Care Home Managers: mental health awareness training

Session 1

Looking after yourself
and supporting your staff's wellbeing
during the Covid-19 pandemic

The impact of Covid-19 for Care Home staff, residents and their families e.g.

- Working very differently; how to work safely; loss of usual 'human' contact
- Access to resources to fully care for residents safely, reduced staffing levels
- Fear of becoming ill, implications for everyone
- Feeling abandoned and unappreciated
- Supporting residents, witnessing their pain and at times, deterioration
- Watching some residents give up on life and fade away
- Losing residents before their time, bereavement and grieving
- Supporting traumatised and grieving relatives
- Challenges in personal , home life

Stress curve

What does resilience mean to you?

- Our views about what it means to be resilient are personal and contextual
- Workplace and/or society attitudes about resilience make a difference too
- Question: how helpful or unhelpful for you, have these views been when delivering care during this pandemic?

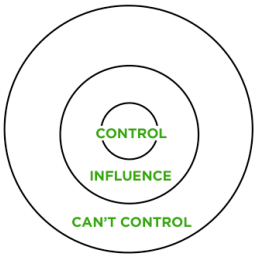
Image source: Jennifer Gonzalez https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/resilience/

Resilience isn't necessarily..... some thoughts

- Always bouncing effortlessly back from adversity?
- Never being vulnerable?
- Triumphing over tough times, being tough?
- Being extraordinary?
- Only about surviving?
- Never asking for help?
- Suppressing and never showing emotion?
- Avoiding feeling uncomfortable or in pain?
- Denying there is a problem?
- Immediately seeing the positives?
- Only needed for the big stressors in life?

Source: Developing Resilience A Cognitive-Behavioural Approach Neeenan. M 2009

'God give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference'



Circle of Influence
Stephen Covey

1. **The Circle of Influence** represents different levels of control. It helps if we recognise and accept each level of control we have in a situation.
2. The pandemic is full of fears, facts and experiences we cannot control. Potentially overwhelming.
3. Focusing on what we cannot control, makes us brood and worry and the more stressed and reactive we are.
4. The more we focus on the things we can influence or control the less stressed we tend to feel.

F = Focus on what's in your control

Fear and anxiety are inevitable; they are normal, natural responses to challenging situations that feel uncertain and worrying.

You can't control what happens in the future. You can't control Coronavirus itself or the world economy or how your government manages the situation. We have far more control over our behaviour. So our number one aim is to take control of our behaviour.

When a big storm blows up, the boats in the harbour drop anchor – because if they don't, they'll get swept out to sea. Dropping anchor doesn't make the storm go away but it can hold a boat steady in the harbour, until the storm passes in its own good time.

Similarly, we may experience 'emotional storms': these can include unhelpful thoughts spinning inside our head, and uncomfortable or painful feelings whirling around our body. If we're swept away by that storm inside us, the first practical step is to 'drop anchor', using the simple ACE guide.

A = Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings → C = Come back into your body → E = Engage in what you're doing

You can run through this ACE cycle slowly and peacefully 3 or 4 times. Please turn over to find out more!

Information adapted from FACE COVID-19 document by Dr Russ Harris, 2020

A = Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings

Silently and kindly acknowledge your thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories, sensation, urges.

Take the stance of a curious scientist, observing what's going on in your inner world.

For example, "I am thinking that something bad is going to happen, which is making me feel scared and my tummy full of butterflies".

C = Come back into your body

You could try some or all of the following, or find your own methods:

- Slowly push your feet onto the floor
- Slowly straighten up your back and spine; if sitting, sitting upright and forward in your chair;
- Slowly press your fingertips together
- Slowly stretch your arms or neck, shrugging your shoulders.
- Slowly breathe in 1-2-3-4 and out 1-2-3-4

E = Engage in what you're doing

Get a sense of where you are and refocus your attention on the activity you are doing.

- Look around the room and notice 5 things you can see
- Notice 3 or 4 things you can hear
- Notice what you can smell or taste or sense in your nose and mouth

Try to have a go at this ACE cycle slowly 3 or 4 times.

