

How Resilient Are You?

Extension Homemaker Package Lesson ~ Human Development
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Resilience is the key in life that gives us the strength to cope with challenges, stress and hardships. We are all resilient to some degree – but some people seem to be more naturally able to stay calm in every situation. Are the times in life we felt more resilient than others? Walk through the following and learn:

- *How Resilient You Are?*
- *Why is resilience helpful; what factors contribute to resilience.*
- *Discover 10 ways to become more resilient.*

Resiliency Quiz *(from Psychology Today by Al Siebert, PhD.)*

Rate yourself from 1 to 5 on the following: (1 = very little, 5 = very strong)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In a crisis or chaotic situation, I calm myself and focus on taking useful actions.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm usually optimistic. I see difficulties as temporary and expect to overcome them.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can tolerate high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty about situations.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I adapt quickly to new developments. I'm good at bouncing back from difficulties.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm playful. I find the humor in rough situations, and can laugh at myself.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm able to recover emotionally from losses and setbacks. I have friends I can talk with. I can express my feelings to others and ask for help. Feelings of anger, loss and discouragement don't last long.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel self-confident, appreciate myself and have a healthy concept of who I am.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm curious. I ask questions. I want to know how things work. I like to try new ways of doing things.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I learn valuable lessons from my experiences and from the experiences of others.				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'm good at solving problems. I can use analytical logic, be creative, or use practical common sense.				

1	2	3	4	5
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I'm good at making things work well. I'm often asked to lead groups and projects.

I'm very flexible. I feel comfortable with my paradoxical complexity. I'm optimistic and pessimistic, trusting and cautious, unselfish and selfish, and so forth.

I'm always myself, but I've noticed that I'm different in different situations.

I prefer to work without a job description. I'm more effective when I'm free to do what I think is best in each situation.

I "read" people well and trust my intuition.

I'm a good listener. I have good empathy skills.

I'm non-judgmental about others and adapt to people's different personality styles.

I'm very durable. I hold up well during tough times. I have an independent spirit underneath my cooperative way of working with others.

I've been made stronger and better by difficult experiences.

I've converted misfortune into good luck and found benefits in bad experiences.

Add up your score: 1 = 1 point, 2 = 2 points, 3 = 3 points, 4 = 4 points, 5 = 5 points (maximum 100 points)

Scoring: 80 or higher very resilient!
 65-80 better than most
 50-65 slow, but adequate
 40-50 you're struggling
 40 or under seek help!

Why is Resiliency Helpful? Factors that Contribute to Resiliency

Adapted from [Verywell mind](#)

Resilience is not a way to erase life's difficulties. It does not allow us to see life through rose-colored glasses either. But - it does help us to realize that pains and hardships are something we can face and we can overcome our adversities and move on with our lives. According to many experts, all people are very capable of learning skills to become more resilient.

One area noted of importance is social support. A strong support system of family and friends can boost our resilience in the most challenging times. Other factors that you might not think of can also contribute to resiliency. Those are:

- Holding a positive view of yourself and your abilities
- The ability to make realistic plans and stick to them
- Having an internal belief of control of your actions and outcomes
- Being a good communicator
- Viewing yourself as a fighter – not a victim
- Managing emotions effectively

Consider one way you might try to boost your resiliency?

10 Ways to Become More Resilient

Adapted from [Mayo Clinic](#)

Build your connections

- **Prioritize relationships.** Connecting with empathetic and understanding people can remind you that you're not alone in the midst of difficulties. Focus on finding trustworthy and compassionate individuals who validate your feelings, which will support the skill of resilience.
- **Join a group.** Along with one-on-one relationships, some people find that being active in civic groups, faith-based communities, or other local organizations provides social support and can help you reclaim hope.

Foster wellness

- **Take care of your body.** Promoting a positive lifestyle to include proper nutrition, sleep, hydration and regular exercise can strengthen your body to handle stress and emotions like anxiety or depression.
- **Practice mindfulness.** Mindful journaling, yoga, and other spiritual practices like prayer or meditation can also help people build connections and restore hope, which can help when we are dealing with situations that require resilience.
- **Avoid negative outlets.** Focus on giving your body resources to manage stress, rather than seeking to eliminate the feeling of stress altogether.

Find purpose

- **Help others.** Whether you volunteer or support a friend, you can garner a sense of purpose, self-worth, and tangibly help others
- **Be proactive.** It's important to take time and ask yourself, "What can I do about a problem in my life?" If the problems seem too big to tackle, break them down into manageable pieces.
- **Move toward your goals.** Develop some realistic goals and do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment — that enables you to move toward the things you want to accomplish.
- **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** People often find that they have grown in some respect as a result of a struggle and increase their sense of self-worth and heighten their appreciation for life.

