Building personal and professional resilience during times of change

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• Setting and defining the context
• Exploring resilience
• Navigating change
• Sharing with, and learning from, peers
• Confirming actions
• Summary and questions
Simple show of hands

1. My institution is currently experiencing change
2. There are current/planned changes at my institution that will have an impact on me
3. I am concerned/worried about changes that may be made to my job and/or my team
• Change is one of the few certainties
• How we react to, or deal with, change is not a certainty
• We all have the capacity for resilience in our personal and professional lives
• We all have the capacity to reflect on, and develop, our resilience
• We all have the capacity to control how we react to change
Our concerns about change are real

- Identity is a process: continuous; changing; reflexive; and without a defined end point
- This gives us freedom to create new, or redefine existing, identities
- We are not limited to a single ‘identity’; we all experience multiplicity
- We all constantly reassert, reconsider and reconceptualise our identities
- Which all means that **any actuality, expectation or threat of change is very likely to provoke concerns about who or what we are**
Resilience

- An individual’s ability to adapt to stress and/or adversity
- A process rather than a trait
- The effective balancing of negative emotions with positive ones
- The ability to return to the original form after being bent, compressed or stretched
On your own

- Identify an example where you had a negative emotional reaction to change (e.g. angry that a colleague was promoted ahead of you)
- Identify an example where you were resilient in the face of change (e.g. managing when a colleague goes on sick leave for six weeks)

On your table
Discuss why you may have reacted differently in each case
Elements that underpin resilience

- Mutual, reciprocal support and caring
- Ability to make plans and to follow them through
- Confidence in one’s strengths and abilities
- Communication and problem solving
- Able to manage strong impulses and feelings

Each of these can be developed over time
Maintaining balance

- Track your week – do you need to ‘unplug’
- Full attention – multi-tasking is a myth
- Check in with yourself – aches, stress, rhythms
- Be bed ready – the magic hour before bed
- Hold up a mirror – reflect on your feelings
- Learn to say ‘no’ – focus on priorities
- Re-evaluate – life/work balance is dynamic
Ways to help develop/build resilience

1. Maintain good relationships - family, friends and colleagues
2. Accept circumstances that cannot be changed
3. Embrace opportunities for self-discovery and take time to process experiences with a colleague/friend
4. Keep a long-term perspective, recognise the broader context and avoid rash decisions
5. Take care of your mind and body – sleep, relaxation and exercise
6. Develop self-confidence
Quick recap

- Change is one of the few genuine certainties
- How we choose to react is not a certainty

- “Escape coping”
  Avoidance / Denial / Resistance
- “Control coping”
  Proactive / Engaged / Involved

- Embracing change as a ‘change agent’ leads to participation and influence
On your tables
Choose one example from below
How would a resilient person deal with this situation?

Example A – Your manager will be seconded to your partner University 0.4FTE for 8 weeks. You and the rest of the team will make up the shortfall.

Example B – The Dean of Higher Education has confirmed that your department will be merged with two others in an institutional restructure, effective from 1 August 2016.

Feedback to the room
On your tables
How will YOU be resilient?

Identify a real example of change, either current or expected. With the help of your partner or group, identify how you could/will deal with it.

If time allows, we will try this more than once. If not, use it as an exercise for another time.
Resilient approaches

- Identify and accept that “I am worried”
- Keep an eye on the bigger picture
- Talk with my colleagues about it (good for me, and for them)
- Maintain work life balance (continue to go to the gym, see friends etc.)
- Work out what I can control and what I can’t
- Affirm the positives and opportunities (don’t reinforce with negative speak)
- Seeking a balance between “solving the problem” and “acknowledging the situation”
I commit to...

A chance to confirm personal actions and affirmations that have come out of this session.

1) Complete a commitment form (including email address)
2) Leave the sheet with me
3) Once you’ve had time to forget the session and have returned to old habits, I will follow up by email 😊.
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