



**Mental Health Association
of Fauquier County**
P.O. Box 3549
Warrenton, VA 20188

RESILIENCE IN A TIME OF WAR: TIPS FOR PARENTS AND DAYCARE PROVIDERS OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

A time of war can be scary for very young children, especially since terrorism has brought fear so close to home. Events are uncertain and their friends' parents, or perhaps their own parents, may be called away to serve in the military. Although you may think they are too young to understand what is happening, even very young children can absorb frightening events from the news or from conversations they overhear.

You teach children so much: how to walk, how to talk, how to share. You may wonder how you can possibly teach them and reassure them about a time of war. The good news is that many children have a certain amount of natural ability to bounce back from bad events; the better news is that it is possible to teach children the skills of resilience - the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress.

What are some tips that can help you teach your children resilience? As you use these tips, keep in mind that each child's journey along the road to resilience will be different and that your own knowledge of your child will guide you.

10 TIPS FOR PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN IN A TIME OF WAR

1. Talk with your children. When they have questions, answer them honestly but simply and with reassurance. Ask them what they think is happening, and listen to their answers. Be ready for questions that may be difficult to answer, such as, "Why do they hate us," and "Will Daddy die when he's fighting over there."
2. Use your family like a security blanket for your children: wrap them up in family closeness. Especially during a time of war, make sure your children have lots of family time. Spend more time with your children playing games, reading to them, or just holding them close.
3. Limit the amount of news your children watch during a time of war. Turn off the TV or radio when war coverage is on. You don't need to hide what's happening in the world from your children, but neither do they have to be exposed to constant stories about war. Put away newspapers and magazines that have lengthy photo coverage of war or frightening covers.
4. Young children like routines and rituals. During a time of war, map out a routine and stick to it. If bedtime is the time you read stories to your children, make sure you keep that time for stories. Your child may be less able to handle change at home when the world situation is unstable.
5. Make sure you take care of yourself. Your children read your face for clues as to how to feel. If they fall down and see concern on your face, they will be much more likely to decide that they are hurt. Similarly, if your face reflects the stress and fear you may feel in a time of war, they will pick up on that. Many people find that turning to a higher power,

whether through organized religion or privately, can help. Take care of yourself so that you can take care of your child.

6. Use play to help your children express their fears about what is happening. Encourage them to use art or pretend games to express what they may not be able to put into words.
7. Young children want to know that they will be all right. Reassure them that they will be protected. Have an emergency plan for the family and share whatever parts of it you think your children can understand. You might tell them, for example, that home is "base" if something happens, but that Aunt Carol's house is another safe place you can visit.
8. Watch your children for signs of fear and anxiety they may not be able to put into words. Have your children become extra clingy, needing more hugs and kisses than usual? Have your children started wetting the bed or sucking their thumb after you thought they had outgrown that behavior? They may be feeling the pressure of what is going on in the world around them.
9. Enlist your children's help. Just because your children are very young does not mean they can't do age-appropriate chores, even if it's just putting placemats on the table. If your children know that they have a role to play, and that they can help, they will feel more in control and more confident.
10. Put things in a positive perspective for your children. Your children have not been around long enough to know that things can change and that wars can end. But they may have experienced something bad or scary that they overcame and you can point out a time when they had courage before. When you talk about bad times, make sure you talk about the good things in the future as well.

You can teach your children resilience. But just because your children have learned resilience doesn't mean they won't have bad times. Bad times hurt, and your children will have times when they aren't happy. Resilience is a journey, and each child will take his own time along the way, just as each child walked or talked in his own time. Your child may benefit from some of the resilience strategies, while some children will benefit from other strategies. The skills of resilience you teach your child in a time of war will be useful to him even after war, and they are good skills to have in daily life.

You may feel that you need some help in teaching your child resilience. If you are feeling stuck or overwhelmed and unable to use the steps listed above, you may want to consider talking to someone who can help, such as a psychologist or other mental health professional. Turning to someone for guidance may help you help your child strengthen resilience and persevere in a time of war.

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RESILIENCE IN A TIME OF WAR: TIPS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

A time of war can be scary for young children, especially since terrorism has brought fear so close to home. Events are uncertain and their friends' parents, or perhaps their own parents, may be called away to serve in the military. They look to teachers as well as to parents to make them feel safe in a time of war.

