

# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES *health hub*

## RESILIENT RETURN

We are no longer in the early days of COVID-19, hoarding toilet paper and running around the house with a bottle of bleach. However, we are not out of the woods living in a post-pandemic world yet. All these changes and unknowns have left us feeling **anxious**, **frustrated**, and **exhausted**. According to psychologist Robert M. Gordon, we are currently in a transition period and individuals in the midst of a transition period in the aftermath of adversity are at risk for severe mental health setbacks. Psychological challenges are to be expected in an unstable world, and it is important to build resilience during a time of transition to combat ramifications for years to come. The pages below illustrate a threat to resilience known as compassion fatigue and tips for building resilience in an ever-changing world.



**Change is the only constant in life.**  
~Heraclitus, Greek philosopher

## Signs & Symptoms:

- Sadness and grief
- Detachment
- Poor concentration
- Changes in beliefs and expectations
- Reduced ability to feel empathy

## Triggers:

- Work environment
- Work-related attitudes
- Response to stress
- Emotional energy
- Personal characteristics

## Remedies:

- Talk to and rely on others
- Set boundaries
- Separate home and work rituals
- Practice self-care
- Utilize EAP counseling
- Keep a journal
- Cultivate friendships
- Engage in outside hobbies

# Compassion Fatigue

Most county employees had or still have lent a hand in the COVID relief. With COVID relief dragging on, you may have felt the inability to recharge or find yourself lacking the empathy you once had; this is known as compassion fatigue. **Compassion fatigue** is beyond burnout and exhaustion. It is the intense physical, mental, and emotional erosion that occurs among professionals in a "helper" capacity. It is important to understand the phases of compassion fatigue to prevent reaching the zombie phase in the future.

- **Zealot Phase:** You are enthusiastic and committed to making a difference.
- **Irritability Phase:** You begin avoiding contact with customers/clients. You may cut corners and lose concentration.
- **Withdrawal Phase:** You are frequently exhausted, have lost enthusiasm, and/or are easily irritated at work.
- **Zombie Phase:** Irritability becomes disdain, hostility, and blaming customers/clients. You may feel hopeless or even anger.



# Tips for Building Resilience

## Renew Connections & Overcommunicate:

Re-connect with colleagues and co-workers as you return to work or via Webex. Over communicate positive messages, expectations, and assistance you may need with colleagues.

## Practice Self-Care Every Day:

Self-care is not selfish. Self-care is a must in building resilience during unstable times. Reading a book, taking a walk, playing a game, meditating, calling a friend, or learning a new skill are examples of self-care.

## Set-up a Sleep Schedule:

Establishing a sleep schedule and sticking to it can reduce stress, improve mood, strengthen the heart, and boost the immune system.

## Take Advantage of Deer Oaks EAP:

Deer Oaks offers a comprehensive EAP to employees and their family members. From counseling sessions, financial assistance, legal assistance, to many more services. Call today at 888-993-7650 or email [eap@deeroaks.com](mailto:eap@deeroaks.com)

## Spruce Up Your Space:

Whether you are returning to the office or still working from home, tidy up your office area. A clean and organized space can help reduce stress levels.

## Did you know?

Research indicates that plants reduce stress levels at the office and increase productivity by 15%.



Add a plant to your work space to reap these benefits.