

Live Well, Be Well

Resilience in the Making: Season Finale

Welcome everyone! My name is Renee Dell'Acqua and I'm a Senior Health Educator in Health Promotion Services here at UC San Diego.

On this episode of Live Well Be Well, I'll be discussing the various ways in which you can strengthen and reinforce your resilience in light of the challenges and hardships we're collectively facing.

So I hope you get inspired, I hope you feel connected, and I hope you discover new ways to live your best life. Let's get started!

Wow, we're at the finish line of this quarter and what a quarter it has been! We've collectively gone through hardships, challenges, and struggles in every dimension of who are, not only individually but, also socially and culturally. This major shakeup has certainly clouded the last few months with confusion, anxiety, pain, exhaustion, frustration, and uncertainty. But with these major life shakeups comes the opportunity for knowledge, for lessons to be learned, and for the discovery of strengths, courage, and solidarity we may not have known existed in the past.

And while these types of experiences certainly leave scars of a lifetime, they also provide a foundation for strengthening and reinforcing our resilience both individually as well as a community. And it's our resilience that keeps us going. Our resilience gives us the

drive, the motivation, and the determination to keep pushing forward no matter what's going on in our chaotic world.

Unfortunately, we don't know what the future holds and there is so much outside of our control but what we do have control over is taking intentional steps in strengthening our resilience to help us continue on in our journey, stronger than ever before. And you may be asking "well how can I strengthen my resilience? How is that even within my control?"

Well let's take a look back on what we've discussed this season of LWBW in our Resilience in the Making series to figure out what we can do to not only bolster our resilience, but also how to extend love and compassion to our minds, hearts, and bodies because now more than ever, that is what we need. So let's get started.

#1: IDENTIFYING CONTROL - The first thing is to look at the events and situations currently going on and think about "what is within my control and what is outside of my control?". When we identify things within our control, we must funnel our energy, time, and resources to just that. This is a proactive approach that will help ease your mind in the midst of chaos and uncertainty, and will provide reassurance that you're doing something in situations that seem to be completely outside of our control.

#2: CHARACTER STRENGTHS - Character strengths include things like bravery, courage, creativity, the ability to rely on hope and optimism during tough times, and the list goes on and on. And these strengths dictate how we act, how we feel, and how we interact with the world and people around us. Sometimes it can be so easy to think about our faults and weaknesses, but take time to reflect on your strengths of character and strategize ways in which you can use those strengths for the betterment of yourself and the world around you. Always remember that you bring to this world something that no one else does and

knowing that should make you feel empowered and inspired. So think about your strengths and ways in which you can utilize those strengths to make positive impacts in this world.

#3: POSITIVE SELF-TALK - Be kind and compassionate towards yourself by being mindful of how you're speaking to yourself. Are you speaking to yourself with compassion, love, and encouragement? Are you speaking to yourself as if you were your best friend or loved one? The way we speak to ourselves holds such power so give it positive power and see how that transforms yourself from the inside out.

#4: GRATITUDE – Keep in mind that even when life is particularly difficult and hard, there are always things to be grateful for, even if they seem minute. Our communities are in the midst of a crisis and even with that there are still things that we can be grateful for. For instance, we can be grateful for sights of solidarity, for increased awareness about the deeply embedded injustices and inequities in our society, and we can be grateful to be witness to individuals taking serious efforts in figuring out ways to be allies and advocates for those deeply impacted by injustice, by racism, and by hate. Often times, gratitude can be the candle that brings light into darkness.

#5: HUMOR - These are really serious and heavy times, and it's important that we take moments to seek out opportunities of positivity and light. Maybe it's taking a brief mental break for the current happenings of the world by watching, reading, engaging with, or listening to something that's lighthearted and will bring a smile to your face. And like we mentioned in our episode of Humor, smiling and laughing initiates a physiological release of feel-good, mood boosting hormones like dopamine and serotonin, which is exactly what we need right now. With this idea of humor, you may feel guilty for needing that break or for seeking out humor when times are heavy and dark, but remember we're all human and

taking momentary breaks is an act of self-love and self-compassion. And these types of breaks keep us going and keep us strong so never feel guilty for that.

