

Resilience Inventory

PROFILE FOR:

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CONFIDENTIAL



What is Resilience?

In psychology, *resilience* characterizes ongoing personal growth, development, confidence and competence related to work/life challenges, adversity or change. Resilience also refers to effectively managing stress.

Resilience comes in two forms. First, there are strong genetic and neurobiological predictors of resilience. DNA research studies have zeroed in on various genes (e.g., glucocorticoid) that dictate just how intensely we react to stressful situations and events. Some people are naturally predisposed to keep their composure in the face of work and life challenges. Some people just naturally find it easier to rebound and grow in the face of life challenges.

Second, there is evidence that a moderate amount of adversity throughout life enhances resilience and optimal well-being (research actually supports a curvilinear relationship between life challenge and overall health).

In both cases being resilient (cognitively hardy) is something that people can alter and change through deliberate lifestyle practices and habits.

About the Resilience Inventory

The **Resilience Inventory** assesses a set of attitudes and beliefs about work and life that are relatively enduring and include:

- *Control*: beliefs an individual has self-efficacy and influence over significant outcomes in life
- *Challenge*: attitudes around viewing life changes as empowering and challenging as opposed to inducing helplessness and hopelessness
- *Involvement*: commitment, as opposed to alienation, with work, family, friendships and self
- *Self-confidence/Self-esteem*

Research with the Resilience Inventory

The **Resilience Inventory** demonstrates moderate internal consistency reliability of 0.84, test-retest reliability of .94 (three-week period) and has been shown to predict a variety of physical and psychological health outcomes in studies by Greene and Nowack, 1995; Nowack, 1990; Nowack, 1991; and Beasley, Thompson and Davidson, 2003. Additionally it has shown convergent validity with measures of optimism (Goss, 1994) and overall health and low job stress in a study of 1,925 Australian university staff (Sharpley et al., 1999). It was also significantly associated with absenteeism and self-reported hospitalization for injury/illness in a three-year longitudinal study of police officers (Greene and Nowack, 1995).

Recent studies with executives, coaches, and students with a brief cognitive-behavioral based coaching intervention have demonstrated significant increases in cognitive hardiness and resilience scores (e.g., Green, Grant & Rynsaardt, 2007; Grant, 2008; Grant, Curtayne & Burton, 2009; Grant, Green & Rynsaardt, 2011). Comparison of a 12-week blended learning versus classroom intervention also demonstrated significant changes in cognitive hardiness and psychological well-being (Giesser et al., 2011).

Cognitively hardy or resilient employees in the workplace appear to be more persistent, actively engaged and resilient in the face of work and life challenges. They also tend to be more engaged and report lower levels of work stress even when the workload is high. The **Resilience Inventory** is a good indicator of employee success in initiating/maintaining new behaviors and persisting in the face of work/life obstacles and challenges.

Your Resilience Results

To understand your Resilience results, your score can be interpreted as follows:

Very High	t-score above 70 (about 98% of the people who took Resilience Inventory got a lower score on this scale)
High	t-score above 60 (about 84% of the people who took Resilience Inventory got a lower score on this scale)
Moderately High	t-score above 55 (about 69% of the people who took Resilience Inventory got a lower score on this scale)
Average	t-score between 45 and 55 (about 31% of the people who took Resilience Inventory got a higher score on this scale and about 31% got a lower score)
Moderately Low	t-score below 45 (about 69% of the people who took Resilience Inventory got a higher score on this scale)
Low	t-score below 40 (about 84% of the people who took Resilience Inventory got a higher score on this scale)
Very Low	t-score below 30 (about 98% of the people who took Resilience Inventory got a higher score on this scale)

Resilience



Interpretation of Your Score

Resilience refers to a set of interrelated attitudes or beliefs about work and life that are enduring from day-to-day. These include a sense of commitment and strong interest toward work, family, hobbies or projects that people are involved in on a day-to-day basis and having things they look forward to doing.

