



MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE MANITOBA

## Fact Sheet | Positive Mental Health and Resilience

**Positive mental health** is not defined by the absence of mental illness or mental health concerns. Most people will experience a mental health issue at some point in their life. Positive mental health means having the tools, resources and resilience to live with ups and downs in moods, symptoms and life challenges.

**Positive mental health** depends on:

- Having a sense of real control or ability to manage most aspects of life and make choices- empowerment
- Being able to cope to with life's challenges and typical ups and downs.
- Functioning well mentally – with general clarity and focus.
- Being optimistic about life
- Having hope for the future – being able to look ahead.
- Being generally physically healthy
- Getting enough sleep
- A sense of inclusion or belonging in family and/or community
- Emotional resilience – an ability to get through hard times and setbacks



### **Mental Health can be negatively affected by:**

- Stigma/discrimination, racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia
- Loss of family or loved ones
- Abuse or bullying
- Lack of basic needs – housing, food, medicine
- Violence, addiction, lack of safety, poor housing

### **Resilience:**

- We are all born with a level of inner strength or resilience.
- Can be developed and strengthened at any age.
- Allows someone to bounce back from setbacks and disappointments.

### **What Helps:**

- Individual willingness and ability to accept that there will be good and bad times ahead. This openness makes us stronger and more able to cope mentally and emotionally when times are tough.
- When we are able to understand our reactions and triggers to difficult experiences, we are in a better position to create strategies to manage them.
- Supportive family, relationships, connections through work, school, volunteering, places of worship.
- Basic needs being met for food, clothes, housing and medical care.
- Internal resilience: the ability to rebound emotionally, psychologically and physically when times are hard.
- Community Support – it is important the general community understand the challenges of mental health and that all levels of community and government work towards reducing barriers, stigma and promoting positive well-being for all.

***Resources at MHERC***

**THE RESILIENCE TOOLKIT: POWERFUL PRACTICES FOR BOUNCING BACK FROM DISAPPOINTMENT, DIFFICULTY AND EVEN DISASTER** | Linda Graham, 2018

**RESILIENCE: THE SCIENCE OF MASTERING LIFE'S GREATEST CHALLENGES** | Steven M. Southwick, 2012

**RESILIENCE: DISCOVERING A NEW STRENGTH AT A TIME OF STRESS** | Frederic Flach, 2004