Information adapted from FACE COVID-19 document by Dr Russ Harris, 2020
Sophia Treas, Molly Laybourn and Dr Sally Stapleton, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

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S.T.O.P.P. www.getselfhelp.com

Useful steps to apply when getting stressed or anxious

S.T.O.P.P.

Stop, step back, pause

Take a breath

Observe and notice what's happening, *'What am I reacting to?'; 'What am I feeling in my body?'*

Put in some perspective, the bigger picture e.g. *'how much does this really matter?' ; 'is fact or my mind's opinion?'*

Practice what works e.g. ask for some support; take a break; make a list; prioritise

Getting grounded when we're spinning off

- Day-to-day living shows us that when we're getting swept away with our thoughts and emotions it helps to re-ground ourselves
- Grounding ourselves is about getting in touch with our physical selves and bringing ourselves right into the presentn moment
- Here's a short animation called 'Dropping Anchor' talking you through an example of a very quick grounding exercise
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDm2c5FDLNI

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The importance of looking after yourself:

general wellbeing strengthens resilience

10. Wellbeing Source: www.smilebeingyou.com/wellbeing-definitions

Self-help S.S.R.I.s resilience aids

From: Find Your Power – a toolkit for resilience and positive change by Dr. Chris Johnson (2010) Permanent Publications

When faced with adversity a resilient response is to link into positive previous experiences:

Strategies you used

Strengths you drew upon

Resources you turned to (human & material)

Insights that helped you

In small groups list examples from your own experience.

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Public Health guidance: looking after our mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic

What are you already doing that helps?

- Daily routine?
- Connecting with others?.
- Talking about your worries?
- Helping and supporting others?
- Looking after your physical wellbeing?
- Looking after your sleep?
- Trying to manage difficult feelings?
- Getting the facts?
- Doing things you enjoy?
- Setting goals?
- Keeping your mind active?
- Taking time to relax and focusing on the present?
- If you can, get outside. If you can't, bring nature in
- www.gov.uk/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing

The Five Ways to Wellbeing: a key public health message

Evidenced based factors that strengthen resilience (preventative) and combat difficulties when they arise (intervention). Build into work/service-delivery/personal

1. **Be connected**: invest in social relationships, find ways of having social contact with others
2. **Be active:** exercise, generally look after physical health
3. **Take notice:** notice and appreciate what you have got . *'Glass is Half Full'* attitude. Mindfulness: noticing with purpose
4. **Keep learning:** hobbies, interests, challenges, creativity. Doing things you enjoy and are good at
5. **Give:** contribute, give to others, being part of things

Source: Centre for Wellbeing, nef Report presented to the UK Government's Foresight programme (2008)

Wellness Action Plans

www.mind.org.uk/wellnessactionplans

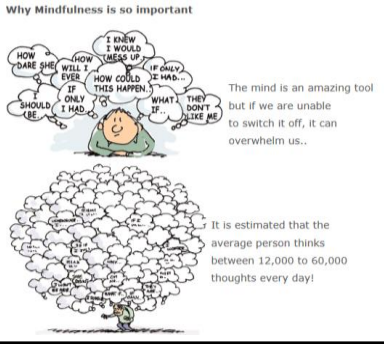
During a pandemic crisis maybe we could all benefit from our own Wellness Action Plan!

Key areas for WAPs focus on:

- What the person can do to look after their mental wellbeing (and/or physical wellbeing)
- Early signs they may be struggling
- Workplace triggers?
- What support from their manager or others
- Positive actions both can take to support wellbeing or to respond to difficulties

I minute meditation

www.1 minute meditation



FACE Covid-19

advice from Clinical Psychologist Russ Harris

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmvNCdpHUYM

Some resources: see handout

- Every Mind Matters information and resources from the NHS to look after your mental health and wellbeing
- Coronavirus support from mental health charity Mind
- Mental Health At Work - Coronavirus and isolation: supporting yourself and your colleagues