

Resilience

Understanding it, and how to develop it within yourself

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Experience • Insight • Education

We all have moments in our lives which aren't great - and we're allowed to have them - because that is life, you get good, and you get bad, and you get a lot that is somewhere in between, it's a matter of how you perceive them, and how you deal with the times which aren't favourable at the time.

You see, adversity is a great teacher, it shows us a lot about who we are, what's important to us, and how we recover from it. This recovery from adversity, the ability to rebound from times in our lives which seem overwhelming, is what we mean when we use the word "resilience".

But resilience isn't innate in everyone and sometimes we need to be shown a path to developing our resilience muscle.

Now, I'm not a psychologist, I have no medical qualification at all and don't pretend to have - what I do have is experience earned over 40 years of adult life where I've been tested in both business and personal situations and have been fortunate enough to be able to bounce back from - I'm not going to go into the gory detail here, some of them have been particularly challenging and those closest to me know what they are - and in here are some of the practices I've used to get me over life's challenges, hopefully these will also help you.

So.... How do we build our resilience so that we overcome those parts of life which challenge us?

Well, we go back to the basics.

The basics have been around for a long time.

The basics are proven.

The basics work.



What are the basics?

Simply put, they are...



Gratitude

Take time to be thankful for what you have, numerous studies show the significant impact on overall welling. The best time to start this as a practice is when you first wake up in the morning and your mind is still clear.

Try this exercise:

Before you get out of bed tomorrow morning, think of 3 things (just 3..) that you're grateful for at that moment - it can be as simple as being able to wake up in a warm bed or having good food in the cupboard- you don't necessarily need to write them down but they're more powerful when you do; but this one habit will change the way you look at your day.



Meditation

It's like a mental detox, where you get to reset and cleanse the mind.

You don't need to sit cross-legged on the floor chanting, it's about being still and quietening the mind, giving your brain a break from everything that is swirling around inside it so it can come back refreshed.

Try starting at 5 minutes then work up from there.



Empathy

This is different to sympathy, it's truly understanding what someone else is going through and giving them the space to be able to come to you without judgement and feel they've been truly heard.

Empathy is about looking after the people around you, checking in on their mental and emotional states by seeing and experiencing the things they say they feel.

To use Brene Brown's words; It's about "communicating the message of 'you're not alone'"



Humour

Laughter is said to be the best medicine for a reason - it is!

The benefits of seeing the lighter side of a moment are immense; it relieves stress, adds joy to your life, eases anxiety and tension, and lifts your mood.

Have you ever tried to be upset when you're laughing?



Mindfulness

This is different from meditation, where meditation is finding stillness.

Mindfulness is being present, in the moment, and focusing on what's going on around you, and inside you - thoughts, feelings, environment without thinking of the future or the past and purely concentrating on the here and now.

Self-Affirmation

This the use of “I am...” statements.

Every time you get a knock back or rejection of some sort, think of your best qualities such as “I am resourceful”, “I am intelligent”, “I am persistent...” there are more inside you than you realise.

Practice saying these to yourself in times when you feel yourself dipping, perhaps even write them down somewhere so you can refer to them when needed.

This will help you reprogram any limiting beliefs and increase your self-confidence.



Visualisation

Create a mental picture in your mind of how you want your life to look like - where you want to live, holidays you want to take, clothes, cars and the like... you'd be surprised how powerful the power in imprinting can be.

One of the tools which can help with this is a visualisation board (it's also been called a dream board) - photos of what and where you'd like your life to be; it can includes places, experiences, and other items - it is a very powerful way to manifest whatever you want to bring into your life.



Writing

They say that each of us has a book in us, maybe yours will be the next best-seller, or perhaps it won't - that isn't the point.

It's about finding your voice and and telling the story that's inside you, expressing it in a way which is personal and has meaning to you; another way to write is journaling - this has been shown to be a powerful way of organising thoughts and feelings at any one time or recording where you are at a particular point in your life.



Read

Pick up a good book or article and spend some time immersed in it.

Growth is a core human need of the soul, and learning is the fastest way from where you are now to where you want to be - all we all need is that one flash of inspiration, whether it's a business idea, a new way of approaching a challenge or a way to improve our lives - this is food for your mind.





Create

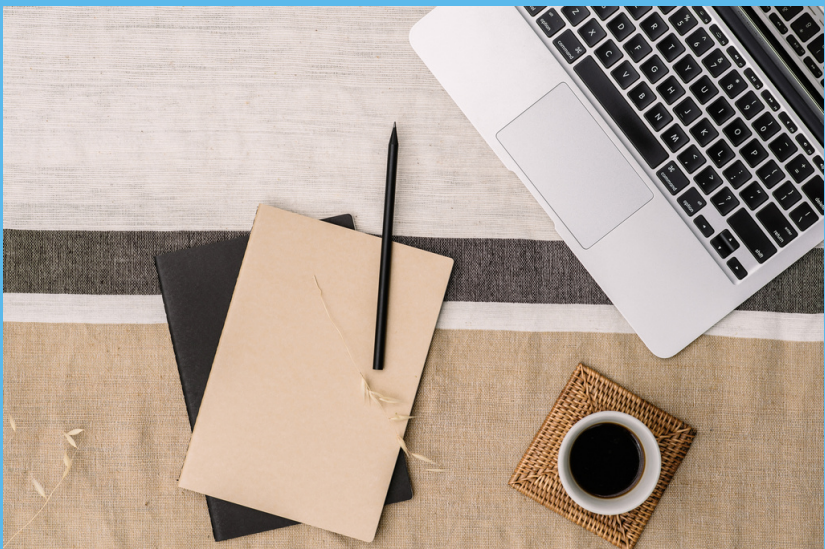
Something - anything.

