

# Resilience: How to Keep Going When the Going Gets Tough

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## Course Objectives

**Upon completion of this course, you'll be able to:**

- Bounce back from adversity
- Build your self-esteem as a foundation of resilience
- Make and maintain connections to build resilience
- Accept and embrace change
- Use flexible thinking to overcome obstacles
- Implement stress management and relaxation strategies to maintain resilience

# Resilience: How to Keep Going When the Going Gets Tough

## Module One Build a Firm Foundation

## What Is Resilience?

Resilience is the process of bouncing back after adversity. Having resilience doesn't mean that you can prevent stressful situations, but that you can handle them when they occur. And in today's workplace, you will encounter challenges every day. The good news is that everyone can learn how to build resilience.

Think of increasing your resilience like building a structure to withstand an earthquake: You want a foundation that goes deep into the ground to hold firm when the shaking starts, and you want the building to sway and be flexible during the shaking, so that it may bend but won't break.

“Man never made any material as resilient  
as the human spirit.”

*Bern Williams*

## “Quake-Proof” Resilience

Resilience skills are a combination of establishing a firm foundation that is unshakeable and developing strategies that allow you to be flexible when faced with stressful situations. The the firm and flexible skills we will focus on in this program:

### Firm

- Build self-esteem.
- Make and maintain connections with others.
- Set goals and achieve them.

### Flexible

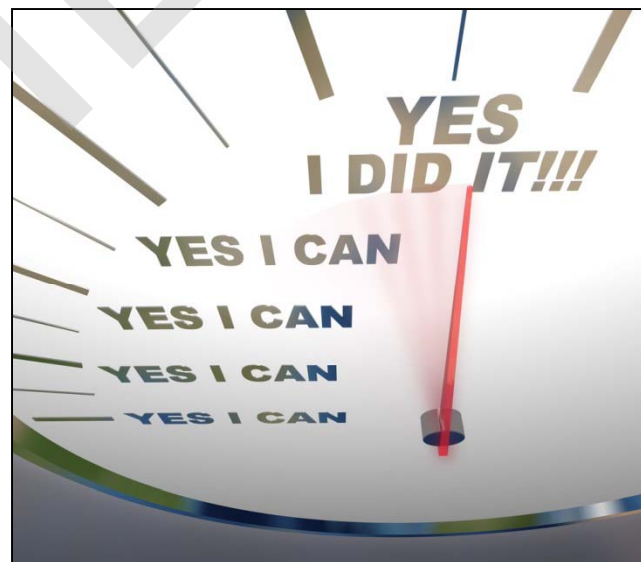
- Accept and embrace change.
- Use flexible thinking to overcome obstacles.
- Survive with in-the-moment coping strategies.
- Use stress management and relaxation techniques.

## Strong Self-Esteem

What is self-esteem? It is self-respect and confidence in one's own worth or abilities.

And why does it matter?

Self-esteem is important to resilience because having resilience depends on having confidence in your own abilities in the face of obstacles and uncertainty.



## Self-Esteem Self-Assessment

Read each statement and decide if it's true or false as it reflects your usual thinking.

1. Any success I've had is mostly due to luck.	T	F
2. I'm comfortable saying what I feel.	T	F
3. When others compliment me, I have trouble accepting it.	T	F
4. I believe people can change their attitudes.	T	F
5. I place a high value on what others think of me.	T	F
6. Change is inevitable and I embrace it.	T	F

## Self-Esteem Self-Assessment (cont.)

Read each statement and decide if it's true or false as it reflects your usual thinking.

7. I feel like a failure when I don't accomplish my goals.	T	F
8. My success is due to my hard work.	T	F
9. I tend to avoid people who I think don't like me.	T	F
10. I face up to my mistakes and try to learn from them.	T	F

Scoring: The more even-numbered T's and odd-numbered F's you have, the higher your self-esteem is likely to be. Conversely, odd-numbered T's and even-numbered F's indicate potentially lower self-esteem.

## What Makes You Unique

To get in the habit of recognizing your self-worth, write down 10 things that you like about yourself, or 10 positive words to describe you. Or, write down 10 things people have complimented you on.

Part of building your self-esteem is understanding the value and joy in being a unique person. Answer the questions below to help you identify what makes you you.

- What would your best friend say is your most positive attribute?
- What is your proudest accomplishment?
- How would you like to be remembered in life?
- What positive message did you receive from your parents or important figure in your life?



## Recognize Your Inner Voice

We all have internal self-talk. If it's constantly negative, it will be more difficult to build and maintain self-confidence and self-esteem. The most common negative voice is probably "the critic."



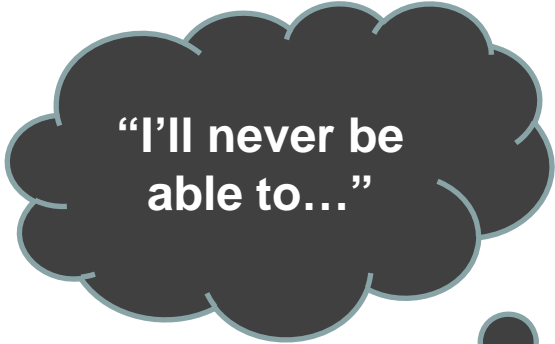
**"I'll never  
get it right."**

### The Critic

- Constantly judging and evaluating yourself
- Points out flaws and limitations
- Typical self-talk: "I could have done better."
- Positive affirmation to combat: "I accept and believe in myself."

## Recognize Your Inner Voice (cont.)

Here are two more common negative voices:



“I’ll never be able to...”

### The Victim

- Focuses on feelings of helplessness or hopelessness.
- Perceives insurmountable obstacles in accomplishing your goals.
- Typical self-talk: “I’ll never be able to...”
- Positive affirmation to combat: “I am capable and competent.”

### The Worrier

- Expects the worst.
- Exaggerates the potential negative consequences of any event.
- Typical self-talk: “What if...?”
- Positive affirmation to combat: “I am prepared for (*whatever is worrying you*).”



“What if...?”

## Monitor Your Self-Talk

You believe the voice in your head. If you are constantly bombarding yourself with negative judgments, it will chip away at your self-esteem. Keep a self-talk journal to track the negative things you say to yourself. Most importantly, write down a positive thought to replace the negative one. Here is an example:

<b>Incident or issue</b>	<b>What you said about it to yourself</b>	<b>Replacement positive thought</b>
My boss rejected an idea I had that I thought was really good.	“I should have known he wouldn’t like it. Now he thinks I’m an idiot.”	“I have lots of good ideas. My boss will like the next one.”

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