



ADAPTIVE MINDSET[®]

FOR RESILIENCY

Developing a Resilient Mindset[™]

Adaptive Mindset, Adaptive Mindset for Resiliency, The Social Intelligence Company and TRACOM are registered trademarks of the TRACOM Corporation. Adaptive Mindset for Resiliency Multi-Rater Profile, Resilient Mindset Model and Resilient Mindset are trademarks of the TRACOM Corporation.



No part of this workbook may be reproduced, transmitted or stored in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without prior written permission from The TRACOM Corporation.

© Copyright 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019 The TRACOM Corporation.

(303) 470-4900 — (800) 221-2321 (U.S. only)

tracom.com

Version 1.2

Reorder # AMR2005



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction.....	1
Course Objectives	1
What is Resilience and Why Is It Important?	2
Emotions, Behavior, and the Brain	5
Our Emotional and Logical Brain	7
Elements of Resiliency.....	9
What does Resiliency Look Like?	10
The Elements of Resiliency.....	11
Resilient Mindset Multi-Rater Profile Report.....	15
Profile Description.....	16
Key Points.....	17
Resiliency Road Map	20
Strategies for Developing Resiliency.....	23
CAB vs. CAR.....	24
Patterns of Automatic Thinking are DRAINING.....	25
Developing Mindfulness.....	29
Acting “As If”	30
Developing Gratitude.....	32
Giving.....	33
Setting Ambitious Goals.....	34
The GROW Model.....	35
Building Resilience in Your Team	36
Building Resilience	37
Conclusion.....	39
Summary and Review.....	40
Additional Resources.....	41
Notes.....	57

Introduction

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Recognize your personal stress and the effect it has on your behavior.
- Identify your own strengths in terms of personal resilience.
- Enhance resilience in yourself and others using certain key strategies.

© The TRACOM Corporation

WHAT IS RESILIENCE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Resilience is a way of combating stressors in your life. We define it as people's developable capacity to adapt to change, adversity, and stressors in a way that not only allows them to bounce back, but also to grow and improve from the experience.

While stress is nothing new, in today's workplace a high level of personal stress has become the norm. When people are feeling overwhelmed, they are unable to cope with adversity and are often paralyzed by inaction. This decreases productivity and increases other personal and organizational costs like health care and expenses related to absenteeism.

Stress and adversity are not going to disappear, so a person's ability to become more resilient to life's challenges is more important than ever. Research shows that highly resilient people respond to challenges with flexibility, bounce back from challenges, and even find opportunities within workplace stress. They perform more effectively in their jobs, are healthier, are more engaged with their work, and have higher commitment to their organizations. The good news for employees and organizations is that resilience can be learned and developed.

TRACOM's Developing a Resilient Mindset™ course teaches people about the sources of their stress, their response pattern to stress, and practical strategies for altering those responses. The course is based on decades of research on resiliency as well as new and groundbreaking research in neuroscience. You will gain insights about yourself and concrete ways to buffer yourself from workplace stressors. You will be able to use these skills immediately to enhance your resilience and improve your job performance.



© The TRACOM Corporation



RESILIENCE BENEFITS EXERCISE

Based on what you've learned about resilience so far, complete the following sections:

- What are your most stressful challenges at work?

- If everyone on your team enhanced their resiliency, what would that look like on a daily basis?

- What do you hope to get out of this course?



© The TRACOM Corporation





Emotions, Behavior, and the Brain

© The TRACOM Corporation

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

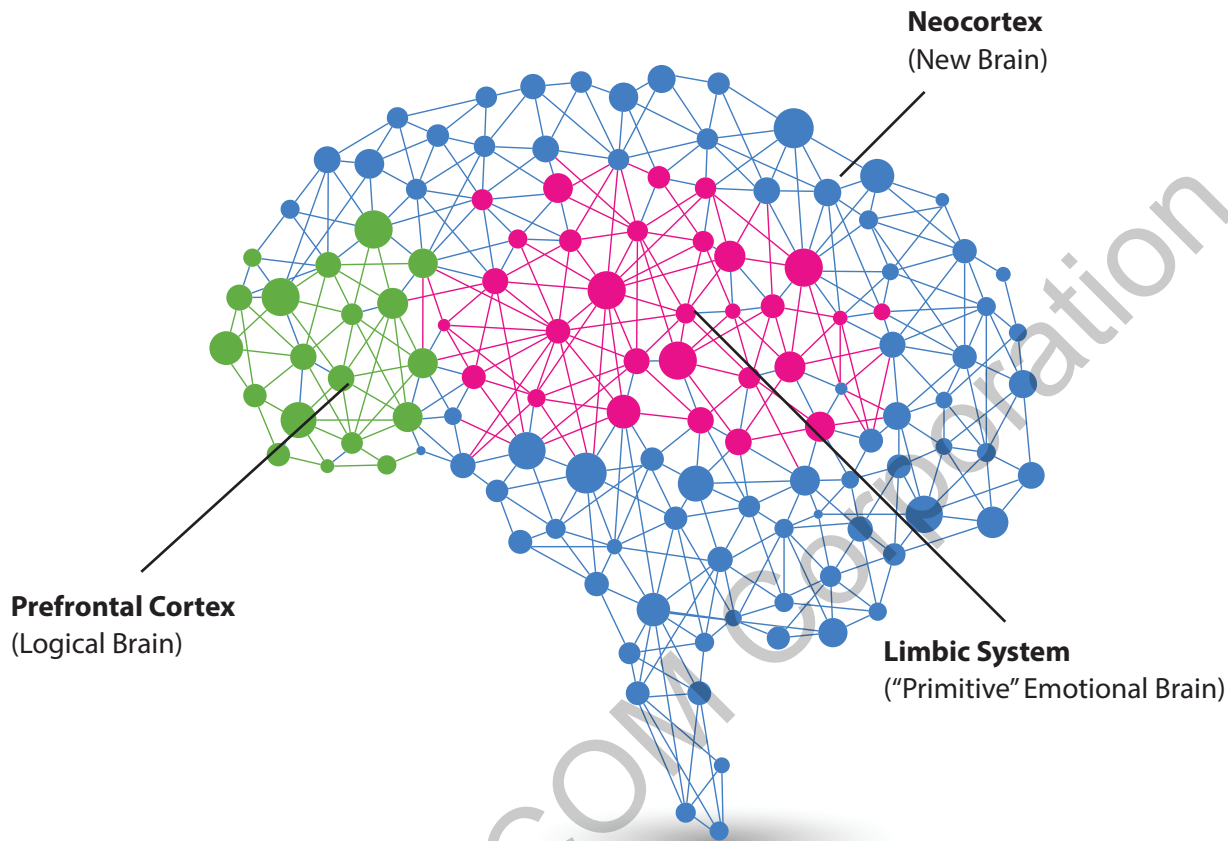
1) Which emotion(s) do you see expressed on this person's face?

2) Which emotion(s) do you see expressed on this person's face?

© The TRACOM Corporation



OUR EMOTIONAL AND LOGICAL BRAIN



■ Notes

» **Complete the stressor identification section of the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)**

© The TRACOM Corporation



Elements of Resiliency

© The TRACOM Corporation

WHAT DOES RESILIENCY LOOK LIKE?

Think of people you know who are highly resilient. They can be people you know personally or well-known public figures. List the qualities or characteristics that make them resilient.

- List of resilient people.

- Behaviors of resilient people.

- In your opinion, what song(s) represent(s) the traits of resilient people?

