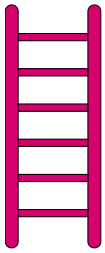
10 Steps to Resilience



When the world is stacked against you, do you rise or do you fall? Do you lash out or do you survive? Resilience is the ability to respond well to pressure, deal with setbacks effectively, respond well to change and challenges. Most importantly, it is not a fixed character trait but an innate ability and capacity which means it can be developed.

Ok – so what?

Resilience is the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events. Being resilient does not mean that people don't experience stress, emoti onal upheaval, and suffering. Some people equate resilience with mental toughn ess, but demonstrating resilience includes working through emotional pain and suffering and having strong mental health strategies in place.

Ok – but how?

Developing resilience takes effort and determination. And this may not come naturally to everyone. If you are naturally risk-averse, for example, then developing resilience will be harder but there are simple things you can do to help you not only deal with setbacks and rapid change, but also help you to pre-empt potential difficulties and challenges. From taking more risks to celebrating failure. From keeping your options open to asking for help. These opportunities to develop resilience are all around you.

1. Get perspective

Life is always going to have challenges, set-backs and some adversity. Learn from it. Practise asking questions: ‘what can I learn from this’, ‘what are some other ways to look at this’? Try writing this down and look at different ways of reframing a situation.

2. Don’t wallow in the mud

Personal set-backs can prevent you from seeing your true potential and being able to see new opportunities. Work through these but then choose to leave the past behind you, keep making choices and moving forward.

3. Ask for help

Resilient people have a strong network of support around them. People they respect and trust and who they can reach out to. What does your support network look like? How can you build it to make sure you have connections and help when you really need it.

4. Know your strengths

It’s important to know what you are good at and where you excel. Work to your strengths and be the best you can be.

5. Keep your options open

There are more possibilities and opportunities than we can possibly think if we only keep ourselves open enough to them. Start by knowing what success and happiness really mean to you and adopt a never give up attitude.

6. Be proactive

Resilience has a strong correlation with being proactive and placing your energy into what you can control. As soon as you do this, you feel stronger, more in control and your actions can influence events.

7. Look after yourself

There is a strong connection between body and mind. Being physically resilient and alert helps you to be mentally strong too. Self-care, reflection, sleep, good nutrition and mindfulness all help to build resilience skills.

8. Accept what you cannot change

Don't waste time and energy on factors outside your control. You can control your responses to any situation, so focus on choosing thoughts, behaviours and actions within the current reality you are in.

9. Celebrate failure

Making mistakes is how we learn and is part of anything new and different. Yet we often feel daunted by the idea of failing. Learn to fail and take on the lessons learned from failure to try a different approach next time.

10. Take more risks

In a world that's changing as fast as ours is, the riskiest thing you can do is be stale and take no risks at all. Taking risks, embracing the new builds our resistance to change and builds resilience skills, confidence and competence.

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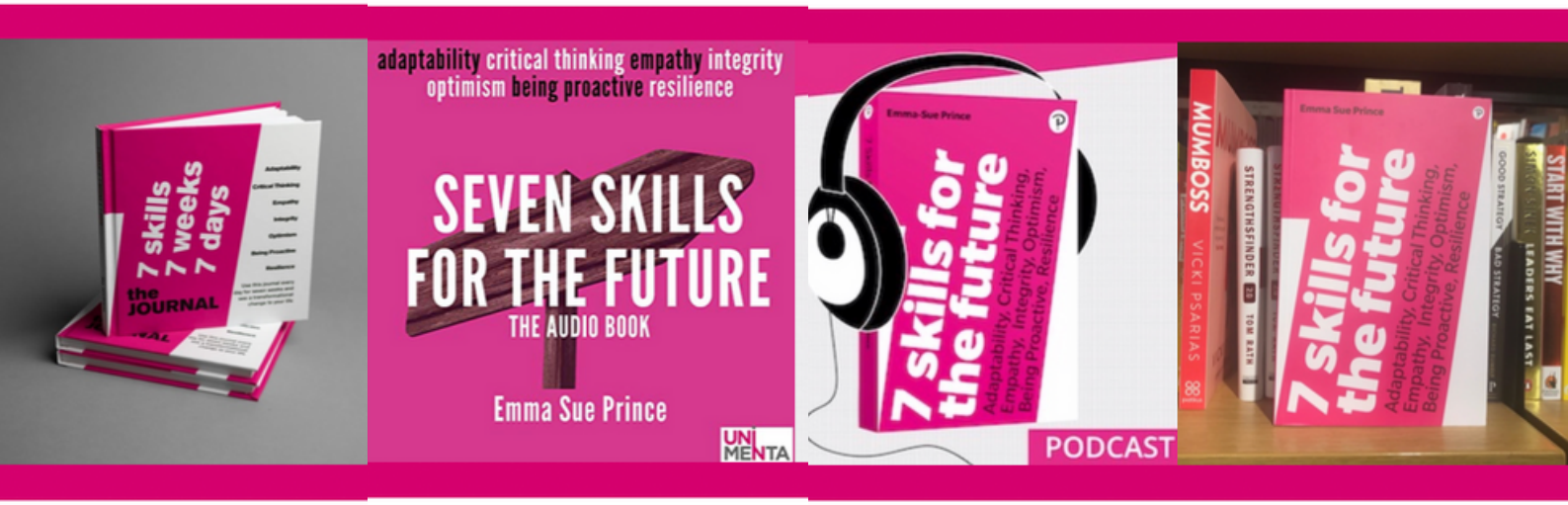
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