

choose  
well



***Building Resiliency  
in Times of Crisis***

## Table of Contents

Cup of Calm.....	3
Staying Strong.....	6
The Upside of Negative Emotions.....	8
Resources.....	11



You, our caregivers, are doing amazing work to prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 outbreak. The effort is far from over, and our caregiver community wanted to acknowledge the commitment that you are all making to care for our dear neighbors.

The objective of this toolkit is to provide you with well-being and resilience resources and tools to use during these difficult and uncertain times, as well as remind you of some of the well-being tools and programs available to you wherever you choose to reach out for support.

choose  
well



*Cup of Calm*

## Resilient people aren't luckier

They make a practice of doing the things that keep them afloat. Learn some of the most common habits, actions, and responses of highly resilient people.

Resilience means having the grit to get through tough times, feeling confident in yourself and your abilities, bouncing back from adversity, and being in control of stress so that you can move forward and thrive.

It has big benefits, too. According to meQuilibrium research, resilient people have 46 percent less perceived stress, are five times more likely to have good or excellent health, and have a 66 percent higher quality of life overall.



**Resilience** means having the grit to get through tough times, feeling confident in yourself and your abilities, bouncing back from adversity, and being in control of stress so that you can move forward and thrive.

**Cup of Calm Series:** March 16<sup>th</sup> - April 27<sup>th</sup>

This series will share the 7 superpowers of resilience. Each week will present a topic and a power boost to practice for the week.

Access through your Choose Well account every Monday.

# The 7 Super Powers of Resilience

- 1. Master Your Emotions** - The ability to control your emotions under pressure is absolutely key to resilience. However, we're born with a tendency to scan the world for "threats" that upend our emotions and compromise our behavior; some of us are quick to anger, anxiety, or frustration (say, blowing up if a car cuts us off in traffic); others look for threats to safety (health anxiety, fear of getting fired).
  - **Power boost: Uncover your default emotion.** The next time something stressful happens, tune into your thinking and start to recognize it. Awareness of our thoughts and emotions is the first, most powerful step toward resilience.
- 2. Defuse Super Stress** - When we resort to those long-held emotional reactions, we act habitually and often impulsively—and become stressed in the process. Instead, when those stressful thoughts and emotions come up, defuse them.
  - **Power boost: Reframe stressful thoughts.** Let's say you default to anxiety when upset. Catch that stressful thought and turn it around. For example, Did I *really* mess up in that meeting yesterday? No, it went fine; I even got assigned a new project. Nine times out of 10, we'll overreact to a situation when it's not warranted, which is the key driver of our stress.
- 3. Blast Through Problems** - Become a more flexible thinker. When confronted with a problem, we'll tend to get stuck and generalize, telling ourselves that something "always" happens and that "everything" always goes wrong.
  - **Power boost:** Instead of all-or-nothing generalizations, **pinpoint a specific issue and a solution.** For instance, instead of saying, "I always miss my deadlines and always feel overwhelmed"; try, "I have a heavy workload. Next time I'm offered a daunting project, I'll talk to my manager about a reasonable timeframe."
- 4. Defeat Self-Doubt** - Be deliberate in recognizing what you do well; keep track of your successes, even the tiny ones. This boosts motivation and increases positive emotions such as pride.
  - **Power boost: Jot down at least one success a day** before leaving work or at bedtime, and refer to the list when you need a resilience power-up.
- 5. Radiate Good Vibes** - Positivity breeds positivity. For instance, studies show that you get a 50 percent increase in the help people will offer you if you simply say "thank you." "It has benefits for thanker and thankee."
  - **Power boost:** Go around the dinner table with your family each night and **list the good things that happened that day.** Find a similar good-vibes routine that works for you.
- 6. Connect Like a Champion** - Adults with strong social networks are more confident, less prone to depression, and live longer.
  - **Power boost:** An easy way to connect with others, such as colleagues, is by **finding common ground:** favorite vacation places, favorite movies, a new restaurant you both love. Look for similarities, however small.
- 7. Kill it with Courage** - Lastly, realize that you're human. It's natural to focus more on mistakes and regrets, but they're part of life.
  - **Power boost:** Instead of dwelling on missteps, **reframe mistakes as learning experiences.** Talk about mistakes with family and friends, find humor in them, and share how you might do better next time.



choose  
well

*Staying Strong*

# Top Tips For Staying Strong

**Don't blame yourself for everything.** When life throws a curveball, resilient people don't waste energy beating themselves up. Acknowledge what is within your control to fix—and what isn't. Remember that you're best served if you focus on moving forward.