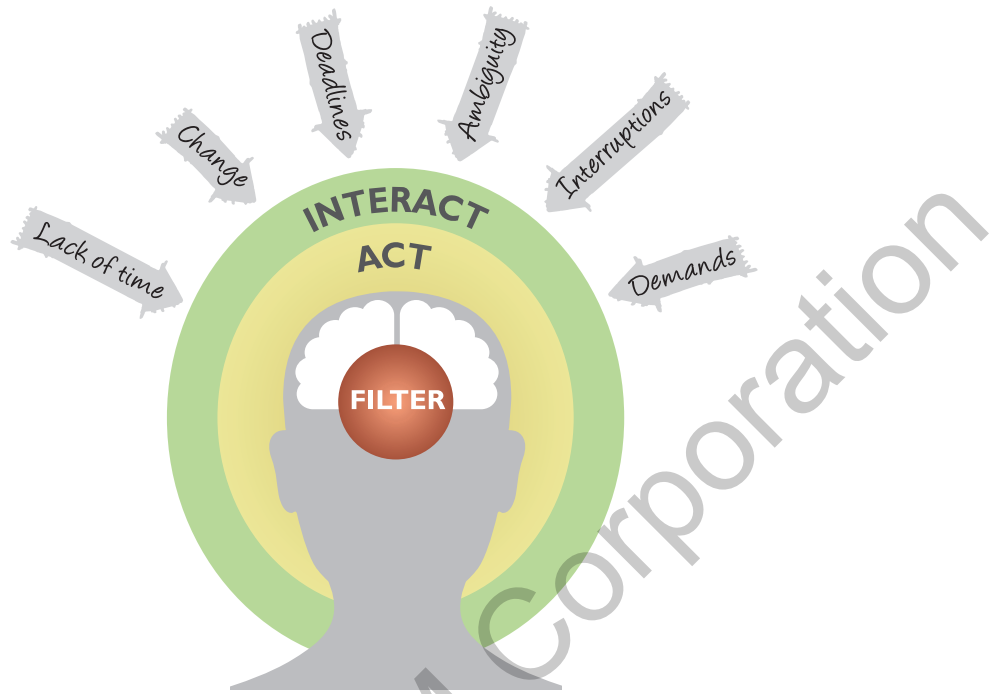
- What is your slogan for resiliency?

- Draw a picture that represents resiliency.

© The TRACOM Corporation



THE ELEMENTS OF RESILIENCY



RESILIENT MINDSET MODEL™



FILTER — How you filter information and interpret the world. This describes how you select information and integrate it into your mind and is comprised of personal responsibility, realistic optimism, and personal beliefs. Because this is happening in your mind, these elements of resiliency are not always observable to others, though others can often recognize your level of optimism.



ACT — How you handle challenges. This represents how you behave and respond to adversity and difficulty and is comprised of self-assurance, self-composure, problem solving, and goal orientation. In contrast to how you filter information, these elements of resiliency are more observable to others.



INTERACT — How you communicate and connect with others. This refers to your ability to communicate courageously with others and cultivate supportive relationships. These aspects of resiliency are observable to others; however, feelings about supportive relationships are subjective. It is just as beneficial to have one person in whom you can confide as it is to have multiple people.



FILTER — How you filter information and interpret the world.

- » **Personal Responsibility** is the belief that successes or failures at work are determined by one's own talents and motivations as opposed to external forces such as luck or good timing.

Those who are high in personal responsibility believe they control their own destiny and attribute events to their own traits. Rather than relying on external factors such as luck to achieve objectives, they look inward to their own talents and motivations and attempt to exert control over situations.

- » **Realistic Optimism** is the tendency to see the world in a positive way but remain grounded in reality.

Those with realistic optimism expect the future to be good, but they remain aware that challenges may arise and things won't always go as expected. This kind of mild optimism is a crucial aspect of resiliency because it instills people with motivation while allowing them to anticipate and plan for challenges.

- » **Personal Beliefs** is the sense that life has deep meaning and purpose. Personal beliefs may take the form of religious observance, spirituality, or devotion to a particular value system or cause.

People with a high degree of personal beliefs sense that they have a calling and feel connected to causes or values they believe are larger than themselves.



ACT — How you handle challenges.

- » **Self-Assurance** is the belief in oneself to successfully perform at work.

People with high self-assurance have confidence in their professional skills and their ability to deal with challenges. Because of this strong self-belief, they approach challenges and shifts in demands without loss of enthusiasm. A strong sense of self-assurance enhances people's motivation, commitment, and engagement with their work.

- » **Self-Composure** is the ability to manage stress and remain calm under pressure.

Those who are high in self-composure deal with challenges rationally without allowing their emotions to take over and drive decisions.

- » **Problem Solving** is the ability to plan and resolve problems effectively.

Those with a high degree of problem-solving ability generate innovative solutions to problems. They take the time to gather relevant information and plan carefully, using reason, logic, and creativity to make decisions.

- » **Goal Orientation** is the tendency to set appropriate goals, monitor progress on those goals, and adjust behavior accordingly.

Those who are high in goal orientation set ambitious goals and work hard to achieve them, monitoring themselves and regulating their behavior along the way.





INTERACT — How you communicate and connect with others.

- » **Courageous Communication** is the tendency to communicate with others in a candid and courageous way in the face of difficulty.

Courageous communicators freely and effectively share their ideas with others, ask questions others might be afraid to ask, and confront problems directly. This skill is critically important for resolving relational conflicts and differences in viewpoints, and allows people to move towards their goals efficiently.

- » **Social Support** is the perception that one is part of a supportive social network. This includes having close confidants and people with whom one can discuss problems.

People with a high level of social support feel that they have close confidants who provide comfort and assistance during difficult times.

© The TRACOM Corporation

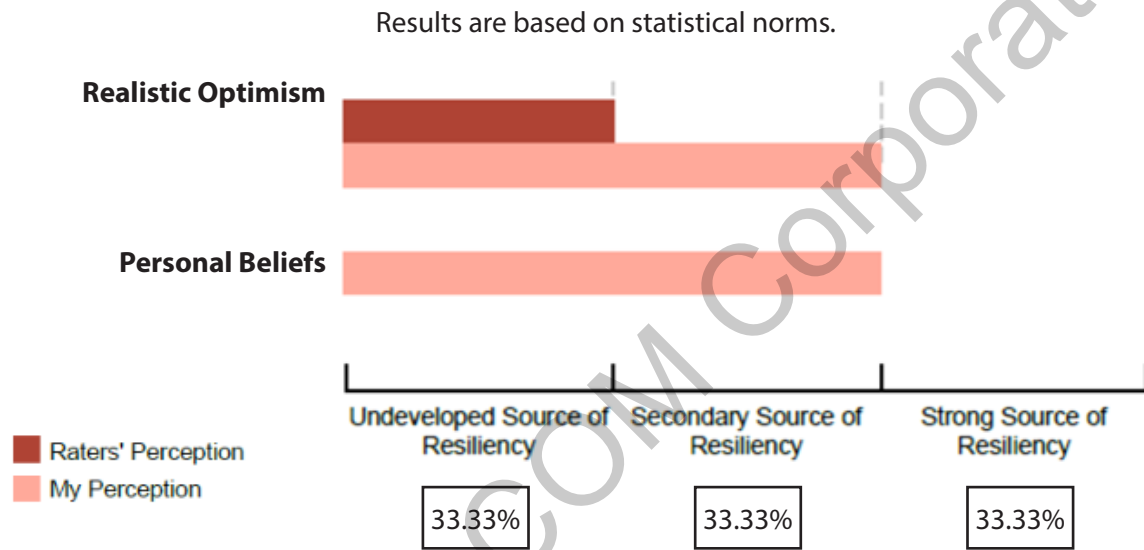


Resilient Mindset Multi-Rater Profile Report

© The TRACOM Corporation

PROFILE DESCRIPTION

The Adaptive Mindset for Resiliency Profile™ Report describes how you and others perceive your Resiliency. The Profile is normed, meaning your results were compared to the population of people in TRACOM's database and this is how your scores were derived. Your rater group assessed your standing on six of the nine resiliency factors – Realistic Optimism, Self-Assurance, Self-Composure, Problem Solving, Goal Orientation, and Courageous Communication. These six factors were chosen because they are observable and, therefore, can be accurately assessed by others. The remaining three resiliency factors – Personal Beliefs, Personal Responsibility, and Social Support – are self-assessment only.



Strong Source of Resiliency: Scores in this area are significantly higher than average. These abilities may come naturally to you, or you have worked hard to develop them over your life and career. Research shows that when you focus on utilizing and developing your strengths, rather than your weaknesses, this leads to improved engagement, performance, health, and wellness. Pay special attention to these skills because they will be critical in helping you cope with stress and adversity.

