



Tips for Developing Resiliency

Positive attitudes go a long way in helping us cope with the demands of work and personal life. You don't have to be born resilient – you can learn to think and behave as if you were!

- Accept what you cannot change, and put your energy into things that you do have control over.
- Once you know what you have control over begin to plan how you will address those issues in an assertive manner.
- Avoid wasting anger or energy on trivial matters. In the scheme of things, many of the situations that bother us are basically small annoyances. Focus on what is truly important to you.
- Empower yourself by saying and believing that you can try to control your attitude and your perception of events and situations. Although it is a challenge, it is possible to develop an “I can handle it” attitude. Believe in yourself and avoid putting yourself down.
- Check out your perception of situations and events. Be sure to ask yourself and others questions to help yourself look at facts objectively and come to rational conclusions. Are you using distorted thinking? Is there another way you can interpret what has happened?
- Avoid the “should”, “ought”, and “must” attitudes and statements. These are judgmental words, which can often lead to feelings of guilt and frustration.
- Remember that life isn't always fair. It is a combination of good and bad with many events happening randomly. Much of life is full of ambiguity and uncertainty.
- Look at crises at work and home as opportunities for growth and learning. Setbacks in your career and personal life can be occasions for rethinking your goals and re-appraising your values. They also provide a chance to learn more about your strengths and vulnerabilities.
- Accept that most things will be ongoing tasks and responsibilities. It is generally impossible to bring closure to some tasks, especially household chores that need frequent repeating, or projects at work that are accomplished in a number of stages or need to be repeated.
- Find your comfort zone, which is the range within which you function best. If you have too much to do and you are unable to feel comfortable, then make an effort to simplify your life for a period of time, until you feel able to take on more. Prioritize.
- On the other hand, if you do not have enough stimulation in your life, then search for ways to enrich your life with people and activities that appeal to you. Your body will give you signals that you are on overload or bored. Listen to your body to find that comfort zone.
- Try to be positive and upbeat. Pay attention to pleasant situations. Try to view unpleasant events more realistically. Avoid irrational thinking. Make a conscious effort to alter the way you perceive daily events. Recognize the value of believing in the time-honored “This too shall pass.” Keep in mind that research shows that realistic-optimistic people have fewer health problems.
- Be aware that work and family responsibilities buffer each other. If there is inadequacy or problems in one area, there is generally a positive situation in another. For example, one day



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things may not be going well at work, but something wonderful may be happening with your family or your relationships with friends, and vice versa.

- Learn to be flexible because change is the only “constant”. We change, our circumstances change, our work situations change, and so do our personal and family lives.
- Use humor to reduce stress. Reappraise a situation by transforming injustice into absurdity. Redefine a problem to make it seem more bearable. Whenever possible, seek out what is funny and amusing in a situation. Learn to laugh more.
- Remind yourself that negative emotions are draining. If you feel angry, exhausted, frustrated, or overwhelmed, try to understand the source of your feelings. Get support and help from your friends or from professionals. If you are not successful in identifying the cause of your feelings and exploring possible solutions, then seek professional help.
- Use some of the skills you have developed in your work life, such as planning, organizing, managing, and breaking tasks into small steps, in your family life. Find information and resources to help you manage your dependent care demands and personal issues. The job of parenting or being a caregiver to an older relative can be enhanced by using the skills you have learned at work and vice versa. Time management skills are essential both at work and at home.
- Spend time with people who are positive and look on the bright side of life. It is important to seek out people who are supportive and upbeat, and sometimes it is necessary to avoid those people who consistently “pull you down” or “put you down”.
- Seek out and find aspects of your job, as well as your personal life, that are rewarding and satisfying. Look at your strengths. Be grateful for the good things.
- Make sure that you get sufficient rest. When we are stressed, we often work harder and cut down on sleep. Our bodies need the restorative effects of rest.
- Build in time for relaxation and fun. Play provides a physical and psychological release of tension.
- Practice the “6-3-6” deep breathing technique to calm your body and mind. A deep breath in to the count of six, holding your breath for three seconds, and a slow breath out for six seconds.
- Work on developing a philosophy of life. Over the years, you’ve gained much wisdom; let it guide you during times of difficulty.
- Get professional help when you need extra support and guidance. Remember, healthy people seek help! Call your EAP at 800.327.4692.