**Reach out.** Seek out and surround yourself with supportive people. Anxiety, fear, and loneliness make stress more debilitating; resilient people fight the urge to isolate. Virtual connections like phone calls and virtual chats with friends and family are very helpful at minimizing feelings of isolation.

**Accept help.** Know that there is true strength in admitting you can't handle it all alone. Don't be afraid to ask for the support you need. When you feel overwhelmed, delegate. Most importantly, don't feel guilty about it! Needing and receiving help is part of the human experience—and you'll likely have a chance to pay it forward.

**Make peace with the past.** Past hurts can take a huge toll on your everyday existence if they are left unprocessed and unresolved. Take some time to sift through your list of grievances and find some peace. Forgiveness is not about the other person—it's about you. You owe it to yourself to let go and move on.

**Make sleep a top priority.** Sleep has a huge impact on our mental state and coping abilities. Aim for seven or eight hours of sleep a night and practice good bedtime habits. As a result, you will tend to experience fewer stress-related physical complaints and are less likely to suffer from high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and obesity.

**Get moving.** Resilient people know that they think, behave, and function more effectively when they use their bodies for what they were designed to do: move. Whether it's a regular brisk walk, a stretch every hour, or a virtual online fitness class - prioritize keeping your body in good shape.

**Accept change.** We often use up a lot of energy trying to plan and predict things we could never plan or predict. Highly resilient people are under no illusion that the world is predictable or within their control. Try to allow things to happen instead of making or forcing them to happen. Change is constant—and adaptability is key to living a happy and healthy life.

**Resilient people aren't luckier—they make a practice of doing the things that keep them afloat.  
How can you practice these daily habits?**

choose  
well



***The Upside of  
Negative Emotions***



# The Hidden Value of Negative Emotions

As kids, we're often taught to bury our negative emotions or pretend they're not there. But did you know that there's an upside to negative emotions—to the anger, sadness, and anxiety that we all feel? They are powerful guides for growth and critical in getting your needs met.

In fact, negative emotions *have* to be heard: They don't actually go away when you ignore them. Studies show that suppressing negative emotions just leads to them resurfacing in other ways, often causing serious emotional, social, and physical health problems, such as high blood pressure and even digestive issues.



***The Upside of Negative Emotions Series: May 4<sup>th</sup>-May 18<sup>th</sup>***

Learn the three steps in dealing with negative emotions and practice each week.

Access through your Choose Well account every Monday.

As kids, we're often taught to bury our negative emotions or pretend they're not there. But did you know that there's an upside to negative emotions—to the anger, sadness, and anxiety that we all feel?

# The key to handling negative emotions?

Use them as a guide, rather than giving them the final say. - Here are three steps to dealing with your negative emotions, understanding what they're trying to tell you, and leveraging their upsides for success:

## 1. Notice the Signs

How many times have you wished you had addressed annoyance before it reached full rage-status or recognized exhaustion before it became burnout? We don't always recognize the signs of our negative emotions until they've escalated. We can get ahead of these signals by practicing mindfulness.

- **How to do it:** Set aside a few minutes a day to close your eyes and take a few deep breaths or practice meditation. The key is to stop for a moment and tune into what you're feeling: Are you holding onto emotions physically? Let go of a tight jaw, shoulders, or clenched fists. Are you resisting or judging the emotion? Thoughts like, "I shouldn't be angry right now" only elicit more discomfort. Just observe with a neutral mind. This awareness will enable you to trace patterns in your responses and recognize which situations typically trigger you.

## 2. Give Yourself Permission

Negative emotions are uncomfortable, but they aren't meant to be ignored. When we send these messages straight to voicemail, we're doing something that psychologists call "avoidance coping," which sets off a snowball of stress. For negative emotions to pass, you have to give yourself permission to feel them and listen to what they're trying to tell you.

