

Resilience: **Why it Matters to Employers and What They Can Do**

Resilience - the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.

Importance of Resilience

- Improved self-esteem
- Sense of control over life events
- Increased sense of purpose in life
- Improved interpersonal relationships
- Greater resistance to stress
- Better physical and mental wellbeing
- Greater job satisfaction, work happiness, organizational commitment, employee engagement, and lower absences from work

Below are some strategies to develop personal resilience:

SELF-AWARENESS

- How am I feeling?
- What are my emotional triggers?
- What are my talents, strengths?
- What have I learnt from past experiences?
- What lifts me up?
- What drives me?
- What are areas I can work on?

Label your emotion and rate the intensity of the emotion

- *How are you feeling now? On a scale of 0-10, what is the intensity of this emotion?*
- *What are the triggers (if any) to this emotion?*

Ways to increase self-awareness

- Practice observing how you feel
- Pay attention to how you behave
- Slow down (or meditate)
- Take responsibility for your feelings
- Keep a journal
- Understand what motivates you
- Acknowledge your emotional triggers
- Recognize your strengths and weaknesses
- Ask for input from others

Useful surveys for self-awareness/ identification of strengths

- www.authentic happiness.org
- VIA Character Strengths (<http://www.viacharacter.org>)
- Strengths Finder 2.0

POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Pay attention to your Thoughts

Be aware of any ANTs (Automatic Negative Thoughts) and Cognitive Distortions you have

Cognitive Distortions

Some individuals acquire habits that distort the way they think about their potential for personal and work success. These are called cognitive distortions, or unhelpful thinking patterns. Such patterns of thinking can limit career achievement, result in low self-esteem and poor self-confidence, and cause individuals to perform below their potential.

However, there is hope! These unhelpful thinking patterns can be replaced with more alternative ones.

Common cognitive distortions:

All or nothing - thinking	You see things in black and white categories. If a situation falls short of perfect, you see it as a total failure. When a young woman on a diet ate a spoonful of ice cream, she told herself, "I've blown my diet completely. I might as well don't continue my diet." This thought upset her so much that she gobbled down an entire tub of ice cream!
Over-generalization	You see a single negative event, such as a romantic rejection or a failure on a test as a never-ending pattern of defeat by using words such as 'always' or "never" when you think about it. "I never do things right!"

Mental filter	You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively, so that your vision of all of reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolours a beaker of water. Example: You receive many positive comments about your class but one of them says something mildly critical. You obsess about his reaction for days and ignore all the positive feedback.
Discounting the positive	You reject positive experiences by insisting they 'don't count.' If you do a good job, you may tell yourself that it wasn't good enough or that anyone could have done as well.
Mind reading	Without checking it out, you conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you.
Fortune telling	You predict that things will turn out badly. Before a test, you may tell yourself, "I'm really going to blow it. What if I fail?"
Magnification	You exaggerate the importance of your problems and shortcomings, or you minimize the importance of your desirable qualities.
Emotional reasoning	You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are. "I feel guilty. I must be a rotten person.' Or 'I feel angry. This proves I'm being treated unfairly.'" Or "I feel so inferior. This means I'm a second-rate person."
Shoulds and musts	You tell yourself that things should be the way you hoped or expected them to be. "I should be the perfect mother", or "I must have the approval of everyone around me."
Labeling	Instead of saying "I made a mistake." you attach a negative label to yourself: 'I'm a loser.'" You might also label yourself 'a failure' or 'a jerk.' Labeling is quite irrational because you are not the same as what you do.

We do not have to believe or accept the ANTs. We can talk back at the ANTs and challenge them by asking ourselves the following questions:

- What evidence supports this idea? What evidence is against it?
- Is it really in my control?
- What might be another explanation/ perspective for this situation?
- Am I making assumptions?
- What's the effect of thinking this way? What could be the effect of thinking differently?

- Will this matter in 5 or 10 years time?
- Imagine a good friend who thinks this way about the situation. What would you tell them?

Positive Self-Talk

- Self-talk can be positive ("I can do it") or negative ("I'll never complete this").
- Positive self-talk helps us to calm down and control stress.
Eg "I can handle things if I take one step at a time."
Eg "I know how to deal with this; I've done it before."

Reframe

- Reframing – looking at the situation from another perspective
A problem as an opportunity
A weakness as a strength
An impossibility as a distant possibility

Practice

- Describe a situation in which you felt stressed or overwhelmed.
- What was one ANT you had? How can you challenge this ANT?
- What is an alternative way of thinking about the situation? (e.g. by using Reframing, or Positive Self-Talk)

STRUCTURE

Most of us are creatures of habit. When things go as planned, we feel in control. However, when life throws a curveball, we may feel anxious and stressed. Hence, implementing a structure or routine to our day can give us a sense of control, which can be helpful in times of uncertainty and stress.