#6: HOBBIES – In line with the sentiment of humor are hobbies. For our overall health and well-being, it's important to be consistent in putting time into activities or interests that are separate from academics, work, or any of the other obligations of our lives. These are sources of fulfillment, they spark our interest, and act as a form of nurturance for our well-being, and they act as a healthy form of stress management. Hobbies such as drawing, photography, yoga, reading books, meditation, etc. are activities that may seem small, but maintaining engagement in them are great for our minds, bodies, and hearts.

#7: GOAL-SETTING – Given what is currently going on, we may feel that intense urge to change the world for our generation and future generations to come, which is the exact drive, passion, and mindset that this world needs right now. But keep in mind, that big impactful changes such as these come from incremental and consistent steps. So don't feel like it's entirely on you to change the world right here, right now. In order to reach this beautiful and much needed goal, you must keep your passion alive by celebrating small victories, by pushing forward even when met with obstacles or unforeseen circumstances, by learning from failures or undesired outcomes, and most importantly, by relying on those around you for support, guidance, and encouragement. You do not have to bare the weight of the world on your shoulders by yourself, always remember that you're not alone, and that others stand alongside you.

#8: HOLISTIC SELF-CARE - Reflect and assess how you're caring for yourself physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually, especially in this time of chaos and uncertainty. Think about whether you've been practicing consistent self-care in a

multi-dimensional way. For instance, are you caring for your physical well-being by remaining physically active, nourishing your body with healthy foods and water, and getting adequate and restful sleep? Are you staying socially connected and engaged with family, friends, and peers, but at the same time setting boundaries and knowing that it's ok to have moments of peaceful solitude? Are you taking breaks from social media and technology for your mental and emotional health? Are you being intentional and purposeful in how you're exerting your energy, resources, and time? Are you allowing yourself the time and space to feel your feelings? Given all that we're enduring, it's valid and normal to grieve, to mourn, to be confused, to be angry, and to be frustrated. And once you give yourself the time and space to do just that, this can be the time to look ahead and ask yourself questions like, "what are my next steps?" "how can I be the positive change this world desperately needs?" "What is my role in this movement?" "How can I learn more and do better?" These are just a few examples of holistic self-care. And the key here is remember that our health and well-being isn't just about our physical health, but also our emotional, mental, social, and spiritual well-being.

And with the concept of holistic self-care, you may feel selfish or guilty putting time into yourself. But if we think of our bodies, minds, and hearts like our cell phones or vehicles, for example, that may put things into a different perspective so let me explain. When our phones are no longer charged or our vehicles run out of fuel, they lose their functionality and their capabilities. But when we recharge and refuel that's when its capabilities come to light, and the same goes for our minds, bodies, and hearts. We must first and foremost prioritize our health and well-being by practicing holistic self-care.

Because by doing that, the best most capable version of ourselves arises and that is exactly what the world needs right now.

So those were some of the ways in which you have control over strengthening and reinforcing your resilience, to get detailed information on each of the topics discussed, be sure to check out each episode of the Resilience in the Making series of Live Well Be Well. I know that was quite a bit of information we discussed and it can seem a bit overwhelming, but keep in mind that strengthening your resilience is a lifelong journey and just like all good and meaningful things in life, it takes time, effort, and intentionality. But I'm confident that you have the fortitude and capability to get there, I believe in you and I want you to believe in you too!

Stand strong and in solidarity Tritons. Keep your fire and passion for justice alive, extend love, compassion, and kindness to yourself and to all others. And know that you are not alone, that we are all in this together. We are Health Promotion Services see you, we hear you, and we're here for you. Endless love, peace, and gratitude to you all.

So that concludes this season of Live Well, Be Well! I am so deeply grateful for to you all for tuning in, for learning about ways in which you can improve and strengthen your health, well-being, and resilience. You all have made this labor of love possible for Health Promotion Services so we thank you and we look forward to bringing you new episodes this summer so stay tuned! Please stay connected with Health Promotion Services by following us on Instagram and Facebook under @UCSDHPS. And if you are in need of health and wellness support from CAPS, SHS, and/or HPS, please visit our Student Health & Well-being website: wellness.ucsd.edu. We are here to support.

Until next time, be kind, be true, be you. And remember, to be well is to live well.