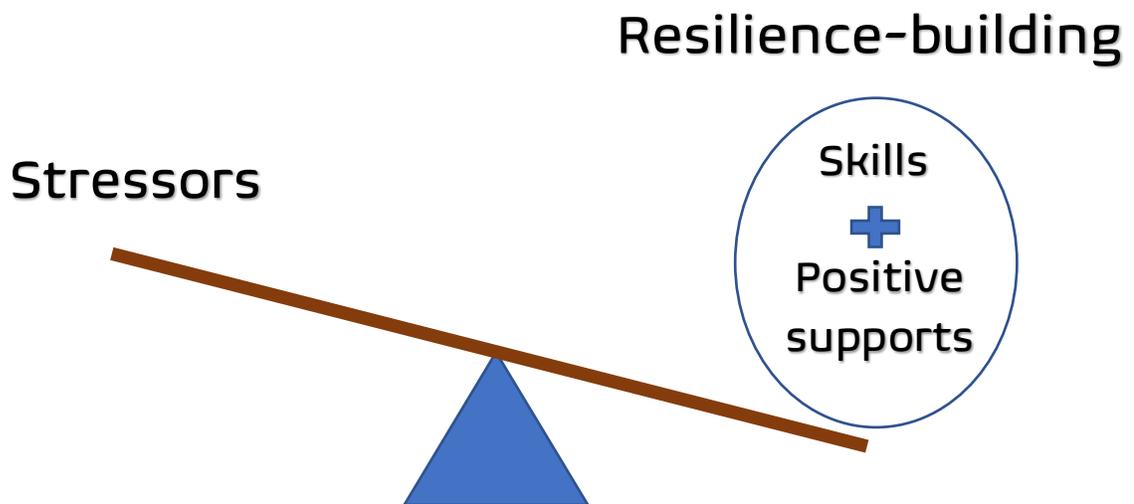


Resilience Tips for Success

What is Resilience?

Resilience can be defined as a positive outcome in the face of adversity (i.e., challenge, change).

Let's consider for a moment that wellbeing is like a seesaw. In life, people are exposed to and experience a range of stressors, both positive and negative, that can influence wellbeing. We can think of resilience as the influence we can have over how easy it is to tilt the seesaw of wellbeing in one direction or the other. Stressors have the potential to decrease wellbeing and resilience serves to enhance wellbeing.



Resilience-building strategies include healthy coping skills, strategies, supports, and perspectives an individual can draw on as one responds to challenges and change. Resilience is partly a skill that can be developed and partly a product of the resources and supports available to an individual within one's community(ies).

Tips for Resilience-building:



1) **Check your mindset.** Mindset refers to the perspective we bring to our experiences that shape our actions and thoughts. So often when life is not going well, we can get stuck in zoom mode, only focusing on the bad things that are happening. It's helpful to remember to back up into panoramic mode, looking at the long term perspective, the bigger picture of one's life and experiences, and identifying opportunities for learning and growth. Bad times are only temporary; having faith and trust in the future becomes essential.

2) **Practice growth mindset.** When some people face a setback, they give up because they believe it's a sign they never had "what it takes" or they might hold a fatalistic perspective. This is referred to as *fixed mindset* – the belief that people essentially are who they are and don't change. Science has shown us that our brains are highly adaptable. A *growth-mindset* means that you believe human beings have the capacity to change and grow. With effort and experience our brains change, and we change and grow! Remembering this might be what you need to stick to something even when the going gets tough.

Most of us already engage in growth mindset in some domain of our lives. Consider how you're already using growth mindset and how you might apply it in the current challenge you're facing. Reflect on a past challenge that you've overcome. What strengths, social supports, or perspectives did you use to help you get through this difficult experience? How might you use these now?

3) **Invest in Connections.** Humans have developed more than one stress response. Most people are familiar with the Fight or Flight response that kicks in if we encounter a bear in Kananaskis or perhaps while public speaking! Did you know that we also have another stress response called Tend & Befriend stress response? The Tend & Befriend stress response, from an evolutionary perspective, developed to make sure we protect our offspring. However, more recent research shows that when we care for others, it changes our biochemistry, activating systems of the brain that:

- a. produce feelings of hope, courage, and pro-social tendencies including increased empathy, connection & trust;
- b. increases motivation and optimism;
- c. enhances perception, intuition, and self-control;
- d. inhibits fear; and
- e. protects against harmful effects of chronic/traumatic stress



Choosing to be generous towards those around us allows one to access resilience and motivation. Good deeds for others are in fact good for our health.