Being resilient does not mean that a person doesn't experience difficulty or stress. Emotional pain and sadness are common in people who have suffered major adversity or trauma in their lives. It is important to remember that cognitive hardiness is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves thoughts, emotions and behaviors that can be learned and developed by anyone.

For you when resilience is present, daily life changes and events are perceived to be challenging rather than being experienced as threatening. This keeps you open to trying new experiences and helps you to recognize that change affords new opportunities rather than hindrances to work and life satisfaction. Resilience also includes the belief that you have strong influence and control over your life, that what you do is directly related to what you achieve, that success in work and life is a result of individual behavior, rather than luck, fate or chance and that you can effectively achieve success in both work and life.

This disposition appears to help buffer the potentially damaging impact of stress and generates effective coping behaviors. Individuals who score high on the Resilience Inventory tend to cope with stress by direct problem-solving rather than avoiding or ignoring the situation. They also tend to interact with others by giving and getting assistance and encouragement rather than by acting out or being overprotective.

Thus high resilience scores suggest the possession of the kind of generally hardy outlook on life that is associated with a lowered risk of job burnout, physical illness and psychological distress.

A higher score on this scale has been shown to optimize long term physical health and psychological well-being.

Your Resilience score is average. According to your responses, you have a tendency to sometimes interpret daily life events as threats to your well-being. You tend to experience moderate level of satisfaction with your support network with your colleagues, friends, and/or family. This may substantially increase your ability to cope with stress related disorders as social support has been shown to be a strong predictor of life satisfaction and overall health. You tend to generally focus on the positive aspects of your work and life and it is recommended that you continue to define aspects of your job that you enjoy and to deploy your signature skills/strengths. Continue to clarify your life goals and strengthen your commitment to things and people that are important to you. You will continue to benefit from building additional coping techniques to reappraise work and life stressors to emphasize what can be learned or how you can continue to grow in the face of such challenges. Finally, continuing to define purpose and meaning in your life will enhance your overall life satisfaction and allow you to effectively manage daily annoyances, hassles and stressors through a resilient mindset.

Tips for Enhancing Resilience

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress — such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors. It means “bouncing back” from difficult experiences.

Research has shown that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary. Developing resilience is a personal journey and not all people react exactly the same way to traumatic and stressful life events. Ask yourself the following questions to learn more about your own typical reactions to challenging situations in your life:

- What kinds of situations, events and triggers generate stress in my life (e.g., workload, relationships, financial, career, time pressure, work/family integration, interpersonal interactions, etc.)?
- How do I react to stress in my life (e.g., what happens to my energy level, my ability to concentrate, how I act towards others, how I feel, etc.)?
- How do I use my social support network to cope with my level of work and life stress?
- How do I react to interpersonal tension and pressure (i.e., how I express my thoughts and feelings with others)?
- What strengths/skills do I have to cope effectively with stress, pressure and life challenges?
- What experiences do I have in successfully coping with work/life challenges?
- How has this made me feel more confident about my ability to be able to handle future challenges and feel more hopeful about the future?

No one approach to building and developing resilience works for everyone. However, some research proven ways to build resilience are summarized below and may be appropriate to consider in developing your personal strategy.

1. Sleep More

How much sleep do you actually need?

When researchers study people in environments without clocks or windows and ask them to sleep any time they feel tired, 95% sleep between seven and eight hours out of every 24. Another 2.5% sleep more than eight hours (the remaining 2.5% require less than 7 hours of sleep a night to feel fully rested and not be inappropriately sleepy the next day). It is estimated that 12-15% of all people suffer from intermittent sleep disorders and sleep deprivation and almost 25% of the adult population have insomnia.

