

Weathering change and loss together

Building family wellbeing through resilience and emotional literacy



Resilience
of each individual

Effective
Communication
between individuals

Families face many big changes and losses

divorce, separation, bereavement, abuse, illness, unemployment, injury, imprisonment

Each individual's grief reactions has ripple effects

frustration... confusion... communication breakdown...

This can erode family wellbeing

Resilience...

...is one's ability to live and grow through adverse life events

Significant change or loss can challenge our resilience

Adults and Children alike may...

- *Cease to trust the predictability of events*
- *Start to question their self image*
- *Feel they no longer belong or fit in*
- *Find their sense of fairness and justice has been compromised*
 - *Believe they have lost control over their life*

**Resilience and Self Esteem work in tandem:
*the experience of one increases the other.***

How can we nurture resilience of individuals within families?

Ensure that each member...

- *Knows that they are wanted, needed and loved*
- *Has some input into decisions that affect them*
 - *Has opportunities to try new things, and to make and learn from mistakes*
 - *Receives support and provides support to others*

Resilience comes from the confidence that one has the tools, strength and social support to face life's various challenges



Effective Communication...

...is borne of Emotional Literacy

Emotional Literacy decreases personal turmoil and enables family members to create and live in an environment where thoughts and feelings are readily shared.

Emotional Literacy = being able to *identify* and *verbalise* one's feelings
being ready to *hear* and *relate to* the feelings of others

Emotional Literacy builds and strengthens:

- Self esteem
- Ability to express thoughts and feelings
 - Empathy for others
 - Cooperativeness and conflict resolution strategies
 - Ability to manage anxiety

How can we develop Emotional Literacy within families?

Create a context where all family members:

- Feel safe and speak freely
 - Explore themselves and test out the responses of others
 - Come to understand their own history and how their own patterns of behaviour have developed because of that history

Emotional Literacy helps free us from **feelings** that make us **anxious**,
undermine our relationships and **limit our capacity to think clearly**



Seasons for Growth[®]

Supporting children and adults to grow through Change

Significant change, loss or grief challenge our sense of wellbeing

Without support, we become more vulnerable to:

- negative self concept
- social isolation
- mental health complications

Seasons for Growth nurtures emotional literacy and resilience for children and adults challenged by change, loss and grief.

Knowing how to name and talk about our feelings helps us make sense of our own lives so we can make sense of the world

Seasons for Growth is an educative peer support program

Rigorous external evaluation has shown that *Seasons for Growth* supports participants to ...

- **Develop coping skills ... *resilience***
 - enable them to manage their current situation
 - prepare them for future challenges
 - increase self esteem
- **Share their stories ... *emotional literacy***
 - find the words to express themselves
 - develop empathy for others
 - build trust and sense of belonging

New life skills and widened perspective enable participants to communicate more effectively and support one another more fully in their family interactions.