



Improving your resilience

# Resilience

Resilience is our ability to recover from setbacks and adapt to challenging circumstances and is required for us to thrive and flourish. It is a tool which helps us to create skills and coping mechanisms to empower us and to feel effective and capable of handling future challenges and adversity.

As individuals, we all naturally have different levels of resilience and there are many factors which contribute to this including the beliefs we hold about ourselves, others and the world, access to information, skills, biases and mental processes and behaviours. However, we can all develop and improve our resilience. It is a personal quality and a skill that can be enhanced, but it requires effort and consistency.



# Resilience

There are generally six domains which support a person's resilience. Each domain can impact the other domains. When reviewing these domains, consider your strengths and aim to build on these while addressing any weaknesses you feel may hold you back.



# 1. Vision

- This is about your sense of purpose, your goals, your personal view of yourself and what you want to achieve to be the best that you can be. It is about staying focused on your goals, even when life is difficult.

*Top Tip: Think of vision as a purpose. To be resilient your brain needs a goal, a reason to persist. During difficult times, such as now, our purpose in life may have changed so, rather than worry about this, reassess your goals and find new meaning. For example, take the time you never could find before to spend with your family online, or your dog or cat.*





## 2. Keep your emotions regulated

- **Keep your emotions in balance.** When facing conflict our brains perceive this as a threat. If we are able to recognise the fight, flight, freeze response and overcome that instinctive emotional reaction, we can learn to maintain composure, and think rationally to resolve our problems.
- **Change your frame of mind.** We have a natural tendency to interpret certain situations negatively due to negative attitudes and beliefs. Research shows that a negative interpretation makes people six times more likely to show symptoms of depression and can cause or maintain ill health, while a positive interpretation bias results in higher resilience.



## 2. Keep your emotions regulated

*Top Tip: It is likely that we will have times when our composure is tested leading to anger, frustration, stress, anxiety and fear. Challenge negative thoughts with positive interpretations including visualising a positive time in your life to calm your emotional response.*



### 3. Be determined

- **By being persistent.** Don't give up. Just because something is hard does not mean you cannot achieve something – remember the harder you try, the luckier you get.
- **Learn from your mistakes.** Rarely do we do things once and get it right first time. It is important to be able to look at a mistake and learn from it.
- **Have realistic optimism.** To be successful is to have realistic optimism. This means you are hopeful about your ability to succeed but realise that no challenge will be without its challenges.



### 3. Be determined

*Top tip: You might find it hard to motivate yourself. Make sure you establish new routines to improvise and overcome any challenges. Don't be put off if things don't work out the way you want but see failures as an opportunity to learn.*





## 4. Solution focused

- **Be creative.** Creativity and innovative problem solving - “thinking outside the box” - can be useful.
- **Anticipate and plan.** Think proactively, when possible, to be able to act ahead of time. Thinking ahead of time can minimise or prevent the impact.
- **Be resourceful.** Having the right tools, techniques, information and people available to you. This will help you to problem-solve more effectively and find more efficient ways of reaching your goals.
- **See the opportunity.** See the opportunities when the environment changes. By helping to maintain your composure and knowing what you want to achieve, change will no longer be seen as a threat and you just may see something others will miss, helping you to succeed.



## 4. Solution focused

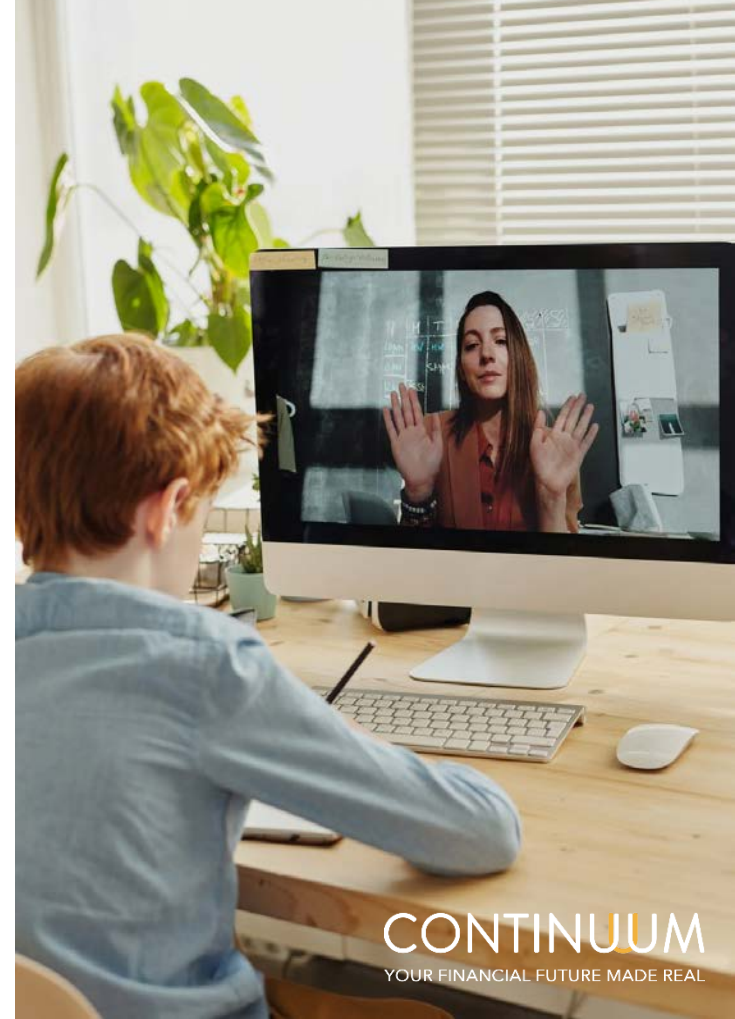
*Top Tip: You may be experiencing information overload at the moment, with constant contingency planning. Put in place the precautions you need to take then relax. You may have some extra time to find new skills, so try to be resourceful and spend time on learning new skills to help you succeed. There may be opportunities out there that you don't want to miss.*



## 5. Socialise

- **Support and be supported.** Although we cannot meet our friends and family in the normal way for the time being, think about how you can use technology to stay in touch. There are lots of good ideas on how to replace our old activities with new ways of socialisation.

*Top Tip: Isolation and restrictions on our movement and social distancing challenge our normal ways of meeting friends and family. Ensure that you establish meaningful connections at home and at work, recognising that others may also need your support.*



## 6. Health

- To look after your health you need to look after your wellbeing. Please see our wellbeing section for further information.

*Top tip: Remember - resilience is a lifelong journey in which we are continuously reviewing, adapting and learning from our experiences. This current situation, while difficult, is almost guaranteed to improve our resilience.*