- **How to do it:** Tell yourself, "I'm angry that my ideas weren't heard in that meeting," for example. Rate the intensity of the emotion on a scale from one to ten. Then take a deep breath and give yourself permission to feel it, then let it go. Tell yourself, for example, "It's okay to feel angry. I know my ideas are valuable and that it wasn't personal. And now it's okay to let that anger go." Then rate the emotion again. Is it less intense than it was before? Keep doing this exercise until the emotion subsides.

## 3. Reroute Your Response

If there's a valid reason you're feeling upset (you're angry because your boundaries were crossed or you're frustrated because you don't have enough time to complete a project, etc.) you don't have to let go of the issue—just the stress it causes.

- **How to do it:** Reframe the emotion to reroute your response. Your action plan will depend on the specifics of your situation, but here are some general guidelines:
  - **Anger:** Try not to take others' behavior personally (it's usually not about us at all).
  - **Frustration:** Scan your environment for resources you have available to you.
  - **Sadness:** Replace or acknowledge something you've lost.
  - **Anxiety:** Reset for the most realistic (rather than the worst) case scenario.
  - **Embarrassment:** Congratulate yourself for leaving your comfort zone.
  - **Guilt:** Check your actions against your own values (rather than others').
  - **Shame:** Make a list of pride points, forgive yourself, or make a plan to act with integrity.

When you manage your negative emotions, you no longer have to hide from what they have to say. On the contrary, you can use their messages as tools to boost self-awareness and reclaim control; *acting*—rather than *reacting*—in a way that fuels your success and lowers your stress.

choose  
well



*Resources*

# Back-up Care for Children and Adult Dependents

Alternate work schedules and child care options are available. We understand school closures are disruptive. If you or someone on your team is struggling with balancing work and family life, please contact your core leader. Arrangements can be made for alternate shifts, different work schedules or other solutions can be identified to better suit each caregiver's unique needs. We want to work with you to ensure you have the peace-of-mind that your family is well cared for, while you help care for our patients.

## **Low cost back-up child ad elder care support options are available.**

Benefits-eligible (0.5-1.0 FTE) caregivers have access to low cost back-up child care through Bright Horizons. In addition to center-based care, there is in-home care for up to three children. You must register in advance and reserve child care when you are scheduled to work and your child's school is closed. There are up to 10 days of use available at low-cost, subsidized rates. Here are some [FAQs](#) with more information.

For the latest guidelines on back-up care use after exposure to COVID-19, visit [www.brighthorizons.com/covid19](http://www.brighthorizons.com/covid19). If you are unable to secure appropriate back-up care, please contact 877-242-2737 to discuss alternative care options



**Register for Back-up Care Now So You're  
Prepare When You Need It**

**Register and Reserve Care Now**

Visit [backup.brighthorizons.com](http://backup.brighthorizons.com)

Employer Username: *choosewell* Password Benefits4You

# Resources

## Reflections:

Starting meetings with a reflection can be a powerful way help center our teams and bring everyone to the present moment. Incorporate one of the provided slides into your team meetings. The slides are ready to be copied and pasted into your meeting presentation.

[Click here to download](#)

## Caregiver Assistance Program:

Sometimes, keeping our lives in balance is difficult and we need a little help to restore our equilibrium. That's why our Caregiver Assistance Program is there for you at no cost. Check out the free services offered.

## Key CAProgram Contact Numbers:

**All caregivers except those in Alaska**

**Phone:** 844-875-5716

**Virtual Visits:** [Click here](#) to get started

**Website:** [liveandworkwell.com](http://liveandworkwell.com) (use access code *choosewell*).

**Alaska caregivers only**

**Phone:** 844-311-6223

**Website:** <https://psjh.lyrahealth.com/>

## Behavioral Health Concierge WA and MT caregivers only

**Phone:** 833-724-9355

7am-9pm 7 days a week

## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Free & Confidential, Available 24/7

## Crisis Text Line:

Text HOME to 741741, 24/7 Crisis support in the US

## Helpful Websites:

**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:** [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)

## Mental Health America:

<http://mentalhealthamerica.net>

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

## National Institute of Mental Health:

[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

## Well Being Trust:

<https://wellbeingtrust.org/>

## Mental Health Toolkit:

[My Guide to Mental Health Resources: It's Ok to Not Be Ok](#)

*These resources can be used or mentioned in meetings or passed along to your team so they have them on hand. We encourage you to check out all tools and resources, so you know what is available.*