Building Employee Resilience

Mary Steinhardt
The University of Texas at Austin
What is Resilience?

The capacity to bounce back from stressful situations, adapt and succeed.

That ineffable quality that allows some people to be knocked down by life and come back stronger than ever.
Resilience Training in at the Worksite

The Resilient Employee…

- Bounces back from setbacks
- Thrives under pressure
- Maintains emotional stability
- Has a realistic, yet positive outlook
- Positive personal/professional relationships
- Provides exceptional work product / services
- Maintains work/life balance
- Practices wellness (healthy nutrition, exercise, sleep)
Resilience
The Science of Mastering Life’s Greatest Challenges
Steven Southwick, MD and Dennis Charney, MD

1. Optimism: belief in a brighter future
2. Facing Fear: an adaptive response
3. Moral Compass, Ethics, & Altruism: doing what is right
4. Religion & Spirituality: drawing on faith
5. Social Support: seeking & accepting support
6. Role Models: providing the road map
7. Training: physical fitness & strengthening
8. Brain Fitness: challenge your mind and heart
9. Cognitive & Emotional Flexibility
10. Meaning, Purpose, and Growth
The Power of Resilience
Achieving Balance, Confidence, and Personal Strength in Your Life
Robert Brooks, PhD and Sam Goldstein, PhD

1. Rewriting your negative scripts
2. Becoming stress hardy vs stressed out
3. Viewing life through the eyes of others
4. Communicating effectively
5. Accepting yourself and others
6. Making connections and displaying compassion
7. Dealing effectively with mistakes
8. Dealing well with success in building islands of competence
9. Developing self-discipline and self-control
10. Maintaining a resilient lifestyle
Stressful Situations

Homeostasis (protective factors)

Disruption (overwhelmed)

Succumb “GIVE UP” FAILURE

Resilience (recovery)

“BOUNCE UP” FOCUSED, FLEXIBLE, FLOWING

Diminished (stuck in a rut)

“PUT UP” FLOUNDERING

Thriving (growth)

“STEP UP” FLOURISHING

O’Leary & Ickovics 1995; Carver 1998
What Causes Millennial Stress?

Have you ever felt things were hopeless?

- % in last 12 months

Have you ever felt very sad?

- % in last 12 months

Have you ever felt overwhelmed by all you had to do?

- % in last 12 months

So depressed it was difficult to function

- % yes sometime in last 12 months

Felt overwhelming anxiety

- % yes sometime in last 12 months

12 month level of stress

- % more than ave+tremendous
Consequences of Distress

★ Impaired academic performance; academic dishonesty
★ Exhaustion, cynicism, and burnout
★ Lying awake at night
★ Irritability or anger
★ Anxiety and depression
★ Overeating
★ Substance abuse
★ Broken relationships
★ Medical errors

Five Practices to Enhance Resilience... 

1. The Practice of Mindfulness
   (nonjudgmental awareness)

Stressful Situations (stressor) → Homeostasis (sustainability) → Resilience
   FOCUSED, FLEXIBLE, FLOWING

Homeostasis (Biopsychosocial protective factors)
Personal Life

High expectations…... (stressor)

Anxiety (consequence)

Working Life

Long hours…... Exhausted, Mistakes

Argument….. Mad, Hurt

Health

No time to exercise…..

Lack of sleep…..

Stressed, Resentful

Exhausted

Friends/Family

Strained relationship…..

Lonely, Overeat

High Stress
1. The Practice of Mindfulness
   (nonjudgmental awareness)

Loving-kindness Meditation
May I be filled with loving-kindness.
May I be healthy.
May I feel calm.
May I be free from fear.
May I be safe.
May I trust myself.
May I have patience.
May I show myself the same kindness I show a loved one.

Forgiveness Meditation
For any hurt I have caused myself in this situation, or others, I offer myself forgiveness.
HOW WE COPE WITH STRESS

Adaptive Coping (problem-focused)
- Action
- Planning
- Positive Reframing
- Acceptance
- Using Social Support

Maladaptive Coping (emotion-focused)
- Denial
- Behavioral Disengagement
- Self Distraction
- Self Blame
- Venting


Thriving (growth)
“STEP UP”
FLOURISHING

Resilience (recovery)
“BOUNCE UP”
FOCUSED, FLEXIBLE, FLOWING

Diminished (stuck in a rut)
“PUT UP”
FLOUNDERING

Succumb
“GIVE UP”
FAILURE
Disruption (Overwhelmed)

Take Responsibility
Empowering Interpretations
Meaningful Connections

We’re vulnerable (fragile)
We have tremendous potential to grow

We're in Stressful Situations

Thriving (growth) 
FLOURISHING

Homeostasis (protective factors)

Resilience
(Strong Foundation)
FOCUSED, FLEXIBLE, FLOWING
Five Practices to Enhance Resilience...

1. The Practice of Mindfulness

2. Using Stress as an Opportunity to Grow

We're vulnerable (fragile)
We have tremendous potential to grow
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Own your power to choose and create

Shame
Make Excuses
Lay Blame
Denial

FIVE-STEP PROCESS TO HELP YOU MOVE ABOVE THE LINE

1. Watch a replay of the stressful situation, as if watching a movie.
2. Identify your position on “the responsibility model.”
3. Ask your heart how you feel about the movie you watched.
4. Create a new movie - an image of what you want to happen.
5. Take responsibility for producing the new movie.
Focus on Empowering Interpretations

Stressor

Primary and secondary appraisal processes
(Is it important?)
(Is it worth doing something?)
(Do I have the resources necessary to handle the situation effectively?)

Let it go
Feel Threatened
Increased risk of illness

Feel Challenged
Increased health
Create Meaningful Connections

People you see daily
People you see weekly
People you see monthly

daily
weekly
monthly

YOU
Five Practices to Enhance Resilience…

1. The Practice of Mindfulness

2. Using Stress as an Opportunity to Grow

Five Practices to Enhance Resilience...

1. The Practice of Mindfulness
2. The Practice of Using Stress to Grow
3. The Practice of Self-Leadership

An active and compassionate inner leader containing the perspective, confidence, and vision to lead your life harmoniously and sensitively.
The Practice of Self-Leadership

Calm
Clarity
Curiosity
Compassion
Confidence
Courage
Creativity
Connectedness
Contentment

Five Practices to Enhance Resilience...

1. The Practice of Mindfulness
2. The Practice of Using Stress to Grow
3. The Practice of Self-Leadership
4. The Practice of Positivity
The Broaden & Build Theory of Positive Emotions

Thriving (growth)

FLOURISHING

Resilience
(Strong Foundation)
FOCUSED, FLEXIBLE, FLOWING

POSITIVITY
Fuels Resilience and Human Flourishing

Five Practices to Enhance Resilience...

1. **The Practice of Mindfulness**
2. **The Practice of Using Stress to Grow**
3. **The Practice of Self-Leadership**
4. **The Practice of Positivity**
5. **The Practice of Renewal**

*Production (results) requires development of Productive Capability (resources).*
Renewal – Having a Wellness Routine

1. The Practice of Mindfulness
2. The Practice of Using Stress to Grow
3. The Practice of Self-Leadership
4. The Practice of Positivity
5. The Practice of Renewal