



RESILIENCY

How to Bounce Back When Times Get Tough

Job loss. Relationship conflicts. Death. Financial difficulties. Sometimes the stress of life feels like more than anyone should be able to handle. So why do some of our colleagues, friends, and family members make it seem easy to remain optimistic and bounce back from the curveballs that are thrown their way?

The answer lies in **resiliency**. Resiliency is the capacity to recover from difficult life events. Another way to think of it is your ability to withstand adversity and continue to grow despite life's downturns.

While resiliency is the ability to bounce back, you shouldn't picture a trampoline – down one moment and up the next. Think instead of climbing a mountain without a trail map. It takes time, strength, and help from people around you. You will likely experience setbacks along the way, but eventually you will reach the top and be able to look back on how far you've come.

The good news is resiliency is not something you're either born with or not. It is a skill that can be developed over time.

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COUNSELOR CORNER

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Q: How can I become more resilient?

A: Resilience is defined as being able to bounce back from a problem. These problems might be significant sources of stress, trauma, threats, adversity, or a tragedy that happens in our life. Being resilient does not mean that bouncing back happens without any distress or difficult emotions, but it does mean we're able to cope with that distress.

So how do we learn to bounce back from these problems? It is possible to shift our thoughts, behaviors, and actions to help us become more resilient.

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WHO TENDS TO BE MORE RESILIENT?

Resilient individuals tend to share these common characteristics:

- Positive attitude (optimism)
- Confidence and calmness
- Willingness to ask for help
- Empathy and understanding
- Persistence and determination

WHAT DOES RESILIENCY LOOK LIKE?

Building resiliency can be the difference between thriving and just surviving. In practice, resiliency includes:

- Recognizing and managing your emotions
- Understanding the feelings of others
- Sense of independence and self-worth
- Forming and maintaining positive, mutually respectful relationships
- Ability to solve problems and make informed decisions
- Sense of purpose and goals for the future

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Resiliency is a key element in our well-being. It is associated with greater job satisfaction, work happiness, organizational commitment, and employee engagement. People who are resilient often have higher self-esteem, a greater sense of control over life events, and a sense of purpose.

WHERE DO I START?

Consider how you can grow in these four elements of resiliency:

Confidence. Confidence is doing the right thing despite opposition. It means being willing to take risks and admit to our mistakes.

Social support. Build good relationships with others in the workplace and in your personal life. These people should be allies – not just people you can vent to, but people you can trust to hold you accountable and help you find solutions.

Adaptability. Strength rarely comes from inflexibility. Adaptability is understanding our failures, reflecting on mistakes we have made, being open to new ideas in certain situations, and finding ways to complete difficult tasks rather than giving up.

Purposefulness. Have fixed, clear goals that align with your personal values. When these are in place, they give us energy and empower us to be confident in our decision-making. Goals provide long-term vision and short-term motivation.

Addressing these four elements can help improve your resiliency levels and make you stronger. It won't happen overnight, but you can help protect and grow your resilience by practicing self-care, building support networks, and changing your thinking from negative to positive.

Information compiled from the training "Resiliency," created by EAP Trainer Nancy Boyle. To see more, visit www.TheVillageFamily.org/webinars



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Here are some strategies you can use to become more resilient:

- 1. Learn to problem-solve.** Being able to find solutions to problems is associated with better coping. Practice this skill by developing logical ways to work through problems you encounter and pay attention to the process of problem-solving.
- 2. Know your strengths.** Take time to reflect on what you're good at. What are the situations you know you handle well or problems you know you are good at solving? Remind yourself of your abilities and use them often.
- 3. Your struggle is valid.** Remember that no matter what you are dealing with, its impact on you is legitimate and the stress you feel is valid.
- 4. Don't do it all alone.** Having people you can confide in and trust gives you a chance to share your feelings, get feedback, problem-solve, and get support. Consider calling 1-800-627-8220 to schedule an appointment with an EAP provider to help you prioritize and build your resiliency skills.
- 5. Be kind to yourself.** When you are stressed, it is easy to neglect your own needs. Making time to care for yourself and take care of your own needs will help you persevere through a crisis.
- 6. Take action.** Being resilient often means being active. Asking yourself "What am I going to do about this?" can be a good place to start, as well as focusing on the progress that you've already made. Think about the step that's directly in front of you to avoid feeling discouraged. Actively working toward a solution can help you feel more empowered and in control of the situation.
- 7. Keep practicing.** Resilience is a quality that can take time to build. Don't be discouraged if coping doesn't come easily. It's a skill you can build on and develop.