



# Building Your Resilient Life

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# Definition of Resilience

- ▶ The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.

(<https://www.bing.com/search?q=define%20resilience&q&form=QBRE&sp=-1&pq=define%20resilience&sc=8-18&sk=&cvid=8A5D85B3737343D0A273BB511EAABB21>)

- ▶ The ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity or the like; buoyancy.

(<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/resilience>)

- ▶ The ability to bounce back after a significant setback.

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 22)

# Definition of Resilience

- ▶ **Psychological resilience** is the ability to mentally or emotionally cope with a crisis or to return to pre-crisis status quickly.<sup>[1]</sup> Resilience exists when the person uses "mental processes and behaviors in promoting personal assets and protecting self from the potential negative effects of stressors".<sup>[2]</sup> In simpler terms, psychological resilience exists in people who develop psychological and behavioral capabilities that allow them to remain calm during crises/chaos and to move on from the incident without long-term negative consequences.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological\\_resilience](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_resilience))

# How Resilient Are You?

## Brief Resilience Scale

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)
2.	I have a hard time making it through stressful events.	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)
3.	It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)
4.	It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)
5.	I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)
6.	I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)

(Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. (2008). The brief resilience scale: assessing the ability to bounce back. *International journal of behavioral medicine*, 15(3), 194-200.)

# How Resilient Are You?

<b>BRS score</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1.00-2.99	Low resilience
3.00-4.30	Normal resilience
4.31-5.00	High resilience

(Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. (2008). The brief resilience scale: assessing the ability to bounce back. *International journal of behavioral medicine*, 15(3), 194-200.)

# When Do We Think Resilience Is Needed and/or Developed?

- ▶ Life Threatening Health Diagnosis
  - ▶ Cancer, Brain Tumor, Organ Failure
- ▶ Facing a Catastrophe
  - ▶ Fire, flood, hurricane, tsunami, drought, war

# When is Resilience REALLY Needed and/or Developed?

## Needed

- ▶ Every-day stressors
  - ▶ Create a fight or flight response which often is out of proportion with the situational stressor.

## Developed

- ▶ Through the process we use to cope with the every-day stressors, the little things that don't go our way.
  - ▶ Adaptive Responses
  - ▶ Unhelpful Responses

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 27)

# “Typical” Pattern/Presentation of Resilience

- ▶ It is natural for a person to be disturbed by a serious situation, a seemingly insurmountable difficulty or significant setback.
- ▶ To be bothered for a few days to a few weeks is often considered to be an expected response.
- ▶ An individual adjusts to the disturbance and finds they are “ok” - they resume their life.

(<https://www.ascopost.com/issues/september-1-2012/the-science-of-resilience-exploring-the-process-of-grieving-from-a-new-perspective/>)

# Defining the Science Behind Resilience

- ▶ Trauma/Fear/Stress/Anxiety evoke the fight or flight response and activates the amygdala and subcortical fear circuits.
- ▶ Prefrontal cortex calms the amygdala and subcortical fear circuits.
- ▶ People who are more resilient have stronger neural pathways between the prefrontal cortex and amygdala and are therefore able to calm the amygdala more quickly.

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 26-27)

# Factors in Resilience

What factors contribute to being resilient?

According to the American Psychological Association:

- ▶ Loving, caring, supportive relationships within and outside of your family that create love and trust, provide role models, offer encouragement and reassurance
- ▶ The capacity to make realistic plans and take steps to carry them out
- ▶ A positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities
- ▶ Skills in communication and problem solving
- ▶ The capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses effectively/adaptively

(Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience>)

# What Creates Resilience?

- ▶ Having a support system
- ▶ Having a stable role model
- ▶ Belief in your own self efficacy
  - ▶ (the knowledge that you can influence the outcome of a situation to your own benefit)
- ▶ Emotional Flexibility
  - ▶ (the ability to let go of an emotion that isn't helpful, to shift your focus onto another emotion)
- ▶ Facing your Fears
  - ▶ (promotes mastery, reduces trauma responses)

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 26-29)

(Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience>)

(Flow, Living at the Peak of Your Abilities by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, 1994)

# What Creates Resilience?

Cont.