Secondary Source of Resiliency: Scores in these areas are in the middle third and are moderately strong. These dimensions represent a secondary source of resiliency for you. With a little more awareness and effort, you can develop these qualities even more and strengthen your response to adversity.

Undeveloped Source of Resiliency: These are undeveloped sources of resiliency. Perhaps you have not considered or worked toward developing these areas. We encourage you to develop these skills but to concentrate primarily on your strengths. As mentioned, when you focus on your strengths, you allow yourself to optimize your unique qualities and reach your full potential.



KEY POINTS

As you read your Profile Report, there are several key points to keep in mind:

- **Working to enhance resiliency is a choice.** Though you may have never considered some of these skills before, all of these behaviors are within your control. Once you learn about resiliency, you will be aware of your behaviors and this is the first step in working on your abilities. By applying new strategies, you might see immediate results.
- **Perceptions of your resiliency can fluctuate with different groups.** You might interact differently with customers and clients than you do with your internal team. You might even behave slightly differently with individuals on your team. Most of us are stable in how we behave, but it's important to recognize that different groups can perceive your resiliency slightly differently.
- **Your results are a snapshot in time.** Your resiliency skills can fluctuate over time. The goal is to act with high resiliency as often as possible and to be consistent in your behavior.
- **We all suffer from self-perception bias.** It is human nature to view ourselves in a positive light, and there is nothing wrong with this. If you rate yourself higher in some areas than your raters, consider their perspectives and what led to this discrepancy. Likewise, it's possible you evaluated yourself lower in some areas, in which case you're showing some healthy humility.

© The TRACOM Corporation

DISCUSSION/BREAK-OUT

Take three minutes to answer these questions on your own, then break into pairs to share and discuss what you learned about your resilience from the Profile Report. You will each have five minutes and should take turns answering these questions:

- What was the most insightful thing you learned that will help you tackle the stressors you listed earlier?

- What are your strengths that you can rely on to be resilient? How will you use these strengths in the face of the stressors you listed earlier?



- What are dimensions of resilience that you have not considered before that may enhance your ability to deal with challenges?

» Record your strengths on the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)

© The TRACOM Corporation

Resiliency Road Map

Stressor	Emotion and Intensity (1-10)	Behavior	Ideal Vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm spread too thin. I have too many different tasks to complete and too little time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustration (8) and Anxiety (8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I isolate myself. I don't spend as much time with co-workers, friends, and family as I'd like to spend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People wouldn't be able to notice I was stressed. I would be able to effectively meet my demands and deadlines without sacrificing my relationships with friends and family.



Mindfulness

What will you do daily to be mindful?



Gratitude

What will you do to express gratitude daily?
Weekly?



Act "As If"

Situations where a power pose will help you:

- Attending a meeting
- Presenting to a group
- Speaking on the phone
- Visiting a client





Strengths	Automatic Thoughts	Active Thinking & Realistic Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal orientation, personal responsibility, and personal beliefs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If I don't meet these demands, I will be fired. I was able to deal with these kinds of stressors in the past, but I can't do it again. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If a few deadlines have to be pushed back or if I have to delegate responsibilities, my boss will understand. I was able to deal with these kinds of stressors in the past, and I can do it again.



List other situations where a power pose will help you:



Giving

List ways you can practice giving in your workplace.



Goal Setting

What process goals will you meet each day? Week?

© The TRACOM Corporation





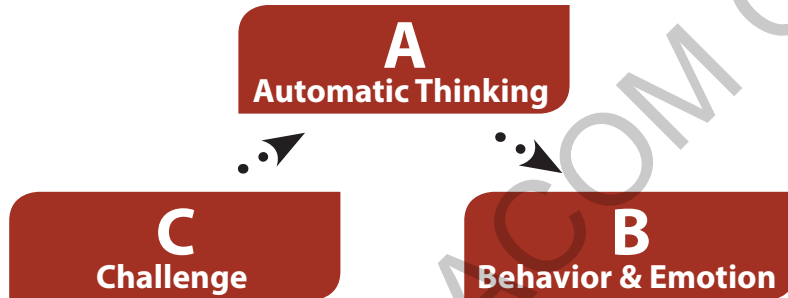
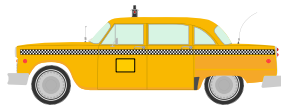
Strategies for Developing Resiliency

© The TRACOM Corporation

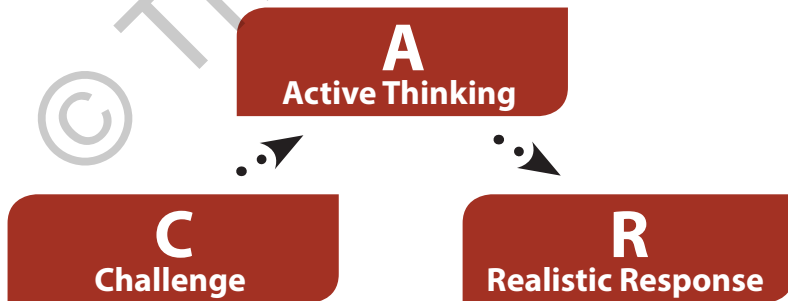
CAB VS. CAR



NOTES



NOTES



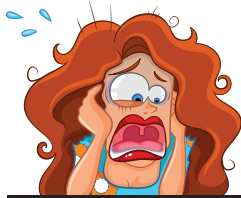
NOTES



PATTERNS OF AUTOMATIC THINKING ARE DRAINING

1. **Disastrous Diane:** Giving greater weight to the worst possible outcome, imagining it is worse than it is, and magnifying the likelihood it will occur.

- » "If I lose my job, I will die."
- » "If I don't do well on this presentation, I will become the laughing stock of my office."



DISASTROUS DIANE

2. **Rosey Ray:** Being unrealistically positive. Minimizing the negative and magnifying the positive.

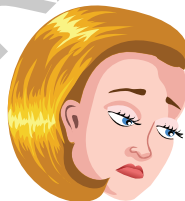
- » "I'm not going to worry about what's going wrong on this project. Let's just keep moving forward; it will all work out."
- » "My team keeps making mistakes, but they'll learn eventually."



ROSEY RAY

3. **Assuming Amber:** Assuming the worst without evidence.

- » "I know if I take the lead on this project, it will just fail."
- » "I'm not going to ask for a promotion because I know my boss won't give it to me."



ASSUMING AMBER

4. **Internalizing Ike:** Seeing yourself as responsible or more involved in negative events than you really are.

- » "My boss seems irritable today; it's all my fault."
- » "My employee is struggling at work; I'm a terrible manager."



INTERNALIZING IKE

5. **Naming Ned:** Giving yourself a negative label or title.

- » "I'm incompetent at my job."
- » "I'm king of the losers."



NAMING NED

6. **Indicting Ivan:** Putting all of the responsibility on others for negative events.

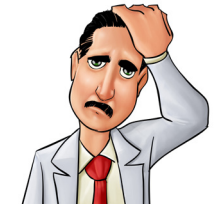
- » "My team did poorly on the presentation. It's all their fault."
- » "I didn't meet the deadline because our vendor kept messing up."



INDICTING IVAN

7. **Negative Nigel:** Magnifying the negative and minimizing the positive.

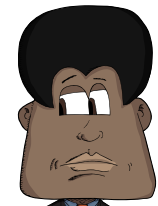
- » "How can I enjoy this family dinner when I was criticized at work?"
- » "We met our goals this year, but we'll never meet next year's projections."



NEGATIVE NIGEL

8. **Generalizing Gerald:** Thinking that isolated negative events apply to your entire life. Making sweeping statements. Coming to a general conclusion based on a single incident.

- » "I always make mistakes."
- » "No one likes me."



GENERALIZING GERALD

AUTOMATIC THINKING IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE

For this exercise, take a look at the statements below and draw a line to the **DRAINING** character who most likely said each. Refer to the definitions of automatic thinking patterns on the previous page, if necessary.