As your child starts to study subjects that teach him about the world outside of his home, he will need your help to sort it all out. You may wonder how you can teach your child to move beyond the fears that a time of war brings. The good news is that, similar to the way that your child

learns reading and writing, he can learn the skills of resilience – the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress.

What are some tips that can help you teach your children resilience? As you use these tips, keep in mind that each child's journey along the road to resilience will be different and that your own knowledge of your child will guide you.

10 TIPS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN A TIME OF WAR

1. Talk with your child. When they have questions, answer them honestly but simply and with reassurance. Ask them what they think is happening, and listen to their answers. Don't discount their feelings - they may say they're afraid and you should be ready to tell them that fear is all right but that they must go on with life anyway. Use black-and-white language that leaves no room for doubt such as, "I will always take care of you."
2. Make your home a safe place emotionally for your child. Spend lots of family time with your child, especially during a time of war. Spend more time with your child playing games, reading with him, or just holding him close.
3. Limit the amount of news your child watches during a time of war. Turn off the TV or radio when war coverage is on. You don't need to hide what's happening in the world from your children, but neither do they have to be exposed to constant stories about war. Put away magazines and newspapers that have lengthy photo coverage of war or frightening covers. Monitor your child's Internet usage to ensure that he isn't going to sites that will give gore or sensationalized accounts of war.
4. Realize that the stresses of war may heighten daily stresses. Your child might normally be able to handle a failed test or teasing, but be understanding that he may respond with anger or bad behavior to stress that normally wouldn't rattle him. Reassure him that you just expect him to do his best.
5. Children are reassured by regular schedules. During a time of war, map out a routine and stick to it. If homework is completed at a certain time, make sure you keep that time for homework. Your child may be less able to handle change at home when the world situation is unstable.

6. Make sure you take care of yourself. If you don't, you may have less patience and less creativity at a time when your child needs both to reassure him about his own safety. Take care of yourself so that you can take care of your child. Many people find that turning to a higher power, whether through organized religion or privately, can help.
7. Children want to know that they will be all right. Reassure them that they will be protected. Have an emergency plan for the family and share whatever parts of it you think your child can understand. Share with them the emergency plans their schools have and prepare them – some schools shut down in an emergency with the children inside and your child needs to know he will be protected at school even if he is not with his parents. If your children have family in the military, help them to understand that this is their family member's job, just like their job is to go to school.
8. Watch your child for signs of fear and anxiety he or she may not be able to put into words. Has your child become extra clingy, needing more hugs and kisses than usual? Have your child's grades suddenly dropped? He may be feeling the pressure of what is going on in the world around him. Encourage him to write stories or draw pictures that show how he feels if he can't put his feelings into words.
9. Enlist your child's help. Just because your child is young does not mean he or she cannot do age-appropriate chores such as setting the table or cleaning his room. Make sure your child knows how his actions contribute to the entire family's well-being. If your child knows that he has a role to play, and that he can help, he will feel more in control and more confident.
10. Put things in a positive perspective for your child. Neither you nor your child may have been through a war before, but you should tell your child that wars end. Point out times when your child has faced up to and conquered something that may have frightened him, whether it was fear of the dark, or entering a new classroom for the first time. When you talk about bad times, make sure you talk about the good things in the future as well.

You can teach your child resilience. But just because your child learns resilience doesn't mean he won't have bad times. Bad times hurt, and your child will have times when he isn't happy. Resilience is a journey, and each child will take his or her own time along the way, just as each child learned to read and write in his own time. Your child may benefit from some of the resilience strategies, while some children will benefit from other strategies. The skills of resilience you teach your child in a time of war will be useful to him even after war, and they are good skills to have even in daily life.

You may feel that you need some help in teaching your child resilience. If you are feeling stuck or overwhelmed and unable to use the steps listed above, you may want to consider talking to someone who can help, such as a psychologist or other mental health professional. Turning to someone for guidance may help you help your child strengthen resilience and persevere in a time of war.

