

The living demands of today

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The living demands of today's society can present children and adults with numerous challenges, setbacks, failures and disappointing situations. Constant worrying about everyday activities, as well as worry about external events (natural disasters and social upheaval), can significantly detract from their occupational performance on a daily basis and reduce resilience. Anxiety is a common companion to reduced resilience and is considered one of the most common forms of psychological disorders, affecting up to 20% of children and teenagers. Reduced resilience and associated anxiety can interfere with a person's ability to effectively participate in life activities. Emotional resilience is the ability to "bounce back" or overcome life's challenges. Emotional resilience is a valuable skill for all, but particularly for children. The capacity to be resilient is not only dependent on development of coping behaviours, the capacity to persist or work through setbacks, cope with stress, develop confidence and maintain a healthy self-esteem, but also on the use of 'healthy thinking habits'. Supported by evidence from neuroscience and resilience frameworks, this presentation uses an occupational performance approach to outline the various ways occupational therapists can assist children and adults develop the healthy thinking habits which support resilience.

This presentation will assist participants to:

- Recognise signs of anxiety and reduced resilience that impact occupational performance
- Explain the variety of possible internal and external triggers for anxiety and reduced resilience
- Identify factors which support and foster resilience
- Use strategies to assist people to develop the healthy thinking habits needed to respond to life's challenges in a capable and effective manner