1. *"It's my supervisor's fault that I performed poorly this quarter."*
2. *"I know that if I deliver this presentation, I will just make a fool of myself."*
3. *"My boss just told me I led the meeting well, but he gives compliments to everyone."*
4. *"It's all my fault that my company's earnings went down this year."*
5. *"Our department budget has been cut in half, but I don't think we'll have any problems meeting our goals for Q2."*
6. *"I'm a loser."*
7. *"If I mess up on this, I will be the office fool!"*
8. *"Everything is always so hard for me."*



D



R



A



I



N



I



N



G



RECOGNIZING YOUR DRAINING PATTERN

Picture yourself in each of the following scenarios and write down your automatic thoughts. The intention of this exercise is to help you recognize your typical pattern of automatic thoughts.

1. At 4 pm, your boss places a large stack of paperwork on your desk due at 9 am tomorrow morning. You are already exhausted and this will require at least four more hours of work.

Automatic Thought(s): _____

DRAINING Label(s): _____

2. You're about to complete an assignment when, all of a sudden, your computer crashes and you lose a week's worth of work.

Automatic Thought(s): _____

DRAINING Label(s): _____

3. Your boss is being very short with you today.

Automatic Thought(s): _____

DRAINING Label(s): _____

4. Your organization is going through a major restructuring. Top management hires consultants to assess the contribution of each employee.

Automatic Thought(s): _____

DRAINING Label(s): _____

5. A coworker criticizes your idea in a meeting.

Automatic Thought(s): _____

DRAINING Label(s): _____

6. You are on your way to work and get stuck in heavy traffic. Traffic reports indicate it will take you an extra hour to get to the office.

Automatic Thought(s): _____

DRAINING Label(s): _____

Did You Know?

- » Research shows that initiatives such as this CAB/CAR technique can be equally or even more effective than medication in treating a host of emotional issues such as anxiety and depression.^{1;2}

CHALLENGING YOUR AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

1. What are your most common categories of automatic thoughts?

2. Describe a recent example of when you had an automatic thought that was DRAINING and what would have been a more active/realistic thought.

3. What mantra or image can you use to challenge your automatic thoughts?

» Record your Automatic Thoughts and Active Thinking & Realistic Response on the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)





DEVELOPING MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness: focusing attention and awareness on the present moment.

How can you develop more mindfulness while at work? We've listed some ideas below. What others do you have? Put an asterisk next to the practices that you can do on a daily basis when you return to work.

- » **Monitor your CPA (continuous partial attention)** — Most of the time, we pay only partial attention to things and people. Recognize this, become aware of it, and counteract it by focusing fully on the person or task at hand.
- » **Breathe mindfully** — Being fully engaged in the moment and thinking clearly requires oxygen.
- » **Cancel unnecessary meetings** — They are a distraction from your focus and productivity.
- » **Exercise** — Even 15-minute walks lead to greater energy.
- » **Disconnect from technology** — Turn off the email notification, put the phone away. Schedule specific times for checking email, texts and messages instead of responding to them as they occur. You are the master, not your phone.
- » **Formalize communication practices at work** — Have technology-free times or work zones. During meetings, have a rule that no phones are allowed. This helps maintain focus and engagement.
- » **Schedule daily interactions** — If you work alone or in partial isolation, schedule a time every day when you will visit someone. Be intentional about this.
- » **Learn and study new things** — Learn for its own sake. Understanding new things brings about changes in thinking and behavior.
- » **Substitute a new routine every now and then** — This can be as simple as driving a different route home. Change something, even if it's very minor. This engages the mind.

» **Record your intentions for Mindfulness on the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)**

Did You Know?

- » People who meditate demonstrate dominance in the brain's left hemisphere, a pattern of activity associated with feeling safe and comfortable in the world. Meditation has also been shown to enhance empathy and sharpen the mind, improving attention, memory, and abstract thought.^{3,4;5;6}
- » One way to be mindful is to focus on your breathing. Interestingly, research shows that different emotions are associated with very distinct respiratory patterns. For example, when feeling anxious, we exhibit low, shallow breathing and when happy, we exhibit slow, deep breathing. Our emotions affect our breathing patterns, but our breathing patterns also affect our emotions. We can change how we feel by breathing in particular patterns that correspond to the emotion we want to feel.⁷



ACTING “AS IF”

Amy Cuddy, a social psychologist at Harvard University, has shown that, by adopting “power poses,” people can decrease their stress and increase their sense of dominance. She reported, “Our bodies change our minds, and our minds can change our behavior, and our behavior can change our outcomes.”

High-Power Poses



Here's a Tip

Try using these poses before stressful situations such as presentations or job interviews. A recent experimental study showed that people who adopted high power poses for just two minutes before a stressful job interview performed better and were much more likely to be hired compared to those who adopted contractive, low power poses.⁸



Low-Power Poses

"I don't want to bother anyone in the department with this dumb question"

"It's just little old me. How am I going to handle this project?"

"I don't know if I can run this meeting. It's too much pressure"



» Record your Act "As If" intentions on the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)



DEVELOPING GRATITUDE

Studies have shown that gratitude is associated with:

- » Increased optimism and happiness
- » Fewer negative physical symptoms
- » Increased motivation to exercise
- » Reduced likelihood of retaliating against criticism
- » Lower aggression
- » Greater empathy

Diamonds in the Rough

Stressor	Things you are grateful for around this stressor

» Record your Gratitude intentions on the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)

Did You Know?

- » On average, people experience three times as many positive events, information, and interactions as negative ones. However, the negative experiences capture our attention.⁹





GIVING

"The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up."

— Mark Twain

- » "Giver burnout" is a myth.
- » Giving is energizing.
- » Givers experience less stress.
- » The key to not feeling giver burnout is by giving in ways that use your unique strengths and allow you to see the results of your efforts.

What strengths, knowledge or abilities can you share?

» **Record your Giving intentions on the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)**

Here's a Tip

One practice you might consider implementing in your company is called the "Reciprocity Ring," introduced by Adam Grant in his book, *"Give and Take."* For this practice, a group of employees gets together and each employee takes turns making a request for help. This request can be personal or professional, such as a hotel suggestion or help with a particular work project. The rest of the employees use their resources, connections, etc. to try to help the employee. This exercise has produced very powerful results.¹⁰



SETTING AMBITIOUS GOALS

SPECIFIC — Goals should specify exactly what needs to be done and by when. Use action verbs such as “develop,” “create,” and “resolve.” So instead of telling yourself to “try hard” or “do your best,” tell yourself to “make two new business connections in the next week.”

MEASURABLE — Goals should provide milestones to track progress toward achievement. For example, if your goal is to write 15 pages of a report by the end of the week, you can easily monitor progress on that goal.

ATTAINABLE — Goals should not be too difficult but not too easy. They should be arduous but achievable.

RELEVANT — The goals should be aligned with company objectives and with your personal values.

TIME-BOUND — Goals should have a reasonable timeline for achievement. Too little time may not allow you to complete all elements of the goal and too much time may encourage procrastination and undermine performance.

» What are the differences between *Outcome* goals and *Process* goals?

Did You Know?

Why are goals such powerful motivators?

The brain can't distinguish between what we want and what we have; therefore, when we set a goal, we feel as though we've already accomplished it. If we fail to meet the desired outcome, we feel that we've lost a valued possession, even a part of ourselves. That is why goals are such important drivers of behavior.

To more effectively meet our goals, we have to learn to be kind to ourselves.

In one study, psychologists followed hundreds of people over time as they were trying to achieve a wide variety of goals. They found that those who were harder on themselves when they experienced setbacks made less progress and were significantly less likely to achieve their goal by the end of the study compared to those who were more forgiving with themselves. This is because when you are critical with yourself, you are depleted of energy and you need to be soothed, which leads you to resort to old habits.¹¹



THE GROW MODEL¹²

Use the GROW Model below to engage in the goal-planning process.

GROW Model	Questions to Consider	Response
G – What is your Goal ? (Outcome goal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is your goal SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound)? • How does this goal help you reach your career objectives? • Are there other, more appropriate goals to pursue? 	
R – What is the current Reality ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you, in some ways, already on your way to achieving your goal or are you starting from scratch? 	
O – What are the Obstacles and Options for achieving your goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What options do you have for achieving your goal? • What are the pros and cons of each approach? • Can you combine approaches? • What kinds of obstacles exist? • What if a certain obstacle vanished — would your current approach still be the best? • What are the problems with this approach? • Have you tackled similar problems in the past? What worked/what didn't? 	
W – What is the Way forward? (Process goal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your next action steps in the short term and in the long term? 	