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RESILIENCE IN A TIME OF WAR: TIPS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILDREN

A time of war can be scary for children, even for older children, especially since terrorism has brought fear so close to home. Events are uncertain and their friends' parents, or perhaps their own parents, may be called away to serve in the military. They look to teachers and friends as well as to parents to make them feel safe in a time of war. As your child starts to study subjects that teach him about the world outside of his home, he will need your help to sort it all out. You may wonder how you can teach your child to move beyond the fears that a time of war brings. The good news is that, similar to the way your child learns reading and writing, he can learn the skills of resilience - the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress.

What are some tips that can help you teach your children resilience? As you use these tips, keep in mind that each child's journey along the road to resilience will be different and that your own knowledge of your child will guide you.

10 TIPS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILDREN IN A TIME OF WAR

1. Talk with your child whenever you can. Sometimes the best time to talk may be when you are driving your child somewhere, sometimes it may be when you are doing chores together that allows your child to focus on something else while he talks. When your children have questions, answer them honestly but simply and with reassurance. Ask them their opinion about what is happening and listen to their answers. Don't discount their feelings - they may say they're afraid or they may express hatred for people from a certain country or religion. Encourage them to avoid generalities and be honest about your own feelings, but leave your child with messages of hope and encouragement. You might say, "I get a little afraid too, but I know that we're prepared for whatever happens and I know we'll get through it." Your child probably is old enough to appreciate some gray areas in your own feelings, but you should leave no room for doubt when you talk about how you will do whatever it takes to keep him safe.
2. Make your home a safe place emotionally for your child. In middle school, cliques and bullies can make life difficult for your child at school - home should be a haven. Your child is at an age when he or she may start wanting solitude, but be ready to provide lots of family time for your child when he needs it, especially during a time of war. Spend more time with your child playing games, reading with him, or just doing side by side chores.
3. Limit the amount of news your child watches during a time of war. You don't need to hide what's happening in the world from your children, but neither do they have to be exposed to constant stories about war. Put away magazines and newspapers that have lengthy photo coverage of war or frightening covers. Monitor your child's Internet usage to ensure that he isn't going to sites that will give gory or sensationalized accounts of war. When you do watch the news, use it as a teaching tool and discuss what you have just seen with your child.
4. Realize that the stresses of war may heighten daily stresses. Your child might already be feeling extreme highs and lows because of hormonal levels in his body; the uncertainty during a time of war can make these shifts seem more extreme. Be understanding but firm when a child responds to stress with bad behavior. Reassure him that you just expect him to do his best.
5. Middle school offers your child more choices about how he spends his time. It can be reassuring for home to be a constant, especially in uncertain times. During a time of war, map out a routine and

stick to it. If homework is completed at a certain time, make sure you keep that time for homework. Your child may be less able to handle change at home when the world situation is unstable.

6. Make sure you take care of yourself. If you don't, you may have less patience and less creativity at a time when your child needs both to reassure him about his own safety. Many people find that turning to a higher power, whether through organized religion or privately, can help. Take care of yourself so that you can take care of your child.
7. Children want to know that they will be all right. Reassure them that they will be protected. Have an emergency plan for the family and share it with your child. Give your child instructions for what to do in an emergency and give them a list of your phone numbers - work and home - that they can keep in their backpack. Share with them the emergency plans their schools have and prepare them -- some schools shut down in an emergency with the children inside and your child needs to know he will be protected at school even if he is not with his parents. If they have family in the military, obtain as much information as you can about where their family member will be, how long they'll be gone, and how often their family member will be able to contact them.
8. Watch your child for signs of fear and anxiety he may not be able to put into words. Have your child's grades suddenly dropped? Is your child asking about the welfare of a friend during the war, when he may actually be afraid for himself? He may be feeling the pressure of what is going on in the world around him. If he has trouble putting his feelings into words, encourage him to use journaling or art to express his fears.
9. Enlist your child's help, whether it's a chore or an opinion about a family activity. Include your child in any volunteer activity you do. Make sure your child knows how his actions contribute to the entire family's well-being. If your child knows that he has a role to play, and that he can help, he will feel more in control and more confident.
10. Put things in a positive perspective for your child. Neither you nor your child may have been through a war before, but you should tell your child that wars end. Point out times when your child has faced up to and conquered something that may have frightened him, whether it was fear of the dark, or entering a new classroom for the first time. Point out the important things that have stayed the same, even while the outside world is changing. When you talk about bad times, make sure you talk about the good things in the future as well. Teach your child about how to think positive thoughts or think about a particular song to relax himself in a time of stress.

