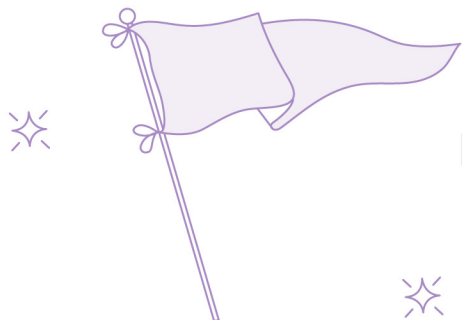


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**Let's take a  
moment for  
resilience.**

**HOLSTEE  
GUIDE**



## BEGIN

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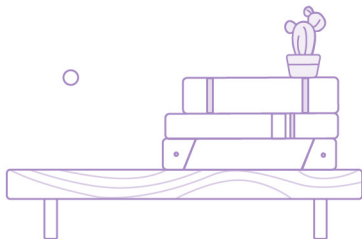
**W**e will all experience loss, illness, setbacks, or pain at some point in our lives. Luckily, we have one very important tool to help us cope with these all-too-human pain points: **Resilience**.

Resilience allows us to adapt and bounce back, but it can also help us derive meaning from our most painful experiences. In this way, it's the tool that helps us get out of bed on our worst days, keeps us moving forward when things don't make sense, and enables us to feel gratitude for the journey.

One of the first steps to building resilience is to examine our experiences with an open heart. When we don't immediately shy away from thinking about the most difficult moments in our lives, we come away with a deeper and richer understanding of ourselves. That's what we ask of you as you work through this guide. Alright? Let's do this!



# LEARN



We'll begin with some 2,000-year-old wisdom from Stoicism — a philosophical root of many therapies and mindfulness practices used to build resilience. Here is one important lesson they offer us:

Happiness and freedom begin with a clear understanding of one principle: Some things are in our control, and some things are not. It is only after you have faced up to this fundamental rule and learned to distinguish between what you can and can't control that inner tranquility and outer effectiveness become possible. – EPICTETUS

Stress and anxiety often come from feeling like we don't have control — over an outcome, someone else's judgment, or things in the past that didn't go well. But the Stoics tell us this: **It is essential to separate the things we have control over and the things we don't.**

This helps us see more clearly what deserves our thoughts, attention, and worry, and begin to accept the things that will happen beyond our power. We build resilience when we practice this separation — acting on what we can to the very best of our ability, and letting go of everything else.



# REFLECT



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## Journal and Discussion Questions

Let these questions be a starting point for reflection about yourself, your experiences overcoming pain, and your efforts to build resilience in your own life. Try to answer each of these either on your own or in conversation with friends and family!

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

Gratitude brings perspective to our challenging moments. What are five things you are grateful for?

Describe a recent challenge that you're proud of yourself for working through.

Who is the most resilient person you know? What makes them resilient?



# ACTIVITY



## Create a Timeline of Personal Growth



Most of us are familiar with the term “post-traumatic stress,” but what about “**post-traumatic growth**”? Psychologists 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. In the tradition of the Stoics, it’s not about the events themselves, but how we understand and think about them that matters most.

**Look back on your life and place your most formative events on a timeline. Try to think of at least five and reflect on how those events may have helped you grow.**





”

Someone I loved  
once gave me a box  
full of darkness.

It took me years to  
understand that  
this, too, was a gift.

- MARY OLIVER

# COMMIT

## 30-Day Challenge: Take a moment each day to just breathe.

We know what you must be thinking: *Breathe? Hello... I do that every day!* No, we mean really BREATHE — fully, expressively, and with intention.

Taking a moment each day to be still, focusing on our breath, and practicing monitoring our thoughts helps us 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:

- Relax your shoulders and jaw.
- Close your eyes and breathe in deeply through your nose.
- Hold the breath for a few seconds, and audibly exhale (sounds like ahhh...) slowly through your mouth.
- Repeat this ten times, noticing how your chest and stomach expand and deflate with each inhale and exhale.
- At the end, take a moment to assess how your body and mind feel.



# RECAP



To help you keep these ideas and reflection questions at the front of your mind this month, here's a short recap:



**1 Finding Meaning.** Resilience helps us derive meaning from our most painful experiences.

**2 Knowing Our Limits.** The Stoics teach us that when we separate our concerns into what we can and can't control, we're better equipped to handle stress and anxiety.

**3 Growing From Pain.** Our biggest challenges are often the source of major personal growth. Think about the hardest thing you are going through right now. In a year, how might you feel about it? What will it teach you?

**4 Focusing on Breath.** When we take time to focus on our breath we build resilience in our day-to-day life, and train ourselves to better handle more difficult pain and trauma.

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This kit is inspired by our readings from Epictetus, Ryan Holiday, Brian Johnson, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, and Mary Oliver. For further reading and curated resources on this topic, visit [holstee.com/resilience](https://holstee.com/resilience)