» Record your Process Goals on the Resiliency Road Map (Pages 20-21)

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN YOUR TEAM

What behaviors demonstrate each of these characteristics?

1. Being a role model

2. Communicating a higher purpose

3. Stimulating your people (intellectually, creatively)

4. Knowing your people

5. Rewarding your people



BUILDING RESILIENCE

1. **Using the CAB/CAR Technique:** Conscious control over the emotional brain is possible, not by suppressing emotions, but by changing the interpretation that creates the emotion in the first place.
2. **Developing Mindfulness:** “Mindfulness isn’t difficult. What’s difficult is to remember to be mindful.” - John Teasdale
3. **Acting “As If”:** Attitude follows behavior. Using specific behaviors and non-verbal techniques can change the way you feel and improve your resilience.
4. **Developing Gratitude:** Savoring moments releases dopamine, extending your positive mood. It also motivates you to seek out positive experiences.
5. **Giving:** “Giver burnout” is a myth. In fact, giving (your time, expertise, etc.) is energizing, as long as it is directed towards something you value. Asking for help also enhances resilience.
6. **Setting Ambitious Goals:** Goals are best designed when they focus not only on the outcome you’d like to achieve (e.g., complete project by end of Q2), but also on the process by which you will achieve that outcome (e.g., weekly team status meetings, project milestones).

	CAB/CAR	Mindfulness	Act “As If”	Gratitude	Giving	Goal Setting
Personal Responsibility	✓				✓	✓
Realistic Optimism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Personal Beliefs		✓		✓	✓	
Self-Assurance	✓		✓			✓
Self-Composure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Problem Solving	✓	✓				✓
Goal Orientation	✓	✓				✓
Courageous Communication	✓		✓			
Social Support	✓			✓	✓	

© The TRACOM Corporation



Conclusion

© The TRACOM Corporation

SUMMARY AND REVIEW

Write a headline or two that captures what you learned from this course and how it will be applied in your life. As an example, you might write, "Mindfulness moves woman out of future and into the present," or "Man uses logical brain to combat emotional brain."

»

»

»

© The TRACOM Corporation





Additional Resources

© The TRACOM Corporation

Additional Resources

Internet Resources and Articles

- » *Is Giving the Secret to Getting Ahead?* by Susan Dominus
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/31/magazine/is-giving-the-secret-to-getting-ahead.html?ref=psychologyandpsychologists&r=0>
- » Free positive psychology products from The Happiness Institute
<http://thehappinessinstitute.com/freeproducts/>
- » Books and resources available from the Resilience Institute
http://www.resiliencei.com/Books-and-Products_60.aspx
- » *12 Guidelines for Deciding When to Persist, When to Quit* by Rosabeth Moss Kanter
<http://blogs.hbr.org/kanter/2012/10/12-guidelines-for-deciding-whe.html>
- » *The Luck Factor* by Richard Wiseman
http://richardwiseman.files.wordpress.com/2011/09/the_luck_factor.pdf
- » *Mastering the Art of Conveying Confidence* by Sue Shellenbarger
blogs.wsj.com/atwork/2013/08/22/mastering-the-art-of-conveying-confidence/
- » *Stanford Studies Monks' Meditation, Compassion* by Meredith May
<http://www.sfgate.com/health/article/Stanford-studies-monks-meditation-compassion-3689748.php>
- » *Meditation May Increase Gray Matter*, Science Daily
<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/05/090512134655.htm>
- » *Neuroplasticity*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neuroplasticity>

Books

- » *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff at Work* by Richard Carlson
- » *Learned Optimism* by Martin Seligman
- » *Flourish* by Martin Seligman
- » *Authentic Happiness* by Martin Seligman
- » *Positivity* by Barbara Frederickson
- » *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* by M. Csikszentmihalyi
- » *The Resilience Factor* by Karen Reivich and Andrew Shatte
- » *Happiness: Unlocking the Mysteries of Psychological Wealth* by Diener and Biswas-Diene
- » *What Got You Here Won't Get You There: How Successful People Become Even More Successful* by Marshall Goldsmith and Mark Reiter
- » *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High* by Kerry Patterson
- » *Stumbling on Happiness* by Dan Gilbert
- » *The How of Happiness* by Sonja Lyubomirsky
- » *Coaching Resilience Practical Positive Psychology* by Green and Humphrey
- » *Give and Take* by Adam Grant



Apps

- » *Anxiety Mint* (Jason Pegg): A Cognitive Bias Modification (CBM) app designed to reduce anxiety.
- » *Let Panic Go* (James Henry): Designed to interrupt the cycle of thoughts that fuel a panic attack.
- » *Relax - Silva* (Mindvalley, LLC): Described as the lazy person's way to relaxation.
- » *CBT Referee* (Andrew Arrow): Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) app.
- » *GoalsOnTrack* (Vancouver IT Services): Goal setting/personal development app.
- » *Don't Break the Chain!* (Clement Beffa): App helps you track your daily progress towards important goals.
- » *Super Better*, <https://www.superbetter.com/>: A game designed to increase your personal resilience in the face of big challenges.

Videos

- » One minute meditation
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6eFFCi12v8>
- » Dr. Kelly McGonigal discusses how to make stress your friend
http://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend.html
- » Dr. Amy Cuddy discusses "Power Poses"
http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are.html
- » Dr. Dan Gilbert discusses the Surprising Science of Happiness
http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy.html

References

- » ¹DeRubeis, R. J., Siegle, G. J., & Hollon, S. D. (2008). Cognitive therapy versus medication for depression: Treatment outcomes and neural mechanisms. *Nature Reviews. Neuroscience*, 9, 788-796.
- » ²Hollon, S. D., Stewart, M. O., & Strunk, D. (2006). Enduring effects for cognitive behavior therapy in the treatment of depression and anxiety. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 57, 285-315.
- » ³Davidson, R. J., Kabat-Zinn, J., et al. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 65, 564-570.
- » ⁴Krimpinger, J. A., & Baime, M. J. (2007). Mindfulness training modifies subsystems of attention. *Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Neuroscience*, 7, 109-119.
- » ⁵Lutz, A., Brefczynski-Lewis, J., Johnstone, T., & Davidson, R.J. (2008). Regulation of the neural circuitry of emotion by compassion meditation: Effects of meditative expertise.
- » ⁶Nielsen, L., & Kaszniak, A.W. (2006). Awareness of subtle emotional feelings: A comparison of long-term meditators and non-meditators. *Emotion*, 6, 392-405.
- » ⁷Philippot, P., Chappelle, G., & Blairy, S. (2002). Respiratory feedback in the generation of emotion. *Cognition And Emotion*, 16(5), 605-627.
- » ⁸Cuddy, A. J. C., Wilmuth, C. A., & Carney, D. R. (2012). The benefit of power posing before high-stakes social evaluation. Harvard Business School Working Paper.

References (Continued)

- » ⁹Gable, S. L., & Haidt, J. (2005). What (and why) is positive psychology? *Review of General Psychology*, 9, 103-110.
- » ¹⁰Grant, A. (2013). *Give and take*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.
- » ¹¹Powers, T. A., Koestner, R., Zuroff, D. C., Milyavskaya, M., & Gorin, A. A. (2011). The effects of self-criticism and self-oriented perfectionism on goal pursuit. *Personality And Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37(7), 964-975.
- » ¹²Whitemore, J. (2002). *Coaching for Performance*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing. Landberg, M. (2003). *The Tao of Coaching*. London: Profile Books.

© The TRACOM Corporation



Research References

Stress in America

It is clear that workers around the world are experiencing tremendous stress. Stress statistics presented in this section were drawn from the following sources:

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Stress in America 2009*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2009/stress-exec-summary.pdf>.

According to this report:

- 69% of employees report that work is a significant source of stress.
- 51% of employees say they are less productive at work due to stress.

