

Wellbeing in the workplace,
thriving business.

Building
personal
resilience

Ripple^{&Co}

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What is resilience?

Resilient objects are able to recover quickly from adversity and mounting pressures. They can spring back into shape despite the difficulties endured. For humans, it describes our ability to cope emotionally, physically, and mentally.

Humans can develop resilience and those with strong psychological resilience are able to remain calm within a crisis or return to their pre-crisis status swiftly. Some people are naturally resilient and have thought mechanisms to protect themselves from potentially negative effects of stressful stimuluses. But the good news is, resilience can be learned.

Resilience is often associated with emotional intelligence, a quality that allows you to separate yourself from the emotion, and recognise how you react. It is our ability to be self-aware and analyse our behaviour during emotionally tough situations. Our bodies give us a variety of clues surrounding our emotions and it's our choice whether to notice and try to understand them.

Studies on the relationship between human mood and human physical health are eye-opening. Low mood can significantly impact our bodies. Accumulating research suggests that positive emotions have a considerable influence on whether you have a healthy, functioning immune system. When you are stressed, your body's cortisol levels become abnormal, which causes your immune systems to become inactive. If your immune system is not functioning efficiently, you become more prone to viruses and infections as your defences have been lowered to invading organisms.

A lot of stress in life comes from our own thought processes and failure to be resilient during tough times. There are many ways to become more resilient and they're accessible for everyone. The key to building up resilience is applying time and effort to learning these skills.



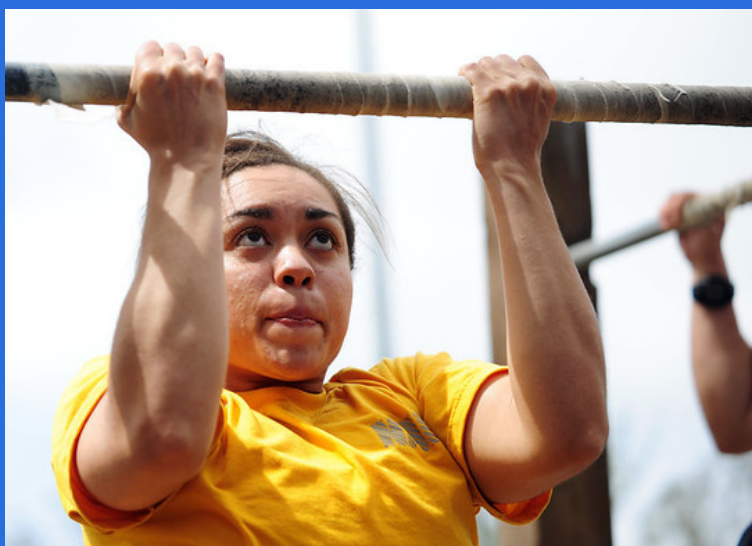
Building resilience through self-awareness

Everyone is guilty of getting caught up in our emotions. Sometimes, people and things you care about can change for the worse and you become fixated on the problem. Trying to figure out why it happened, how it happened and whether you could have done something about it can become an obsession. It is this level of tangent, overthinking that you need to learn to recognise, and problem solve.

Growing in emotional resilience comes through greater self-knowledge. Identifying how you react and behave in emotional situations means you can improve your thought processes and behaviour in the situation.

Changing perceptions

The world today is becoming increasingly materialistic. Being brought up in a society that promotes possessions as a means to happiness. This is not the case. Genuine happiness cannot be achieved this way as there are always faster, newer and brighter versions of possessions becoming available.



A survey conducted in the USA (2010), concluded that money does make us happier – but only up to a certain point. After a certain amount, money does not effect happiness. Primarily this is because, once you purchase the thing you thought would make you happy, it does not last and you begin to strive for the next item to make you 'happy.' You become trapped in a dangerous cycle of comparing what you have against others, leading to feelings of jealousy. You buy more to make yourself feel better, but it will never be enough.

Relationships

Relationships are incredibly important for our wellbeing.

Humans are social creatures and if become isolated, there are mental and physical consequences. Strong social networks help you become resilient. They provide a support system that genuinely cares and is there to help.

- If you have strong relationships, you feel significant, and it gives you purpose. You are there for someone else who needs you. You will form mutual commitments through strong relationships and that in turn will give you the support network needed to tackle tough times.
- Compassion is to be aware of and sympathetic to someone else's suffering and empathy is to notice the signals someone gives off to let you know what they want and need.
- If you can connect with someone else emotionally and are able to recognise their signals and their suffering, you can ease the stresses that they are having to endure. Resilience can be built through the quality of your social connections and solidarity with one another.



'It is okay to ask for help'

People often believe asking for help or depending on someone else shows weakness. However, having the confidence to ask for help should be praised and encouraged as much as possible.

The more you ask and accept help from colleagues, family or friends, the stronger your bonds will be. Trusting someone to help you gives them confidence, strengthens your relationships with them and improves your emotional resilience.



Asking for help also encourages reciprocity in a relationship. This refers to repaying your debt to someone by helping them in return, which collectively strengthens your resilience. Reciprocity is crucial for creating strong bonds in a relationship.



Acquiring hardiness

Hardiness is key to building resilience, it is the characteristic of being strong and tolerant of stressful situations. According to the research of psychologist Susan Kobasa, three elements that are essential for an effective stress-hardy mindset are:

- Challenge
- Personal control
- Commitment

Personal control

By focusing our time and energy on situations and events where you have the most control, where you can have the greatest impact, you will feel empowered and confident. Those who spend time worrying about uncontrollable events can often feel lost, helpless and powerless to take action.



Challenge

This is about viewing stress as a challenge, which can be overcome if it is understood. It involves finding ways to identify the cause of the stress from a positive perspective, an opportunity to learn, figure out how it can be solved and then grow. This is a motivated and positive way of looking at the problem, rather than viewing stress as unfortunate and inevitable.

Commitment

Resilient people are committed to their lives and their goals, and they have a compelling reason to get out of bed in the morning. Commitment isn't just restricted to work. It can be a commitment to relationships, friendships, causes they care about, and their religious or spiritual beliefs. Commitment is a key factor when acquiring hardiness. Being able to persist and stay in the challenge creates individual purpose, and purpose in turn motivates us to influence our surroundings and persevere even when initial efforts fail.