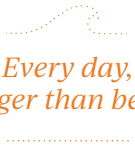




Resilience



*Every day,
stronger than before..*

HOLSTEE

WELCOME TO

Resilience

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Life will send storms
you cannot prepare for.

Some will approach slowly and
others will appear without warning.

Move through each moment
with care and persistence.

Meaning and beauty are
waiting for you
on the other side.



Resilience *noun*

re·sil·ience | ri-'zil-yən(t)s

An ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary © 2022

This guide will open your mind to ways of managing challenging moments and tactics that will leverage your resistance in the face of adversity. Dig into poetry, philosophy, and a range of activities inspired by the teachings and research of Dr. Martin Seligman, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, and Dr. Tara Brach — just to name a few.

On the following pages, you will journey back to demanding experiences you have had. Analyze and find deeper understanding of your reactions to complex moments, honor previous hardships by reshaping pain into moments of growth, and gain confidence in your ability to take on the world by finding your inner hero.

Through everyday habit-setting and mindfulness practices, this guide will help you build powerful resilience against life's overwhelming moments.

To the flower that grows from the sidewalk

From the cracks in the sidewalks
of old weather beaten tracks
With gravel roads full of grime and dust
Near dilapidated walls
Where days old refuse has accumulated
And the air lacks it's unique fresh scent
You find a way to thrive and shine
And your smile grows wide
As the sun sails by
Even though you won't be able to change your spot
This forgotten decrepit place
Will be your home throughout your life
Yet you don't seem to mind at all
For you've carved your happiness here
A happiness that seems to last
Even when you're surrounded by grey crumbling life
Day in and day out
You've found a reason to breathe and boom
you're unperturbed by what's around
And that's the reason your beauty sparkles
Way more than those who grow in perfectly manicured lawns

Praggya Joshi

Warm-Up

Sometimes it is in our most difficult moments that we learn the most important lessons.



Identify three challenging moments or situations from this past year that you wish had gone differently.

- **Describe each experience and note how you felt at the time.**

“ Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

CONFUCIUS

Click on bars like these to open a new journal entry in Reflection.app with the prompt ready! **Bonus:** As part of your Holstee Membership, you get Premium access to Reflection.app — click now to give it a try!



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Explanatory Styles

In [Dr. Martin Seligman](#)'s pivotal book *Learned Optimism*, he shares an important truth: the way you explain the events in your life greatly affects the way you live.

How you understand and make sense of things is your explanatory style. According to Seligman, there are three ways we see the world that contribute to our individual explanatory style: **Personal, Permanent, and Pervasive**.

1 PERSONAL

Whether we attribute an event to **internal** or **external** causes.

INTERNAL:

Everything is my fault.

EXTERNAL:

Some things are out of my control.

2 PERMANENT

Whether we see a situation as **fixed** or **malleable**.

FIXED:

Things will never get better.

MALLEABLE:

I can improve my situation.

3 PERVASIVE

Whether we see events as **universal** or **circumstantial**.

UNIVERSAL:

Everything in my life is bad.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL:

This moment is painful, but not symptomatic of my whole life.

“ *While you can't control your experiences, you can control your explanations.* ”

DR. MARTIN SELIGMAN

It's important to take a healthy approach to how we understand and process the good and bad things that happen in our lives, and to adjust our thoughts when negativity tries to take over. This is part of building resistance.



Look back at the challenging moments you described in the Warm-Up section.

- **How did you react in those instances?**

Did you blame yourself or external factors (**Personal**)? Did you see your situation as fixed or malleable (**Permanent**)? Did you let negativity spread or see it as a singular instance (**Pervasive**)?



ANSWER THIS PROMPT IN REFLECTION.APP

Honoring Difficulty

It is said that in the late fourteenth century, Japan's shogun, **Ashikaga Yoshimitsu**, broke his favorite tea bowl and sent it to be repaired. When it was returned to him, he was unhappy that the broken pieces had been rejoined by metal staples. He ordered his craftsmen to come up with a more aesthetically pleasing repair solution.

Legend has it that this is how the Zen Buddhist tradition of **kintsugi** was born.

KINTSUGI • 金継ぎ

Kintsugi means “**golden mending**,” a practice in which broken or damaged pottery is reassembled and mended with a gold-powdered lacquer.

In this tradition, the cracks in a ceramic piece are preserved as part of its story. Instead of being an excuse to throw the piece away, the breakage makes the object even more unique and special.

This same practice can be extended to our own lives. We don't need to glorify suffering, but we can recognize its inevitability and try to make something meaningful of it.

Resilience helps us not just bounce back from our breakage, but also grow from it. When applied to our lives, the concept of *kintsugi* asks us to honor the scars left by our pain, heartbreak, mistakes, and failures — and to not be ashamed of our vulnerability.

“ *There is a crack in everything. That’s how the light gets in.* ”

LEONARD COHEN

YOUR GROWTH TIMELINE

Most of us are familiar with the term “post-traumatic stress,” but what about “post-traumatic growth”? Psychologists **Drs. Richard Tedeschi** and **Lawrence Calhoun** coined the term after they interviewed people who suffered traumatic life events and found that many of them experienced significant positive life changes after those events.

These individuals identified their trauma as a catalyst for major personal growth. It helped them gain a sense of inner strength and pushed them to be more confident and appreciative of life. Similar to the teachings of the ancient Stoics, it’s not events themselves, but how we understand and think about them, that matters most.



Write down five painful or challenging moments from your life and reflect on them.

- **How do you see these difficulties?**

Are the scars or breaks you suffered something to be ashamed of, to hide away? Or are they valuable parts of your larger journey that helped you grow?