American Psychological Association. (2007). *Stress in America 2007*. Retrieved from www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/2007-stress.doc.

According to this report, 52% of employees report that stress impacts their career decisions. That is, they have considered or made a decision to look for a new job, decline a promotion, or leave a job based on workplace stress.

Statistic Brain. (2014). *Stress Statistics*. Retrieved from <http://www.statisticbrain.com/stress-statistics/>.

This report cites job pressure as the #1 source of stress for Americans.

American Psychological Association. (2007). *How Does Stress Affect Us?* Retrieved from <http://psychcentral.com/lib/how-does-stress-affect-us/0001130>.

Here, we see that stress is linked to the six leading causes of death. These are heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide.

For more international stress statistics, consider the following:

Milczarek, M., Schneider, E., & Gonzalez, E. R. (2009). *European Risk Observatory Report*. Retrieved from https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/TE-81-08-478-EN-C_OSH_in_figures_stress_at_work.

According to the Fourth European Survey of Working Conditions in 2005, stress was experienced on average by 22% of working Europeans.

Towers Watson. (2014). *Workforce stress: Establishing a workplace culture to manage top risk effectively*. Retrieved from <http://www.slideshare.net/TowersWatson/infographic-workforcestressstheem-employeremployeeconnecttowerswatson>.

Asian employers rank stress as the leading workforce risk across most countries in the region.

The top three causes of stress in Asia Pacific are inadequate staffing, low pay, and lack of work-life balance.

Only 15% of Asian employers are making managing stress a priority in their health strategy.

The Association of the Global Organization for Stress. *Stress facts*. Retrieved from <http://www.gostress.com/stress-facts/#sthash.CIT1hn40.dpuf>

Due to stress, Australian employees are absent for an average of 3.2 working days each year. This absenteeism costs the Australian economy approximately \$14.2 billion.

Approximately 442,000 individuals in Britain who worked in 2007 and/or 2008 reported that they were experiencing so much work-related stress that it was making them ill.

Work-related illness is associated with approximately 13.7 million lost working days. These lost working days costs £28.3 billion per year.

Resiliency is related to improved job performance, organizational commitment, work-life integration, and change acceptance.

Luthans, F., Avolio, B., Avey, J. B., & Norman, S. M. (2007). *Psychological capital: Measurement and relationship with performance and job satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology*, 60, 541–572.*

In this study, the authors provided empirical support for PsyCap as a higher-order positive psychological construct consisting of optimism, hope, resiliency, and self-efficacy. Then, they investigated how each of the four psychological facets as well as the broader PsyCap construct predicted work performance and satisfaction. Results suggested that the composite PsyCap construct was significantly related to these two outcomes. Additionally, and importantly, resiliency was significantly related to performance (correlation = .22). A correlation coefficient determines the extent to which two variables are related to each other. Values range from 0.0 (no relationship) to 1.0 (perfect relationship). A correlation of .22 is substantial. As a point of comparison, consider that the correlation between conscientiousness and job performance is 0.22.ⁱ

Youssef, C. M., & Luthans, F. (2007). *Positive organizational behavior in the workplace: The impact of hope, optimism, and resilience. *Journal of Management*, 33, 774–800.*

Using a large sample of employees from a wide range of positions and organizations in the U.S., the authors investigated the impact that hope, optimism, and resilience have on desired work-related outcomes. Results indicated that resilience was related to self-reported performance, job satisfaction, work happiness, and organizational commitment.



Shin, J., Taylor, M.S., & Seo, M. (2012). Resources for change: The relationships of organizational inducements and psychological resilience to employees' attitudes and behaviors toward organizational change. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(3), 727-748.

The authors conducted a series of surveys using a sample of approximately 300 employees and managers and found that those with greater resilience were more likely to support organizational change. Moreover, employees with strong resiliency were committed to change because they experienced more positive emotions during the change.

Siu, O., Hui, C., Phillips, D. R., Lin, L., Wong, T., & Shi, K. (2009). A study of resiliency among Chinese health care workers: Capacity to cope with workplace stress. *Journal Of Research In Personality*, 43(5), 770-776. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2009.06.008.

The authors of this study were interested in the benefits of resiliency. Using a sample of Chinese healthcare workers, they conducted interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys to assess the role of resiliency in individuals' ability to cope with workplace stress. Results indicated that resiliency was positively related to salivary IgA levels (an immune marker), as well as job satisfaction, quality of life, and work-life balance. Resiliency was also negatively related to physical/psychological symptoms and injuries at work.

Humans are hard-wired to focus on negativity more than positivity.

Baumeister, R.F., Bratslawsky, E., Finkenauer C., Volis, K.D. (2001). Bad is stronger than good. *Review of General Psychology*, 5, 323–370.

In this article, the authors provide an extensive review of research related to the negativity bias. The negativity bias is the notion that humans focus on and are more strongly impacted by negative events compared to positive events. The authors argue that this fundamental human bias was adaptive throughout evolutionary history. In prehistoric times, for example, when saber tooth tiger attacks and natural disasters loomed constantly, those individuals who survived were the ones who were attuned to threats and dangers. Throughout the article, the authors accumulate evidence that bad is stronger than good. For example, they reference a longitudinal study in which bad events had stronger effects on measures of adjustment (self-esteem, anxiety, perceived sense of control, and so on) than good events. Additionally, they note that a single traumatic experience can have significant long-term effects, but there is little evidence for a single positive experience that have equally powerful effects. They even cite evidence that brain responses are stronger toward negative stimuli than positive stimuli. The evidence they provide for the negativity bias is powerful and compelling.

Electrical activity in the cerebral cortex is stronger toward the negative stimuli compared to positive or neutral stimuli.

Ito, T. A., Larsen, J. T., Smith, K., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1998). Negative information weighs more heavily on the brain: The negativity bias in evaluative categorizations. *Journal of Personal and Social Psychology, 75*, 887-900.

The authors investigated the negativity bias in the brain. They showed participants images of positive, negative or neutral stimuli and recorded electrical activity in the brain. They found that negative stimuli were associated with stronger neural responses than equally-probable positive stimuli. This study supports the notion that negative information weighs more heavily on the brain.

The negativity bias is evident in our language.

Averill, J. R. (1980). On the paucity of positive emotions. In K. R. Blankstein, P. Pliner, & J. Polivy (Eds.), *Advances in the study of communication and affect, Vol. 6* (pp. 7–45). New York: Plenum.

To the extent that negative emotions are prevalent and powerful, they should show up in our language. Averill (1980) conducted an exhaustive review of the dictionary and compiled 558 emotion words. He found that 62% of the emotion words were negative and 38% were positive. This suggests that the negativity bias is evident even in our language.

Negative events have a more long-lasting impact on our moods compared to positive events.

Sheldon, K. M, Ryan, R., & Reis, H. T. (1996). What makes for a good day? Competence and autonomy in the day and in the person. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 22*, 1270-1279.

In this study, the authors investigated whether bad events have longer-lasting effects than good events. Their data suggested that having a good day was not associated with a noticeable change in a person's well-being the following day. However, having a bad day was associated with lower well-being the following day. In this way, bad is stronger than good.



We have a primitive “emotional brain” (the limbic system) and a more recently-developed “logical brain” (prefrontal cortex). The prefrontal cortex is directly connected with the limbic system. This means we can train our prefrontal cortex to exert control over the amygdala during stressful times, in order to remain calm and rational.

Rock, D. (2009). *Your brain at work*. HarperCollins Publishers: New York, NY.

Dr. David Rock was named one of the 30 most influential organizational psychologists alive today. In this book, he brings together neuroscience and psychology to help individuals enhance their effectiveness at work. He references many regions of the brain but two essential regions are the limbic system (what we call the “emotional brain”) and the prefrontal cortex (the “thinking brain”). He notes that the limbic system gives rise to emotions in response to thoughts, objects, people, and events. The limbic system operates unconsciously, and when overly aroused, siphons resources from the prefrontal cortex and inhibits conscious functions such as understanding, decision-making, and memorizing. He discusses several techniques for switching brain states and quieting the emotional mind.