We know that sleep helps our bodies recover from the day's activities and that it helps us focus and be more productive. Lack of sleep is significantly associated with increased work absenteeism due to illness. In addition, it is associated with reduced work productivity, memory loss, lack of concentration/focus and negative emotions. It is also associated with a list of negative health outcomes including impaired function, inflammation, susceptibility to infectious disease, coronary heart calcification, obesity and reduced longevity. Getting even a few hours less sleep than you require significantly interferes with memory, psychomotor performance and your health. In fact, one study by Williamson (2000) found that a single night of sleep loss was correlated with poor cognitive and psychomotor performance equivalent to a blood alcohol content of 0.1% (0.08% is legally drunk in most U.S. states).

Smartphones and tablets can make for sleep-disrupting bedfellows. A tablet or smartphone used at night increases being tired the next morning via its effects on sleep (light exposure can interfere with melatonin, a hormone that helps control the natural sleep-wake cycle). It's important to try to detach from work and avoid using your smartphone and/or tablet right before bed or if you wake up in the middle of the night.

2. Get More Exercise

When you begin exercising, your brain recognizes this as a moment of stress. As your blood pressure increases, the brain can't determine whether you are experiencing a “challenge” or “hindrance” stressor but to protect yourself and your brain from stress, you release a protein called BDNF (Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor). However, BDNF has a protective and also reparative role to your memory neurons and acts positively on areas of the brain associated with mood.

A study found that people who exercised very little showed greater stress-related atrophy of the hippocampus (the part of the brain that stores memories) compared to those who exercised more (Fotuhi, Do & Jack, 2012). Regular exercise also promotes sound quality of sleep, reduces depression and boosts positive affect through the production of endorphins, the “feel-good” hormones.

Cumulative research has shown that physical activity and exercise boost mood/psychological wellbeing and has a strong dose-related link to both overall physical health and longevity. Resilient people tend to engage in daily activities that involve cardiovascular, strength and flexibility exercises as a strategic tool to stay healthy in the face of work and life challenges.

3. Develop a Strong Social Support Network

A weak social support network and toxic interpersonal relations affect longevity and health. One study suggests that the risks are the equivalent to that of smoking and alcohol consumption (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010). Additionally, the perceived availability and satisfaction with one's social support network, particularly emotional support, has direct effects on physical health and buffers the negative effects of stress.

Most people who live to old age do so not because they have beaten cancer, heart disease, depression or diabetes. Instead, these long-living individuals appear to all have long-lasting, meaningful connections with others as a core survival component.

Psychologists Howard Friedman and Leslie Martin (2011) analyzed ongoing data from an eight-decade study first initiated by Stanford University researcher Lewis Terman. In 1921 Terman studied 1,500 adolescents and explored the factors that contributed to those who lived longest. Friedman and Martin found that on average sociable children did not live longer. However, being satisfied with and using one's social support network did in fact predict longevity. They also found that beyond social network size, the clearest benefit of social relationships came from helping others. Those who helped their friends and neighbors, advising and caring for others, tended to live to a very old age.

In his 2011 book “Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being”, University of Pennsylvania professor Martin Seligman consistently found that doing an act of kindness produces the single most reliable momentary increase in happiness and psychological well-being of any exercise they tested. So, take an inventory of your own social support network and look for ways to strengthen those relationships that are most meaningful to you.

4. Practice Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Techniques to Rewire Your Brain

Can people develop the capacity to keep a level head, persevere under stress and experience less psychological and even physical distress by practicing mindfulness meditation?

Several published studies suggest that indeed this is the case. For example, Georgetown University Professor Elizabeth Stanley and colleagues (2014) conducted an experiment to test whether resilience can be developed by practicing a specialized form of mindfulness based meditation called “mind fitness training” on 281 military participants in an eight-week design. In this form of mindfulness meditation participants were taught to blunt reactions to stressors and to focus intently on specific sensations and to pay nonjudgmental attention to what they are feeling at that moment. The participants in the mindfulness based fitness training program, relative to a control group, reported significantly higher resilience outcomes measured by brain activation, heart rate reactivity and neurobiological measures.

