



Organizational Resiliency in Managing Challenges within Survivor-Serving Organizations

Webinar Peer Exchange Participant Comments

September 30, 2020

Words that represent resiliency:

Ability for Joy	Enough	Persistence
Acceptance	Faith	Power
Adaptability	Faith	Protection
Agility	Flexibility	Renewal
Balance	Forgiving	Steadfast
Bandwidth	Future	Strength
Believe	Grace	Stretch
Belonging	Grit	Survival
Big-Girl-Pants	Growth	Survivor
Bounce-Back	Gumption	Sustain
Brave	Health	Sustainable
Breathing	Honoring Yourself	Teamwork
Capable	Hope	Thriving
Change	Humility	Transformation
Community	Motion	Vulnerability
Compassion	Nimble-ness	Wisdom
Courage	Overcoming	Withstand
Empowerment	Patience	

As a leader, personal strategies to cultivate resilience through life challenges:

- Accountability-buddies
- Acupuncture
- Acknowledge productivity may look different than it used to
- Affirmation journal
- Affirmations- it's ok to not be 100 and repeat
- Animals at worksite
- Applying for COVID funds for extra staff pay
- Ask others for help
- Asking about peoples' kids and pets
- Asking about how may I help
- Be a listening ear
- Be a positive role model for coworkers
- Being as helpful, positive and thankful as I can to my coworkers
- Being transparent
- Boundaries
- Breathing exercises
- Checking in often with supervisors
- Comedy (movies and improvised)
- Communication - talk it through
- Community
- Counseling
- Create a community of care
- Create space for authentic feelings
- Create emotional safety plans
- Culturally centered cooking/sharing
- Eating healthy and on time
- Empathy
- Encourage employees to take PTO and mental health days, self-care
- Encourage others to put themselves and their families first
- Exercise
- Express your needs clearly and work towards them
- Flexible schedules
- Focusing outwardly
- Free therapy for advocates
- Fun committee!
- Gardening
- Get outside
- Give each other space to make mistakes, learn and grow
- Giving roses for the number of years of service
- Glass of wine outside, no phone
- Gratitude is so important!
- Gratitude journal
- Healing (revising, reclaiming justice)
- Holding space for staff to be whole people
- Hope
- Intentional check in with a trusted person
- Internal resiliency practices
- Journal
- Keeping hope
- Knowing limits and when to walk away
- Laugh therapy
- Laughing, laughing with my toddler
- Leading by example
- Lean on community
- Lean on friends and family
- Liberation circle
- Listen
- Listen worship songs
- Maslow's hierarchy - making sure staff's primary needs are met so they can be ready to be resilient at work
- Meditation
- Mindfulness exercises
- Modeling self-care to staff

- Modeling that vulnerability is ok, and that we don't need to separate the personal and professional
- Modeling to your staff and colleagues
- Music
- Native American ceremonies
- Nature, enjoy nature
- Netflix binge on comedy movies
- Open communication
- Open door policy being ready to talk
- Patience
- Personal and professional check-ins
- Pets, spending time with pets
- Planning vacation ahead of time
- Policies and practices that support setting boundaries
- Positivity
- Practicing good boundaries
- Prayer
- Promoting self-care at the forefront of our minds at all times
- Providing space and support
- Quiet time
- Raising awareness and making decisions while being present
- Reach out and support group share
- Reading
- Recognize that folks may not be able to perform at the same level in this context and being okay with that
- Reflect before responding, personal golden rule
- Reflect, spiritual guidance, make necessary changes
- Reflective time in quiet space
- Running and hiking
- Self-care, radical self-care
- Self-care practices, exercising, eating well, sleep, yoga, time outside, reading, work/life boundaries, pets
- Singing
- Sleeping enough
- Social media detox
- Somatic practices (body movement practices)
- Space for everyone to share personal challenges
- Spiritual connections
- Spiritual practice
- Stating intentions
- Stay positive
- Stop feeling guilty
- Tai chi, 10 step!
- Surround myself with friends and family
- Taking breaks, (break from routine)
- Taking a step back and enjoy all I have
- Taking care of myself helps me take care of my staff
- Taking sick days rather than pushing through when not feeling well
- Talking about self-care and vicarious trauma in team meetings and individual supervision
- Therapy
- Time with family, grandkids
- Walking, walking in nature, walking meditation
- Checking-in with colleagues
- Wellness days with staff
- Yoga, yoga during work hours (offered to staff).

These strategies help cultivate agency, empathy, relationship building, perspective taking, and re-fueling energy.

Organizational Resiliency Strategies to Address Challenges. Chat comments.

