



# LEADERSHIP RESILIENCE: MANAGING THROUGH CRISIS

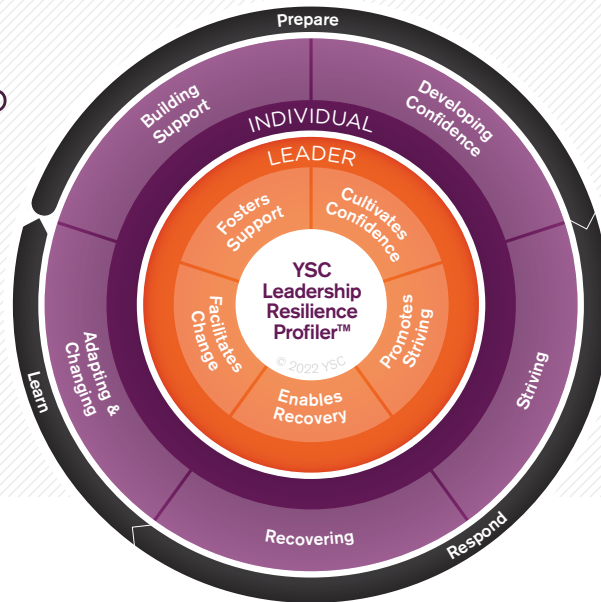
The disruption brought by COVID-19 is placing enormous demands on the resilience of leaders around the globe. How should they respond?

Organizational flux, personal concerns, and the mass uncertainty all contribute to a uniquely challenging situation for leaders. Exacerbating this is social isolation, which disrupts normal recovery resources and can lead to a 'hunker-down' mentality. It's no wonder then that YSC is seeing a surge in demand for advice, training and support with resilience.

Resilience is about so much more than gritting your teeth and carrying on. YSC's Leadership Resilience Model provides insight into how to support, grow and adapt, both for yourself and others. This document shares some practical, quick, and research-backed resilience essentials that leaders can use right now.

# THE YSC LEADERSHIP RESILIENCE MODEL

“Leadership resilience is a collective resource that leaders can develop both for themselves and those around them”



## SUPPORT

**The Challenge:** It's easy to underestimate how much support we get from everyday office conversations, be that a quick corridor chat or a five-minute conversation at a colleague's desk about an initiative we are leading. We rarely get these micro-boosts of support in a virtual working context. Working remotely means people can end up 'out of sight, out of mind' and often the onus is on them to reach out for help, which most people are reticent to do.

**How to Respond:** Re-create corridor conversations virtually. This might look like a five-minute check-in call or even just a quick message via digital platforms (e.g., MS Teams, Slack). It sounds simple, but the small connections accumulate. Seeing the crisis from another person's point of view can help leaders grow their perspective, and bolster their own resilience.

## CONFIDENCE

**The Challenge:** Hunkering down to get through a crisis can inadvertently lead to a loss of confidence. Why? People largely derive confidence through their interactions with the world. Remote working decreases the “feedback loops” that people subconsciously rely on, and without deliberate management this can eventually erode confidence.

**How to Respond:** At this time of volatility, leaders need to increase positive feedback and assurances to their people. In virtual interactions, pause to recognize small milestones and individuals' contributions to team objectives. In doing this, leaders will likely pick up subtle feedback about how

they themselves are doing, bolstering their own confidence that the right decisions are being made.

## STRIVING

**The Challenge:** Social distancing means it is easy to lose sight of the bigger picture, and to lose sight of what it really is that you are striving for. Goal-oriented individuals can feel lost as goal posts continue to shift, and those who are driven by a sense of deeper purpose can become demoralized.

**How to Respond:** Simplify goals, both for yourself and those around you, but remember to keep your purpose alive. Make an explicit connection between progress on current initiatives and the organization's long-term goals. Try to move away from a perfectionist mindset, and be practical with what can be achieved when having to react so rapidly.

## RECOVERY

**The Challenge:** Many leaders have great self-awareness about what depletes and re-fills their reserves of energy. But today we have all temporarily lost access to many of our recovery resources, be that friends, a yoga class, or even going to the park. The absence of work rhythms means that the daily structure we use to top up our energy is no longer there – yet the demands are higher than ever.

**How to Respond:** Sound recovery advice is available everywhere – seek it out, and try and stick to one or two things. In particular, leaders have flagged to us the benefit of only watching the news once or twice a day, of taking regular breaks, and of

spending time outdoors. Research suggests experimenting in order to find a new routine that works for you, and landing on one that you can maintain when the novelty wears off.

## ADAPTING

**The Challenge:** The challenge is twofold: How do we adapt the present context to feel as close to 'normal' as possible whilst, at the same time, proactively using this long break in our daily habits to challenge and improve them? This is not an endurance test – it's about finding new ways to thrive.

**How to Respond:** The pandemic presents a reason and a moment to challenge our assumptions. Use the disruption to the everyday as a catalyst to change patterns you don't like, both professionally and in your personal life. Pick one thing that you're going to do differently when normal life resumes, and use the break in your daily habits as a way to push the reset button.

**LEARN MORE**

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