

Building Resilience

Stress can be defined as "Pressure or tension exerted on an object or individual"

A certain amount of stress is positive. It is the kind of stress that provides you with focus to set and achieve goals and gives you your "competitive edge", which will help you think quickly and clearly and express your thought in ways that will benefit the situation.

Prolonged stress, however, can have a negative effect on your health. During moments of stress, you may find yourself becoming tense and breathing faster or even hyperventilating.

If you are experiencing an increase in headaches, a change in good eating patterns and sleep disturbances you may be experiencing signs of negative stress. Left undealt with these symptoms may lead to stress related disorders or burnout.

Resilience refers to how well a person copes with stress and adversity and their ability to return to normal state after stressful situations. It does not mean a person is not experiencing difficulty but rather being able to recover from it. Thankfully, you do not have to be born with resilience traits; they can be developed in most people.

People who cope well with stress can recognize early warning signs and act accordingly. They identify what they can and cannot change, prioritise their work and set realistic goals. They also laugh more; laughter releases endorphins (feel-good chemicals).

While you may not be able to change a difficult situation there are things you can do when you find yourself overstressed

- Slow, deep breathing
- Stretch to release tension
- Seek support from friends and family
- Regular exercise
- Maintain a balanced diet and stay hydrated

In the long term you can build your resilience by

- Developing communication and problem-solving skills
- Developing self-confidence and a positive outlook on life
- Managing impulses and strong feelings

Contact Vitae for professional assistance with work or personal stress.

<http://www.rational.org.nz/orgs/workstress.htm>

<http://www.aia.co.nz/en/individuals/resources-and-guides/health-tips/stress-working-it-out/>

<http://www.osh.govt.nz/publications/stress/stress.asp>

<http://www.resiliencei.com/>



when *life* works better,
business works better

Pai ake te oranga, pai ake te pakihi

If you need some support or are feeling overwhelmed by anxiety you can contact a Vitae Clinician by phoning **0508 664 981 or email **The Vitae Team****