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| **Resilience** |
| How to bounce back from adversity |
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| A self-help guide with various insights and coping strategies to help you bounce back from life’s sets-backs and improve overall well-being |
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**What is resilience?**

Having resilience is about having the ability to recover from a set-back when things go wrong. We may experience many difficult challenges in our life or be mindful of others who seem to have a lot of courage when faced with tragic circumstances through disasters, serious illnesses or trauma for example.

We all deal with things differently and demonstrate resilience in different ways. There’s no wrong or right way to do this really, it’s about finding a way that works for you. We are all capable of learning how to be more resilient and be more able to bounce back from whatever life may throw at us.

Resilience is very much connected to our self-esteem, the way we perceive ourselves. We are not aware of self-esteem as something we are born with. This develops as we grow and may become high or low depending on our life experience. If we see ourselves in a positive light and can be successful at overcoming obstacles, our self-esteem will more likely be healthy and quite high, making it much easier to bounce back each time there is a set-back.

Be aware of how you view certain situations. Are you are able to take a positive approach in a difficult situation? If so, you’re more likely to see yourself as a survivor rather than a victim, making it easier to develop healthy levels of self esteem

***Asking for help is a sign of self confidence***

Asking for help - being able to let others know that you are struggling is very important here. People with higher self-esteem usually ask for help when needed, so are also more able to help others. Be flexible! It is much better to bend than break!

Being able to help someone can also help us feel good about ourselves which is a great morale booster, and having friends that we can trust and rely on can help built a strong and safe environment in which to develop reliance.

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***Be flexible!***

***It is much better to bend than to break!***

Being more flexible about your values and beliefs will stand you in good stead. It’s much more difficult and draining to be too ‘unbending’ and try to resist any changes or opportunities to move forward in your life.

Resilient people often find it easier to identify what their values are, what’s more important to them. They decide just how flexible they are prepared to be and consider how they can change their thinking and behaviour in order to move ahead.

Learning how to change the way you think and behave is one of the most beneficial skills for becoming more resilient, and yet many people resist this because it’s fraught with uncertainty.

***Be prepared to change and you are prepared to be resilient.***

Consider the possibility of being able to break past unwanted habits. Believe in your ability to do change and face all life’s challenges with **calmness** and **courage**

Be mindful too that this may take a little time. You will need to make the effort to get the results you want

**How is your Resilience?**

**Explore the questions below to help identify situations where you are already resilient and to highlight and understand areas that you may want to improve.**

***Put a tick next to the action that you would most likely do:***

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| **Health**1. You decide it’s time to take care of yourself and get fit Do you:
2. Reflecting over the past year, you realise you have become a bit stuck in your ways ant not really accomplished anything. You decide to make some personal goals. Do you:
3. You feel lacking in energy and wonder if your diet and alcohol might be the cause. During the past year, do you:
4. You become aware of a connection between the stress you are currently experiencing and not having enough sleep. Do you:
5. After working very hard for some time, yourself and your partner or friend or partner, decide you both need a holiday. Do you:
 | **Health**1. Join a gym membership
2. buy new trainers and sportswear
3. pay for personal training
4. include exercise into your daily routine
5. instantly go for a run but give up
6. download a fitness DVD
7. Think, what’s the point? I know I won’t keep it up anyway
8. Make a couple of goals but then do nothing
9. Keep it up for a few days only
10. Keep it up for a few weeks
11. Achieve what you intended
12. Make a plan of how you are going to achieve your goals
13. Eat fast food at least twice a week
14. Mostly cook meals from scratch
15. Eat too much chocolate or snack most days
16. Try to have 5 vegetables a day
17. Drink alcohol most days
18. Drink alcohol occasionally
19. Have difficulty getting to sleep
20. Manage to get at least 7 hours sleep
21. Wake up in the middle of the night
22. Take sleeping pills on a regular basis
23. Lay in bed up to lunchtime when you can
24. Switch off completely on holiday
25. decide where to go, and then go there
26. let your friend or partner decide, and go there
27. discuss it first, both state your choices and then compromise
28. decide what you can afford
29. choose a place you have never been before
30. choose somewhere more familiar
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| **Work or college**1. At work or college you find that you are frequently upset by the personal remarks of another colleague or student. Do you:
2. You feel disappointed and bored with work or college, and you’re beginning to dread going in.