Knit, cook, draw, paint, play an instrument, develop a part of the garden which you've been meaning to get to - anything which harnesses a creative part of your brain shows you that you have skills you'd buried away and possibly didn't even know you had.

Learn something new -

Maybe there's a voice inside you that's saying "I've always wanted to try to do that" - perhaps this is that time for you; learn to sing, cook, dance, a new language ...

It doesn't matter what it is, the development of a new skill enhances the brain's neuroplasticity and can show us very clearly that we're capable of anything we set our mind to.



Exercise

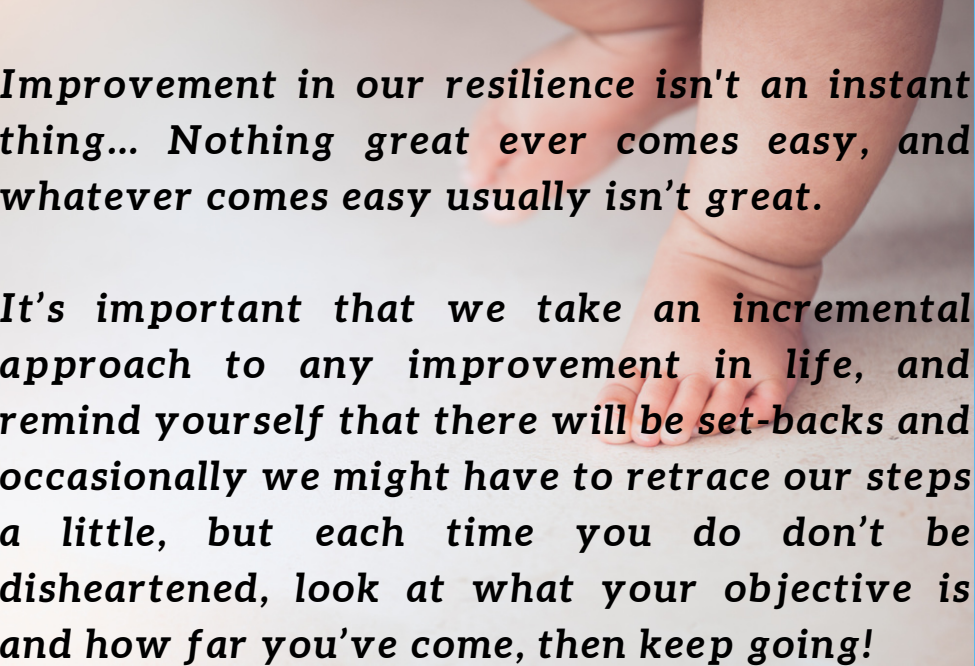
We all know we need to do it; and training and movement are great ways to improve our mood.

Whether it's walks in fresh air and nature (without the phone!) contemplating the nuances of life, high intensity training, lifting weights or playing a sport, this gives you a focus on something other than what might be troubling you, and the adrenaline will give your spirit a boost.

Movement also increases bloodflow through the body, produces adrenaline and releases oxytocin - the "feel-good hormone"



Baby-steps...



Improvement in our resilience isn't an instant thing... Nothing great ever comes easy, and whatever comes easy usually isn't great.

It's important that we take an incremental approach to any improvement in life, and remind yourself that there will be set-backs and occasionally we might have to retrace our steps a little, but each time you do don't be disheartened, look at what your objective is and how far you've come, then keep going!

Before I go...

A few words on self-talk; I know I touched on Self-Affirmations earlier, but

Your strongest ally in this is your mind, it is the most powerful machine you will ever come across - so take care to train it well.

How you talk to yourself, and what you say to yourself MATTERS!

Be careful with the words you put into your own mind - the brain is like a continual loop voice recording.

Whatever you allow to go in and stay in, will go around and around - mostly at 3:00 in the morning.

*We are tested not to
display our weaknesses,
but to show our strengths
– focus on those.*



Kirk Stafford is a well known property management identity, over the course of a 35+ year career in real estate, he has bought and sold hundreds of properties for clients, managed investment assets both individually and within offices which he has built up, owned and managed for himself and for larger corporations.

He has managed and mentored high performing property management teams for many years and has trained and spoken nationally at seminars, and now finds his joy in coaching, training and mentoring through his business The Property Management Coach.

He is available to coach on an individual basis and speak in either small group settings or larger conferences and seminars,

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