ANSWER THIS PROMPT IN REFLECTION.APP

Stimulus & Response

In his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, **Dr. Viktor Frankl** describes the experience of arriving at a concentration camp in Nazi Germany. He was immediately stripped of his clothing and possessions, his head was shaved, and he was left to stand in a room of similarly affected people – a mix of strangers and people he'd known his whole life.

In this moment Frankl realized that even though so much had been taken away from him – his possessions, his family, his dignity – he still had the power to choose how he would react to this catastrophic experience.

“ *Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.*

DR. VIKTOR FRANKL, MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING

This extreme example is a powerful reminder that while you may not be able to control or stop a painful moment in your life, you still have the power to choose how you respond to it.

30-Day Challenge

Take a moment each day to just breathe.

While you breathe throughout every day, how often do you breathe fully, expressively, and with intention?

Taking a moment each day to be still, focus on your breath, and monitor your thoughts helps you build in-the-moment resilience (how we respond to daily stresses) and long-term resilience (how we respond to our biggest life challenges and pains).

Here is a short exercise to get you started with intentional breathing:

Take a moment to assess how your body and mind feel right now.

Relax your shoulders and jaw.

Close your eyes.

Breathe in deeply through your nose.

Hold the breath for a few seconds.

Audibly exhale slowly (sounds like “ahhh...”) through your mouth.

Repeat this ten times, noticing how your chest and stomach expand and deflate with each inhale and exhale.

Review how you feel after this exercise. Has anything changed?

A Hero's Journey

We admire heroic literary protagonists for their actions and their epic journeys. What we often forget is that we are all heroes embarking on our own journeys every day.

In 1949, scholar and mythologist [Joseph Campbell](#) popularized the concept of the **hero's journey**, suggesting that nearly every story follows a common narrative. In his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* he explores how heroes in film, literature, and even in ancient religious stories follow a similar path to achieving **heroism**.

Joseph broke down a hero's journey into three parts we can all relate to:

01 DEPARTURE

You, the hero, are going about your day when an unexpected challenge surfaces. At first you are hesitant to respond, but ultimately you decide to rise to the occasion. At this moment, a friend or mentor might appear offering wisdom and guidance as you begin your journey.

02 INITIATION

Almost immediately, you face trials that test your capabilities. You begin to question whether your efforts are worth it. As you pause to reflect, you gain a deeper understanding of your purpose. At that moment, you achieve what you were in search of all along.

03 RETURN

You have come a long way, but your journey is not over. Your final challenge is to retain all you have learned and share your new strengths and abilities with those in need of your help.

Every single one of us has gone on a hero's journey. Throughout our careers, relationships, and personal development, we've had to face adversities that challenged us, maybe even knocked us down. Getting back up is not easy, but if we awaken our inner hero, nothing can hold us back.

It's time to think about a specific "journey" you've taken in life, one that tested your mental and emotional strengths and abilities.



Give your journey a name.

Now, take time to answer the following questions about this journey.

- **Why did you decide to take it on?**
- **What challenges did you encounter along the way?**
- **Who helped you through it?**
- **How were you changed as a result?**

“ It's your reaction to adversity, not adversity itself, that determines how your life's story will develop.

DIETER F. UCHTDORF



ANSWER THIS PROMPT IN REFLECTION.APP

Mindful Resilience

It's common to feel overwhelmed by life challenges that test your resilience. You may be simultaneously juggling a complex project at work, working through a rough patch in a relationship, and managing a health issue.

Sometimes, stress about challenges can scare us into inaction. In these moments we turn to [Dr. Tara Brach](#) who combines clinical psychology with Buddhist philosophy and meditation. Brach developed an easy-to-remember, four-step tool called **RAIN** to employ mindfulness and compassion whenever challenging moments arise.

“ *In the same way that the earth blossoms following a spring shower, after RAIN, realization naturally arises as to our true nature. We are no longer identified with passing states like fear or anger; we are free to inhabit the wholeness of our Being.* ”

DR. TARA BRACH

TIP

Take time to explore **RAIN** as a stand-alone meditation or return to this exercise the next time you face a challenging moment.

Let's walk through the exercise.



Recognize what is going on.

Acknowledge your present thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Step outside of yourself and recognize any signs of a harsh inner voice, feelings of embarrassment and dread, or noticeable physical manifestations created by anxiety.



Allow the experience to just be there, just as it is.

Accept your thoughts, emotions, or sensations. Do not attempt to alter or avoid them. When defaulting to self-judgment, let the negative emotions exist. They do not mean you are unworthy; their presence means that you recognize painful feelings created by a stressful moment.



Investigate with gentle attention. Lean into your natural curiosities to discover the truth. Ask yourself, "How is this experience manifesting in my body? What is it that I think I believe? What does this vulnerable place want from me and what does it need most?"



Nurture with self-compassion. The moment you detect your pain, self-compassion will start to kick in. Once you identify the wounded and hurting place inside you, offer a gesture of kindness that might address it. Ask yourself, "Does it need a message of reassurance? Of forgiveness? Of companionship?" Sincerely spark self-compassion and even if it feels awkward, it will start to soothe and strengthen the heart.

Reflect & Discuss

Use these questions for self-reflection or to spark meaningful conversations.

ICEBREAKERS

Who do you turn to for advice when you feel stuck?

If you could choose to have no more challenges or obstacles in life, would you?

What are you holding on to that you need to let go of?

What is a recent challenge that you're proud of yourself for working through?

DEEPER QUESTIONS

Is there a difficult moment in your life that you wouldn't go back and change, even if you could?

What mistake in life have you learned the most from?

What is the hardest thing you're going through right now?

What is one moment your life that changed course because of an action you took?

“ *I can be changed by
what happens to me.
But I refuse to be
reduced by it.*

MAYA ANGELOU

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