

Resilience for Small Business

Key Points

- Individual responses to stress may vary widely. The majority of those impacted by stressors, such as managing a huge workload or taking care of you family are only minimally affected and will adapt very well. Others, however, who are dealing with stressors that are always present, may experience dangerous chronic stress responses or burn out.
- Acute stress responses can include heartburn and stomach aches; anxiety or sadness, headache or other body pains, impatience or irritability, sweaty palms, and difficulty sleeping. These are considered normal stress responses to difficult situations.
- As we experience longer-term stress, we might start to see other types of responses, such high blood pressure, extreme fatigue, feeling helpless, sleep and appetite disturbances, memory impairment, and frequent stomach upset, heartburn, ulcers, and diarrhea/constipation, which can eventually progress into issues that are more serious because of the wear and tear on the body. Such issues could include heart attacks, weight gain, stroke, and diabetes. Individuals also become more prone to severe viral infections, such as the flu or common cold. It is also a risk factor in depression, anxiety, addiction and suicide.
- Burnout can also occur. It is related to **where** you work. The onset is gradual. This can be good time to evaluate your options, since both organizational and individual change in needed. It may also require a change in occupation or job.
- Compassion fatigue is different from burnout. It is associated with the **type** of work you do. Often connected with being traumatized while trying to help or being a person that really and deeply cares.
- Resilience strategies can include excellent self-care, social support, purpose and embracing positive attitude.
 - **Excellent self-care:** This begins with deep sleep, getting active and eating healthy, and embracing spiritual practices, mindfulness, and deep breathing. We must also intentionally plan such activities to ensure we follow through.
 - **Social Support:** Talking about your stress with others can be very helpful. If you are not sure who to visit with, consider these questions. Are there people who have done something similar to what you have done? Are there people whose interests you can relate to? Who do I really trust to talk with? Could be a colleague, a minister, a close friend or family member. Other social support activities to consider could include, going on a date with you partner, enjoying some social time with family and friends or joining a group. Such groups could be a business groups, a church group, or some other group that you can make a connection.
 - **Purpose:** One way to help others is by finding opportunities to perform a random act of kindness to family members, friends or colleagues. It could mean increased charitable giving and volunteerism. You might wish to develop some realistic goals and do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment that enables you to move toward the things you want to accomplish. Maybe a goal this week is to actively seek out some assistance or make an appointment with a healthcare or mental health provider. Being “more than our occupation” means that it is important to have hobbies, play sports, or participate in other social roles, like a community volunteer or church leader or as a parent. This also provides an opportunity to disengage by getting away from what we do.
 - **Embracing Positive Attitude:** Try to keep things in perspective by identifying areas of irrational thinking, such as a tendency to catastrophize difficulties. We have to remind ourselves that what has happened during this pandemic is not an indicator of how the future will go. You may not be able to change the last few years, but you can change how you interpret and respond to it.

- We are also constantly adjusting to change. When difficult changes come along or when change happens quickly, we might struggle to deal with it. That is when we need to look back and realize we have dealt with change before and thrived.
- To help our sense of gratitude, you might consider two people that you would like to thank for something they have said or done and take the opportunity to thank them in the next week.

CORN Model

- One way to assist a client or other who may be in distress is by using the **CORN** model:
 - C**hoose to engage.
 - O**ffer support, listen and respectfully ask, “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”
 - R**efer person to helplines, lifelines or local resources.
 - N**ever leave the person alone or without a plan, and never leave the person without **hope**.

Resources

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK), provides 24/7 free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. Go to suicidepreventionlifeline.org/.
 - Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 and press 1
 - Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
- **Iowa Concern** at 1-800-447-1985, offers 24/7 free assistance and referral for stress counseling, legal education, and financial concerns. Go to www.extension.iastate.edu/iowaconcern.
- The **Disaster Distress Helpline** from SAMHSA provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters. Call or text 1-800-985-5990 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
- **Stress Management for Small Business Owners**. Go to www.sbdnet.org/sbdc-national-blog/stress-management-for-small-business-owners/.
- **Small Business – Understanding Small Business Challenges**. Go to www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/smbus/default.html

For Additional Training

- **Mental Health First Aid (Adult & Youth Professional)** is an internationally provided 6-hour training offered to teach participants how to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. For more information or to find a virtual course, go to extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/MHFA
- **Question.Persuade.Refer. (QPR)**. Say “Yes” to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling or neighbor. Individuals trained will learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade and refer someone to help. Virtual and in-person programs are available. For more information or to find a course, go to extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/QPR.

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