

Building Physical and Emotional Resilience

Jocelyn Hill and Pamela Gilbert

JOCELYN HILL

Board Certified Health Coach and Founder of **JWellness**

An Integrative Health Practice specializing
in helping people reclaim their health.

Improving Physical and Mental Resilience

Why is resilience important Post-Covid 19 and beyond?

What key lifestyle choices will help to boost resiliency?

What strategies will improve your coping skills?

What are the benefits of an integrative approach to resilience?

“It’s your ability to withstand adversity and bounce back
and grow despite life’s downturns.”

-Amit Sood, MD

Executive Director of the Global Center for Resiliency and Well-Being

Some of us are born more resilient than others,
but everyone can get better at it.

Using Lifestyle as Medicine to build Resiliency

Key Pillars of Lifestyle Medicine

Nutrition

Exercise

Sleep

Stress Management

Nutrition

“The most powerful medicine is at the end of your fork,
not at the bottom of a pill bottle.
Food is more powerful than anything in your medicine
cabinet.”

-Dr. Mark Hyman, MD
Chairman of The Institute for Functional Medicine (IFM)

Making Food your Medicine

Focus on real, nutrient dense food first, not restrictive specialty diets such as ketogenic or vegan

Eat colourfully - Try to have vegetables at every meal

Eat diversely - your microbiome thrives on a varied diet

Include fermented foods - gut health is strongly linked to mental health

Add anti-inflammatory spices and herbs such as turmeric, garlic and ginger

Exercise

“If exercise could be packed in a pill, it would be the single most widely prescribed and beneficial medicine in the nation.”

-Robert N. Butler, MD
Former Director, National Institute on Aging

Making Exercise your Medicine

Find what moves you - the only exercise you'll stick to is what you actually enjoy doing

Move more. Sit less - most people currently spend more hours sitting than sleeping

Always be prepared to train - running shoes at office, yoga mat or gym bag in car

Start tracking - What gets monitored, gets managed

Diversify your movement - yoga, HIIT, biking, strength training, running, stretching, swimming, golf

Sleep

A 2017 nationwide survey conducted by Dr. Kelly Sullivan of Georgia Southern University suggested a strong link of chronic sleep deprivation to depression.

Of the 20,000 adults polled, those getting less than 7 hours of sleep each night were 60-80% more likely to show symptoms of depression and related issues, including nervousness and hopelessness.

Making Sleep your Medicine

Focus on quality, not just quantity (alcohol can hinder REM sleep, important for mental well-being)

Find out what's optimal for you. 7-9 hours for most adults

Get outside - exposure to daylight affects melatonin production at night

Get up at the same time each day to reset your circadian rhythm

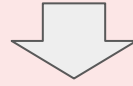
Avoid large meals, processed sugar, and beverages within 2 hours of bedtime

Stress Management

Dr. Steven Taylor has written about a new condition called COVID Stress Syndrome. Symptoms include compulsively checking social media, heightened anxiety about getting infected, and intrusive thoughts and nightmares.

-Globe & Mail, May 11, 2020

Stress



Inflammation



Disease

Making Stress Management your Medicine

Change your mindset - it's how you respond to stress that counts

Learn to breathe - and turn on the relaxation response

Experiment with meditation - start with a popular app such as Headspace or Calm

Try musical medicine - nature sounds, sound bath, or search for sound meditations

Create tech free periods - especially when you wake up and one hour before bed

Lifestyle Medicine

Evidence based

Effective

Simple

Inexpensive

No side effects

PAMELA GILBERT

Registered Psychotherapist
Pamela Gilbert Therapy and Counselling

An integrative private practice specializing in Life Transitions,
Anxiety, and Recovery from Addiction

Context - Mental and Emotional Health

COVID-19 the biggest leveller yet full of contradictions:

- “We’re all in this together” yet... people’s situations and how they are responding quite different:
 - We’re social beings yet other people both lifeline and threat
 - Safe at home versus feeling unsafe in the world
 - More ‘quality’ time at home together yet stressors on relationships
 - The new “free time” yet parents burning out with kids at home
 - Having a job versus coping with job loss

Big Issues:

- Loss of Control = Not knowing
- Overwhelm = Multiple major stressors at the same time
- Social Disconnection = Basic human need is disrupted

...fuelling anxiety, depression, unease

Where do I start?

