



## Boosting Resilience

Resilience is the ability to manage the stress of difficult situations, land on our feet and keep moving forward. Natural abilities to face adversities vary greatly but the good news is that we can all learn skills to strengthen our resilience and expand our capacity to maintain it.

### 10 Tips for Boosting Resilience:

- 1. Become Mindful** “Mindfulness” has recently become a buzz word, and it’s a good thing. Mindfulness is an awareness of our experience - our emotions, our reactions, our body sensations, our beliefs and our impulses. Cultivating mindfulness helps us notice when we are bogged down in the past or reacting to a future we can’t yet know. Learning the skills of mindfulness promotes our ability to be in the present moment - in the here-and-now.
- 2. Accept that Life Involves Setbacks, Hurts & Disappointments** *The Harvard Business Review* in April 2011 was entirely dedicated to failures, and to the successes that followed. Beth often tells the story about herself in graduate school studying American History. “I was a dismally poor student at the time and dropped out feeling terrible and inadequate. With hindsight I know that the setback was what turned me towards my real calling-working with the living and facilitating change in the here and now.” Keeping perspective on life’s roller coaster helps us manage intense emotions and maintain openness to a positive future.
- 3. Identify What We Can & Can’t Control** Resilience involves staying realistic and taking action when that action can impact an outcome. It also involves recognizing when a situation cannot change and managing the feelings that come with that awareness. Jane often says that “You can’t get milk from a hardware store. There are many things to be gotten at a hardware store, but if milk is what you need, it makes better sense to go elsewhere.” Accepting what is, even though we don’t like it, makes it much easier to move forward.
- 4. Broadening Perspectives** Resilient leaders look through a wide lens, opening themselves up to new perceptions, increasing access to seeing outside the box (as well as above and below it). Expanding perspective empowers leaders to see opportunities formerly unseen.
- 5. Build Emotional Intelligence Skills** Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to manage our own emotions and deal with the feelings of others. In the workplace, emotional intelligence (EI) skills are critical for increasing satisfaction, performance and the bottom-line. Resilient people deepen their understanding of the intelligent use of emotion and use that awareness to guide them.

6. **Maintain Relationships & Grow Strong Social Networks** Resilience often depends on remembering that “it takes a village” to survive and thrive. Relationships don’t just maintain themselves, they take effort. We strengthen resilience when we stay well networked and build a community in which we can give and receive support.
7. **Question Assumptions & Beliefs** Beth used to jog. There were times when she thought she was seeing a dog, and would become fearful, assuming it would go after her. Most often the dog she saw was, in actuality, a fire hydrant. Fear gets heightened by the stories we tell ourselves so it’s important to examine our assumptions, especially those ways we take things personally and predict the future.
8. **Claim Your Strengths, Gifts & Talents** Too often, we focus on what we have not yet learned or not yet accomplished. It’s a common way to zap energy and dampen our outlook. Resilience and confidence are maximized by acknowledging our strengths and celebrating our accomplishments.
9. **Identify Thought Distortions & Resist Them** “Cognitive distortions” are all those ways in which we personalize situations, engage in all-or-nothing thinking, over-generalize and make negative predictions. When we become familiar with the way cognitive distortions operate, we can summon our Inner Coach to move us forward.
10. **Keep on “Truckin”** Thomas Edison discovered the light bulb after multiple failures. He said, “The three great essentials to achieve anything worthwhile are, first, hard work; second, stick-to-itiveness; third, common sense.” Kathryn Stockett, author of the best-selling book, “The Help,” was rejected by 60 editors before signing a contract with a publisher. Winston Churchill said, “Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.” So, as Jerry Garcia and The Grateful Dead would say “keep on truckin.”