You can teach your child resilience. But just because your child learns resilience doesn't mean he won't have bad times. Bad times hurt, and your child will have times when he isn't happy. Resilience is a journey, and each child will take his own time along the way, just as each child acquires the skills of independence and negotiates the social changes of middle school in his own time. Your child may benefit from some of the resilience strategies, while some children will benefit from other strategies. The skills of resilience you teach your child in a time of war will be useful to him even after war, and they are good skills to have in daily life.

You may feel that you need some help in teaching your child resilience. If you are feeling stuck or overwhelmed and unable to use the steps listed above, you may want to consider talking to someone who can help, such as a psychologist or other mental health professional. Turning to someone for guidance may help you help your child strengthen resilience and persevere in a time of war.

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RESILIENCE IN A TIME OF WAR: TIPS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF TEENS

Although your teen can tower over you, he still is very young and can keenly feel the fear and uncertainty of a time of war, especially since terrorism has brought fear so close to home. Events are uncertain and their friends' parents, their own parents, or maybe even their older friends, may be called away to serve in the military. It may seem that their friends' opinions are the only ones that matter, but teens still look to teachers and parents to make them feel safe in a time of war.

As your teen hovers on the brink of adulthood, you may wonder how you can teach him to move beyond the fears that a time of war brings. The good news is that, just as your child learns to play basketball or a musical instrument, he can learn the skills of resilience - the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress.

What are some tips that can help you teach your teen resilience? As you use these tips, keep in mind that each person's journey along the road to resilience will be different and that your own knowledge of your child will guide you.

10 TIPS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF TEENS IN A TIME OF WAR

1. Talk with your teen whenever you can, even if it seems he doesn't want to talk to you. Sometimes the best time to talk may be when you are in the car together, sometimes it may be when you are doing chores together that allow your teen to focus on something else while he talks. When your teens have questions, answer them honestly but with reassurance. Ask them their opinion about what is happening and listen to their answers. Don't discount their feelings - they may say they're afraid or they may express hatred for people from a certain country or religion. They may say things you consider outrageous just to test the opinion out. Encourage them to avoid generalities and be honest about your own feelings, but leave your teen with messages of hope and encouragement. You might say, "I get a little afraid too, but I know that we're prepared for whatever happens and I know we'll get through it." Your teen is old enough to appreciate that you may feel uncertain or afraid as well, but you should leave no room for doubt when you talk about how you will do whatever it takes to keep him safe.
2. Make your home a safe place emotionally for your teen. In high school, taunting and bullying can intensify - home should be a haven. Your child may prefer to be with his friends rather than spend time with you, but be ready to provide lots of family time for him when he needs it, especially during a time of war. Set aside family time that includes his friends.
3. Encourage your teen to take "news breaks." Constant exposure to war coverage can heighten a teen's anxiety. Your teen may want to stay informed - he may even have homework that requires him to watch the news. But try to limit the amount of news he takes in, whether it's from television, newspapers or magazines, or the Internet. Watching a news report once informs him; watching it repeatedly just adds to the stress and contributes no new knowledge. When you do watch the news, use it as a catalyst for discussion with your teen about his feelings and fears.
4. Realize that the stresses of war may heighten daily stresses. Your teen might already be feeling extreme highs and lows because of hormonal levels in his body; the uncertainty during a time of war can make these shifts seem more extreme. Be understanding but firm when a teen responds to stress with angry or sullen behavior. Reassure him that you just expect him to do his best.
5. High school offers your child more choices and more freedom. It can be reassuring for home to be a constant, especially in uncertain times. During a time of war, map out a routine and stick to it.

Remember that, even though teens may like change and action in the rest of their lives, they often still want home to remain unchanged, and your teen may be even less able to handle change at home when the world situation is unstable.

