

Self-care is a priority not a luxury

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Hello Colleagues

It was great to work with you at the Frontline Network Conference 2019. We were delighted to share our workshop: 'Building Resilience in a Fast Paced World' with you.

We really enjoyed your participation in the session and would love to hear how you interpret and implement the ideas shared. Please feel free to [email us](#) with thoughts.

Please read below for some key takeaways and the links and resources mentioned in the session.

Session notes:

The overall context: We live in VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) times. In order to deal with uncertainty, we might try to control and predict situations. It is, however, more resilient, or 'anti-fragile' to be ready and open to the curve balls than to try and control them. Chaos and curveballs are an inevitability, and they are not necessarily a bad thing. To be 'anti-fragile' is to lean in and grow through challenging times. It is about approaching challenging times by responding instead of reacting, by relating, and by gaining new perspectives on the situation.

The signs of low resilience: There are noticeable signs that we are feeling overwhelmed and low in resilience. Chandeliering (suppressing the emotion that comes with stress, and then 'hitting the chandelier' when the smallest thing happens), Stockpiling (suppressing the emotion that comes with stress, and then feeling physical pain or problems), Numbing (suppressing the emotion that comes with stress by drinking, over-eating, watching too much tv, over-exercising, self-harm), Bouncing hurt (projecting your pain onto others - it's all their fault), High Centering (where you start sharing some of your stress, but then worry about going too far but feeling you can't go back) and "I'm Fine" (pretending everything is ok).

The strategies: When we prioritise self-care practices, we relax our stress responses enough to be able to respond to VUCA times in an anti-fragile way. Our self-care strategy tips are:

#1 Identify our inner critic (the 'gremlin' voice in the back of our minds telling us we are not capable enough, or that there is lots to fear. The strategy here is to chose a different story.)

#2 Mindfulness (being with our emotions, body scanning and box breathing)

#3 Permission slips (I give myself permission to.... be human/ be messy/ to relax/ to be brave and ask questions)

#4 Self-compassion (being our own best friend, and the self compassion break)

#5 Gratitude (being grateful for the small things we have in life)

Commitments and ongoing learning: There will always be challenges. To handle them in a safe and resilient way we need to prioritise our well-being and self-care.

We need to become anti-fragile in order to be with the ever-changing nature of

life. Remember to check in with your accountability partner and to use your anchors to ensure you are moving forwards with your self-care strategies. This is all a work in progress, there is always more you can explore.

You can also read more about our research into wellbeing and self-care in the charity sector by reading [our pieces published in Civil Society Media](#).

Further Reading/Watching:

Joel and Michelle Levey on VUCA times

- <http://www.wisdomatwork.com/about/thriving-in-vuca-times/>

Dr Brené Brown - Vulnerability Ted Talk

- https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability

Dr Brené Brown - Shame Ted Talk

- https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_listening_to_shame

Dr Brené Brown's books - <http://brenebrown.com/books-audio/>

Taming Your Gremlin: A surprisingly simple method for getting out of your own way

- <http://www.tamingyourgremlin.com/>

Head Space app - <https://www.headspace.com/>

Insight Timer - <https://insighttimer.com/>

Calm - <https://www.calm.com/>

Dr Kristin Neff on self-compassion - <https://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/>

Deepak Chopra and Oprah 21 day meditation -
programme <https://chopracentermeditation.com/>

Box Breathing - <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321805.php>

If you have any further questions or queries please don't hesitate to [get in touch](#).

We have a weekly Bird blog that we encourage you to sign up to in order to get reminders each week to think about your wellbeing. [Here](#)'s our blog from last week. If you didn't get chance to sign up on the day, and you'd like to [click here to sign up](#).

Take care, Jo and Team Bird