

[Cultivating Resilience During COVID-19](#)

Apr 12, 2020

[Rick Hanson, PhD, psychologist, and author](#) of the book [Resilient](#) describes three things we can do to make a difference in the flow of our everyday lives. These three things are particularly relevant to the current COVID-19 pandemic and can support us in keeping our immune systems healthy and remaining steady in our minds, bodies, and hearts.

One: Be on Top of Not Getting Over Alarmed. As part of our human experience, we are designed by evolution to be scared monkeys 🐒. We lean toward having a negativity bias and tend to live in more fear than is warranted. This does not mean denying fearful times, it is absolutely normal to feel anxiety (everyone is anxious during the pandemic). It just means we need to “*feel what we feel*” and be careful to give ourselves time for self-care and rest. Meditate, go for a walk, get plenty of sleep, eat healthy, exercise, unplug, bake, cook, and connect with positive friends via Zoom, phone, etc.

Two: Cultivate Positive Emotion. Stop and smell the roses 🌹. Do not underestimate the power of expressing gratitude for everyday moments that could be easily overlooked. One exercise is to think of three new things each day you are grateful for and why. For example, bring attention to something good as it happens, reflect on something new and good that happened during the day, practice gratitude when you brush your teeth, before you go to bed or journal about a positive experience being as specific as possible to reinforce good feelings. As you reflect on gratitude, you are rewiring your brain toward being more positive.

Three: Focus on What You Do Have Influence Over. In our human experience, there are many things out of our control, like this current COVID-19 pandemic. Do your best to focus on where you do have some control and efficacy – including your own actions and behaviors like washing your hands 🧼, practicing physical distancing (but social connection!), calling a neighbor in need, keeping with your routine, exercising, being respectful, doing something kind for yourself or someone else, etc.