Through daily practice of mindfulness we can practice tuning into our feelings and surroundings without judgment and detach from them. This allows us to handle difficult situations without a disruption of our focus. As a result, we can build the capacity to more realistically interpret stressful situations and remain calm while facing it. Current studies suggest that in as little as 8-9 weeks of daily practice significant changes in the brain structure can be observed associated with enhanced well-being and resilience.

Our own research (Schoen & Nowack, 2013) asked participants to listen to a self-administered self hypnosis stress reduction program for 12 weeks. At the end of the study, participants demonstrated a significant decline in a major marker of inflammation (IL-6) and a significant decrease in self-defeating coping.

A wonderful resource is the UCLA Mindful Awareness Center for several free mindfulness meditation exercises: <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

5. Practice Gratitude

In three independent studies in 2003 U.C. Davis researcher Robert Emmons demonstrated that a conscious focus on blessings and gratitude in life had significant positive emotional and interpersonal benefits. In another study (Seligman, Steen & Peterson, 2005), delivering a letter of gratitude to a family member, friend or other loved one resulted in a significant increase in happiness that lasted for one month following the intervention compared to a group that were instructed to focus on a time in life when they were at their best and reflect on their strengths.

Resilient people tend to live the saying that “things turn out best for those who make the best of how things turn out.” Each day spend some time reflecting on what you are truly fortunate to have in your life and focus on at least one thing that you treasure and value as a way to practice gratitude giving.

6. Fall Upwards - Growing Through Challenge

Flexibility is an essential component of resilience. By learning how to be more adaptable, you'll be better equipped to respond when faced with a work, family or life stressor. Resilient people view change as a challenge, rather than a threat and tend to adapt and even grow from personal and professional challenges. The term for this is called “falling upwards”. Psychologists call it post-traumatic growth.

Research in this area has shown that people who have experienced post-traumatic growth or “benefit finding” include some or all of the following: greater appreciation and enhanced sense of meaning of life; changed sense of priorities; warmer, more intimate relationships; greater sense of personal strength; recognition of new possibilities or paths for one's life; and richer spiritual development (Tedeshi & Calhoun, 2004).

Resilient people don't always make “lemonade when life gives them lemons.” But those who are most hardy appear to learn and grow through the challenges and difficult times in life without being fixated on being a victim, blaming themselves or feeling as if things will never get better.

7. Change Your Mindset Scripts from “Catastrophe” to “Annoyance”

Using data from over 12,000 participants from the Australian Longitudinal Study of Women's Health assessed at 3-year intervals, researchers found that work/life stress significantly increased the odds of developing a serious autoimmune disorder called rheumatoid arthritis (Harris et al., 2014). However, it was the perception of stress, and not the actual events that was predictive of the actual arthritis onset. Today stress researchers actually differentiate between good stressors (challenge) and those that take longer to recover from (hindrance). But this definition is based on your “mindset” - how you perceive and experience work and life events.

Remember that you can't change the fact that stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to these events. Try looking beyond the present to how future circumstances may be a little better. Even when facing very painful times try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective.

People who are most resilient tend to view negative occurrences in life with a more optimistic than negative “explanatory style”. The resilient see negative events as not being their fault (external vs. internal), not lasting forever (stable vs. unstable) and related to just this one area of their life (local vs. global). Dealing with difficult people, having financial and health constraints, having a heavy workload and dealing with aging parents might all be examples of things that are truly challenging to manage for all of us. However, shifting our mindset to actively minimize the “worst case scenario” (catastrophic thinking) and accentuate what we can control and manage will go a long way to reverse the innate “fight and flight” stress response which has provided an evolutionary survival advantage to us for thousands of years.

8. Be Hopeful and Optimistic

We all know that negative moods are associated with poor physical health and psychological well-being. What about positive emotions and health?

