



Executive Advisor, to Business Large & Small

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### **Make connections.**

Good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important. Accepting help and support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience. Consider being active in civic groups, faith-based organizations, or other local groups providing social support.

### **Assist others in their time of need.**

Doing things for others get your head out of your behind. It also tends to remind you how good you have it. Embrace giving your time in planned activities and as opportunities appear.

### **Step into the details.**

Note any subtle ways in which you might already feel somewhat better as you deal with difficult situations. Remember them and how you made it happen.

### **Accept that change is a part of living.**

Certain prior goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.

### **Develop mental agility.**

It is possible to literally switch the neural networks with which we process the experience of stress in order to respond to rather than react to any difficult situation or person. “Decentering” stress is not denying or suppressing the fact that we feel stressed — rather, it is the process of being able to pause, to observe the experience, pivoting the attention from the narrative network in our brains to the more observational parts of our brains. That is being mentally agile.

### **Cultivate compassion.**

One of the most overlooked aspects of the resilience skill set is the ability to cultivate compassion — both self-compassion and compassion for others. Compassion increases positive emotions, creates positive work relationships, and increases cooperation and collaboration. Compassion cultivation practices increase happiness and well being and decrease stress. Individual, team and organizational success rely on a compassionate work culture.

### **Compartmentalize your cognitive load.**

We receive 11 million bits of information every second, but the executive, thinking centers of our brain can effectively process only 40 bits of information. To the extent that it is possible, avoid context switching. Create dedicated times in the day to do specific work-related activities and not others much the way you might create a dedicated time for physical exercise in the course of your day.

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### **Take detachment breaks.**

Mental focus, clarity and energy cycles are typically 90-120 minutes long, so it is useful to step away from our work for even a few minutes to reset energy and attention. Balancing work activity with even a brief time for detaching from those activities can promote greater energy, mental clarity, creativity and focus, ultimately growing our capacity for resilience throughout the course of the workday. The long-term payoff is that we preserve energy and prevent burnout over the course of days, weeks and months.

### **Move toward your goals.**

Do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment — that enables you to move toward your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?" Take decisive actions. AKA: Your List of Three.

### **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.**

People often learn something about themselves and may find that they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle with loss. Many people who have experienced tragedies and hardship have reported better relationships; greater sense of strength while also feeling more vulnerable, an increased sense of self-worth, a more developed spirituality and heightened appreciation for life. Try it!

### **Nurture a positive view of yourself.**

Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts helps build resilience even when you're a WIP (work in progress.)

### **Keep things in perspective.**

Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective understanding that you do not yet know what tomorrow brings.

### **Maintain a hopeful outlook.**

An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life. Visualize what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.

### **Take care of yourself.**

Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly. Eat well and eat good food, not just healthy. Take vacations and leave work early when you can. Eat outside, walk barefoot. Think of things that make you happy, make you smile. The more little things you add the better. Find ways to "giggle on the inside" and smile on the out.

Taking care of yourself helps to keep your mind and body primed to deal with any situations that require resilience.