- ▶ **Exercise**
  - ▶ (builds new neurons in the brain)
- ▶ **Having a code of ethics**
  - ▶ (guides your decision making)
- ▶ **Mindfulness**
  - ▶ (allows you to return to a calm state faster and reduces emotional reactivity)
- ▶ **Flow States**
- ▶ **Learning from your past**
- ▶ **Staying Flexible**

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 26-29)

(Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience>)

(Flow, Living at the Peak of Your Abilities by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, 1994)

# How to Increase Your Own Resilience

## Tip #1

### ▶ Connect with People

Research suggests that this is the most important factor in building your resilience.

#### Here's how:

- ▶ Foster strong relationships with family, friends and others.
- ▶ Accept help and support from people who care about you.
- ▶ Join a group with people who share your core values
  - ▶ faith based groups, political causes or organizations, activity based groups like biking, hiking or travel groups, charities, etc...)
- ▶ Help others who are in need

# How to Increase Your Own Resilience

## Tip #2

### ▶ Define and/or develop your core values

Having a set of core values gives you a foundation upon which to stand through tough times and a lens through which to make decisions as you face difficult decisions.

### ▶ Here's how:

- ▶ Keep a values journal every day for a month. Each day review the events of the day. Clarify what behaviors, responses and actions you are proud of. Label the value that informed or motivated those things that you are most proud of.
- ▶ At the end of the month, list the values that informed your behavior throughout the month.
- ▶ Select your top 5 values from the list. These are your core values.
- ▶ *Complete the Soul Care “Exploring Your Values” Exercises when you download the worksheets from Soul Care’s subscription resource page.*

# How to Increase Your Own Resilience

## Tip #3

### Build Your Optimism

Develop your ability to find the “Silver Lining” in any cloud. Maintaining a positive outlook is a learned skill. Those who see the glass as half full, rather than half empty will bounce back faster.

#### Here’s how:

- ▶ Practice finding the good in a bad situation
- ▶ Create a mantra that you recite to yourself that reinforces an optimistic world view
- ▶ Practice acceptance in unpleasant situations
- ▶ *Complete the Soul Care “Building Your Optimism” Exercises when you download the worksheets from Soul Care’s subscription resource page.*

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 26-29)

(Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience>)

# How to Increase Your Own Resilience

## Tip #4

### Face Your Fears

Nothing prepares you to bounce back from adversity in quite the same way as when you face the things that scare you. When you conquer a fear, you strengthen your resilience in a unique way, you “relax your fear circuitry.”

#### Here's how:

- ▶ Evaluate your risk
- ▶ Create an action plan
- ▶ Execute your action plan
- ▶ ***Complete the Soul Care “Building Your Optimism” Exercises when you download the worksheets from Soul Care’s subscription resource page.***

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 26-29)

(Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience>)

(Retrieved from: <https://www.verywellmind.com/healthy-ways-to-face-your-fears-4165487>)

# How to Increase Your Own Resilience

## Tip #5

### Exercise

Stress damages our neurons. You can build new neurons by exercising. A regular exercise routine can counterbalance your stress response.

#### Here's how:

- ▶ Set your exercise goals
- ▶ Create a balanced routine
- ▶ Start slow and progress slowly
- ▶ Build activity into your daily routine
- ▶ Mix it up by planning a variety activities
- ▶ Allow time for recovery
- ▶ Track your progress on paper
- ▶ ***Complete the Soul Care “Develop Your Exercise Routine” Exercises when you download the worksheets from Soul Care’s subscription resource page.***

(Retrieved from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/fitness/art-20048269>)

(Time: The Science of Happiness, 2019 pg. 26-29)

# How to Increase Your Own Resilience

## Tip #6

### Meditate

Meditation will assist you in creating a calmer baseline state of mind. When you meditate you change the structure and function of your brain. You strengthen the neural pathways between the amygdala and the pre-frontal cortex of the brain. The more you meditate, the faster you recover from stress. Meditation can also decrease expression of pro-inflammatory genes in the body.

### Here's how:

- ▶ To meditate
  - ▶ Sit or lie comfortably
  - ▶ Close your eyes
  - ▶ Breathe naturally
  - ▶ Focus your attention on the breath and body experience
- ▶ Listen to a guided meditation recording on spotify
- ▶ Check out these links for support
  - ▶ <https://www.gaiam.com/blogs/discover/meditation-101-techniques-benefits-and-a-beginner-s-how-to>
  - ▶ <https://www.amazon.com/Stress-Free-Exercises-Meditations-Relaxation/dp/B0026GDBUC>
  - ▶ <https://www.brainsync.com>

# How to Increase Your Own Resilience

More tips available on the  
Soul Care  
subscription page

# References

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