



# GREY KOLLEGE SEKONDÊR COLLEGE SECONDARY

A SOUTH AFRICAN PARALLEL MEDIUM SCHOOL FOR BOYS

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## LEARNING AND SUPPORT CENTRE

### **Adapting to change during the Covid-19 pandemic**

We all desire to live successful and happy lives. To achieve what we all desire, we need to be proactive about how we manage the current changes we face in our daily lives due to Covid-19.

Change is a part of life and, therefore, it is important to cope with and manage change effectively. Change may bring about feelings of sadness, anger, frustration, anxiety and confusion. It is difficult to fully accept change, but denial and resisting change will only intensify our reactions of fear and panic. This is why it is so important to learn how to be adaptable, resilient and bold in life as these 3 factors are key to successfully adapting to the impact that Covid-19 will have on our lives. In order to improve our response to change we may need to incorporate the following 3 components of flexibility and adaptability into our lives:

**Cognitive Flexibility** - the ability to use different thinking strategies and mental frameworks. Individuals who have cognitive flexibility are able to incorporate different thinking strategies and mental frameworks into their planning, decision-making and management of day-to-day tasks. These individuals can hold multiple scenarios in mind and can see when to shift and inject a change.

**Emotional Flexibility** – the ability to vary one’s approach to dealing with emotions. Individuals with emotional flexibility vary their approach to dealing with their own and others’ emotions. An emotionally flexible individual is comfortable with the process of transition, resistance and change.

**Dispositional flexibility** – the ability to remain optimistic and, at the same time, realistic. Individuals who display dispositional flexibility operate from a place of optimism grounded in realism and openness. They will acknowledge a bad situation but simultaneously visualize a better future by successfully adapting to change.

By learning and practicing behaviours that boost your cognitive, emotional, and dispositional flexibility, you may become more adaptable and, in turn, help and support others to be more adaptable as well. Change forces us to examine our lives and to pause and gain perspective on what is really of importance. It is possible that change will cause us to look into the past, comparing how things were before and leaving one feeling helpless about what is now different. All people go through a cycle of thoughts and emotions when encountering change in their life. You need to keep in mind that these thoughts and emotions will not last forever as we need to go through these stages in order to cope more effectively with change. However, the beauty of life and human beings is that we have the potential within us to be able to adapt to change.

### **Four strategies for adapting to change:**

#### **1.) Changing your mind-set.**

*“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds, cannot change anything.” – George Bernard Shaw*

We like to live our lives in our comfort zone. As soon as our comfort zone is under threat our subconscious will try to resist the change. There is no escaping the fact that change is a disruptor and it feels uncomfortable and scary. However, it is our power of choice that enables us to activate change in our lives. We cannot control the events of change in our life, but we can control how we react to the impact that this event may have on our lives. The more you focus your mind-set on positively adapting to change, the more resilient you will be to deal with the impact that change will bring to your life.

## 2.) Find meaning in life.

*“Change is inevitable. Growth is optional.”*

– John C. Maxwell

Knowing what is important in your life gives you purpose and sets the direction for how you want to live your life. With a sense of purpose and meaning in life, you have clarity and focus. These elements are essential to be able to successfully adapt and manage the impact of change in your life. Having no purpose or meaning means that you tend to drift in life, within the confines of your comfort zone. Purpose and meaning in life gives you the courage to step out of your comfort zone, where you will find change and new opportunities.

## 3.) Let go of your regrets.

*“We all make mistakes, have struggles, and even regret things in our past. But you are not your mistakes, you are not your struggles, and you are here now with the power to shape your day and your future.”* – Steve Maraboli

Regrets have a huge impact on how you respond to change and they hold you back in life. Letting go of your regrets is key to be able to move forward in life and to be more adaptable to situations. It is in the events of change that opportunities present themselves, so if you are looking back at your past you may miss the opportunities of the present and future. You cannot change or adapt to a situation in the past. The only control you have now is to choose to live in your present and future life. Change is scary and it is all about stepping out of your comfort zone into the unknown.

## 4.) Focus on living a balanced and healthy life.

*“Balance is not something you find, it’s something you create.”*

– Jana Kingsford

Living a balanced and healthy life builds our resilience and ability to successfully adapt to change. Stress is a normal response to dealing with change and challenges we find in our daily life. However, constant stress may pose problems to your health and should be carefully monitored. Finding positive ways to deal with daily stressors and pressure is key to our health on both physical and emotional levels. Some healthy lifestyle actions you can implement to successfully manage change and disruptions in your life are:

- Eat a healthy diet.
- Exercise regularly.
- Reduce caffeine and sugar intake.
- Get enough sleep.
- Implement a daily routine.
- Take time out and disconnect from technology.
- Practice meditation regularly.
- Connect with people who have a positive impact on your life.

The Learning and Support Centre offers emotional support free of charge to all Grey College Secondary School learners. Please feel free to contact us to schedule an appointment [lclaassens@gc.co.za](mailto:lclaassens@gc.co.za) .



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