6. Make sure you take care of yourself. If you don't, you may have less patience and less creativity at a time when your teen may be testing both as he negotiates the balance between pulling away from you and wanting to feel safe during a time of war. Many people find that turning to a higher power, whether through organized religion or privately, can help. Take care of yourself so that you can take care of your teen.
7. Teens may act like they feel immortal, but at bottom they still want to know that they will be all right. Engage your teen in planning your emergency strategy and go over what each family member will do in different scenarios such as what to do if a military emergency occurs while they are at school versus at home, and what to do if the teen is out driving during a military emergency. If they have a cell phone, have a plan for them to call in to a central family number to report their safety. If they have family or friends in the military, obtain as much information as you can about where that person will be, how long they'll be gone, and how often they'll be able to contact your teen.
8. Watch your teen for signs of fear and anxiety he or she may not be able to put into words. Have your teen's grades suddenly dropped? Is he unusually sullen or withdrawn? He may be feeling the pressure of what is going on in the world around him. If he has trouble putting his feelings into words, encourage him to use journaling or art to express his fears.
9. Enlist your teen's help, whether it's a chore or an opinion about a family activity. Include your teen in your volunteer activities, or encourage him to volunteer on his own for something that has meaning for him. Make sure your teen knows how his actions contribute to the entire family's well-being. If your teen knows that he has a role to play, and that he can help someone less fortunate, he will feel more in control and more confident.
10. Put things in a positive perspective for your teen. Neither you nor your teen may have been through a war before, but you should tell your teen that wars end. Point out times when your teen has faced up to and conquered something that may have frightened him, whether it was asking someone out on a date or applying for a job. Point out the important things that have stayed the same, even while the outside world is changing. When you talk about bad times, make sure you talk about the good things in the future as well. Teach your teen relaxation techniques such as thinking positive thoughts or using music to relax himself in a time of stress.

You can teach your teen resilience. But just because your teen learns resilience doesn't mean he won't have bad times. Bad times hurt, and your teen will have times when he isn't happy. Resilience is a journey, and each person will take his or her own time along the way, just as each teen acquires the skills of driving a car or negotiates through the dating world in high school in his own time. Your teen may benefit from some of the resilience strategies, while some teens will benefit from other strategies. The skills of resilience you teach your teen in a time of war will be useful to him even after war, and they are good skills to have even in daily life.

You may feel that you need some help in teaching your child resilience. If you are feeling stuck or overwhelmed and unable to use the steps listed above, you may want to consider talking to someone who can help, such as a psychologist or other mental health professional. Turning to someone for guidance may help you help your child strengthen resilience and persevere in a time of war.

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RESILIENCE IN A TIME OF WAR: ADAPTING TO WAR-TIME STRESS

What does war mean to you?

It may seem like the war has nothing to do with you. On the other hand, the news can seem overwhelming. You may have a friend in JROTC or ROTC, or you may have a relative in the military. And, with the threat of terrorism, the war can get close to home pretty quickly.

You keep hearing about being prepared for war - is there something you can do to prepare mentally?

The good news is that you can learn the skills of resilience - the ability to adapt well in the face of hard times; disasters like hurricanes, earthquakes or fires; tragedy; threats; or even high stress.

What are some tips that can help you learn resilience? As you use these tips, keep in mind that each person's journey along the road to resilience will be different - what works for you may not work for your friends

