

Nurture Your Heart

Build heart resilience to handle the ups and downs of normal life.

Did you know that, of the bodily organs, the heart plays a major role in our emotional experience? To better understand emotional health, it is useful to look at “heart resilience,” or the ability of the heart to handle the ups and downs of normal life.

Research has shown that the risk of developing heart disease may be increased for people who often experience emotions such as irritation, anger or frustration. These emotions can create a chain reaction in the body — stress hormone levels increase, blood vessels constrict, blood pressure rises. If we regularly experience these emotions, it can put a strain on the heart and may compromise the immune system. However, when we cultivate positive emotions, there is a beneficial effect on the cardiovascular system and our overall well-being.

Heartfelt emotions such as love, kindness, appreciation, and compassion produce harmonious heart rhythms. Generosity, humility, joy and gratitude are other examples. Seeking to experience these emotions lets the brain know that the heart feels good and can provide balance during times when life is difficult.

Build heart resilience into your daily routine:

- Remember the feeling of love or care you have for someone.
- Gently send that feeling of love or appreciation to yourself and others.
- Smile more and practice gratitude.
- Say something kind to everyone you encounter today.
- Breathe deeply and imagine your heart expanding.
- As you exhale, let go of what may be binding your heart.

If you'd like to learn more about how to grow your heart resilience, give the EAP a call.