

Build Your Personal Resilience

Personal Resilience is the ability to control our reaction to events or circumstances that may have a negative impact on us. Building Resilience requires a growth mindset where we learn to form a positive attitude and adapt to situations as they happen. It is a process that we learn and apply.

10 tips for Resilience

- 1. Three minute calming breath – focus on the present to prepare for the next step.** Reset your mood and focus by meditating daily. Sitting quietly for three minutes and focusing on your breath can give you the space to regroup and be more intentional in whatever you need to do next.
- 2. Appreciate what has gone well, and express your gratitude.** By paying attention to the good times and taking the time to express your gratitude, you bolster your well-being, confidence, and connections to others. Even in the midst of chaos there is always something to appreciate, but you need to be open to noticing these possibilities. Gratitude helps train the brain to notice new patterns.
- 3. When things go well – use optimism to explain why (personal, permanent and pervasive).** Ask yourself: what role did I play making this happen? How can I make this permanent? What can I do to have this spill over into other aspects of my life?
- 4. When things go badly – use optimism to explain why (bad luck, temporary, situation specific).** Ask yourself: in what way is this also the responsibility of others or circumstances beyond my control? How can I keep this temporary? What must I do to contain the damage of the long-term effects of this event?
- 5. Be your own best friend in the moments you need it the most.** When things go wrong we tend to blame ourselves for everything: being self-critical and impatient with our human flaws. Instead, be our own best friend – compassionate, kind, supportive, patient, loving – in the moments that we need it most.
- 6. Be gritty – stick to your goals, despite the obstacles.** Grit is defined as perseverance and passion for very long-term goals. Choose your top priorities and keep focused on your end goal(s). When you are doing something that you love, you somehow find a way to deal with the obstacles and challenges. You keep going, no matter what. Learn from your existing grit – what did you do to overcome these obstacles? Which attitudes, beliefs, and strategies worked best? Did you ask for help? Brainstorm in a team? Take a break? Use humour?
- 7. Use strategies and attitudes that have worked in other contexts.** Once you've identified these strategies, strip away everything but the essence of your resilience (leaving out all the specifics of the activity described). You already have faith in these strategies and attitudes because they are familiar and trustworthy in one context – all you need to do is transpose these to another situation and discover how they work there. You are more resilient than you realize, you want to generalize these strategies and attitudes to new situations.
- 8. Know your character strengths, and use them every day.** Ask yourself when faced with important choices: is what I'm about to do a reflection of who I am and who I want to be? There are seven 'game-changer' character strengths with respect to academic success and achievement: optimism, gratitude, social intelligence, curiosity, self-control, enthusiasm, and perseverance/grit. What are your strengths? Can you find ways to use them more? Become the best version of yourself. Who do you want to be?
- 9. Stay connected to your community.** Support from and to classmates, instructors, mentors, employers, friends, and family is what can get you through the tough times. Reciprocity is a great system and paying it forward can move mountains. There is strength in numbers and sometimes solidarity leads to social change.
- 10. Savour the good times.** Savouring the good times is a wonderful way to be resilient. Take the time to remember, be fully present, and anticipate the times that make your life worth living. Use all of your senses to recall a pleasant experience, to fully engage in the present joys, and to imagine a future event by considering all aspects of it.

Reference: <https://www.torontomu.ca/thrivetmu/resources/10-tips-for-resilience/>