Embrace healthy thoughts

- **Keep things in perspective.** How you think can play a significant part in how you feel — and how resilient you are when faced with obstacles.
- **Accept change.** Accept that change is a part of life. Certain goals or ideals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations in your life. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.
- **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** It's hard to be positive when life isn't going your way. An optimistic outlook empowers you to expect that good things will happen to you.
- **Learn from your past.** By looking back at who or what was helpful in previous times of distress, you may discover how you can respond effectively to new difficult situations. Remind yourself of where you've been able to find strength and ask yourself what you've learned from those experiences.

Seek help

- There are occasions to seek out a professional to assist us. Many benefits can result from finding a therapist, counselor, or other to help at times.

References:

Psychology Today; Resiliency Quiz: <https://resiliencyquiz.com/index.shtml> <https://resiliencyquiz.com/index.shtml>

Verywell mind: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-resilience-2795059>

Mayo Clinic: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/resilience-training/in-depth/resilience/art-20046311>

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Interpretation

Over 30 years of research into the inner nature of highly resilient survivors has created a clear understanding of human resiliency and how it develops. Highly resilient people show many similar qualities:

Playful, childlike curiosity. Ask lots of questions, want to know how things work. Play with new developments. Enjoy themselves as children do. Have a good time almost anywhere. Wonder about things, experiment, make mistakes, get hurt, laugh. Ask: "What is different now? What if I did this? Who can answer my questions? What is funny about this?"

Constantly learn from experience. Rapidly assimilate new or unexpected experiences and facilitate being changed by them. Ask "What is the lesson here? What early clues did I ignore? The next time that happens I will...."

Adapt quickly. Very mentally and emotionally flexible. Comfortable with contradictory personality qualities. Can be *both* strong and gentle, sensitive and tough, logical and intuitive, calm and emotional, serious and playful, and so forth. The more the better. Can think in negative ways to reach positive outcomes. "What could go wrong, so it can be avoided?"

Have solid self-esteem and self-confidence. Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. It determines how much you learn after something goes wrong. It allows you to receive praise and compliments. It acts as a buffer against hurtful statements while being receptive to constructive criticism. "I like, appreciate, and love myself...."

Self-confidence is your reputation with yourself. It allows you to take risks without waiting for approval or reassurance from others. You expect to handle new situations well because of your past successes. "These are my reliable strengths...."

Have good friendships, loving relationships. Research shows that people in toxic working conditions are more stress resistant and are less likely to get sick when they have a loving family and good friendships. Loners are more vulnerable to distressing conditions. Talking with friends and family diminishes the impact of difficulties and increases feelings of self-worth and self-confidence.

Express feelings honestly. Experience and can express anger, love, dislike, appreciation, grief--the entire range of human emotions honestly and openly. Can also choose to suppress their feelings when they believe it would be best to do so.

Expect things to work out well. Deep optimism guided by internal values and standards. High tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty. Can work without a job description, is a good role model of professionalism. Has a synergistic effect, brings stability to crises and chaos. Ask "How can I interact with this so that things turn out well for all of us?"

Read others with empathy. See things through the perspectives of others, even antagonists. Win/win/win attitude in conflicts. Ask "What do others think and feel? What is it like to be them? How do they experience me? What is legitimate about what they feel, say, and do?"

Use intuition, creative hunches. Accept subliminal perception and intuition as valid, useful sources of information. Ask "What is my body telling me? Did that daydream mean anything? Why don't I believe what I'm being told? What if I did this?"

Defend self well. Avoid and block attacks, fight back. See through and side-step cons, "games," and manipulations that others attempt. Find allies, resources, and support.

Have a talent for serendipity. Learning lessons in the school of life is the antidote to feeling victimized. They can convert a situation that is emotionally toxic for others into something emotionally nutritious for them. They thrive in situations distressing to others because they learn good lessons from bad experiences. They convert misfortune into good luck and gain strength from adversity.

A good indicator of exceptional mental health is when a person talking about a rough experience says "I would never willingly go through anything like that again, but it was the one of best things that ever happened to me." Ask "How can I turn this around? Why is it good that this happened? What is the gift?"

Get better and better every decade. Become increasingly life competent, resilient, durable, playful, and free. Spend less time surviving than others and survive major adversities better. Enjoy life more and more.

The Resiliency Center was founded by the late [Al Siebert](#) who studied highly resilient survivors for over fifty years. He authored the award-winning book [The Resiliency Advantage: Master Change, Thrive Under Pressure and Bounce Back From Setbacks](#) (2006 Independent Publisher's Best Self-Help book), and best seller [The Survivor Personality: Why Some People Are Stronger, Smarter, and More Skillful at Handling Life's Difficulties...and How You Can Be, Too.](#)