



# WELLBEING "HEALTHY HABITS"

## ADAPTABILITY



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In today's world, we are experiencing a period of change and growth, at a speed in which we may not have experienced before. Technology, transport and world affairs are driving this quickening period. It is sometimes referred to as a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Changing, Ambiguous) environment. Some of us enjoy and thrive during this period, for others it is a little more uncomfortable.

**Adaptability is the ability to modify and change your thoughts, emotions and behaviours in response to change.** We are living in a period of enormous and rapid technological and scientific change and as Charles Darwin said "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, not the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change."

We are not able to directly alter the course of some of the things that happen to us in our life. However, if we can adapt our response to changes in our environment, we can learn to not just survive but to thrive in periods of change.

Adaptability is also pivotal to effective collaboration, experimentation and empowerment, because collaboration requires us to adapt our style of communication with others; experimentation requires us to adapt our mind-set to new possibilities and empowerment requires us to adapt how we see ourselves and what we can influence.

Adapting behaviour starts with a deliberate change of perspective on the presenting situation – adapting how we think about things. Depending on the 'lens' that we are looking through at the time we will 'see' different things – we build different stories about what is happening and what our choices are. Doing this, changes how we 'feel' about things.

In difficult situations, a good tip is to ask yourself what 'lens' you are looking through and mentally change the lens to get a different perspective. For example:

**{Reverse Lens}** What would the other person say?

**{Long Lens}** How will this look in six months?

**{Wide Angle Lens}** Regardless of the outcome, what can I learn?



"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, not the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change."

CHARLES DARWIN



The old native Indian saying was '*you'll never know a man until you walk a mile in his moccasins*', which means, you never really know what another person is going through or what their life is like.

What the native Indians meant was that if we try to look at a situation through the eyes of someone else, we go a long way to developing greater understanding of that person, and therefore we can develop a greater level of tolerance when dealing with them.

Think of someone you find difficult to deal with. Try to put yourself into their shoes: imagine what pressures they face, what challenges they are dealing with, what goals they are trying to achieve, what obstacles they might be facing, what life might be like for them. This will give you a different perspective.

Remember, wisdom comes from multiple perspectives. By developing alternative viewpoints, you are directly improving your ability to adapt your thinking, feeling and behaviour.

**We are all unique.** If you want to progress towards your goals faster, it is worth developing your skills in this area and identifying key style differences and adapting your approach accordingly.