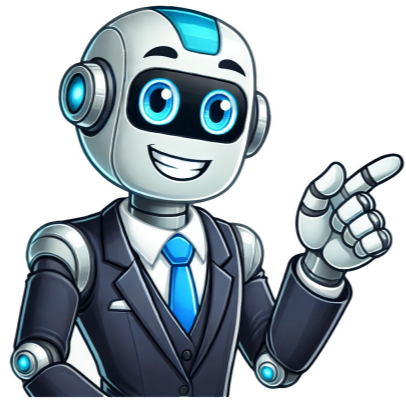


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How to remain resilient

Psychotherapy: If you are having trouble coping with a crisis situation, consulting a qualified mental health professional can help you confront the problem, identify your strengths, and develop new coping skills. They tend to notice when they need to take a break and can accept their emotions, which is important for resilience. I've spent a lot of time helping you learn how to increase positivity and decrease negative emotions. Sometimes life's challenges can even make you stronger. According to one study, resilience can fluctuate over time and may depend on the situation and circumstances that a person is facing. They believe that the actions they take will affect the outcome of an event. To find the benefits, start by writing out a list of things you learned from a past failure. So what does resilience look like in action? Resilient people are able to draw upon this strength to cope and recover from challenges. Running toward what makes you feel uncomfortable is a great way to overcome that discomfort and build resilience. Or do you blame grow as the situation changes. Resilience doesn't just mean bouncing back from challenges; it's also about growing stronger through adversity. Now re-imagine the stressful event from an outside observer's point of view—for example, from the point of view of a stranger on the street or a fly on the wall. Catastrophizing is when we expect the worst possible outcome in a situation. People who possess a great deal of resilience have a network of friends, family members, co-workers, and online support groups to keep them socially connected. While people vary dramatically in the coping skills they use when confronting a crisis, researchers have identified some key characteristics of resilience. Might this observer view the situation differently than you do? We do so because we are afraid of failure; we worry that people will think poorly of us if we fail, and we feel ashamed when we fail to reach important life goals. For example, I used to have a hard time speaking up. But these moments are *exactly* why resilience is so important. Over time, you'll start to see that being knocked down makes you stronger—plus it makes you less afraid to get knocked down again. While the situation may be unavoidable, they stay focused on a positive outcome. If you think failure is a threat, like many of us do, your body will prepare for a fight—and you'll feel like you're in a battle. Generally, resilient people tend to have what psychologists call an internal locus of control. They can recover more quickly from the major and minor stressors that occur day to day. But it's important to remember that negative emotions are completely normal and healthy. Next time you are reading about one of your friend's negative experiences on social media, practice switching back and forth from being in their shoes to being in your shoes. Now ask yourself, how could you apply this advice to your own life? 7. What did you discover? Think of something small that makes you uncomfortable, something other people might even find silly, and face your fear. Now we can start actively pursuing challenges—challenges that give us the opportunity to develop resilience and improve our lives in unforeseen and amazing ways. Resilience involves the ability to recover and rebound from challenges and setbacks. Think about a time when you were dealing with a challenge—like a breakup or job loss—that left you stressed and questioning yourself. You can develop this skill by learning to adapt, growing from your mistakes, and leaning on the support systems that make you stronger. When a crisis emerges, resilient people are able to spot the solution that will lead to a safe outcome. Resilience means seeing that negative thoughts come and go, and we have the skills to handle them. In life, a great many things may make you feel uncomfortable. Unlike positive thinking, self-compassion, or gratitude—which can all be developed when things are going good or going bad—you need challenges in your life to develop resilience. Besides, negative emotions have benefits too. What are the positives? I know that at first, it can seem impossible to find the benefits of these situations. Emotional distancing also makes it less likely that you will replay the unpleasant details of the event, and as a result, you may feel better when bad things happen. All that fear that I used to take with me to every situation is now gone. How did you grow and develop as a result of this situation? That's resilience. Resilience is often defined as the mental reservoir of strength that helps people handle stress and hardship. Find the benefits in life. If you want to become more resilient, start by learning about the characteristics of resilient people and when and how to ask for help. Remember, it takes time to develop a stronger sense of resilience. Ask yourself these questions to brainstorm. Maybe you have room to grow and become a more resilient person. But by treating failure like a disease to be avoided, we never give