



FACTSHEET - Stretched but not Snapping

September 26, 2024



Energy
Likeability
Adaptability
Strategy
Trust
Imagination
Curiosity

Community foundations are feeling increasingly stretched as they face growing demands in their communities. From addressing urgent social issues to fostering long-term resilience, community foundations are stepping up to tackle complex and evolving challenges.

We are constantly being asked to stretch — often in too many directions and for too long. It can feel unsustainable. As community foundation leaders, you're familiar with feeling stretched. You face significant responsibilities and challenges, including managing the day-to-day operations of your foundation and responding to the ever-changing needs of your community, often with limited resources.

The *ELASTIC* metaphor and acronym (energy, likeability, adaptability, strategy, trust, imagination and curiosity) will help you find your optimal level of stretch, equipping you to continue your important work in the midst of these competing pressures.



Evidence-based tips for improving your elasticity

- Energy: Try focused action. Multi-tasking leaks energy and tires us out.
- Likeability: Combine clear standards with an “orientation outward”
- Adaptability: Invest in your team. Team support contributes to our individual capacity to adapt.
- Strategy: Make a habit of balancing present and future thinking
- Trust: Extend trust before it’s earned. People who are trusted behave in more trustworthy way.
- Imagination: Get out in nature. Replace scrolling your phone with daydreaming.
- Curiosity: Lead with questions, especially when you are tempted not to.

Be adventurous! Exposure to a wide range of people and contexts will boost all seven ELASTIC skills.

ELASTIC Resources

Energy: A currency and a barometer for monitoring wellbeing in yourself and others

[The Burnout Epidemic](#), Jennifer Moss

Likeability: A powerful pathway to influence, but not the same as being nice

[The Likeability Trap](#), Alicia Menendez

Adaptability: A set of learnable skills that can offer a sustainable and customized source of energy

[The Adaptation Advantage](#), Heather McGowan and Chris Shipley

[Adaptability Quotient Assessment](#), AQai

Strategy: The ability to maintain a long, high perspective and connect it to the current work

[Sightline](#), Rebecca Sutherns

Trust: Requires being trusted and extending trust, not just being trustworthy

[Trust & Inspire](#), Stephen M. R. Covey

Imagination: Mental creation precedes physical creation

[From What Is To What If](#), Rob Hopkins



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Curiosity: A path to an energized life and all sorts of other good things!

[Think Again](#), Adam Grant

Community Foundations of Canada is grateful for the collaboration of Rebecca Sutherns in creating this factsheet for community foundations. For more information and resources, please visit: www.rebeccasutherns.com.