10 TIPS IN A TIME OF WAR

1. **Talk About It.** Talk with your friends and, yes, even with your parents. Understand that your parents may have more experience with war than you do, and they may be afraid as well. In fact, it may be harder for them to talk about it than it is for you! Don't be afraid to express your opinion, even if your parent or friend takes the opposite view. Ask questions and listen to the answers. And, understand that some people may express hatred for people from a certain country or region - it doesn't mean that you have to. Get connected to your community, whether it's as part of a church group or a high school group.
2. **Turn It Off.** You want to stay informed - you may even have homework that requires you to watch the news. But try to limit the amount of news you take in, whether it's from television, newspapers or magazines, or the Internet. Watching a news report once informs you; watching it over and over again just adds to the stress and contributes no new knowledge.
3. **Cut Yourself Some Slack.** The stresses of war may heighten daily stresses. Your emotions might already be all over the map because of hormones and physical changes; the uncertainty during a time of war can make these shifts seem more extreme. Be prepared for this and go a little easy on yourself, and on your friends.
4. **Create A No-War Zone.** Make your room or apartment a "no war zone" -- home should be a haven free from the stress and anxieties associated with war. Understand that your parents and siblings are under war-time stresses as well and may want to spend a little more time than usual with you.
5. **Stick To The Program.** Spending time in high school or on a college campus means more choices; so let home be your constant. During a time of war, map out a routine and stick to it. You'll be doing all kinds of new things, but don't forget the routines that give you comfort, whether it's the things you do before class, going out to lunch, or have a nightly phone call with a friend.
6. **Take Care Of Yourself.** Be sure to take of yourself - physically, mentally and spiritually. And get sleep. If you don't, you may be more grouchy and nervous at a time when you have to stay sharp. There's a lot going on, and it's going to be tough to face if you're falling asleep on your feet.
7. **Take Control.** Make sure you are included in any emergency planning at home, school or work. Go over what each person will do in different scenarios such as what to do if a military emergency occurs while you're at school versus at home. If you've got family or friends in the military, get as much information as you can about where that person will be, how long they'll be gone, and how often they'll be able to contact you.

8. **Express Yourself.** War can bring up a bunch of conflicting emotions, but sometimes, it's just too hard to talk to someone about what you're feeling. If talking isn't working, do something else to capture your emotions like start a journal, or create art.
9. **Help Somebody.** Nothing gets your mind off your own problems like solving someone else's. Try volunteering in your community or at your school, cleaning-up around the house or apartment, or helping a friend with his or her homework.
10. **Put Things In A Positive Perspective.** War may be all anyone is talking about now. But eventually, wars end. If you're worried about whether you've got what it takes to get through this, think back on a time when you faced up to your fears, whether it was asking someone on a date or applying for a job. Learn some relaxation techniques, whether it's thinking of a particular song in times of stress, or just taking a deep breath to calm down. Think about the important things that have stayed the same, even while the outside world is changing. When you talk about bad times, make sure you talk about good times as well.

You can learn resilience. But just because you learn resilience doesn't mean you won't feel stressed or anxious. You might have times when you aren't happy - and that's OK. Resilience is a journey, and each person will take his or her own time along the way. You may benefit from some of the resilience tips above, while some of your friends may benefit from others. The skills of resilience you learn in a time of war will be useful even after war, and they are good skills to have every day.

You may feel that you need some help learning resilience. Here are some places you can look for help:

PLACES TO LOOK FOR HELP

A psychologist can help you cope with many of life's problems. The American Psychological Association does not provide referral services. For a referral to a psychologist in your area call 1-800-964-2000. The operator will use your zip code to locate and connect you with the referral system in your area.

Getting help when you need it is crucial in building resilience. Beyond caring family members and friends, people often find it helpful to turn to:

Self-help and support groups. Such community groups can aid teens struggling with hardship by sharing information, ideas and emotions so that group members know they're not alone in experiencing difficulty.

Books and other publications by people who have survived a war. These stories can motivate readers to find a strategy that might work for them personally.

Online resources. Information on the Web can be a helpful source of ideas, though the quality of the information can vary. For example, APA offers a variety of online resources through its HelpCenter.

For many, using their own resources and the kinds of help listed above may be sufficient for building resilience in a time of war. At times, however, an individual might get stuck or have difficulty making progress on the road to resilience.

A licensed mental health professional such as a psychologist can assist people in developing an appropriate strategy for moving forward. It's important to get professional help if you struggle through daily living. Information contained in this brochure should not be used as a substitute for professional health and mental health care or consultation. Individuals who believe they may need or benefit from care should consult a psychologist or other licensed health/mental health professional.

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RESILIENCE IN A TIME OF WAR

In times of war, it's not unusual for people to have feelings of uncertainty. No one knows how long a war will last or how it will affect our lives. We may feel uncertain about the future and anxious about events that are out of our control.

You may react differently to a war today because of the impact of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Terrorism creates fear and uncertainty about the future. Because terrorist acts are random and unpredictable, war today poses a new kind of threat, one with which most Americans have little experience. You may feel more afraid, insecure and vulnerable as a result of concerns that the United States could be attacked again.

