

Tips to Increase Resilience

Recent research reports that you can change your thoughts and actions to increase your resilience during difficult times. Below are five “happiness activities” and resilience builders shown in numerous studies to increase the resilience of study participants. To improve your resilience, choose the activities that suit you best. Build these activities into your everyday life to ensure long-term success.

Resilience activities to consider:

Live with purpose. People who strive for something personally significant – whether it’s learning a new skill, raising a good family, or changing careers – are happier than those who don’t have strong dreams or aspirations. Pick one or more significant goals and devote time and effort pursuing them. The process of working towards your goal is as important to your well being as its attainment.

Nurture your relationships. A Japanese study found that contented people’s happy experiences most often involved connecting with someone. The most resilient people have a strong bond with at least two out of three of these essential relationships: a partner, a friend, or a parent. This time spent with others can increase feelings of happiness, connection and happiness.

Express Gratitude. This can be difficult during stressful times or difficult life changes. However, being able to find the smallest things for which you are grateful can increase your ability to cope with those stressful times and even increase your personal happiness. Try keeping a gratitude journal. Write down three to five things you’re grateful for daily or just once a week. Several studies show that people who record what they appreciate experience greater happiness and less anxiety.

Practice kindness. Do good things for others. During difficult times, we tend to withdraw which makes those difficult times more difficult. By nurturing relationships as well as performing unsolicited acts of kindness for others, you can feel more capable, compassionate and full of purpose and less distressed. In one recent study, researchers could literally see the benefits of kindness. Performing 5 random acts of kindness can be a more powerful deterrent to depression than medication and counseling combined.

Accept that Stress responses are adaptive. The stress you feel is your body telling you that you are facing a challenge. See this stress as positive and don’t try to fight it or ignore it. It will help you build resilience and move through those difficult times.