

+ TECHNIQUES AND TACTICS FOR DEVELOPING RESILIENCE

Change and Challenges: Navigating with Resilience

We all have resilience built into us. In times of stress, strengthening that resilience can help you to cope more effectively. The techniques below offer ways to tap into your resilience.

Techniques for adjusting thought patterns

- + **Reframe the situation:** When you can reframe your situation to give you a fresh and positive outlook on the changes you experience, they may not feel so bad. This isn't just thinking that things aren't as bad as they could be but seeing the good in what's happening. Think of a tighter budget as a way to be creative within the limits you have. Most changes also create opportunities, so try to find those.
- + **Remind yourself of strengths:** We all needed to be reminded of our strengths, especially when we face difficulties and challenges. Make note of your natural strengths, and how they've helped you cope before. You can keep a list of them in your wallet or phone and review it when you need a boost.
- + **Practice problem-solving:** Having good problem-solving skills and being able to think on your feet helps you to adapt readily in changing circumstances. Take note how the people around you solve problems and put those methods into practice in your life. Consult with others to see how they have coped with similar challenges in their lives and obtain resources.
- + **Improve your self-control:** Managing your emotions and impulses well can help change feel less overwhelming. Even when you're not facing changes, try to keep your emotions from going to extremes. Remove yourself from the challenging situation. Take a deep breath to calm intense emotions. Try a "time out" from intense conversations with others and come back to it when you are both calm.
- + **Fake it till you make it:** Even if you don't feel strong or resilient, practice the behaviors that characterize resilient people. Try a thought experiment where you imagine best case scenarios, not the worst thing that could happen. Verbalize the "silver linings" in the situation. Practice until resilient behaviors become real for you.
- + **Grow in flexibility:** We can get stuck in routines of daily life but change forces us to break free of those ruts. Flexibility enables you to bend painlessly with changing situations. Practice letting things go and letting others have their way. Think about things from others' points of view and try to work with them. Be willing to change your habits and routines to rise to your changing needs.
- + **Focus on what you can control:** Thinking too much about factors that are outside of your control can weigh you down. Focusing on what you have control over gives you a starting point for action. Achieving small goals, one at a time, helps slowly build your resilience and ability to "bounce back" over time.
- + **Rethink your worries:** If you are a natural worrier, compartmentalize your worries so that they don't snowball out of control. Set aside a certain time of day to worry, and don't allow yourself to think about them outside of your "worry time". Practice thought-stopping techniques to prevent those thoughts from taking over the rest of your day.
- + **Let go of shame and blame:** Some negative changes can lead people to blame themselves and others. That can result in shame and anger. As you release the hard feelings you've held, you will feel more at peace as you face the future.

Tactics to prepare for change

- + **Gather facts:** When you go through changes, you may not have all the information you need readily available. It helps to get more info about what is happening. Ask your supervisor about issues at work, or research health problems you're dealing with. Ensure you are using reputable sources of information.
- + **Get Perspective:** Try to see other sides of the story. Get some understanding of what is behind the change you see. Remember that you're not the only one affected. As you widen your perspective, you'll have a better base to understand and accept the changes.
- + **Expand your skills:** Find out what you need to know to succeed or look for ways that you can gain more knowledge and skills. If your job role is changing, are there skills that would help you be more successful?
 - Can you take a class or obtain a mentor to help gain those skills ahead of time? Attempt to grow your knowledge base *before* it is required. This makes you ready for change when it happens.
- + **Explore your options:** change can actually open a door to a world of opportunities. Get in the habit of identifying all the options in front of you, instead of focusing only on the most obvious. Write them down. As you explore the different options, you can better grasp what's happening and use that information to develop short- and long-term plans to keep your options open moving forward.
- + **Make a move:** Don't just think about being resilient but commit to making a move in a positive direction each day, even if it is just a very small move.

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