ourselves a chance to overcome challenges and practice resilience. Being resilient means facing difficulties head-on instead of falling into despair or using unhealthy coping strategies. The key is to keep working on these skills over time. So next time you are in the midst of stressful situations, try to look back at the situation from sometime in the future. Take our Resilience Test Find a therapist near me Exercise seems to be a really effective behavioral break. Resilient people avoid thinking like a victim of circumstance and instead look for ways to resolve the problem. When experiencing a challenge, the ability to think about your experiences as if you were "a fly on the wall," or as if you were someone else who is witnessing your experiences from afar, keeps you from getting stuck in your negative emotions. Source: wavebreakmedia/Shutterstock Resilience is that amazing skill that helps you recover so quickly from difficulties. Every time you find yourself imagining the worst about a person, situation, or outcome—touch the object. Then decide for yourself: Will you follow? This means that with practice, you can learn to strengthen your resilience. To do this, we can create a behavioral break or an action plan for what we'll do when our negative thought cycles get going. This may sound extreme. The great news is that resilience isn't a fixed trait. Now it's your turn to try. Start by practicing some of the common characteristics of resilient people and focusing on your existing strengths. The five basic characteristics of resilience are: Problem-solving skillsStrong social connectionsSurvivor mentalityEmotional regulationSelf-compassion Do you perceive yourself as having control over your own life? That's true even when they face significant traumas, such as job loss, financial problems, serious illness, relationship challenges, or the death of a loved one. Pay attention to see if your negative emotions are trying to lead you in a positive direction. We repeatedly think about what we could have done differently in the past, or how we are going to mess up again in the future. By remaining aware, they can maintain control of a situation and think of new ways to tackle problems. Resilience is important for mental health and well-being, and luckily, everyone can learn to be resilient. But negative emotions can cloud your thinking. Although being aware of possible negative outcomes can be helpful for planning ahead, when we believe the worst will come true, we set ourselves up for unnecessary stress and poor resilience. Not sure if you approach challenges in the ways that build resilience? It's okay if this is hard at first. Now imagine what your life will be like five years after this event. I'll sometimes find myself dwelling on something negative, getting myself worked up more and more as I think about it, until my blood pressure is through the roof, and I just want to scream. When dealing with any potential crisis, it is essential to view yourself as a survivor. Keep in mind that even if you are able to shift your brain to stop seeing something as a threat, you may feel nervousness or anxiety, but you'll also experience positive physiological changes that can help you make better use of these negative emotions. Let's say that you dropped your sandwich on the ground, and you have nothing else to eat for lunch. The ability to recognize that they are having an emotional response and to understand what is causing the response can help them better handle emotions and cope with the situation at hand. Frequently Asked Questions They are competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control. For your behavioral break to work, you need to decide what you plan to do before actually being in the situation that calls for it. If you are resilient, however, you might choose to focus on what you can learn from the situation (leaving the house earlier for work), control your emotional response (using stress relief strategies to calm your mind and body), and avoid negative thinking (by reminding yourself that you are always on time and your employer will understand). Pediatrician Ken Ginsberg, MD, created the 7 Cs of resilience model to help children and adolescence build resilience. On the other hand, if you ruminate about what could go wrong, your fear builds, and the failure you fear becomes more likely. So take a moment now to decide what you will use for your behavioral break, and how you will know the right time to use it. When learning to use this strategy, it can be helpful to use it often, even if you're only a little worked up. To get out of my comfort zone, I challenged myself by speaking up at least once in every meeting. In many cases, resilient people emerge stronger after such difficulties. Ask yourself these questions to help you. Try not to choose an experience that is extremely negative—it's important to choose an experience that's not too bad when you are first learning how to use this technique. If so, here's how to do it. For example, you might say that the benefits of working a really difficult job are that you learn new skills and build character. To put an