- Assess where you are
- Pick what feels right for you.... try and see
- Very individual

Calming Technique

Starting with the breath = fundamental coping skill for anxiety

Overbreathing can leave you feeling exhausted

Gaining control over breathing and slowing it down - -> healthy habit.

- Sitting in comfortable position
- Breathe in slowly 4 seconds (through the nose)
- Hold the breath for 2 seconds
- Breathe out slowly 6 seconds
- Pause. Repeat

5 Senses Grounding Tool

Grounds you in present moment - in your body and surroundings - and gets you out of your anxious thoughts



CBT Strategy - to manage anxiety and depression

Commonly used, and evidence-based, to challenge and change anxious thoughts

Strategy: Catch, check, and change troublesome thoughts

Catch the initial thought....."I'm not going to be able to cope."

Check the thought by looking at the facts

Change and reframe the initial thought, based on the facts

Mindfulness

What is mindfulness?







- Present moment awareness
- Being mindful throughout your day

In practice: we slow down on purpose

If we can slow down for even a moment, we can make a different choice

Free Apps - CBT and Mindfulness

Apps

CBT skills-based support:		Mindfulness Meditation:	
	Mindshift – CBT tools & strategies for anxiety; (Developed by Anxiety Canada) Free		Calm
	What's Up – CBT & ACT (Acceptance & Commitment Therapy) tools to manage anxiety, depression, anger, & stress; Free		Headspace
	Sanvello (formerly <i>Pacifica</i>) – CBT tools for anxiety, depression, & stress (Premium membership currently free)		Insight Timer

**** Many phone apps are offering free membership or access to additional services over the course of COVID-19.**

SOBER Breathing Space

To step out of stressful situation, upset, or intense emotions....

- STOP = 1st step to get out of automatic pilot
- OBSERVE = physical sensations, thoughts/moods...notice your experience
- BREATHE = allow attention to settle...pause and couple slow, deep breaths
- EXPAND = overall awareness + other choices for responding
- RESPOND = respond thoughtfully to situation and taking care of self

This can be done anywhere, anytime as it is brief and simple.

Source: Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBSR)

The 5 Love Languages

For connection not just with couples, but with families and loved ones

Research of Gary Chapman = people speak 5 love languages

1. Words of Affirmation
2. Quality Time
3. Receiving Gifts
4. Acts of Service
5. Physical Touch

One way to listen and understand better what matters to your loved ones

Daily Gratitude Practice

- Growing body of research...
- Practice of gratitude associated with greater happiness, improved health, and dealing with adversity
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- 5-Minute Journal... *What are 3 things I am thankful for today?*
- Acknowledge goodness in our lives and others
- Source of goodness partially outside self
- Helps people connect to something larger than themselves

Support Groups for Anxiety, Depression

Many aren't aware = community of people with experience who "get you"

Huge benefit of discovering you are not alone, sharing vulnerabilities, feeling validated, share with others and learn strategies

- Anxiety Disorder Association of America - adaa.org
- 11MM people visit annually from around the world
- <https://adaa.org/adaa-online-support-group> <https://>
- Mood Disorders Association of Ontario <https://mooddisorders.ca/>
- Register for Virtual Peer Support Group and Evening One-on-One Peer Support

Online Resources during COVID-19

- New 'Wellness Together Canada': "A game changer for mental health solutions". Offers 24/7 mental health resources for adults and kids
<https://ca.portal.gs/>
- Kidshelpphone
<https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-involved/give/you-can-ensure-no-young-person-feels-alone-during-covid-19>
- CAMH <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19>
- CMHA <https://ontario.cmha.ca/news/cmha-offers-tips-to-support-mental-health-amid-concerns-of-covid-19-pandemic/>
- And many more...

What can we do to support our mental health?

- Remembering some fear and anxiety is normal
- Remembering you can't control everything
- Minimize news and social media consumption
- Intentionally unplug everyday
- Carve out space in your life and your calendar
- Try a new coping strategy - one step at a time
- Ask for support if you need it

INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO RESILIENCE

Resilience = Physical + Mental + Emotional

Employee as a whole person

Empathy for what people are going through

Resilience = Being Ready