



Building Resilience

BNH Monday Group Chat

What are some ways to become more resilient?

- Healthy habits—getting enough sleep, eating well, and exercising—can reduce stress, which may, in turn, boost resilience. Similarly, being sure to nurture close relationships can help an individual find support when trouble arises. Regularly thinking about morals and [actively living according to one's values](#) have been linked to higher resilience.
- Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/basics/resilience>

How can I be more resilient in a crisis?

- Any crisis, such as the [coronavirus](#) pandemic, can test resilience. [Looking to loved ones for help and emotional support](#), increasing self-care, and focusing on the aspects of the situation that are under your control can help you weather almost any storm.
- Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/basics/resilience>

A Fun Trick to Start!

EYEBROWS



THE ONE THING YOU CAN GET INTO
SHAPE WITHOUT EXERCISING

Raise your eyebrows to feel more alert right away!

Five Science-Backed Strategies to Build Resilience:

- 1. Change the narrative**
- 2. Face your fears**
- 3. Meditate**
- 4. Practice self-compassion**
- 5. Cultivate forgiveness**

Source: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five_science_backed_strategies_to_build_resilience

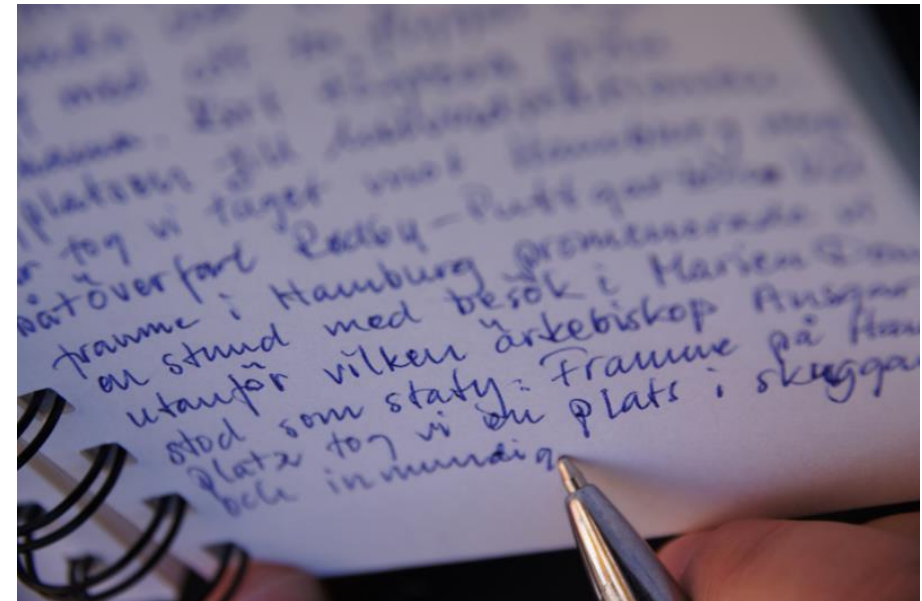
Change the narrative

- **Expressive Writing:** Writing continuously for 20 minutes about an issue, exploring your deepest thoughts and feelings around it.

A 1988 study found that participants who did Expressive Writing for four days were healthier six weeks later and happier up to three months later, when compared to people who wrote about superficial topics.

In writing, the researchers suggest, we're forced to confront ideas one by one and give them structure, which may lead to new perspectives.

We're actually crafting our own life narrative and gaining a sense of control.



Change the narrative

- **Finding Silver Linings:** Calling to mind an upsetting experience and try to list three positive things about it. For example, you might reflect on how fighting with a friend brought some important issues out into the open, and allowed you to learn something about their point of view.

In a [2014 study](#), doing this practice daily for three weeks helped participants become more engaged with life afterward, and it decreased their pessimistic beliefs over time. This wasn't true for a group whose members just wrote about their daily activities. It was particularly beneficial for staunch pessimists, who also became less depressed. But the effects wore off after two months, suggesting that looking on the bright side is something we have to practice regularly.



Change the narrative

- **Reversing the Narrative:**
Consider an example in your life where you continue to repeat a story that produces worry or anxiety. Try writing out a new version with a more positive interpretation.
- Recognize how you feel in the process.



Face your fears

The first step is **to slowly, and repeatedly, expose yourself to the thing that scares you—in small doses.**

For example, people with a fear of public speaking might try talking more in meetings, then perhaps giving a toast at a small wedding. Over time, you can incrementally increase the challenge until you're ready to nail that big speech or TV interview.

In a [2010 study](#), researchers modeled this process in the lab.

They gave participants a little electrical shock every time they saw a blue square, which soon became as scary as a tarantula to an arachnophobe.

But then, they showed the blue square to participants without shocking them. Over time, the participants' Pavlovian fear (measured by the sweat on their skin) gradually evaporated.

Meditate

- As mindfulness gurus like to remind us, our most painful thoughts are usually about the past or the future.
- We regret and ruminate on things that went wrong, or we get anxious about things that *will*. When we pause and bring our attention to the present, we often find that things are...okay.
- One meditation that might be particularly effective at calming our negative thoughts is the **Body Scan**.
- In one study, researchers found that time spent practicing the Body Scan was linked to greater well-being and less reactivity to stress.
- **Mindful Eating - Try this Raisin Meditation:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2Eo56BLMjM&ab_channel=ClareJosa
- **Mindful Breathing**

In one study, participants who did a Mindful Breathing exercise before looking at disturbing images—like spiders or car crashes—experienced less negative emotion than people who hadn't done the exercise.

- **5 minute activity: Body scan meditation:**
https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/body_scan_meditation?_ga=2.6118453.787725059.1616430185-242776559.1612810507
- **5 minute activity: Mindfulness meditation:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evJHBLldMsE&ab_channel=TheHonestGuys-Meditations-Relaxation
- **5 minute activity: Finger Trace breathing**
- **5 minute activity: Line drawing your breath**

Practice self-compassion

- **Be mindful:** Without judgment or analysis, notice what you're feeling. Say, "This is a moment of suffering" or "This hurts" or "This is stress."
- **Remember that you're not alone:** Everyone experiences these deep and painful human emotions, although the causes might be different. Say to yourself, "Suffering is a part of life" or "We all feel this way" or "We all struggle in our lives."
- **Be kind to yourself:** Put your hands on your heart and say something like "May I give myself compassion" or "May I accept myself as I am" or "May I be patient."

Cultivate forgiveness

- Begin by clearly acknowledging what happened, including how it feels and how it's affecting your life right now.
- Then, you make a commitment to forgive, which means letting go of resentment and ill will *for your own sake*;
- **forgiveness doesn't mean letting the offender off the hook or even reconciling with them.**
- Researchers have found that cultivating compassion led participants to report more **empathy, positive emotions, and feelings of control.**

9 Steps of Forgiveness activity:

https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/nine_steps_to_forgiveness?_ga=2.72570645.787725059.1616430185-242776559.1612810507

- **5 minute activity: Letting Go of Anger through Compassion**

https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/letting_go_of_anger_through_compassion?_ga=2.5912373.787725059.1616430185-242776559.1612810507

Challenge Your Mind

Strengthen your brain through challenging activities.

- Draw a map of your neighbourhood with your eyes closed.
- Learn a new language or instrument.
- Play mental games.
- Meet new people.