

The Resiliency Quiz

Resilience has been identified as one of the key areas to help transform compassion fatigue. It is important to recognize that resilience is a process, not a particular personality trait. This is helpful because it means we can all strengthen our resiliency skills...that ability to 'bounce back' from difficult life situations and circumstances. Research shows that resilience is the result of people promoting their well-being as a protective factor from their environment. The following two part quiz may help you reinforce helpful strategies and make a commitment to try new ones.

Part One:

Do you have the conditions in your life that research shows help people to be resilient?

People bounce back from tragedy, trauma, risks, and stress by having the following conditions in their lives. The more times you answer yes (below), the greater the chances you can bounce back from your life's problems "with more power and more smarts."

Answer yes or no to the following. Then, celebrate your "yes" answers and decide how you can change your "no" answers to "yes".

1. Caring and Support

- _____ I have several people in my life who give me unconditional love, nonjudgmental listening, and who I know are "there for me."
- _____ I am involved in a school, work, faith, or other group where I feel cared for and valued.
- _____ I treat myself with kindness and compassion, and take time to nurture myself (including eating right and getting enough sleep and exercise).

2. High Expectations for Success

- _____ I have several people in my life who let me know they believe in my ability to succeed.
- _____ I get the message, "You can succeed", at my work or school.
- _____ I believe in myself most of the time, and generally give myself positive messages about my ability to accomplish my goals - even when I encounter difficulties.

3. Opportunities for Meaningful Participation

- _____ My voice (opinion) and choice (what I want) is heard and valued in my close personal relationships.
- _____ My opinions and ideas are listened to and respected at my work or school.
- _____ I provide service through volunteering to help others or a cause in my community, faith organization, or school.

4. Positive Bonds

- _____ I am involved in one or more positive after-work or after-school hobbies or activities.
- _____ I participate in one or more groups (such as a club, faith community, or sports team) outside of work or school.
- _____ I feel "close to" most people at my work or school.

5. Clear and Consistent Boundaries

- _____ Most of my relationships with friends and family members have clear, healthy boundaries (which include mutual respect, personal autonomy, and each person in the relationship both giving and receiving).
- _____ I experience clear, consistent expectations and rules at my work or in my school.
- _____ I set and maintain healthy boundaries for myself by standing up for myself, not letting others take advantage of me, and saying "no" when I need to.

6. Life Skills

- _____ I have (and use) good listening, honest communication, and healthy conflict resolution skills.
- _____ I have the training and skills I need to do my job well, or all the skills I need to do well in school.
- _____ I know how to set a goal and take the steps to achieve it.

Part Two:

People also successfully overcome life's difficulties by drawing upon internal qualities that research has shown are particularly helpful when encountering a crisis, major stressor, or trauma.

The following list can be thought of as a *personal resiliency builder* menu. No one has everything on this list. When the going gets tough, you probably have three or four of these qualities that you use most naturally and most often.

It is helpful to know which are your primary resiliency builders; how have you used them in your past; and how can you use them to overcome the present challenges in your life.

You can also decide to add one or two of these to your *personal resiliency builder* menu, if you think they would be useful for you.

Personal Resiliency Builders: Individual Qualities that Facilitate Resiliency

Put a checkmark by the top three or four resiliency builders you use most often. Ask yourself how you have used these in the past or currently use them. Think of how you can best apply these resiliency builders to current life problems, crisis, or stressors.

You can then put a check by one or two resiliency builders you think you should add to your personal repertoire.

Relationships - Sociability / ability to be a friend / ability to form positive relationships

- Humour** - Has a good sense of humour
- Inner Direction** - Bases choices / decisions on internal evaluation (internal locus of control)
- Perceptiveness** - Insightful understanding of people and situations
- Independence** - "Adaptive" distancing from unhealthy people and situations / autonomy
- Positive View of Personal Future** - Optimism, expects a positive future
- Flexibility** - Can adjust to change; can bend as necessary to positively cope with situations
- Love of Learning** - Capacity for and connection to learning
- Self-motivation** - Internal initiative and positive motivation from within
- Competence** - Is "good at something" / personal competence
- Self-Worth** - Feelings of self-worth and self-confidence
- Spirituality** - Personal faith in something greater
- Perseverance** - Keeps on despite difficulty; doesn't give up
- Creativity** - Expresses self through artistic endeavour

You Can Best Help Yourself or Someone Else Be More Resilient by...

1. Communicating the Resiliency Attitude: "What is right with you is more powerful than anything that is wrong with you."
2. Focusing on the person's strengths more than problems and weaknesses, and asking "how can these strengths be used to overcome problems?" One way to do this is to help yourself or another identify and best utilize top personal resiliency builders listed in The Resiliency Quiz Part Two.
3. Providing for yourself or another the conditions listed in The Resiliency Quiz Part One.
4. Having patience... successfully bouncing back from a significant trauma or crisis takes time.

The Resiliency Quiz has been reprinted for educational purposes from www.resiliency.com. Author Nan Henderson, M.S.W., is an international trainer on how to help yourself, your children, or others you care about become more resilient. She speaks to educators, parent and community groups, and to youth on a variety of topics connected to resiliency. She is also the President of Resiliency In Action, Inc., and the author/editor of five books on the topic of fostering resiliency.