



Resilience Building for Adults

with Food Allergies

Resilience, the ability to bounce back in the face of adversity, needs to be grown for adults too. Adults living with food allergies face a unique set of challenges as they raise families, navigate the workforce, and/or travel and explore the world around them. Whether or not you have developed an allergy for the first time in adulthood or you have lived your whole life into adulthood with food allergies - resilience will remain vital.

Adulthood is hard and being an adult with food allergies is sometimes even harder. However, cultivating the ability to rebound from tough times and obstacles will vastly improve your mental wellbeing.

How can you do this?

Resilient People share several characteristics:

1. They look for self-discovery opportunities.
2. They have a profound sense of purpose.
3. They handle stress appropriately.
4. They are open to change.
5. They have built a strong support system.

You can have these characteristics, as well:

- Adopt a love of lifelong learning. What can you do better? What can you try? Think back to the first time you did something that you love (like baking). Developing a new interest or discovering something about yourself, often requires doing something for the first time. When was the last time you did something for the first time? Challenge: try something new this week and see what you can learn about yourself.
- Fun is integral to relieving the burdens of life.
- You can grow your purpose by setting a goal and working to achieve them. This may look different for different people. Put meaning into your day by meditating, praying, completing a task that gives you a sense of accomplishment (e.g. doing something you have been putting off such as laundry).
- It is easy to freak out when life becomes stressful. A new allergy? An extra assignment at work that you feel like is just too overwhelming? Stress comes, but the way you react will determine your resilience.
 - Healthy ways to handle stress include making a game plan, talking to someone, and/or taking a break, etc.
 - Unhealthy ways we can handle stress include overdrinking (or drinking for the wrong reasons), procrastinating, and taking your stress out on others through hurtful words or actions.
 - It is better to be proactive when it comes to stress and further develop healthy coping skills to build resilience.
- Are you flexible when things change? We cannot change the past, or the things that once happened to us. But we can be hopeful and ready to adapt to what will be coming. Our attitude here will determine our outcome. Challenge: see if you can take a positive risk this week.
- Find people you can trust, who understand you, and will care about your food allergies. Learn to rely on these people in times of trial and in time of success. If you do not feel like you currently have these kinds of friends or family members, it is never too late to meet new people and create lifelong friendships. Try joining an adult sports team, religious study, the PTA, a yoga class, running club, or another organization that gathers like-minded adults together.

Remember, resilience is not developed in a day. It will take work and persistence, but you can do it. Looking to make connections with other adults with food allergies? Join [FAACT's Adults with Food Allergies Facebook group](#) today.