The top five workplace amygdala triggers

Goleman, D. (2011). *The brain and emotional intelligence: New insights*. More than Sound, LLC: Northampton, MA.

In this book, Daniel Goleman lists the top five amygdala triggers at work. These are:

1. Condescension and lack of respect.
2. Being treated unfairly.
3. Being unappreciated.
4. Feeling that you’re not being listened to or heard.
5. Being held to unrealistic deadlines.

Goleman says that the amygdala is the trigger point for emotions and the “fight or flight” stress response, which can dominate our mental landscape. However, certain strategies, including mindfulness and self-talk, can be employed to tamp down emotions and generate a more appropriate response.



Lottery winners and accident victims tend to return to their baseline level of happiness.

Brickman, P., Coates, D., & Janoff-Bulman, R. (1978). Lottery winners and accident victims: Is happiness relative? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 36, 917-927.

The authors investigated the notion that people tend to adapt to favorable or unfavorable events and return to their baseline level of happiness. They interviewed lottery winners and individuals who had suffered an accident in the past year that left them paralyzed, asking them to rate their past, present, and future happiness and the pleasure they derive from mundane activities like reading a magazine. Compared to lottery winners, accident victims rated their present life happiness as 2.96, lower than that of lottery winners (4.00), but higher than expected. Additionally, their expected future happiness and pleasure in everyday activities were rated slightly higher than that of the lottery winners (4.32 versus 4.20 for future happiness and 3.48 versus 3.33 for everyday pleasure). This study is often used to demonstrate that lottery winners and paraplegics are equally happy with life.

Gilbert, D. (2004, Feb). *The surprising science of happiness*. Video Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy?language=en.

Dr. Daniel Gilbert is a social psychologist at Harvard University known for his research on human happiness. In this talk, Dr. Gilbert says that very often, we don't understand what makes us happy. He refers to the impact bias - the idea that we overestimate the impact that negative and positive events will have on our future happiness. In minute 2:05, he references a study that focuses on lottery winners and paraplegics. One year after winning the lottery and one year after losing the use of their limbs, lottery winners and paraplegics are equally happy with their lives. He says we have a robust psychological immune system that allows us to maintain our level of happiness and bounce back even if things don't go as we'd hoped.

Our patterns of automatic thoughts

Reivich, K., & Shatte, A. (2002). *The resilience factor: 7 keys to finding your inner strength and overcoming life's hurdles*. New York: Random House.

The patterns of automatic thoughts we discuss in our program were identified by Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis in the 60s and stem from their work in a counseling setting with depressed and anxious patients. Today, these patterns of automatic thoughts are very influential and widely used by psychologists. In their book, "The Resilience Factor: 7 Keys to Finding your Inner Strength and Overcoming Life's Obstacles," Reivich and Shatte reference these automatic thought patterns. For example, they cite 1) jumping to conclusions (represented in our training with the "Assuming Amber" character), 2) overblowing the negatives (represented in our training with the "Negative Nigel" character), and 3) personalizing (represented in our training with the "Internalizing Ike" character). They insist that these patterns of thought apply not only to depression, but can also be used to bolster resilience. The DRAINING acronym was TRACOM's way of making these thought patterns memorable.



The benefits of mindfulness

Davidson, R. *Can mindfulness increase our resilience to stress?* Video retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALjF1yb-VLw>.

Dr. Richard Davidson is a leading expert in the area of neuroscience, mindfulness, and resilience. In this video, Dr. Davidson discusses how mindfulness helps individuals recover from stress. If you remember based on the course, the amygdala is responsible for producing the stress response and negative emotions. Dr. Davidson has found that, when confronted with a stressor, those who meditate experience the same amygdala response as normal controls, but their amygdala response returns to baseline much more quickly. As a consequence, they “bounce back” and move forward more effectively.

Davidson, R. J., Kabat-Zinn, J., Schumacher, J., Rosenkranz, M., Muller, D., Santorelli, S. F., Urbanowski, F., Harrington, A., Bonus, Katherine, & Sheridan, J. F. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 65, 564-570.

In this study, the authors explored the changes in brain and immune function associated with meditation. They randomly assigned participants to either an 8-week mindfulness meditation course or a wait-list control group. With both groups, they assessed electrical brain activity at the same points in time - before, immediately after, and 4-months after the mindfulness meditation intervention. At the end of the eight-week period, all participants were given an influenza vaccine. Results indicated that compared to those in the control condition, those in the meditation condition showed significant increases in left anterior activation, a pattern of brain activity associated with positive emotions. They also had more antibody titers in response to the influenza vaccine, indicating improved immune function. These findings suggest that meditation confers strong benefits to physical and mental health and that these benefits emerge rather quickly.



The TRACOM Corporation

The benefits of power posing

Carney, D. R., Cuddy, A. J. C., & Yap, A. J. (2010). Power posing: Brief nonverbal displays affect neuroendocrine levels and risk tolerance. *Psychological Science*, 1–6.

We know that our attitudes influence behaviors, but our behaviors can also influence our attitudes. Research shows that by adopting certain “power poses,” we can configure our brains to be more assertive, confident, and less stress-reactive. The researchers distinguish between high power poses, which are expansive (e.g., standing with hands on hips, leaning back and putting hands behind your head) and low power poses, which are contractive (e.g., hugging your body, putting your hands on your neck). They provide evidence that high power poses, when adopted for just two minutes, can have significant effects on one’s attitudes.

Carney and colleagues had students adopt either a low power pose or a high power pose for just two minutes. Then, she asked them how powerful they felt, gave them an opportunity to gamble, and took a saliva sample. She found that of those in the high power pose condition, 86% chose to gamble, and of those in the low power pose condition, 60% chose to gamble. Participants in the high power pose condition experienced an increase in testosterone (the dominance hormone) and a lowering of cortisol (stress hormone). Low power poses were associated with the opposite trend. So, our bodies change our minds. The researchers suggest using this technique before evaluative situations such as speaking at a meeting or giving a speech.

It should be noted that additional studies have failed to replicate the hormonal changes on gambling behavior. However, the main findings - that power poses affect self-confidence - have been replicated.

The benefits of gratitude

Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: Experimental studies of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 377-389.

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether gratitude enhances one’s psychological and physical functioning. Participants wrote down five things for which they were grateful each week, for ten weeks. At the end of the study, this group was significantly happier than a control group who simply listed five events from the week. They rated their life as a whole higher and had more optimistic expectations for the upcoming week. They also reported fewer symptoms of physical illness. This study sheds light on the benefits of gratitude.



Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. T., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist*, 60(5), 410-421.

The authors investigated the effectiveness of various psychological interventions in terms of increasing individual happiness. Participants were randomly assigned to complete one of six exercises:

1. Placebo control exercise: Participants were asked to write about their early memories each night for one week.
2. Gratitude visit: Over the course of a week, participants wrote and delivered a letter of gratitude to someone who was especially kind to them.
3. Three good things in life: Each night for one week, participants wrote down three things that went well that day as well as the causal explanation for the event.
4. You at your best: Participants wrote about a time when they were at their best. Then they were asked to reflect on the personal strengths reflected in the story each night for one week.
5. Using signature strengths in a new way: Participants took an assessment of their character strengths and received feedback about their top five strengths. They were then asked to apply this strength in a different way every day for one week.
6. Identify signature strengths: Participants completed a strengths assessment, received a feedback report indicating their top five strengths, and were asked to use their strengths more often over the course of the next week.

Analyses revealed that two of the exercises – “using signature strengths in a new way” and “three good things” increased happiness and reduced depression for six months. The “gratitude visit” produced these positive effects for one month. These exercises, thus, are effective interventions on their own. The other exercises did not lastingly increase happiness.

DeWall, N. C., Lambert, N. M., Pond, R. S., Kashdan, T. B., Fincham, F. D. (2012). A grateful heart is a nonviolent heart: Cross-sectional, experience-sampling, longitudinal, and experimental evidence. *Social and Personality Science*, 3, 232-240.

