

Resiliency & Energy Balance



Why do some people thrive in the face of challenges while others are struggling merely to survive?

The answer is resiliency, or the ability to adapt to new environments and unexpected situations in our day-to-day experiences of the world around us.

Resilient, emotionally strong people are able to see challenging situations through a more positive lens, allowing them to manage the stresses of daily life more effectively.

You have the ability to strengthen your resiliency by developing a more positive perspective and effectively balancing your daily energy demands.



Emotional Intelligence – How Aware Are You?

The first step to becoming more resilient is developing the ability to recognize and acknowledge your emotions in stressful situations. If you were to experience situations similar to those shown in the images here, what types of emotions would they cause you to feel?

Circle all that apply or add some of your own.

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| Angry | Guilty | Defensive | Worthless |
| Sad | Anxious | Disgruntled | Furious |
| Fearful | Tearful | Frustrated | Uncomfortable |
| Ashamed | Self-pity | Embarrassed | Other: _____ |
| Annoyed | Envious | Overwhelmed | _____ |



Expand Your Perspective - What Am I Thinking?

Resiliency requires that you become curious about what you are feeling without avoiding the discomfort of your emotions. Practice pausing to ask yourself, "What am I thinking?" (W.A.I.T.) before reacting to a situation. Consider a stressful situation at work or at home. Ask yourself: What assumptions am I making about the situation and people involved, and what part did I play? What am I really feeling?

Resiliency is not about avoiding negative emotions and striving for a permanent state of happiness. It is the ability to acknowledge the negative while also opening your eyes to more positive details.

Write down a stressful situation you recently found yourself in.

1 _____

Are there other important details to consider? Describe your situation a second and a third time without repeating any of the details from the original version and using only true statements. Did you find more positives?

Are you able to see the situation from additional perspectives?

2 _____

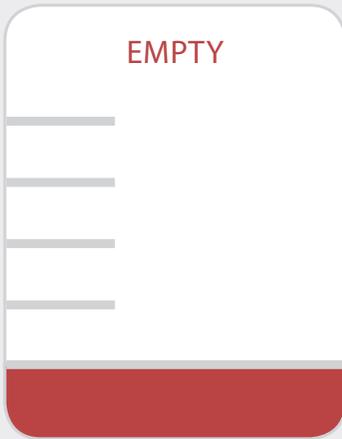
3 _____

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Energy Drainers & Energy Enhancers

Low energy significantly reduces your brain's ability to expand your perspective and identify positive details. These "blind spots" exist in your perspective because the brain is programmed to find threats or negatives in the environment as a survival mechanism.

To develop a more positive perspective and strengthen your resiliency, it is important to keep enough "fuel" in the tank by balancing your daily energy demands.

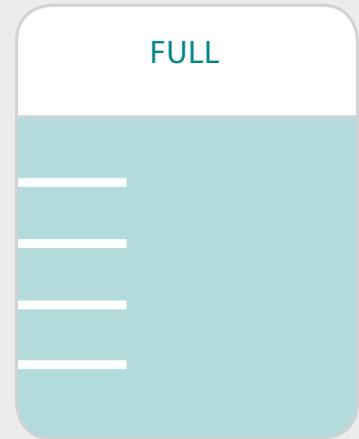


Are You Running On Empty?

Take a look at the list of common energy drainers and enhancers below. Write those you find drain you of energy in the empty fuel tank on the left. Write those you find enhance your energy in the healthy fuel tank to the right. Feel free to come up with some of your own as well.

What would it take to maintain a healthier "fuel" level in your tank on the right?

How can you fill your day with more energy enhancers than drainers?



Sleep
Healthy Eating
Stress
Exercise
Challenges

Conflict
Purpose
Spirituality
Support
Connection
Love

Coworkers
Travel
Career
Nature
Hobbies
Finances

Self-Talk
Scheduling
Control
Negativity
Fear
Sensitivity

Meditation
Positivity
Friendship
Alcohol
Community
Illness

Tobacco
Family
Gratitude
Worry
Boredom

Boosting Energy and Strengthening Resiliency

Now that you have identified some of your most common sources of energy you can begin to consider how to fill your daily and weekly experiences with more of these energy enhancers. Prioritize positivity by looking for opportunities in your routine to engage in more positive, energy-enhancing experiences.

Using the following examples, create your own personal plan, and write it down below.

"Lack of sleep keeps me from being productive at work and happy at home, so I will start shutting off the TV and going upstairs to bed each night by 9:30 p.m."

"Volunteering at my child's school gives me a sense of purpose and connection with my community, so I will start signing up for one volunteer opportunity per month."



- Books:
- Before Happiness: The Five Hidden Keys to Achieving Success, Spreading Happiness, and Sustaining Positive Change by Shawn Achor
 - Rising Strong by Brené Brown
 - 10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works – A True Story by Dan Harris

- Web:
- http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/the_power_of_positive_emotions
 - http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/a_better_way_to_pursue_happiness
 - www.powerofpositivity.com