the country are now back in local lock-downs. It is different across the UK and those differences can cause both confusion and anger, as people struggle with the pace at which the changes are happening and many may be struggling to understand the rules.

Right now we need to look to our own self-care, we need to know what works for us and to move toward that. “It is okay not to be okay” and to seek help and support if needed.

Change is now a day to day thing, we don’t always have time to get our head around new changes and so, we need to dig deep to look at how we ourselves manage change, remind ourselves of how we managed before and to remember that we need to be adaptable, to take control and to draw on the resilience we have built up since March. Remember, that is it not how hard or badly we fall, it is about drawing on that resilience that we all have inside us to get up again.

If you feel you may need some support, you can contact Care first. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to view the Webinar on ‘**COVID-19: Change and Resilience**’ this is being delivered live on **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October at 12pm**, please use the below link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4533051555677521932>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.