



Staying resilient

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FROM TAL AND ASSURE PROGRAMS

Advances in the field of neuroscience have allowed us to understand the functions of the brain and how it responds to stress in our environment. Using this knowledge, we can learn to build a more resilient brain.

What is resilience?

Resilience is the ability to positively respond to adversity. It's about having the mindset to bounce back and have perspective about trying again and achieving your goals.

It's well researched that our experiences and environment have the potential to shape the neural pathways in the brain. Our brain has an amazing capacity to change and adapt. This is referred to as neuroplasticity.

One of the most important needs of the developing brain is safety. When we feel safe and secure in our environment, we can think clearly and problem-solve effectively. If we feel unsafe, our brain is likely to detect potential threats and prepare us for a fight-or-flight response.

To help build resilience in response to COVID-19, Assure Programs has shared some areas you can focus on.

HELPING YOU STAY POSITIVE DURING COVID-19

As a leader in the life insurance industry, TAL has always been focused on helping Australians through life's biggest challenges. COVID-19 has made many of us realise we live in an unpredictable world. As the situation continues, we may be feeling increased uncertainty and potentially a sense of loss.

That's why we've partnered with Assure Programs to provide resources, tools and expertise to super fund members who might need some extra support with the challenges of the current crisis.

ABOUT TAL

TAL is a leading Australian life insurer, helping people protect what matters most in their lives for 150 years. Together with its partners, TAL provides life insurance and disability benefits to over 4 million Australians and in 2019, paid over \$2.3 billion in claims to more than 34,000 customers. TAL partners with leading superannuation funds to provide members with options to protect their future choices with insurance through super.

ABOUT ASSURE PROGRAMS

Assure Programs is a leading mental health organisation with an extensive network of experienced psychologists and specialists. With a holistic model of counselling, wellbeing coaching and evidence-based development programs, Assure Programs helps individuals, teams and organisations across the entire mental wellbeing spectrum.

Resilience and stress

When we're faced with prolonged periods of stress, the brain may adapt to the unsafe environment by responding with fear-based emotions. Our stress response means we may have increased levels of adrenaline and cortisol running through the body. The result could be an overly anxious brain.

Our brain responds to everyday stressors such as traffic, work demands, deadlines and conflict at work, as well as pressures at home. These stressors may be perceived as potential threat which triggers the fight-or-flight response in the brain.

But it's not all bad news. The brain can adapt to modern day stress. With knowledge, self-awareness and practice, we train the brain to stay calm and override the stress response.

Here are some areas you can focus on to help override the stress response and build resilience:



PHYSICAL WELLNESS

- Eat well and keep a balanced diet
- Maintain good sleep habits
- Keep active: go for a walk or make time to do some stretches.



NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS

- Stay connected by networking, seeking support and supporting others
- Develop empathy: listen and respond to others
- Give back through volunteering, charity or spirituality.



EMOTIONAL REGULATION

- Practice self-care: be mindful and manage your emotions
- Stay positive: develop and promote optimism
- Adopt a growth mindset: consider adversity a learning opportunity.

We hope these tips help you create a greater sense of ease within yourself and for your loved ones. Your mental health is vital to your overall wellbeing and there are always more actions and behaviours you can learn to safeguard it, especially during times of uncertainty.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR YOUR WELLBEING



If you'd like to continue your mental health journey, Head to Health is a website provided by the Australian Department of Health that brings together a range of mental wellbeing information, programs and forums available to the wider community.

Visit headtohealth.gov.au