In a 2008 study of 2,873 healthy British adults, those who reported more positive emotions during the day had significantly lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol than is typically associated with increased blood pressure, immune suppression and obesity.

Among women, but not men in this study, positive emotions were significantly lower as well as levels of C-reactive protein and interleukin-6 which are considered indicators of widespread inflammation in the body and independent risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

These findings support the idea that happiness is protective although we all have genetic “set-points” accounting for approximately 50% variance in how happy we generally are on a day-to-day basis. Heritability contributes to the finding that following increases (decreases) of well-being that people tend to return to their baseline levels over time.

9. Find a Purpose in Life

Does being optimistic about life and having a purpose predict health and longevity? In 2001, psychologist Deborah Danner and colleagues published a study rating the autobiographies of 180 Catholic nuns for expression of optimism, life purpose and positive emotional content and related this to their survival during the ages of 75 to 95. The happiest nuns lived 10 years longer than the least happy nuns and by the age of 90, the most optimistic, purposeful and cheerful nuns survived 66 percent of the time while the least cheerful sisters only survived 30 percent of the time. However, living long and healthy appears to be more than just being happy and cheerful.

Research by Barbara Frederickson and her colleagues have found convincing evidence that at the gene expression level people experiencing higher life purpose had significantly lower levels of inflammatory gene expression and strong expression of antiviral and antibody genes compared to those who just reported being emotionally “happy” on a daily basis. So, beyond just increasing the ratio of positive versus negative emotions, it appears clear that having life purpose and defining a meaningfulness to our lives has tremendous impact on both how long we live and how resilient we are in the face of work/life stressors.

10. Move Towards Your Goals...Or Quit

Develop some realistic goals. Do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment — that enables you to move toward your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable you might ask, “What’s one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?” Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.

Motivation to “do things right” follows a u-shaped pattern. It is higher at the beginning and end of goal pursuit than in the middle. Contrary to what we might have been taught, it appears that at times it may actually be in our best interests to “cut our losses” in the face of unattainable goals and life challenges and disengage from these goals to ensure optimum well-being and potentially long-term health.

According to research, quitting a goal you start may actually be better for your health in some circumstances. Psychologists Gregory Miller and Carsten Wrosch found that people who are able to feel comfortable quitting when faced with unattainable goals may actually have better mental and physical health than those who persevere and push themselves to succeed. In previous research they found that persistent individuals experienced higher levels of an inflammatory protein called C-reactive protein (an indicator of stress) as well as increased cortisol. On the surface, this might not seem like a big deal but inflammation appears to be an independent risk factor for cardiovascular disease and other stress related conditions.

11. Practice Forgiveness

In a close relationship we hope that forgiveness will not only remove past negative emotions, but move us toward a net positive feeling. It doesn’t mean forgetting or pardoning an offense. Unforgiveness, by contrast, seems to be a negative emotional state where an offended person maintains feelings of resentment, hostility, anger and hatred toward the person who offended them.

The core components of unforgiveness (e.g., anger, hostility, blame, fear) have been associated with increased negative health and disease outcomes. Evidence has been produced linking both forgiveness and unforgiveness to short-term physiological variables such as cortisol reactivity, blood pressure and skin conductance.