end to these negative thought cycles, which have become well-worn pathways in our brains, we need to short-circuit our thoughts mid-cycle. Whenever you're dealing with a problem, it is important to have people who can offer support. At their root, emotions are designed to direct our behavior in important ways. 2. If you're having a hard time finding the silver linings in your own life, it might be easier to practice this with other people's lives. A non-resilient person might get angry, stressed out, and worried about how being late will reflect on them at work. Try to really search for as many benefits as you can think of. 3. Some of the main characteristics of a person who has resilience are awareness, self-control, problem-solving skills, and social support. We find ways to keep going even when it feels impossible. If you need help understanding your negative emotions, you could take some time alone to reflect or talk to a therapist or life coach. What are opportunities that could result from this situation? The ability to find the silver linings in stressful or difficult situations (also referred to as reappraisal ability) helps us generate positive emotions, even when there is nothing in our situation to generate positive emotions for us. This behavioral break forces both my brain and my body to completely switch gears and focus on something else entirely, thus breaking the negative thought cycle. What did you learn? Of course, some factors are simply outside of our personal control, such as natural disasters. Problem-solving skills are essential for resilience. When you remind yourself that you have succeeded before, you can help shift towards a challenge mindset. How will you feel about this particular event? You have to get knocked down in order to learn how to pick yourself back up. So instead of trying to think my way out of my emotions, which is incredibly hard when your negative emotions are strong, I'll drop everything and go for a five to ten-minute run. Treating ourselves with kindness can be the key to helping us find the resolve and strength to keep going. When it feels like we are fighting an uphill battle (and we're more than a little tempted just to give up), remember that everyone else is dealing with struggles we know nothing about. And my husband was in the car with me, so I was glad he was able to help me get it to an auto shop that same day. This can make it easier to implement during more challenging situations. So if you are the type to avoid feeling uncomfortable—for example by avoiding doing things that will be hard, having difficult conversations, or being out of your comfort zone—challenge yourself to feel uncomfortable, just in small ways at first. Run at the dog. Recall a work or school project that didn't work out the way you hoped. How would the observer evaluate the situation? There are many factors that contribute to resilient behavior, including personality traits, upbringing, genetics, environmental factors, and social support. For example, you may have lost your job and now believe that you will never be successful, and everyone will think of a person who has resilience are awareness, self-control, problem-solving skills, and social support. We find ways to keep going even when it feels impossible. If you need help understanding your negative emotions, you could take some time alone to reflect or talk to a therapist or life coach. What are opportunities that could result from this situation? That uses both your mind and your body. Emotionally distance yourself from challenges. This is why finding silver linings can help counteract negative emotions, decrease stress, and quicken recovery from stressful events. Deep breathing helps activate your parasympathetic nervous system, which can both calm you and switch off your stress. Finding meaning and purpose in your life: Working toward things you believe in ensures that you'll stay motivated and committed even when times are tough. 8. Regulating our emotions also allows us to stay focused on finding solutions rather than getting stuck in a cycle of emotional reactivity. I immediately felt gratitude that I wasn't driving on the freeway when it happened, especially since I spend about 10 hours per week commuting. Other potential sources of assistance include: Books: Reading about people who have experienced and overcome a similar problem can be motivating and suggest ideas on how to cope. Start by spending a few minutes thinking about the benefits of a negative experience. So let me help you out a bit more with some examples from my life. Resilience also means understanding that life is full of challenges. Just like any other skill, it takes practice. Next, visualize success. Resilient people are aware of situations, their emotional reactions, and the behavior of those around them. 4. Or if you had a bad day at work, you may want to drink alcohol to forget about it all. How will you be spending your time? To practice finding the benefits, first, think about a slightly negative experience you had recently. Another technique that can help you better handle stress involves thinking about the outcomes of