



Stronger

Learn to bounce back

Aetna Resources For LivingSM

What is resilience? It's the ability to cope with everyday challenges, bounce back from setbacks and keep reaching for your goals.

Resilience leads to lower stress

There is a direct relationship between higher resiliency and lower stress. People who believe they can make it through difficult times tend to be more positive and optimistic — and less stressed.

How you can become more resilient

Do you wish you were better at bouncing back from problems? Here are steps you can take to learn resilience:

- 1. Believe in yourself.** Remind yourself often of your strengths and successes. Try not to dwell on times when things have gone wrong.
- 2. Have a sense of purpose.** Make your life more meaningful by getting involved in things outside yourself.
- 3. Develop connections with others.** Friends can help each other solve problems, offer support and provide helpful feedback.
- 4. Become more flexible.** Life is full of change. Do you use up a lot of energy fighting change? If so, try to go with the flow more often. Being adaptive helps build resilience.

5. **Look on the bright side.** When you're going through a tough time, try to remember that it will pass. Look to better times ahead.
6. **Take care of yourself.** Resilience requires physical and emotional strength and wellness. So be sure to keep good eating, sleeping and exercise habits. Nurturing yourself is key.
7. **Practice problem-solving.** Problem-solving is a creative activity. Practice by listing possible solutions to everyday problems that come up. Keep a journal about how you overcame obstacles.
8. **Break it down.** Problems can seem overwhelming. Take a step back when you're feeling defeated. Re-assess the situation and solutions you've tried so far. Can you make progress by focusing on a smaller part of a larger problem? Keep your goals smaller and build on your successes.
9. **Keep working on your skills.** Becoming resilient doesn't happen overnight. It takes practice, skill-building and — well — resilience! Don't give up!
10. **Monitor your progress.** Before you start practicing, rate your ability to bounce back on a scale of 1-10. Make a note on your calendar to rate yourself again each month and see if the number goes up over time.

Some people seem to be born extra-resilient. For the rest of us, resilience can be built up with a little attention and practice.



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