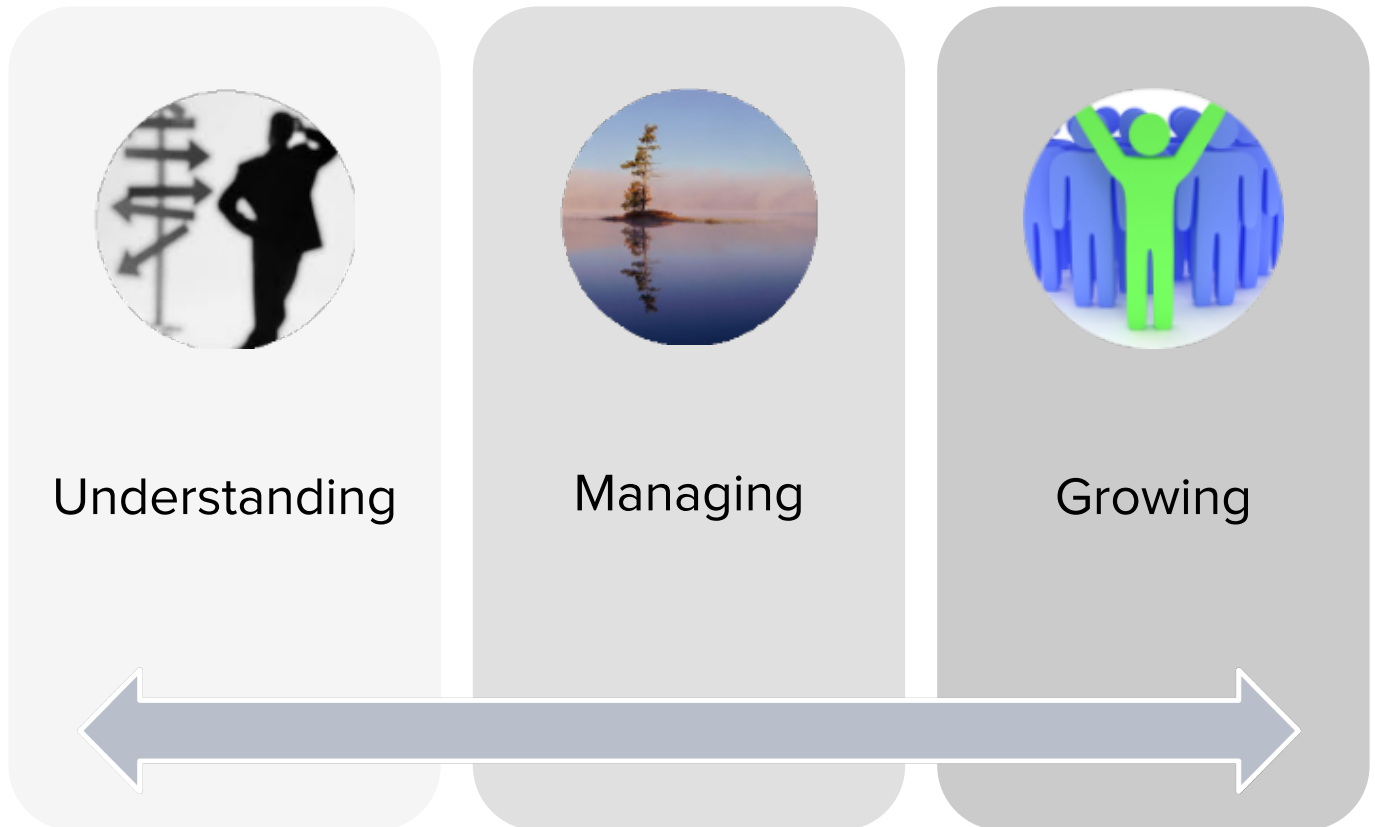
In one study (Washington et al., 2007) the stress hormone cortisol from saliva was collected for people who rated their relationship on a continuum from terrific to terrible. Participants with poor (or recently failed) relationships tended to have higher baseline cortisol levels and scored worse on a test that measured their willingness to forgive. When asked to reflect on their relationship, cortisol levels were immediately elevated and the magnitude of this reaction was directly associated with their unforgiving attitudes towards their partner. Those who reported happier relationships were not without stress at times, but forgiving their partner's faults appeared to keep their stress at a moderate range.

12. Identify and Deploy your “Signature Strengths”

What do you do well and enjoy doing? These sets of skills and abilities might be characterized as unique to you and hence the name “signature strengths.” In a published placebo-controlled study by psychologist Martin Seligman at the University of Pennsylvania, colleagues and participants who identified and used one of their “signature strengths” in a new and different way every day for one week reported significant increases in happiness and decreased depressive symptoms for six months.