- ✓ Burnout is real and leaders have a responsibility to see it and say something
- ✓ Acknowledging the impact working remotely has on staff
- ✓ We know now that so much of our work can be done remotely and creatively when needed
- ✓ Assume everyone is doing the best they can - document all communication so you can refer back to things if you forget
- ✓ Open communication is powerful regardless of the type/venue
- ✓ Be more creative in work-from-home opportunities for those with childcare needs
- ✓ Understanding how fear of COVID in relation to how it will effect staff personally and be open to discussion about it
- ✓ Overcoming resentment of staff because some positions were able to telework and other positions you had to come in to do your work
- ✓ Recognizing that this a new experience for us all
- ✓ In prevention programs, we are focused more on being a SUPPORT to schools, instead of pushing programming
- ✓ Having compassion and empathy for each other
- ✓ We pay a stipend for staff that work at home as an acknowledgement of use of space.
- ✓ Phone a friend! We've been so used to seeing each other in the office and benefitting from that physical/seen support among coworkers.
- ✓ Having our video chats help so we still feel together
- ✓ Acknowledge what you're really feeling
- ✓ We all are confronting COVID, but here in California we also had fires and a lot of staff had to evacuate, giving staff the freedom to take the time they need to just take care of themselves (immediately step away from work)
- ✓ Working remotely doesn't allow for some of the "hallway" conversations or in passing connections. Creating this remotely for folks has been key for connection
- ✓ Everyone has a different level of tech knowledge
- ✓ Working remotely has actually been a relief, now that the expectations are clearer. There is peace and less stress by being in the office part time.
- ✓ As a leader of the organization, I learned that there are things that can't be fixed and that instead listening is enough and is an action
- ✓ We came to paying a monthly stipend for all staff working out of their homes, all got work cell phones and laptops, some tables and chairs too
- ✓ 32 hours week: We got clearance from our major government funders that whatever is in our existing leave policies is covered by grant funding (just like PTO and Holidays differ from agency to agency). Haven't had anyone blink an eye all year!

Strategies in managing challenges and building resiliency, as a leader and as an organization. Registration comments.

- ✓ Adjusting expectations, focusing energy on controllables, being open as possible with supervisor and supervisees about challenges
- ✓ All of our best plans are worth nothing if we aren't communicating with our staff.
- ✓ As a leader, holding space to talk about the conflicts that are happening is very important, even if tense moments may occur
- ✓ Began teambuilding work two years ago, working on culture, training on individual and organizational resiliency
- ✓ Board development, active and engaged board has been very helpful
- ✓ Building trust with staff, keeping a calm demeanor in the face of crisis/stress, encouraging staff to use leave & flex time
- ✓ Building trust: focusing on staff retention, financial transparency with board, listening to community partners
- ✓ Coaching
- ✓ Collaboration and partnership
- ✓ Collaboration with other agencies with similar experiences
- ✓ Communication between work staff and willingness to be flexible
- ✓ Consistency
- ✓ Creating a vicarious trauma policy, integrating resiliency building into supervision and team meetings
- ✓ Creating a vicarious trauma prevention team that provides tools to staff for additional coping strategies
- ✓ Cross training in different positions, developing a strong succession plan, planning for funding diversification
- ✓ Cultural healing services - Native American
- ✓ Detailed planning and coordination with other organizations
- ✓ Developing concise protocols and ensuring all staff are aware of the procedures
- ✓ Dismantlement shame and culture perfection/ failing forward (still a work in progress)
- ✓ Expressing vulnerabilities and communicating clearly
- ✓ Flex time; use of vacation; more autonomy; zoom meetings; weekly "news"
- ✓ Flexibility/adaptability, focus on PTO/encouraging self-care
- ✓ Fluid/positive feedback
- ✓ Focus on institutional knowledge retention, policy review and reform
- ✓ Having a well-informed team, internal support
- ✓ Have as many plans as possible in place, so that you have something to refer to
- ✓ Refer to the sanctuary model regularly to address power and control dynamics
- ✓ Internal surveys, continual weekly trainings across departments; and focus groups with clients.
- ✓ Introducing Healing Justice into our work.
- ✓ Learning, individual, cohort, and small group, sharing, and support
- ✓ Listening, building and supporting longevity, staff wellness, team building
- ✓ Mindfulness
- ✓ Offering staff wellness vouchers to things/services that they identify that help them to heal
- ✓ Open communication, collaborative problem solving

- ✓ Openness with staff, board and clients. Listening to all voices and getting everyone on board with changes and challenges.
- ✓ Our strength is in our mission, staying focused
- ✓ Patience, respect, hope and communication
- ✓ Pause and ask questions to collect all key information (done at the county level)
- ✓ Professionally support staff even while physically working apart
- ✓ Providing open and confidential spaces for staff to talk to one another about how they are holding
- ✓ Raw transparency within our management team, devoting greater efforts to hear from staff/stakeholders
- ✓ Recognizing the stress that uncertainty of the pandemic and leadership transition has had on employees,
- ✓ Reflective management, utilizing the concept of servant leadership, frequent appreciation of staff
- ✓ Regular but not overbearing communication
- ✓ Regular meetings, check-ins
- ✓ Regular resilience practice with external facilitation support, affinity groups, wellness meetings, retreats
- ✓ Seek expert assistance, look for solutions
- ✓ Self-care, mentor support, outside learning, mindfulness meetings, self-care reminders
- ✓ Shared leadership
- ✓ Solid staff, staff outings, staff retention focus
- ✓ Staff engagement committee
- ✓ Staying healthy and grounded to lead effectively
- ✓ Strategic plan and consultation
- ✓ Strong and bold leadership and teams, strong management team
- ✓ Strong policies
- ✓ Support each other over the phone on a daily basis
- ✓ Support from superiors with making hard decisions
- ✓ SWOT assessment and planning with board
- ✓ Teambuilding, teamwork, mutual support and appreciation,
- ✓ Transparency in decision making - authentic communication - holding space to talk about challenges/solutions
- ✓ Transparency, consistent, continual communication.
- ✓ Trauma informed care and environment
- ✓ Trauma Stewardship book study, on-going discussion about secondary trauma
- ✓ Understanding that change always involves some form of loss and expressing acknowledgement/value of that loss to those experiences
- ✓ Uplifting community voices
- ✓ Using TEAMS to create a team atmosphere from home, finding webinars for ways to support staff, pointing to positives

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-TA-AX-K047, awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.