Do you:1. Nothing improves so you decide to tell your boss or tutor that you are not happy. Do you:
2. You are interviewed for a job or a course of study that you think you would like, but you fail to get it. Do you:
3. Due to cutbacks at work you are among those being made redundant. Do you:
 | **Work or college**1. confront them
2. get someone else to say something
3. do nothing
4. complain to a member of staff
5. take time off work or college and hope that things will change
6. start looking for another job or change course
7. leave
8. stay with it and hope things improve
9. go home after each day is over and moan about it
10. talk to someone you trust for advise
11. start looking for other jobs or alternative courses
12. think about what it is that you don’t like
13. talk it over with a friend first before you decide what to say
14. Write it down as a prompt or reminder
15. explain the problem rationally
16. tell your boss or tutor what is wrong and then get angry
17. blurt out what is wrong and then get emotional
18. ignore the problem and do nothing
19. Blame the interviewer
20. Decide you did not want it anyway
21. Ask for feedback
22. Feel depressed and hopeless
23. Start looking for another job
24. Put it down to experience and move on
25. Keep in touch with work mates
26. list those you know who might be able to help
27. look for a new career path or training course
28. stay away and avoid meeting people
29. volunteer for something you are interested in
30. rant about your employers on your blog
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| **Relationships**1. You have been with your partner for many years and experiencing more and more rows. Do you:
2. Your partner or housemate announce that they are leaving. Do you:
3. You have moved with your family to a different area, but you are finding it difficult to settle and think you have made a mistake. Do you:
4. You have stayed close to your family even though you no longer live near them. Recently, however, you fetl your sister has let you down by disclosing to the rest of the family things that you told her in private. Do you:
5. You discover that an old friend has lied to you occasionally, Do you:
 | **Relationships**1. stay out more often to keep out of the way.
2. discuss the situation with someone you can trust
3. decide to leave
4. ask them to leave
5. persuade them to go to counselling with you
6. go away on holiday together
7. Realise that you are secretly glad
8. Beg them not to
9. Ask for an explanation
10. Shout and scream and tell them to go
11. Tell your friends
12. Start looking for somebody else
13. discuss it with your partner or family
14. keep it to yourself, as you do not want to admit you have made a mistake
15. analyse why you are not happy
16. decide to join a local club or society
17. give yourself more time
18. draw up a plan of action in case things do not improve.
19. wait for her to apologise
20. tell a close friend what has happened
21. just ignore it and carry on as before
22. arrange to see her to discuss it
23. have sleepless nights worrying about what you should do
24. feel depressed and angry, but do not say anything
25. stop all contact
26. confront your friend and have a furious row
27. write a letter to your friend explaining how hurt you are
28. ignore the behaviour and continue the friendship without saying anything
29. discuss it with other friends
30. ask your friend, calmly for an explanation.
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| **Personal disasters**1. Everything you own (car, tv, mobile phone etc.) seems to be breaking down at the same time. Do you:
2. You find yourself getting increasingly into debt. Do you:
3. you decide you do not want to be paying rent for the rest of your life, but you are finding it difficult to save the deposit to buy a flat or house: Do you:
4. You have decided to return to college to improve your qualifications, but it’s a long time since you have writtenan essay and you are finding the workload too much. Do you:
5. Lots of things are going wrong: things are breaking down. You find it difficult to sleep, you think your friends are avoiding you, and work is tedious. Do you:
 | **Personal disasters**1. sort out in order of priority
2. find it all too much and do nothing
3. complain to everyone how stressful your life is
4. have a list of emergency numbers you can call
5. panic about how much it’s all going to cost
6. have an emergency fund to pay for breakdowns
7. cut up your credit cards
8. take on extra work
9. cancel any club memberships
10. draw up a spreadsheet of your expenditure and earnings
11. refuse all invitations to go out, with no explanation
12. ignore the problem, tell nobody and hope something happen
13. borrow the money from your parents
14. take on an extra job
15. cut down on alcohol and take packed lunches to work or college
16. sell everything you can on eBay
17. moan about it a lot, but actually do anything
18. raise the money on credit cards or loans
19. ask for help at the college
20. finish the course
21. go to your doctor for anti-depressants
22. work out a study plan
23. form a study group with other students
24. buy a book on how to study
25. deal with each problem one at a time
26. phone in sick and take to your bed
27. drink copious amounts of alcohol
28. tell everyone you meet how unlucky you are
29. know that you will be able to cope, as you always have in the past
30. discuss your problems with family and friends
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**How did you score?**