Resilient individuals tend to deploy what they are competent at doing. They find using their signature strengths to be fulfilling and “stretching” those strengths to novel situations at work and home tends to facilitate positive psychological well-being.

Developing Resilience



Understanding Stage

The Understanding stage is characterized as spending time, energy and tasks on gathering information, researching and learning more about the situation you are facing and taking time to truly understand more about your experience. It might include researching on the Internet, consulting with others facing similar situations and consulting with knowledgeable experts.

This is an important stage. Many individuals spend a great deal of energy and time to get a more accurate perspective of what is affecting them or their loved ones. Although a person may continue to expend additional energy to gather more information over time, most individuals acquire enough at some point in their research to satisfy their “need to know more” and move on to the next resilience stage.

Managing Stage

The Managing stage is characterized as spending time and energy on learning new techniques, initiating and practicing new behaviors and trying new coping approaches to manage the specific situation facing them. During this stage individuals might employ a wide variety of cognitive, emotional and behavioral coping techniques to “get a handle” on managing the stress and the unpredictability of their situation.

This is an important stage that helps many individuals manage the “rebound” and effectively cope with the unique stressors they are facing. Individuals in this stage may feel confident, empowered and optimistic that they can more effectively handle and manage their day-to-day challenges.

Growing Stage

The Growing stage is characterized as spending time, energy and tasks on redefining what is important in life, identifying the benefits from coping with difficult situations and giving gratitude for the positive aspects of life.

Individuals in this stage typically redefine their relationships and put more energy into those relationships that are the most satisfying and enriching. Individuals in this stage spend more time doing things that they are passionate about and begin to explore and act on their “signature strengths” and interests. Frequently they will also have an enhanced sense of self-efficacy (i.e., believing that they can deal with just about anything). It is also a stage where individuals begin to reflect on the meaning of their lives and what is important to them (i.e., more spiritual).

Now that you know about the three stages, we have prepared the following exercises specially designed to help you understand and manage each of these stages as you learn to develop greater hardiness and resilience. Together the three stages are important to help you identify issues and challenges around life change, develop coping skills to effectively manage the current situations you are facing and prepare you to accept and grow intellectually, emotionally and spiritually along your life journey.

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Understanding Exercise 1

All of us react to stress based on the situation and our personality or style. Use the questions below to summarize how you typically respond to work and life stress, pressure and challenge. Which techniques do you typically use when you are under stress (check all that applies to you)?

Positive Appraisal

- Look at things optimistically, rather than pessimistically.
- Use humor in the situation to lessen the impact of the stress.
- Emphasize the advantages, benefits and consequences.
- Focus on happier times and situations.
- Use positive self-talk and avoid catastrophic thinking.

Negative Appraisal

- Focus on the worst-case scenario.
- Blame and criticize yourself.
- Bring it up and talk about it excessively without closure.
- Blame and criticize the situation or others for the problem.
- Avoid dealing with the situation all together.
- Shut out and repress emotions to avoid the hurt and pain.

Problem-focused Coping

- Get exercise to clear my mind and get energized.
- Seek social support to express my feelings and emotions.
- Take charge of the things I can control.
- Seek spiritual guidance or use my beliefs to get through the stressful situation.
- Seek information to better understand my issues and challenges.
- Get adequate sleep to energize my battery.
- Give gratitude for what I have in life.
- Practice forgiveness with others.

Understanding Exercise 2

Deploying My Signature Strengths

Seeing ourselves accurately is a key to both career and personal success. How do others perceive your signature strengths, both at work and away from the job?