We do not all respond the same way to war. Someone with previous experience in war or other types of conflict may unexpectedly recall distressing thoughts and feelings from that previous experience. Those of us who have family and friends in the reserves or military may worry over their well-being.

War affects us differently. And we all have an individual and unique way of dealing with stressful situations in a time of war. Building resilience -- the ability to adapt well to unexpected changes and events -- can help us manage stress and feelings of anxiety and uncertainty related to war.

However, being resilient does not mean that you won't experience difficulty or distress. Emotional pain and sadness are common when we have suffered major trauma or personal loss in a time of war, or even when we hear of someone else's loss or trauma.

We all can develop resilience. It involves behaviors, thoughts and actions that can be learned over time. Following are steps to building resilience that can help you adapt to unexpected events and stressful situations in a time of war.

10 Steps for Resilience in a Time of War

1. **Make connections.** Keep in touch with family, friends and others. Connecting with people provides social support and strengthens resilience. Some find comfort in connecting with a higher power, whether through organized religion or privately.
2. **Help yourself by helping others.** Assisting others in a time of need can be empowering, such as volunteering at a community organization or helping families of active reservists or military personnel serving in the war.
3. **Maintain a daily routine.** Keeping up with your daily routine of work, errands, household chores and hobbies provides you with a feeling of stability when the world around you seems chaotic. Sticking with a routine can be comforting to your children, as well.
4. **Take care of yourself.** Make time to eat properly, exercise, and rest. Schedule time to do things you enjoy such as hobbies and social activities. Caring for yourself and even having fun will help you stay balanced and enable you to better deal with stressful times.

5. **Give yourself a "news" break.** Be sure to control the amount of time you and your family spend watching and reading war-related news coverage. Although it's natural to seek out the news to keep informed, too much news can make you more anxious. Perhaps limit your news intake to no more than one hour a day, and try not to watch the news right before you go to bed, when you need to "wind down." It's okay to turn off the TV or radio and allow yourself to focus on non-war related things.
6. **Have a plan.** Having an emergency plan in place will make you feel in control and prepared for the unexpected. Establish a clear plan for how you, your family and friends will respond and connect in the event of a crisis. Have a family or neighborhood meeting to talk about who to call in emergencies or designate a place to meet if you can't reach someone by phone. Make a plan for your pets and a list of items you will need to take in an emergency.
7. **Prepare a Security kit.** When pulling together an emergency kit, remember to include those things that give you comfort and security such as a favorite book, a journal or pictures of loved ones. Also include a list of your loved ones' phone numbers so that you can re-establish connections with them as soon as possible.
8. **Nurture a positive view of yourself.** Recall the ways you have successfully handled hardships in the past, such as the loss of a loved one, a divorce or major illness. Draw on these skills to meet current challenges. Trust yourself to solve problems and make appropriate decisions.
9. **Keep things in perspective.** Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Remember that wars end and circumstances can ultimately improve. Previous generations have faced war and gone on to prosper - use their examples to inspire you.
10. **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** An optimistic and positive outlook enables you to see the good things in your life and can keep you going even in the hardest times. There are positive things in everyone's life such as good health, a comfortable home and strong friendships. Taking the time to identify and appreciate them will enhance your outlook and help you persevere.

Resilience can be an important part of your emergency preparedness kit. It is a psychological tool that can help us deal with anxiety, fear and distressful events in a time of war.

Developing resilience is a personal journey. An approach to building resilience that works for you might not work for someone else. If you are feeling stuck or overwhelmed and unable to use the steps listed above, you may want to consider talking to someone who can help, such as a psychologist or other mental health professional. Turning to someone for guidance may help you strengthen resilience and persevere in a time of war. Information contained in this brochure should not be used as a substitute for professional health and mental health care or consultation. Individuals who believe they may need or benefit from care should consult a psychologist or other licensed health/mental health professional.

For more information, contact the Mental Health Association of Fauquier County, 540-341-8732 or www.fauquier-mha.com, or the National Mental Health Association at 800-969-NMHA (6642) or www.nmha.org.