

Mindset Matters for Enhanced Resilience

Strategies for Thriving with Challenge

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What is Mindset?

- A set of beliefs, frame of mind or a way of thinking that determines one's behaviour, outlook and mental attitude.

What is Resilience?

- The ability to adapt, recover and thrive in a complex world.
- The ability to bounce back and to recover from disruptive change, illness or misfortune with minimal wear and tear (physically, mentally and emotionally), to ourselves and to our relationships. (M.W.)
- Resilience is developed over time when planned into daily actions.

5 Strategies to Support a Resilient Mindset

- Nurture a Growth Mindset vs. Fixed
- Practice Gratitude
- Build Positivity
- Strengthen your Empathy and Compassion Muscles
- Leverage the Upside of Stress with a mindset reset

The Brain: 2 States

- Bad is stronger and more attention getting than good – we have an inborn negativity bias.
- We are wired to fear threats and move towards rewards.
- SCARF – **Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, Fairness** – these 5 domains activate either the 'primary reward' or 'primary threat' circuitry of the brain.

Resilient Mindset #1. Embrace a Growth Mindset

4 Steps to Changing Mindsets

1. Learn to hear your fixed mindset voices

2. Recognize that you have a choice in how you respond
3. Talk back to it with a 'growth mindset' voice
4. Take the growth mindset action

The Power of Yet: Real Time Reframes

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|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ○ I can't do this yet... | ○ It doesn't make sense yet... |
| ○ This doesn't work yet... | ○ I'm not good at this yet... |
| ○ I don't know yet... | ○ It doesn't make sense |

Growth Mindset and Team Performance

Professor Carol Dweck's research has found that when teams cultivate a growth mindset culture that is focused on learning goals – rather than just performance goals - we're more willing to collaborate with others, to innovate and learn from our successes and our failures and to behave ethically. Most importantly, we're psychologically and socially equipped to deal with setbacks and seek out opportunities for growth and innovation.

Leaders and teams with a growth mindset see people's talent and capabilities as the promise of what is possible, and invest their energy and resources into cultivating people's effort and willingness to learn to realize their true potential. **So, how can you build a growth mindset culture on your team?**

Neuroplasticity

The ability of the brain to change continuously throughout an individual's life. Brain activity associated with a given function can be transferred to a different location, the proportion of grey matter can change, and synapses may strengthen or weaken over time.

Resilient Mindset #2. The Power of Gratitude

Gratitude is more than a 'feel' good movement. When we practice gratitude, it increases our ability to be optimistic, it improves mental function and focus, and provides a sense of hope in the wake of challenge. Gratitude has been shown to improve mental health, renew energy and hope and encourage self-improvement. Expressing gratitude to others by celebrating small achievements helps people to face larger challenges. Routinely, frequently, and generously thanking team members costs nothing and has enormous benefits.

Practice: Do a gratitude journal 3x/week for 6 weeks. Name 3-5 things for which you're grateful. Notice and savour how you feel.

Resilient Mindset #3. Positivity

Remember this is **not** about being positive all the time, but rather to work towards experiencing more positive emotions than negative. Positive emotions counter our natural negativity bias and build psychological resilience and wellbeing.

Providing positive and supportive feedback to others builds confidence, bolsters motivation and fosters authenticity and purpose...all contributing to one's sense of autonomy and self-competence. This in turn is directly linked to one's increased ability to navigate through challenges, while decreasing the potential for psychological concerns.

Resilient Mindset #4. Empathy and Compassion

The Superpowers for 2021: Build your empathy and compassion muscles through what you say and what you do regularly.

According to a recent article in law.com; 'Tea and Empathy at Big Law', in the age of Covid, "lawyers want/need/crave moral support, *compassion and empathy*." But how do you find and show empathy for colleagues when your cognitive and emotional resources are depleted due to stress?

- Accept that we're all coping differently and that our current circumstances are all unique.
- Be generous in your interpretations – try not to get stuck in right-wrong thinking but focus on the dynamic and the circumstances, rather than the person. Strive to get to the underlying issue without placing blame.
- Acknowledge how you're feeling – express yourself clearly and honestly. Be mindful of what you say and the tone you convey. Communicate more than you might under normal circumstances.
- Accept that your coworkers' home lives are now relevant to you.
- Don't compare suffering.

Resilient Mindset #5. Harnessing the Upside of Stress

1. Tend and Befriend Response

- You recognize that the stress you're facing is bigger than what you can handle by yourself. This leads to hope and courage, strengthening social relationships. The belonging hormone, oxytocin takes the lead in this response.

2. Resilience Response

- You believe that you have learned from the stressful situation. DHEA levels are higher than cortisol levels, stress response symptoms are lower.

Reframe

Reset Your Mindset by... noticing feelings and physical symptoms of stress – (i.e. stomach churning, or heart beating faster) – rather than tell yourself that this is a sign that you can't handle things or reach for something that numbs the sensations, remind yourself it's because something **matters** to you and this is your body rising to the challenge.

Resources

Books

- Mindset: The New Psychology of Success by Carol Dweck Ph.D.
- The Culture Code by Dan Coyle
- Upside of Stress: Why Stress is Good for You and How to Get Good at It by Dr.Kelly McGonigal
- Hardwiring Happiness: The New Brain Science of Contentment, Calm, and Confidence by Rick Hanson.
- The Resilience Factor by Karen Reivich and Andrew Shatte
- The Brain that Changes Itself by Norman Doidge
- Thanks! How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier by Robert Emmons
- Positivity by Barbara Fredrickson

Videos

1. [The Power of Believing That You Can Improve](https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve)
https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve
2. [Carol Dweck: The Growth Mindset – Talks at Google](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=130&v=-71zdXCMU6A)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=130&v=-71zdXCMU6A
3. [Neuroplasticity by Sentis - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELpfYCa87g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELpfYCa87g)
4. Kelly McGonigal Ted Talks

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