**Maybe you have resilience in some areas of life and not in others. Find your total score for each section to see where you are strong and where to improve**

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| **Health**1 (a) 3 (b) 1 (c) 4 (d) 5 (e) 0 (f) 22 (a) 0 (b) 1 (c) 2 (d) 3 (e) 5 (f) 43 (a) 1 (b) 3 (c) 2 (d)5 (e)0 (f) 44 (a) 3 (b) 5 (c) 2 (d) 0 (e 1) (f) 45 (a) 1 (b) 0 (c) 4 (d) 5 (e) 3 (f) 2 | If you scored:20-25 You are resilient with good health and vitality15-20 You are on the right track, but there is room for improvement10-15 Examine your lifestyle and nutrition: your body needs fuel to function well5-10 Urgent action is required to develop a resilient body: give yourself a chance0-5 You need help to get yourself back on track |
| **Work or college**6 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 1 (d) 4 (e) 3 (f) 5 7 (a) 5 (b) 4 (c) 3 (d) 2 (e) 1 (f) 08 (a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 4 (d) 0 (e) 3 (f) 59 (a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) 1 (e) 5 (f) 010 (a) 5 (b) 4 (c) 2 (d) 3 (e) 1 (f) 0 | If you scored:20-25 You adapt quickly to change and you are professional about your work or studies15-20 You are able to anticipate problems and to avoid difficulties at work or college10-15 You may need to be more assertive and learn to ‘no’ to others5-10 You tend to take the easy way out and may be stuck in a rut0-5 You are almost definitely in the wrong job or wrong course and need some career advice or a change of direction |
| **Relationships**11 (a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 0 (d) 1 (e) 5 (f) 4 12 (a) 4 (b) 0 (c) 5 (d) 1 (e) 3 (f) 213 (a) 3 (b) 0 (c) 4 (d) 1 (e) 5 (f) 214 (a) 1 (b) 4 (c) 3 (d) 5 (e) 2 (f) 015 (a) 0 (b) 1 (c) 4 (d) 2 (e) 3 (f) 5 | If you scored:20-25 You are happy with your relationships with others and when you are by yourself15-20 You are able to analyse your problems with others and discuss them with others10-15 You tend to avoid confrontation and find it difficult to stick up for your self5-10 You tend to worry about your relationships, but never take any action0-5 If you are in a relationship it is probably time to move on |
| **Personal disasters**16 (a) 4 (b) 0 (c) 2 (d) 3 (e) 1 (f) 5 17 (a) 4 (b)5 (c) 2 (d) 3 (e) 1 (f) 018 (a) 2 (b)5 (c) 4 (d) 3 (e) 1 (f) 019 (a) 5 (b) 0 (c) 1 (d) 4 (e) 3 (f) 220 (a) 3 (b) 2 (c) 0 (d) 1 (e) 5 (f) 4 | If you scored:20-25 You expect difficult situations to work out okay and you know that you will cope15-20 You constantly learn from your experiences and you are open to new ideas10-15 You sometimes allow yourself to be overwhelmed by your problems5-10 You spend a lot of time worrying and feeling anxious about things that might never happen0-5 You may find it helpful to look at some of the additional self-help exercises listed below:  |

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**Add your total scores together**

**Your total score =**

If you scored:

**80-100** You are a person with resilience; you have high self-esteem; you recover quickly from misfortune; you take good care of yourself and adapt quickly to change

**60-80**  You are able to bounce back, but sometimes, when things go wrong, you fail to look after yourself and you may suffer from stress

**40-60**  You need to develop your self esteem and believe in yourself; life may have dealt you some blows, but it is possible to bounce back and enjoy life to the full

**20-40** You sometimes struggle with your problems and feel the world is against you; it’s still possible to learn to think positively and to develop resilience. You can do it!

**0-20** Don’t worry if you end up with a low score- there is no better place to start than at the very beginning. You’ll find lots more in the ‘Further Self-Help Guides’ below to help you on your way to creating a successful happy life

***Further self-help guides and coping strategies:***

* Building Confidence and Self-esteem
* Managing Anxiety
* Managing Stress
* Assertiveness
* Managing Depression
* Changing Habits & Behaviours
* Study or exam stress

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