

Imposed and unexpected changes are often the hardest to accept. When confronted with a change like a pandemic, we are task to fight the virus and deal with the emotional contagion that is generates. During these tough and uncertain times, most of us can imagine no upside. How can we navigate turbulent times, embrace the process, and come to terms with this new reality?

**"When you come out of this pandemic, you may not be the same person that walked into it.**

**And that's okay."**

1.

**Continue to show up**

2.

**Identify and grieve your losses with clarity and compassion**

3.

**Give yourself permission to honor your emotions**

4.

**Play the hard- game and stay with the process**

5.

**Develop your own "uncertainty adjustments"**

**BE GENTLE WITH YOURSELF** – we're in extraordinary times where reality has insisted that we make vast adjustments all at once. When our emotional bandwidth is tugged like this, we need to be gentle, flexible, and patient with ourselves. If you're feeling a bit down on a given day – the pandemic blues – give yourself permission to feel that way. Look to cut yourself some slack.

**REMEMBER TO MAKE 'YOU' A PRIORITY** – now that we're working at home and everyone is hunkered down together, it's easy to become hyper-focused on everyone else's needs – because they're all right in front of you. The dog, your little one, your partner or roommate. Remember to put yourself on that totem pole. Find ways of taking care of yourself – a warm bath, reflective walk – and time for mini-rewards, like, dark chocolate bites!

**FOSTER ACCEPTANCE** – Acceptance is different than contentment. We don't have to like the present situation, but we do have to find a way of co-existing with it. Think of acceptance as energy conservation. Denying the present reality takes energy that we need to press forward. Acceptance is also different from defeat; we choose to accept in order to move on. It is a survival mechanism.

**TALK, CONNECT** – we know that in this time of isolation, it's easy to get lost in our own heads. Over time, this can become increasingly lonely, isolating and emotionally draining. Find ways to connect with colleagues, friends, and family. It can just be a quick check-in, but we want to create opportunities to share, laugh and wonder together. Connecting provides nurturance, releases pleasure hormones and helps sustain us.

**FIND YOUR MANTRA** – is there a phrase that helps you get through challenging times? "This too shall pass." "I got this." Having a ready-to-go affirmation at your fingertips provides an emotional anchor and allows the brain to move in a positive direction rather than into worry thoughts.

**DON'T JUST DO SOMETHING. STAND THERE.** – while we do need to do cognitive work around adjusting to the new normal, there's another way in which our best response may not be about doing anything. But, about being, just being ourselves. In other words, sometimes our best friend is simply time. And just allowing our adaptation to naturally occur in time.