1. List your signature strengths as you see them in the space below:

2. Describe the signature strengths that others see in you in the space below:

3. How might the overuse of your signature strengths be experienced by others?

4. How might you utilize and deploy more of your signature strengths at work?

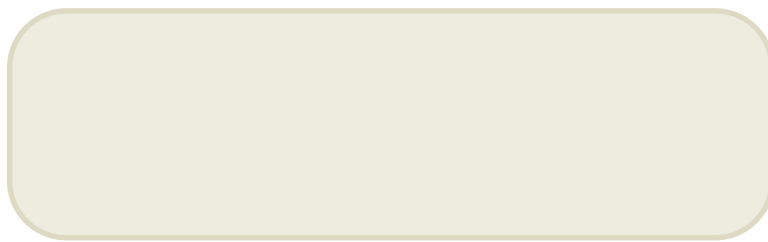
5. How might you utilize and deploy more of your signature strengths at home?

Managing Exercise 1

My Professional Board of Directors

Research shows that organizations and people perform better in environments where they are supported and encouraged. The stronger our relationships are, the greater our strengths become and the more value we add to our organization.

Imagine the oval below represents the table of your very own Board of Directors. Put yourself at the head of the table and write the names of people you would like to be sitting around the table guiding, supporting and helping you with your career.



1. Do the people on your Board of Directors know they are members?

Blank response area for question 1.

2. Would the people that you work with put you on their Board?

Blank response area for question 2.

3. Who isn't on your Board that perhaps should be?

Blank response area for question 3.

4. What makes these relationships successful?

Blank response area for question 4.

Managing Exercise 2

4 Post-It Notes for Well-Being

DIRECTIONS: Create four post-it notes and place them strategically where you can see them to practice these evidence based exercises to enhance your psychological well-being.

OPTIMISM

Evidence: Research shows that sometimes anticipation can be even more pleasurable than getting what you are anticipating and makes you optimistic (Mitchell, et al., 1997).

Exercise: Write down something that you are looking forward to doing.

CONFIDENCE

Evidence: Research demonstrates that focusing on your own credentials and achievements boosts confidence and minimizes “choking” under pressure (Beilock, S, 2011.)

Exercise: Write down 2 accomplishments you are really proud of.

HAPPINESS

Evidence: Research demonstrates that the practice of gratitude giving is significantly associated with enhanced subjective well-being (Seligman, M., 2012).

Exercise: Write down three things you are grateful for in your life.

MEANING IN LIFE

Evidence: Research shows that finding purpose in life is the single best predictor of life satisfaction and overall health (Routledge, et al., 2011).

Exercise: Write down a memory of the past that always makes you feel good and brings a smile to your face.

Growing Exercise 1

Expressing Gratitude

Optimism

Research has shown that expressing gratitude towards others helps increase subjective well-being in those who write down and share how someone special in their life has helped them to grow and learn personally and professionally.

Instructions for the Gratitude Letter:

Identify a person in your life who has had a meaningful influence on your progress or success on a particular career or life goal but has never really been thanked. Write a brief note expressing your appreciation for the gift or contributions they have made in your life and send it to them.

Growing Exercise 2

My Success Scoreboard

This scoreboard is a way to look at personal and life success from a more balanced perspective. These four areas form the basic structure of what people try to gain through the pursuit and enjoyment of success. What actions will you take to maximize each of the four below?

	Objectives	What Will I Do?
Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H1 Developing Resilience H2 Lifestyle Practices H3 Enhancing Positive Emotions H4 Identification/Deployment of Passions 	
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A1 Energy/Time Management A2 Identification/Deployment of “Signature Strengths” A3 Personal/Professional Goals A4 Seek and Use Feedback 	
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R1 Decreasing Toxic Relationships R2 Positivity to Negativity Ratio R3 Networking/Fostering Social Exchanges R4 Enhancing Emotional Intelligence 	
Legacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L1 Spirituality/Religiosity L2 Identification/Deployment of Core Values L3 Defining and Realizing “Ideal Self” L4 Volunteering/Giving Back L5 Gratitude Giving/Forgiveness 	