- Staying active and getting regular daily exercise
- Taking rest breaks at certain times of the day
- Eating healthy meals on a regular schedule
- Keeping a gratitude journal

The 5-minute Gratitude Journal

Morning Journaling:

- 3 things I am grateful for
- I can make today great by _____ (set an intention for the day, eg texting a friend/ clearing my desk, etc)
- I am _____ (write a self-affirmative statement, eg, kind/ responsible/ creative)

Night Journaling:

- 3 good things that happened today
- 1 person I am thankful for

SOCIAL SUPPORT

- Surround ourselves with supportive people
- Join a supportive social network or community.
- Be open to seek and receive help from others.
- Set healthy boundaries
- Who is one person whom you can approach for help and support?
- Who is one person whom you would like to reach out to?

SELF-CARE

Practice Self-Care

- Self-compassion
- Healthy diet
- Exercise
- Sufficient sleep
- Learn to say "no"
- Do something you enjoy everyday (BLISS List)
- Forgive ourselves and others
- From FOMO (fear of missing out) to JOMO (joy of missing out)
- Do not compare with others

Reflection

- What are some self-care activities which you are already engaging in currently?
- Which areas of self-care (physical, emotional, social, cognitive, spiritual) have you neglected lately? What are some things you would like to do this week?

Bliss List

Write down what you enjoy doing (list as many as you can think of). It can be something simple, such as having a cup of hot coffee, gardening, exercising, or just simply, spending time alone reading a good book. Challenge yourself to do at least one item on your list each day, for self-care.

Ways to Enhance Resilience and Mental Wellbeing at the Workplace

- Foster a psychologically safe and trusting work environment by having open and regular conversations on mental well-being
- Raise awareness on mental well being through talks and workshops
- Conduct surveys to understand general state of mental well being of employees and work stressors
- Train supervisors to spot signs of mental distress
- Supervisors can schedule regular check ins with employees to assess their state of mental well being and review/ prioritise their workloads
- Provide access to counselling services such as through Employee Assistance Programme
- Form informal support networks (eg buddy/ mentoring system)
- Set aside time and resources for bonding activities to strengthen relationships among employees
- Establish after hours policy for work communication

If you have signs of distress that do not decrease over time, do seek professional help or advice.

- ☐ Symptoms persist over a prolonged period of time
- ☐ Significant problems in functioning at work or at home
- ☐ Severe withdrawal behaviours
- ☐ Severe physical reactions (eg fainting, pain, diarrhoea)

Below are some helplines. Remember, it is OK to seek help!

National Care Hotline (8am to 12am): 1800-20-6868

Helpline	Details	Operating Hours	Tel / Website
Samaritans of Singapore (SOS)	For people in crisis, thinking of suicide or affected by suicide.	24 hours	1800-221 4444
Care Corner Counselling Centre Helpline (Mandarin speaking counsellors available)	Face-to-face counselling sessions for family or personal problems	Mon to Sun: 10am -10pm	1800-353 5800
Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH)	For people who have psychological, psychiatric or social problems and others who need information for such persons	Mon to Fri: 9am - 6pm	1800-283 7019
The Seniors Helpline	For anyone 50 years and above or anyone who has a concern or question regarding someone 50 years and above	Mon to Fri: 9am - 7pm	1800-555 5555
National Addictions Management Service Helpline	For individuals who have a drug/alcohol abuse problem, gambling problem, or internet/gaming addiction problem. Concerned family members are also encouraged to call for advice on how they can help.	Mon to Sun (including public holidays): 8am – 11pm	6-RECOVER (6-732 6837)



Worried, stressed or anxious during COVID-19?

Speak to our counsellors today for support.
Call **1800-202-6868**.

Our Community Partners Offering Targeted Support

	Mental Well-Being Fei Yue's Online Counselling Service Institute of Mental Health's Helpline Samaritans of Singapore Silver Ribbon Singapore	eC2.sg 6389 2222 1800 221 4444 6385 3714
	Marital and Parenting Issues Community Psychology Hub's Online Counselling platform	CPHOnlineCounselling.sg
	Violence or Abuse Big Love Child Protection Specialist Centre HEART @ Fei Yue Child Protection Specialist Centre PAVE Integrated Services for Individual and Family Protection Project START TRANS SAFE Centre	6445 0400 6819 9170 6555 0390 6476 1482 6449 9088
	Counselling TOUCHline Counselling Care Corner Counselling Centre	1800 377 2252 1800 353 5800
	Mental Health-related Support Belle, Beyond the Label Helpbot	go.gov.sg/ beyondthelabelhelpbot

For other hotlines and mental wellness resources, visit <go.gov.sg/mentalwellnessresources>