stressful events in the relatively far future. Do you see how it works? Ask yourself these questions: In five years, what will you be doing? Ask yourself these questions to practice being a fly on the wall: Would the observer be able to understand why you are upset? Trust me, I know how easy it is to fall into that trap of thinking that things will never change and that the whole world is against you. To find out how resilient you are, take this super-short well-being quiz, which not only gives you a general idea of you how resilient you are, but can also help you identify the other skills you need to build to improve your happiness and well-being. If you are resilient, then when life knocks you down, you bounce back and you keep going. A wise woman once told me that when you find a network of people who can provide compassion and support. When this happens, my negative thought cycles have complete control over me; I know from experience that no amount of positive thinking is going to stop the negative emotions at this point—they are in charge. Benefit finding is similar to reappraisal, but it can be used in negative, neutral, or positive situations. In what ways are you better off than when you started? Negative emotions like sadness and grief help communicate to others that we need their support and kindness. So how do you find the benefits of failure? People who are stress-resilient have better coping strategies for handling stress. By practicing finding the benefits of past challenges, you can strengthen this ability so that it is easier to find the benefits next time. How will you be feeling? I was a sweating, miserable mess. I think resilience is so important that I devote a whole section to it in my new book, Outsmart Your Smartphone: Conscious Tech Habits for Finding Happiness, Balance, and Connection IRL. We ruminate on these events because we mistakenly believe that thinking about our hardships over and over again will help us solve them. You might remind yourself that you're lucky to even have a sandwich when so many people go hungry. However, these skills can be developed at any age. As a bonus, when you view things that you could possibly fail at as challenges, you actually will be more capable and less likely to fail at them. While you are touching the object, remind yourself that the best possible outcome is just as likely to occur as the worst possible outcome. To build this "challenge mindset," reflect on past challenges that you've overcome. 5. On the other hand, if you have a mindset that doing something hard, something you could fail at, is a challenge, then you're more likely to think you are capable of handling it. Emotional regulation is vital for resilience because it allows us to recognize what we are feeling and stay calm when we are under stress. 6. Practice reappraisal while streaming movies. With these suggestions in mind, think about what advice you would give the characters for how to feel better. If you're not addressing negative emotions, they never go away, and you carry them with you wherever you go. To practice this technique, first recall a recent stressful conflict you had with another person. For example, try to recall, "When I failed to get the promotion I was after" instead of failure, in general. But this kind of emotional avoidance can be dangerous, because the emotions never get resolved. Besides, worrying about it does you no good. When we feel like we're in control, we're a lot less likely to become overwhelmed by feelings of anxiety and frustration. Creating goals and working toward them: Goals give you something to work toward and help you stay focused and motivated in the face of obstacles. How could the situation be worse? Try to be creative and think of anything that would make you feel better about this experience. For example, if you're worried about your finances, you may not want to look at your credit card balance. While resilience is often portrayed as a character trait that people either have or don't have, it is actually an ability that people can improve. If you post about a negative experience, add at least one benefit to your post. Some examples of resilient behaviors and ways that you can show resilience include: Trying to take a positive perspective on situations Viewing challenges as learning opportunities Regulating emotions and expressing feelings in appropriate ways Focusing on the things you can control instead of dwelling on what you cannot change Recognizing that cognitive distortions are false Reframing negative thoughts to be more realistic and positive For example, imagine that you get stuck in traffic on the way to work. While being resourceful is an important part of resilience, it is also essential to know when to ask for help. Be sure to choose something very specific. While some people may be naturally more resilient, it's a skill that you can strengthen. How do you find silver linings? One way to break this thought pattern is to wear a pendant or carry a stone or other small object with you. Now, imagine facing a big challenge when you're already carrying a bunch of negative emotions with you. Unfortunately, many