

## Harnessing Strengths During Challenging Times

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### THREE REALITIES

- ✘ We are all vulnerable
- ✘ We will all face challenges, crises
- ✘ We underestimate our own potential to cope during the challenging times

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## PROMOTING RATIONAL THINKING!

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- ✘ A degree of stress is helpful
- ✘ Prolonged stress is bad for us
- ✘ Unhealthy stress eats away at our health and happiness

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**THE ROLE OF THINKING WITHIN STRESS**

- ✘ Bias thinking
- ✘ Irrational thinking
- ✘ Private thinking
- ✘ Powerful thinking

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**INTERNAL DIALOGUE  
AUTOMATIC SELF-TALK**

Our private world of thoughts, our interpretation of past and present, our predictions for the future are very powerful influences on mood

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**EXPLORING THE THOUGHT:**

- Is it helpful?
- Is it fair?
- Is it absolutely true?

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**PRACTISE  
BEING  
COMPASSIONATE!**

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**CULTIVATING COMPASSION**

- ✘ Psychology has started to investigate compassion
- ✘ The most powerful way of becoming happy is to develop compassion

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- ✘ The benefits of kindness
- ✘ It's nice to be nice but it's also good for you!
- ✘ Stress makes us focus too much on ourselves
- ✘ Compassion lets the light in!
- ✘ Putting our worries into context

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- ✘ The goalposts for what counts as 'good enough' seem always out of reach
- ✘ Insecurity, anxiety and depression incredibly common
- ✘ Much of it due to self-judgement, to beating ourselves up when things go wrong
- ✘ A need to stop judging and evaluating ourselves altogether

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**UNLEARN  
HELPLESSNESS!**

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- ✘ Failures are temporary setbacks!
- ✘ Never underestimate your own potential
- ✘ It's never too late to improve at something
- ✘ Getting good advice and support makes it easier
- ✘ Lots of people struggle with things

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**REACH  
OUT!**

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- ✘ Being social - practising it!
- ✘ Joining clubs and organisations
- ✘ Volunteering
- ✘ Starting new things - courses etc

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# INVEST IN GRATITUDE!

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- ✦ Counting our blessings
- ✦ Looking at what is right about our lives
- ✦ Celebrating all the things we have rather than always talking about the things we don't have
- ✦ What went well exercises
- ✦ Savouring

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# BASKING IN THE 'NOW'

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- ✘ Respecting the past but not being governed by it
- ✘ Not letting the past hold you back
- ✘ Over anxious about the future
- ✘ Today is a gift
- ✘ Make today count!

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# **INCREASE 'FLOW'!**

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- ✘ Doing the things we love best
- ✘ Doing the things we are best at
- ✘ Starting new things
- ✘ Switching the 'channel'
- ✘ Being 'stretched'

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**INVEST IN THE  
SPIRITUAL  
SELF!**

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- × Sense of purpose
- × It's not all about me!
- × Life as a journey
- × The benefits of prayer
- × Investing in our spirituality

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**MINDING YOUR BODY**

**EXERCISE,  
DIET, SLEEP**

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# Invest in HUMOUR!

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✘ “Laughing 100 times amounts to the same exercise as riding a stationary bike for 15 minutes. Five minutes of intense laughter can double the heart rate. Three minutes of laughter is equivalent to 3 minutes on a rowing machine. Laughter stimulates circulation, tones muscles, energises lungs and stimulates endorphins in the immune system.”

✘ Dr William Fry (Stanford University)

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