

How Resilient are you? – by Al Siebert, Ph.D

How do you react to unexpected difficulties? Healthy, resilient people have stress-resistant personalities and learn valuable lessons from rough experiences. They rebound from major setbacks even stronger than before.

When hurt or distressed, resilient people expect to find a way to have things turn out well. They feel self-reliant and have a learning/coping reaction rather than the victim/blaming reaction that is so common these days.

Take the Quiz...

Rate yourself from 1 to 5 on the following: (1 = very little, 5 = very strong)

1	2	3	4	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I adapt quickly, I'm good at bouncing back from difficulties
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm able to recover emotionally from losses and setbacks. I can express my feelings, let go of anger, overcome discouragement and ask for help.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	In a crisis or chaotic situation, I calm myself and focus on taking useful actions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I feel self-confident, enjoy healthy self-esteem, and have an attitude of professionalism about my work.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm optimistic. I see difficulties as temporary, expect to overcome them, and believe things will turn out well.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm good at solving problems logically
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I can think up creative solutions to challenges, I trust my intuition
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm curious, ask many questions, want to know how things work and experiment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm playful, find the humour in rough situations, laugh at myself, and chuckle
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I constantly learn from experience and from the experiences of others

1	2	3	4	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm very flexible. I feel comfortable with my paradoxical complexity (trusting and cautious, unselfish and selfish, optimistic and pessimistic, etc)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I try to anticipate problems to avoid them, and I expect the unexpected
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm able to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty about situations
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm a good listener, have good empathy skills, and 'read' people well. I'm non-judgmental and adapt to the different personality styles in others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm good at making things work well. I'm often asked to lead groups and projects
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm very durable, keep on going during tough times and have an independent spirit
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I've been made stronger and better by difficult experiences
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I've converted misfortune into good luck and found benefits in bad experiences

Add it up!

Scoring:

80 or higher very resilient
65-80 better than most
50-65 slow, but adequate
40-50 you're struggling
40 or under seek help

Interpretation

Over 50 years of research into the inner nature of life's best survivors has created a clear understanding of human resiliency and how it develops. Highly resilient people show many similar qualities.

Playful, childlike curiosity

Ask lots of questions, want to know how things work. Play with new developments, Enjoy themselves as children do. Have a good time almost anywhere. Wonder about things, experiment, make mistakes, get hurt, laugh.

Ask/Reflect: "What is different now? What if I did this? Who can answer my questions? What is funny about this?"

Constantly learn from experience

Rapidly assimilate new or unexpected experiences and facilitate being changed by them.

Ask/Reflect: "What is the lesson here? What early clues did I ignore? The next time that happens I will..."

Adapt quickly

Very mentally and emotionally flexible. Comfortable with contradictory personality qualities. Can be *both* strong and gentle, sensitive and tough, logical and intuitive, calm and emotional, serious and playful and so forth. The more the better. Can think in negative ways to reach positive outcomes.

Ask/Reflect: "What could go wrong, so it can be avoided?"

Have solid self-esteem and self-confidence

Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. It determines how much you learn after something goes wrong. It allows you to receive praise and compliments. It acts as a buffer against hurtful statements while being receptive to constructive criticism. "I like, appreciate, and love myself..."

Self-confidence is your reputation with yourself

It allows you to take risks without waiting for approval or reassurance from others. You expect to handle new situations well because of your past successes.

Ask/Reflect: "These are my reliable strengths..."

Have good friendships, loving relationships

Research shows that people in toxic working conditions are more stress resistant and are less likely to get sick when they have a loving family and good friendships. Loners are more vulnerable to distressing conditions. Talking with friends and family diminishes the impact of difficulties and increases feelings of self-worth and self-confidence.

Express feelings honestly

Experience and can express anger, love, dislike, appreciation, grief – the entire range of human emotions honestly and openly. Can also choose to suppress their feelings when they believe it would be best to do so.

Expect things to work out well

Deep optimism guided by internal values and standards. High tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty. Can work without a job description, is a good role model of professionalism. Has a synergistic effect, brings stability to crises and chaos.

Ask/Reflect: "How can I interact with this so that things turn out well for all of us?"

Read others with empathy

See things through the perspectives of others, even antagonists. Win/win/win attitude in conflicts.

Ask/Reflect: "What do others think and feel? What is it like to be them? How do they experience me? What is legitimate about what they feel, say and do?"

Use intuition, creative hunches

Accept subliminal perception and intuition as valid, useful sources of information.

Ask/Reflect: "What is my body telling me? Did that daydream mean anything? Why don't I believe what I'm being told? What if I did this?"

Defend self well

Avoid and block attacks, fight back. See through and side-step cons, 'games' and manipulations that others attempt. Find allies, resources and support.

Have a talent for serendipity (fate, chance, karma)

Learning lessons in the school of life is the antidote to feeling victimised. They can convert a situation that is emotionally toxic for others into something emotionally nutritious for them. They thrive in situations distressing to others because they learn good lessons from bad experiences. They convert misfortune into good luck and gain strength from adversity.

A good indicator of exceptional mental health is when a person talking about a rough experience can say "I would never willingly go through anything like that again, but it was one of the best things that ever happened to me".

Ask/Reflect: "How can I turn this around? Why is it good that this happened? What is the gift?"

Get better and better every decade

Become increasingly life competent, resilient, durable, playful and free. Spend less time surviving than others and survive major adversities better. Enjoy life more and more.