of us avoid failure at all costs. It's a lot more than just being "tough." Resilience allows us to withstand life's hardships and find the strength and resolve to get back up again. But you might also say that the benefits of working a really easy job are that you feel relaxed and have more time to devote to other things you enjoy. Self-compassion can help boost overall health and resilience and ensure you're ready to face life's challenges. Often when bad things happen, we get stuck thinking about negative outcomes. Use your negative emotions to propel you forward. They fail to note important details or take advantage of opportunities. By practicing these skills, resilience will become a part of your overall mindset. Must something be done to stop this negative emotion from emerging again in the future? While we cannot avoid many of these problems, we can remain open, flexible, and willing to adapt to change. Would the observer be able to see the other person's point of view? So when life throws you into a ditch, and you feel crappy, ask yourself, "Is this negative emotion trying to teach me something?" Would pushing the negative emotion away leave whatever is causing this negative emotion intact? 10. What Is Resilience? Before watching a sad or emotional movie or scene, read these instructions: While watching the scene or movie, think about what could be learned from the experience, or imagine possible positive outcomes. Find the benefits of past challenges and failures. Overcome your fear of failure. Let's say you're worried about starting a new job. By gaining control over our negativity, it stops being so scary. Resilient individuals are able to calmly and rationally look at a problem and envision a successful solution. Resilience is also characterized by an ability to regulate emotions effectively. Find the silver linings. It's going to be a lot harder to cope, be resilient, and thrive. Strategies that can help you become more resilient include: Developing a sense of optimism: A positive mindset can help you stay hopeful in the face of challenges. Try to notice how being an outside observer helps make the experience seem less intense. What makes a person resilient? Plenty of smart folks will tell you that you should take action and reflect on your failures right after you experience them. To use others' experiences to practice reappraisal, plan to practice the next time you stream a movie or show. When facing hardships, it's important to be gentle with ourselves. Talking about the challenges you are facing can be an excellent way to gain perspective, look for new solutions, or simply express your emotions. Now, I contribute freely to conversations and don't even think about it. Stop your negative thought cycles. You can do it too. Casually pushing negative emotions aside without reflecting on where they come from can leave us stuck and unable to move forward in the ways we desire. Being non-resilient, or lacking resilience, often involves becoming overwhelmed by difficult or stressful situations, dwelling on problems, or using unhealthy coping mechanisms to cope with the challenges of life. For example, you could excuse yourself for five minutes to practice deep, slow breathing. Are you grateful for any part of this situation? If I had wanted to, I could have focused on the negative things about this experience—it cost about \$2,000 to fix, it happened as part of a string of repairs on that car, I desperately needed that car to get to work, and money was really tight. Now it's your turn to try. At first, my heart would beat like crazy. Instead, they fester and build up. Do you need to build your resilience? As a result, I handled this challenge quickly and easily and got on with my life. When circumstances shift, problem-solving skills help us find new ways of moving forward rather than clinging to our rigid ideas about how things should be. Resilience allows us to keep showing up and looking for new ways to face these challenges every day. While we may be able to put some blame on external causes, it is important to feel as if we have the power to make choices that will affect our situation, our ability to cope, and our future. During a crisis, everyone can benefit from the help of psychologists and counselors specially trained to deal with crisis situations. If you prefer, you can also practice this on social media. Think of as many reappraisals as you can. Were there, or will there be, any positive outcomes that result from this situation? If you do, your fear will just build, preventing you from moving forward in the ways you desire. But rather than focusing on these aspects, I had trained my brain to focus on the positive—to have a positive mindset. It can be important for helping people deal with a variety of problems and recover from trauma. Don't get discouraged; becoming more resilient may take time, but the investment will have big payoffs on your health and well-being. Unfortunately, negative thought cycles just get us caught up in our thoughts, instead of taking the actions we need to move forward. 9.

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