

The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.

Strengthening your

Resiliency

in the time of

COVID-19

The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity.

A Guided Meditation



*“A good half of the art
of living is resilience”.*

- Alain de Botton

**We will get through this together.
We look forward to a healthy future for everyone**

Thank you,
“Dr. B”

The Defining Moment Foundation
www.definingmomentfoundation.org

Resilience Exercise

Doors Closed, Doors Open

Instructions

Think about a time in your life:

- Where someone rejected you.
- When you missed out on something important.
- When a big plan collapsed.

These represent points in your life where a door closed.

Now think about what happened next:

- What doors opened after?
- What would have never happened if the first door didn't close?

Lets discuss these experiences, or write them down in a journal:

The door that closed on me was:

The new door that opened for me was:



Doors Closed, Doors Open - Reflections

Now think of all the people that have helped you open doors in the past. What did they do to help you? And what could you do to help others?

- What led to the door closing? What helped you open the new door?
- How long did it take you to realize that a new door was open?
- Was it easy or hard for you to realize that a new door was open?
- What prevented you from seeing the new open door?
- What can you do next time to recognize the new opportunity sooner?
- What were the effects of the door closing on you? Did it last long?
- Did the experience bring anything positive?
- Which character strengths did you use in this exercise?
- What does a closed door represent to you now?
- What did you learn from the door closing?
- Is there more room for growth from these types of experiences?
- Is there a closed door that you still wish to see open?

Resilience: Key Elements

- **Optimism:** The degree of optimism that an individual can call upon when faced with a challenge is an important factor in deciding how they react.
- **Freedom from stress and anxiety:** We all experience stress and anxiety to some degree.
- **Individual accountability.**
- **Openness and flexibility.**
- **Problem Orientation** defined as the schemas one holds about **problems** in everyday life and ones assessment of their ability to solve said **problems**. The **problem orientation** may be positive and constructive to the problem solving process or negative and therefore dysfunctional in the process.

"I can be changed by what happens to me but I refuse to be reduced by it" - Maya Angelou

"You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have" - Bob Marley

"When we learn how to become resilient, we learn how to embrace the beautifully broad spectrum of the human experience" - Jaeda DeWalt

11 Ways to Build Resilience at Work

1. **Learn from your mistakes and failures.** Every mistake has the power to teach you something important; so don't stop searching until you've found the true lesson in every situation.
2. **Choose your response.** Remember, we all experience bad days and we all go through our share of workplace stress. But we have a choice in how we respond: we can choose to react negatively or in a panic, or we can choose to remain calm, logical, and patient while finding a solution. **Your reaction is always up to you.**
3. **Practice Cognitive restructuring:** To change what you think about negative situations and challenging events.
4. **Maintain perspective.** Resilient people at work understand fully that although a stressful situation may seem overwhelming in the moment, it may not make that much of an impact over the long-term. Try to avoid exaggerating events.
5. **Practice thought awareness:** Resilient people don't let negative thoughts derail their projects and work atmosphere. Instead, they consistently practice **positive coping skills**. Also "listen" to yourself and pay attention to your tone. Notice how you talk to yourself when something goes wrong, if you find yourself making statements that are part of the 3 P's, permanent, pervasive, or personalized, correct these thoughts in your mind. **Be mindful of your responses at work and respect your entire team and the stress they are under.**
6. **Get enough sleep and exercise:** and learn to manage stress. When you take care of your mind and body, you're better able to cope effectively with challenges in your life and especially during this COVID-19 pandemic.
7. **Focus on being flexible:** Resilient people understand that things change, and that carefully-made plans, need to be amended or dismissed entirely. Our current pandemic has made the issue of flexibility so apparent.
8. **Treat problems as a learning process:** Develop the habit of using challenges as opportunities to acquire or master skills and build achievement.
9. **Take positive action:** Doing something in the face of adversity brings a sense of control, even if it doesn't remove the difficulty.

10. **Practice optimism:** This is a very significant factor in all work and personal worlds. Nothing is entirely good or bad. If we allow our negative thinking to dictate how we view any issue at work it will take over the entire organizational culture. (**Organizational culture encompasses values and behaviors that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of a business**).
11. **Build your self-confidence:** Remember, resilient people are confident that they're going to succeed, despite the setbacks or stresses they might be facing. This belief in themselves also enables them to take measured risks. When you develop confidence and a strong sense of self, you have the strength to keep moving forward and succeed the workplace.



What is Resilience?

Life may not come with a map, but everyone will experience twists and turns, from everyday challenges to:

- Traumatic events with more lasting impact.
- The death of a loved one.
- A life-altering accident.
- A serious illness.

Every change affects people differently, bringing a unique flood of thoughts, strong emotions and uncertainty. Yet people generally adapt well over time to life-changing situations and stressful situations, in part thanks to **RESILIENCE**.

Psychologists define **resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of:**

- Adversity
- Trauma
- Tragedy
- Threats
- Significant Stress (As associated with the COVID-19 pandemic).
- Family problems
- Relationship problems
- Workplace Dissatisfaction
- Financial Stressors

As much as resilience involves “bouncing back” from these difficult experiences. It can involve a profound personal growth.

