

# Harnessing Strengths:

## *How to build resilience in the workplace*

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Web: [www.moodwatchers.com](http://www.moodwatchers.com)



# Three realities

- We are all vulnerable
- We will face challenges and crises
- We underestimate our potential to cope

# What we all need

- The inevitability of challenge and upheaval
- A toolbox for coping in crisis
- How not to take a hit lessons in school
- The science of the survivor
- How to thrive despite adversity

# Lost in the 'noise'

- No time to think
- Rushing and fussing
- Connecting with yourself, others and your world
- Being openminded, being openhearted

# What is resilience?

“Resilience is the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful **adaption** despite challenging or threatening circumstances”

(Master, Best & Garmezy, 1990)

# 5 essential strengths to develop when facing challenges



# 1. EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

The ability to identify your feelings and express your emotions, and when necessary, the ability to control your feelings (Reivich)

- *Not being governed by your emotions*
- *Allowing for your emotional state*
- *There is a separation between who you are at your core and what you are going through*
- *Avoiding panic*

- *Internal and external consultation*
- *Sitting back and looking at things in a thoughtful way before acting*
- *Tolerating ambiguity and not rushing to make decisions*
- *The need for rational thinking – thinking straight*
- *Being objective, neutral and fair-minded*



# INTERNAL DIALOGUE AUTOMATIC SELF-TALK

- Our private world of thoughts, our interpretation of past and present, our predictions for the future are very powerful influences on mood

- Is there another way of making sense of this?
- Am I right to be as annoyed as I am?
- Would this annoy you as much as it's annoying me?
- Does it really matter?
- Have I got good advice or am I making conclusions on my own?
- Am I my own best or worst coach?

Consulting / Practical advice and solutions

Watch out for KNOW-ALL-ISM

The power of questions

Doing your own thinking

Not to be governed by panic

## **2. EMPATHY**

The ability to read and understand the emotions of others

- Understand how situations affect others
- Seeing others, supporting others
- Enhancing our sense of team
- Building relationships

### 3. OPTIMISM

- Having an optimistic ‘explanatory’ style
- Realistic optimism
- Optimism which facilitates problem-solving
- ‘wed to reality’
  - *Engaging with the optimist*
  - *Contemplating the optimistic view*

## **4. SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY**

- People need people
- Staff getting to know each other
- Staff supporting each other
- Social committee (marking events, celebrating success etc)
- Effective communication, feedback and clarification etc. at all times.

- The proper and professional delivery of announcements/  
news
- Transparency
- The crucial role of the 'significant other'
- Sustaining team

- Psychologists have shown that social ties and increased contact with family and friends are associated with a lower risk of illness
- What's more, a 2010 meta-analysis of 148 studies showed that social connection doesn't just help us survive health problems but the lack of it causes them (Williams, 2011)



## **5. LAUGHTER**

- The gift of humour
- Humour therapy
- Hanging around with good humoured people

*“Laughing one hundred times amounts to the same exercise as riding a stationary bike for fifteen minutes. Five minutes of intense laughter can double the heart rate. Three minutes of laughter is equivalent to three minutes on a rowing machine. Laughter stimulates circulation, tones muscles, energises lungs and stimulates endorphins in the immune system.”*

**Dr William Fry (Stanford University)**

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Resources section



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