

FACING LIFE'S ADVENTURES WITH RESILIENCE

Cass Coulston

on a daily basis and thus, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed. However, the first thing to remember is that you are not alone.

Try to think of resilience as the ability to make the best of a situation. Instead of feeling unable to overcome an obstacle in your path, keep going and adapt. You will come through that challenge being more open and willing to take on new opportunities. Therefore, you will learn to grow.

With a series of articles on resilience, we strive to present the best insights in psychology with practical tools

and techniques to enable you to face life's challenges with renewed energy and focus.

Resilience comes from the Latin word '*resilire*' which means 'to leap back.' Thus, it is often described as the ability 'to bounce back' from a challenge. In such a fast-paced and changing world, many of us face challenges

Are You Born With It?

Research consistently shows that resilience is a process that can be learnt and not a trait that cannot be changed. Whilst neuroscientists acknowledge that some people are naturally more resilient than others, genetics only explain 30 per cent of our variability. The rest is down to what we learn from a young age and what we face in life. Think of resilience like an 'emotional muscle' that can be strengthened before, during and after, you face a challenge in life.

Think of resilience like an 'emotional muscle' that can be strengthened before, during and after you face a challenge in life

Nature Of One’s Mindset

Much of how we are on a day-to-day basis comes from our way of thinking or our mindset. A fixed mindset comes from the belief that we cannot change who we are and what we do. However, with a flexible mindset, it is believed that everyone can change and grow through effort and experience.

Neuroscientists have shown that with practice and discipline, we can change our neural pathways to become more flexible and address challenges in a more positive and often, creative way. So, when faced with a challenge, ask yourself, *‘how can I make the best more likely to happen and the worst less likely?’*

Measure Your Resilience

Understanding yourself better is the first step. There are a number of consistent qualities that appear in research findings for building resilience. We all have them in varying degrees but may just draw upon some, more easily than others. The most resilient people ‘learn’ how to draw upon all of these qualities of resilience.

Spend five minutes when you are feeling calm and measure which qualities of resilience you have learnt to use regularly and which you have not. Score yourself according to the number which best represents you with the help of the table on the right.

Positive Actions

- ◆ Think about your sense of purpose in life. Try to define in one sentence what is most important for you.
- ◆ Think back to all situations when you managed to do well, despite the challenges you faced. What did you do and learn that can help you in the future?
- ◆ Pick one quality of resilience that you would like to develop. Write it down



To What Degree Am I Resilient?

Qualities of Resilience	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not At All	Don't Know
Purposeful - I have a clear sense of where I want to go and what is important to me.	4	3	2	1	0
Confident - I have awareness and trust in my strengths and abilities.					
Solutions Focused I can creatively think of different options.					
Proactive - I plan effectively and take action to make progress versus procrastination.					
With Supportive Relationships - I have support within and outside of family whom I ask for help.					
Flexible - I am flexible to change and adapt well, appreciating the benefits along the way.					
Realistically Optimistic - I am hopeful and see the bright side of a situation.					
Emotionally Controlled - I manage strong emotions when under pressure.					
Total					

Now ask yourself this question - what qualities are undermining my resilience right now and what kinds of things are strengthening it?

and keep it visible in a place where you will be able to see it every day. Consciously, put this quality into practice daily.

blessed with innate resilience, you can become just as resilient, by ‘learning’ how and committing to making positive changes in your life. After all, we are all people in progress.

So, if you are not one of the 30 per cent