“ You all know that I have been sustained throughout my life by three saving graces - my family, my friends, and a faith in the power of **resilience** and hope. These graces have carried me through difficult times and have brought more joy to the good times than I ever could have imagined” – Elizabeth Edwards

What is Resilience ?

(Cont'd part 2)

While the adverse events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic are certainly painful and difficult, they don't have to determine the outcome of your life. There are many aspects of your life you can:

- Control
- Modify
- Grow with

That's the role of Resilience.

Becoming more resilient not only helps you get through difficult circumstances, it also empowers you to grow and even improve your life along the way.



What Resilience Isn't

Being resilient doesn't mean that a person won't experience difficulty or distress.

People who have suffered major adversity or trauma in their lives commonly experience emotional pain and stress. In fact, the road to **resilience** is likely to involve emotional distress.

While certain factors make some individuals more resilient than others, it isn't necessarily a personality trait that only some people possess. On the contrary, resilience involves behaviors, thoughts and actions that anyone can learn and develop.

The ability to learn resilience is one reason research has shown that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary. One example is the response of many Americans to the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks and individuals' efforts to rebuild their lives after tragedy. We are seeing these life altering experiences all over again through the bravery of every health care worker on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Core Components of Resilience

Like building a muscle, increasing your resilience takes time and intentionality.

Focusing on four core components:

- Connection
- Wellness
- Healthy thinking and meaning - can empower you to withstand and learn from difficult and traumatic experiences.
- To increase your capacity for resilience to weather-and grow from- the difficulties, use these strategies.

Build your connections:

- **Prioritize relationships:** Connecting with empathetic and understanding people can remind you that you're not alone in the midst of difficulties. Focus on finding trustworthy and compassionate individuals who validate your feelings, which will support the skill of RESILIENCE.
- **The pain of traumatic events:** Can lead some people to isolate themselves, but it's important to accept help and support from those who care about you. Maintaining social connections with family and friends via video chats and visits are so essential for your mental health and well-being.

Core Components of Resilience (Cont'd part 2)

Foster Wellness:

- **Take care of your body:** Self-care may be a popular buzz word, but it is also a legitimate practice for mental health and building **RESILIENCE**. That's because stress is just as much physical as it is emotional. Promoting positive life style factors like proper nutrition, ample sleep, hydration and regular exercise can strengthen your body to adapt to stress and reduce the toll of emotions like anxiety or depression.
- **Practice mindfulness:** Mindful journaling, yoga, and other spiritual practices like prayer or meditation can also help people build connections and restore hope, which can prime them to deal with situations that require resilience. When you journal, meditate, or pray, ruminate on positive aspects of your life and recall the things you're grateful for, even during personal trials.
- **Avoid negative outlets:** It may be tempting to mask your pain with alcohol, drugs or other substances, but that's like putting a band-aid on a deep wound. Focus instead on giving your body resources to manage stress, rather than seeking to eliminate the feeling of stress altogether.

Find purpose

- **Help others:** Following the CDC guidelines, whether you volunteer with a local homeless shelter or simply support a friend in their own time of need, you can garner a sense of purpose, foster self-worth, connect with other people which can empower you to grow in resilience.
- **Be proactive:** It's helpful to acknowledge and accept your emotions during hard times, but it's also important to help you foster self-discovery by asking yourself, "What can I do about a problem in my life?" If the problems seem too big to tackle, break them down into smaller, more manageable components.
- **Move toward your goals:** Develop some realistic goals and do something regularly - even if it seems like a small accomplishment - that enables you to move toward the things you want to accomplish. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?" For example, if you're struggling with the loss of a loved one and you want to move forward, you could seek out a telehealth grief counselor.

Core Components of Resilience (Cont'd part 3)

Embrace healthy thoughts:

- **Keep things in perspective:** How you think can play a significant part in how you feel - and how resilient you are when faced with obstacles. Try to identify areas of irrational thinking, such as a tendency to catastrophize difficulties or assume the world is out to get you, and adopt a more balanced and realistic thinking pattern. For instance, if you feel overwhelmed by a challenge, remind yourself that what happened to you isn't an indicator of how your future will go, and that you're not helpless. You may not be able to change a highly stressful event, but you can change how you interpret and respond to it.
- **Accept change:** Accept that change is a part of life. Certain goals or ideals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations in your life. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.
- **Maintain a hopeful outlook:** It's hard to be positive when life isn't going your way. An optimistic outlook empowers you to expect that good things will happen to you. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear. Along the way, note any subtle ways in which you start to feel better as you deal with difficult situations.
- **Learn from your past:** By looking back at who or what was helpful in previous times of distress, you may discover how you can respond effectively to new difficult situations. Remind yourself of where you've been able to find strength and ask yourself what you've learned from those experiences.
- **Seeking help** from a mental health professional

The Important Thing to Remember During the COVID-19 Pandemic:

You're not alone on this journey. While you may not be able to control all of your circumstances, you can grow by focusing on the aspects of life's challenges, and you can manage with the support of loved ones and trusted professionals.

We will get through this together!

A Quick Resilience Reference Chart



“Your best teacher is your last mistake.” - Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam

Contact:



The Defining Moment Foundation

**No Matter The Challenge,
You Don't Have To Face It Alone,
We Are In This Together.**

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