Grateful people are less likely to retaliate or act aggressively toward others. In this study, researchers asked students to turn in a piece of writing. Then, half of the participants were asked to write a letter about five things in their lives for which they were most grateful. The other half (the control group) wrote about five things in their lives they'd like to do. Some students received praise for their writing while others received criticism. All of the students then played a computer game against their evaluator. The winner of the game could blast white noise on the loser. Not surprisingly, students who had been criticized retaliated against their raters with particularly loud blasts. However, those students who had written essays about things for which they were grateful weren't as bothered by the criticism and showed less inclination to punish their rater. So, a grateful heart is a non-violent heart.

The benefits of giving

Grant, A. (2013). *Give and take*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

In his book, "Give and Take," Adam Grant argues that generosity can build social capital and help improve overall effectiveness in the workplace. One of the ways givers rise to the top is through the advantages they gain in terms of networking. In the long term, they get a lot of help from their weak ties and dormant ties, because these individuals are happy to help them when they get back in touch. Givers also earn freedom to deviate from the group's norms and offer dissenting ideas. They are given leeway to try out unique ideas that may have tremendous payoff for themselves and the organization.

Dr. Grant points out, however, that there is potential to burn out through giving. He says that successful givers (i.e., those givers who achieve high levels of performance and avoid becoming a doormat) give in ways that allow them to see the impact of their efforts. They also give in a way that is meaningful to them, rather than out of obligation. Additionally, they keep their interests in the rearview mirror and sever ties that are one-sided. They also aren't afraid to ask for help when they need it. Overall, this book provides tremendous insight into the power of giving and how to givers can protect themselves against burnout.

Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. *Science*, 319, 1687-1688.

Dunn and colleagues designed a series of studies which revealed that spending money on other people has a more positive effect on happiness than spending money on oneself. They first asked approximately 650 Americans to report their annual income, rate their general happiness, and estimate how much money they spent in a typical month on bills/expenses, gifts for themselves, gifts for others, and donations to charity. They found that personal spending was unrelated to happiness but spending on others was related to significantly greater happiness. Next, the researchers asked 16 employees at a Boston firm who had just been given a sizeable bonus how they spent their money. Results revealed that those who spent on others were happier while those who spent on themselves were not. Finally, they tested the effect of giving through an experiment. They gave participants either \$5 or \$20 and half of the participants were told to spend on themselves while the other half were told to give the money to charity or spend the money on others. Those in the prosocial spending condition reported greater happiness than those in the personal spending condition, regardless of the amount of money they were given. This paper lends support to the importance of giving in terms of bolstering resilience.

Inagaki, T. K., & Eisenberger, N. I. (2012). Neural correlates of giving support to a loved one. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 74, 3-7.

Research suggests that support-giving is not only beneficial for the recipient, but also for the giver. Inagaki and Eisenberger (2012) invited twenty romantic couples to come into their lab. The female underwent a functional magnetic resonance imaging scan while comforting her partner, who received unpleasant electric shocks outside of the scanner. Results suggested that giving support (i.e., holding a partner's arm while they experienced physical pain) was associated with increased activity in reward regions of the brain as well as decreased activity in the amygdala and consequently, reductions in stress.



McGonigal, K. *How to make Stress your Friend*. Video retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend.

Dr. Kelly McGonigal, a health psychologist, suggests in this talk that stress is only harmful for your health if you believe it to be. She argues that if we reframe our thinking around stress and view it as a positive, we can change our physiological response to it. She also points to one crucial stress-reducing technique– giving. Dr. McGonigal references a large scale study by Poulin, Brown, Dillard, and Smith (2013) in which researchers tracked approximately 1,000 adults throughout the U.S. They found that every major stressful life experience increased an individual’s risk of dying by 30%. However, those who spent time helping and caring for others showed no stress-related increase in dying. Giving and caring generated resilience.

The benefits of goal setting

Wax, D. *The science of setting goals*. Retrieved from <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/the-science-of-setting-goals.html>.

In this piece, the author presents research explaining why goals are such powerful motivators. It turns out that the brain can’t distinguish between what we want and what we have; therefore, when we set a goal, we feel as though we’ve already accomplished it. If we fail to meet the desired outcome, we feel that we’ve lost a valued possession, even a part of ourselves. That is why goals are such important drivers of behavior.

McGonigal, K. (2012). *The neuroscience of change: A compassion-based program for personal transformation* [CD].

In her CD, Dr. Kelly McGonigal, an award-winning research scientist, discusses methods to induce positive behavioral change. One of the most effective ways to alter a habit, she suggests, is through goal-setting. She presents research showing that we have two brain systems – one acts automatically and on impulse and the other acts consciously and deliberately and is responsible for self-control. Interestingly, she says that when you set a process goal (i.e., a specific behavioral intention) you begin to build a new habit in the automatic system of the brain. This means that even in the face of stress, fatigue, or distraction, your brain remains committed to your goal and actively looks for ways to further that planned behavior.

Whitmore, J. (2002). *Coaching for Performance*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Developed in the 1980s, the GROW model is an effective tool for problem-solving and goal-setting. It was popularized by Whitmore in his book, *Coaching for Performance*. The GROW model is intended to help individuals create goals and contingency plans by asking specific questions about the nature of their goal. GROW is an acronym for the following set of questions:

- 1) What is the **G**oal?
- 2) What is the current **R**eality?
- 3) What are the **O**bstacles and **O**ptions for achieving your goals?
- 4) What is the **W**ay forward?

This tool is used extensively and with much success in corporate coaching.

Leader behaviors associated with subordinate resilience

Harland, L., Harrison, W., Jones, J. R., & Reiter-Palmon, R. (2005). Leadership behaviors and subordinate resilience. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 11, 2-14.

In this study, Harland and colleagues examined the relationship between leader behaviors and subordinate resilience. They asked 150 MBA students to write about a challenging situation and what helped them to deal with this situation. Then participants completed questionnaires assessing resilience, optimism, and leader behaviors. Analyses revealed that being a role model, communicating a higher purpose, stimulating your people, knowing your people, and rewarding your people (what the authors call attributed charisma, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and contingent reward, respectively) were significantly related to employee resilience. Examples of being a role model include displaying confidence and remaining calm in the face of unexpected shifts in demands. Examples of communicating a higher purpose include providing a compelling higher purpose and motivating employees to look beyond their self-interest. Examples of stimulating your people include re-examining critical assumptions and seeking different perspectives. Examples of knowing your people include developing employees and valuing each employee according to his/her needs. Examples of rewarding your people include providing clarity about who is responsible for what and how each accomplishment will be rewarded. As the business climate becomes increasingly volatile, this information can help leaders fortify their workforce.

¹Hurtz, G. M., & Donovan, J. J. (2000). Personality and job performance: The Big Five revisited. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85, 869-879.



The TRACOM CORPORATION



Achieve Positive Interactions!

Positive Interactions is TRACOM's blog on individual and organizational performance.

There you'll find the latest research, whitepapers and thinking on a variety of performance topics including:

- Resiliency in the workplace
- Neuroplasticity and brain science
- Developing emotional intelligence
- The connection between behavior and achievement
- Creating positive organizational change

Check out Positive Interactions today at tracom.com.

facebook

LinkedIn®

twitter

YouTube



Neuroscience Holds the Key to Boosting Resiliency

Our mindset encompasses what is going on inside — our thoughts, perceptions and subconscious psychology. Although people do not see what is going on inside our heads, our mindset greatly affects our outward behavior and the ways in which we interact with others.

Research shows that highly resilient people respond to challenges with flexibility, bounce back from challenges, and even find opportunities within workplace stress. They perform more effectively in their jobs, are healthier, more engaged with their work, and have higher commitment to their organizations. The good news for employees and organizations is that resilience can be learned and developed.

TRACOM's Resiliency programs teach people about the sources of their stress, their pattern of responses to stress, and practical strategies for altering these responses. They are based on decades of research on resiliency as well as new and ground-breaking research in neuroscience. Participants leave the training with insights about themselves and concrete ways to buffer themselves from workplace stressors. They will be able to utilize these skills immediately to enhance their resiliency and increase their job performance.

Mindset is one of the three elements of Social Intelligence along with Behavioral Style and Emotional Intelligence. Understanding and using Social Intelligence increases effectiveness and productivity.

To learn more about these and other TRACOM products, visit tracom.com.