

Fostering Family

FOSTERING RESILIENCE STUDYGUIDE

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Why do some people develop resilience in the face of challenges and become even stronger, while others break down and cannot fully recover even years later?

When faced with challenges, many people consider themselves not strong enough to cope with them. However, people who confidently overcome setbacks and other blows of fate were not born with an unbreakable character and an iron will. They became that way. The truth is that we start feeling empowered as we encounter challenges. We become much more resilient when we face these challenges and overcome them. And all of us can do it.

Where would you rate yourself your resilience on a scale from 1-to-10 at this moment? Think about it and reflect on the strategies that you currently use. For example, do you start with a full tank each day? Do you feel every day when you wake up, you're ready to take on whatever comes your way, or does it feel like you build your resilience throughout the day?

Perhaps you've had challenges all day today and feel your resilience might be a little bit lower, or if you think you had a fabulous day and met every challenge you encountered and persevered.

You cannot maintain or achieve wellness without bringing some balance into your life. The foundation of resilience is combined in these five elements of wellbeing: relationships, physical health, emotional health, sleeping habits, and eating habits. When one of these is off, it makes us feel off. We might not feel as stable within ourselves. When you're not in alignment, or when you're not in balance with all of these areas of your lives, you feel it somewhere. You may start to feel that stress or see maybe something is not as productive or as effective as you were in your work, home life, or your emotional self.

By thinking about where your emotions and thoughts are going, you can control your wellbeing and bring yourself back to balance. What practices can help you bring yourself back to balance?

It's essential for you to have vitamins for your resilience. So either you're going to do and get your resiliency vitamins from your daily activities, with or without intention, or you're going intentionally to do what you need to replenish yourself.

1. Allow yourself to be present. Learning to be in the present moment without judging boosts resilience. This is very similar to the skill of just being mindful or being and paying attention throughout your day. It can help you to feel clear-headed about your options for responding. When we're fully present, we're more likely to find appropriate, levity moments of challenge and help relieve stress by potentially finding humor in our situation or being just grateful for what we have.

2. Exercise. In addition to the physical benefits of exercise, many other cognitive and emotional benefits come along. For example, exercise helps to improve your mood. It increases your brainpower, stimulates feel-good hormones to get released, and enhances energy levels and sleep.

3. Practice mindful, intentional movements throughout the day. This may include taking photos while walking, dancing while cooking, taking a hot shower with aromatherapy, deep breathing, puppy cuddles, etc.

4. Find what it is in today that you're grateful for and express gratitude. Is it your family or friends? Your kids' laughter? Your spouse's support? Good health? A great job? Your home? Helping others? A warm vest? Or you're grateful for being alive?

5. Develop strong regulation skills. This can improve your performance, enrich your personal relationships and lead to stress reduction, ultimately promoting better health overall. For your children, regulation is one of the most critical skills for their social, academic, and emotional wellbeing.

6. Practice deep breathing. You can start it right now. Take a deep breath in, hold it and exhale. Then, do it three more times, breathe in, hold it, and let it go. Another time, and one more. You're resetting your nervous system when you deep-breathe like that with your belly. It brings relief of tension and anxiety and more blood flow and oxygen to your brain for clearer thinking.

7. Have a connection. This is the key to healing and the key to resilience. Everyone needs validation and others to empathize with us. You need to have a connection and that person you can talk to. Text a person you can call when you need support that you know will answer if you need help. Tell them, "Thank you!". Tell them how much they mean to you.

8. Maintain your energy and unplug. We all have a finite amount of energy every day. It is necessary to identify those things that are challenging you and then find where they would fall in the sphere of control. Would you put it under something you can control? This may also be a great way to help you set up a plan for something you need to move on, maybe something that you need to have some action. If it is something you can't influence or control, provide yourself permission to let it go.

In addition to the strategies listed above, pay special attention to your own needs, positive emotions, and feelings. These things together can help you through a challenging time in your life. Being resilient does not mean not experiencing hardship or stress. On the contrary, anxiety, emotional pain, and sadness are common to people who have experienced challenging life circumstances, and they may be a prerequisite on the road to resilience. We all face different kinds of challenges and choices, and we have all experienced varying levels of resilience. However, the more challenges you have in your life, the more you become versed in this skill. Resilience is not something that you're born with. In fact, it's something that you have to obtain and develop with lots of practice and the right strategies.

Fostering resilience will help you turn challenges into developmental situations. This skill is transformational because it promises real breakthroughs for its practitioners, focusing them not just to endure somehow, manage and adapt but on overcoming these challenging situations and even turning them to their advantage.

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