



PREPARATION, CONSOLIDATION AND ASPIRATION

Preparing for change, managing uncertainty and adapting: strategies for working differently during the COVID-19 pandemic



STAGE 1: PREPARATION

- STABILISE:** people are remarkably resilient and cope through difficult times
 - Maintain a sense of agency by reconnecting with your values and sense of purpose in these times
 - Determine what you can influence now and take action towards it

It can be helpful to identify three keys strengths and find actionable ways to reinforce these.
- CONNECT:** work smartly and safely
 - Source reliable information (WHO, State or Territory Government information, College Fora)
 - Ensure physical distancing: plan to engage in a few different ways to maintain social connection and determine frequency and duration
 - Set-up times to talk with friends online, check in on family and share a coffee or a drink online
 - Set-up regular meetings with team members, students and stakeholders to maintain outputs, and personal connections
- ORGANISE:** establish new routines, facilitate self-efficacy and agency, plan meals, household members' individual daily schedules, private time and enjoyable activities with pets and family
 - Set-up specific micro goals and review achievement
 - Categorise your time: balance activities from each area across the weeks to ensure you are finding a new order for yourself, those around you (family) and look out for team members to establish new schedules that assist with environmental changes and work routines

Setting up a functional work base at home is critical to ensure you have a designated area, equipment and infrastructure for the short to medium term.
- LOOK AFTER YOURSELF:** stay healthy and sleep well: exercise for your mental health as well as physical health
 - Establish a range of meals that can be easily prepared and share the responsibilities and teach other members of the household new skills and ways of contributing
 - Give each member a detailed plan and set up schedules/rosters
 - Identify a few physical activities that you can engage with and use apps or websites to gain new regimes (or just go for a 20 min walk or run every day)



STAGE 2: CONSOLIDATION

- TOLERANCE:** manage uncertainty, remain vigilant and adjust to changes in the way we live our lives not just for a few months but potentially years to come

Managing stress and changes to your emotional wellbeing is essential. Coping abilities will vary throughout these unprecedented times and recognising your own capacity and changes to these are important. Utilising tools that can be accessed from trusted websites can be helpful, as can talking with supportive colleagues to reframe and redirect actions.
- COMPASSION:** self-compassion has been shown to contribute towards increased psychological health

Compassion is grounded in our humanity, functional analysis of basic social motivational systems (e.g. home life and intimate relationships, peers, collaborators and friends, care for family and kin) and different functional emotional systems (e.g. to manage threats, access resources, and establish safeness of self and surrounds.



STAGE 3: ASPIRATION

- GRIT:** a positive, non-cognitive trait based on an individual's perseverance of effort combined with the passion for a particular long-term goal or end state (a powerful motivation to achieve an objective). This perseverance of effort promotes the overcoming of obstacles or challenges that lie on the path to accomplishment and serves as a driving force in achievement realization. Distinct but commonly associated concepts within the field of psychology include "perseverance", "hardiness", "resilience", "ambition", "need for achievement" and "conscientiousness"
- RESOLVE:** through the reappraisal of our thoughts we can change the meaning and interpretation of experiences and events. Through increased cognitive flexibility, changes in emotional and behavioural responses occur

Identify an unhelpful or difficult thought or response, and evaluate to determine other ways of interpreting or making sense of the event or experience that can influence the emotional response and increase self-efficacy.
- MODIFY:** determine a different and more constructive response to the situation and write down your new thoughts and check on the changes to your physical or emotional response

This type of cognitive activity takes time to solidify and is assisted by regular engagement. Change happens through a deliberate process so if this is something that you have noticed is getting you stuck, then 5-10 minutes every few days can really make an impact.
- ADAPT:** learn to go against more instinctual ways of being to more adaptive ones
 - Set-up a time to talk with others about what has and hasn't worked for them, share tips and learnings with others, and prepare for more changes
 - Find ways to work on new sets of habits, practices, and ways of connecting that require structural, spatial and personal adaptations, which collectively we commit to and implement for the greater good with increasing flexibility, agility and responsiveness
- HOPE:** sacrifice and collectivism can make a significant difference to how COVID-19 impacts and alters how many live their lives. Equity will be even more essential as we learn more and see a way forward through what will be one of the most challenging times in each of our lives

Consider ways in which these unprecedented times can generate opportunities for new educational approaches that were previously deemed 'too hard' or 'unworkable'. The speed at which colleagues have mobilised is truly inspiring and now we have achieved this it is important to consider what lies ahead and how we can design, construct and build curricula that is truly modern, relevant and expansive.



STAGE 1: PREPARATION

- Stabilise
- Connect
- Organise



STAGE 2: CONSOLIDATION

- Tolerance
- Compassion



STAGE 3: ASPIRATION

- Grit
- Resolve
- Modify
- Adapt
- Hope

