



Basic Resilience Exercises

Version 1

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Stress is how our body reacts to worries. Worries are those things that trouble us. A little stress can help push us through a problem or challenge. Too much stress can be painful and harm our health.

Resilience can help protect us from too much stress. We become resilient by learning coping skills that make stress easier to handle. Becoming resilient means we learn to reach out and talk to other people about our problems and worries. This is often called social support. A social support system is a very important part of becoming resilient because many people working together are more likely to solve a problem. By learning to work with others on problems, we become better problem solvers. The better we become at solving problems the more we believe that we can reach a goal. We feel better about ourselves. Resilience can help us in our schooling, learning, and the way we handle our problems. We are able to reach out and find help when needed.

The Hero's Journey is a storytelling style found in many epic stories. Our hero faces a challenge and goes on an adventure. The hero is victorious in meeting the challenge and returns as a changed person. Some examples are Luke in Star Wars, Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, and Frodo in Lord of the Rings. Like the hero facing the challenge, your call to adventure begins when you face a stressful challenge. That challenge moves you from where you are comfortable to the unknown. But, with some clever problem solving and the help of other people you can victoriously come to terms with the challenge.

Your goal with this learning is to create your own Hero's Journey. Yet, a goal without a plan is only a wish. So, there are three exercises that help move you along in your Hero's Journey. There are challenges, skills to be developed, and companions on the journey. These skills are your protective armor. They make you more resilient. You learn five resilience skills, Belief, Persistence, Strength, Trust, Adaptability, and can even make your own skills. One way to create your Hero's Journey is to explore each of the five skills. You can start with the Belief skill and work on the *Tell your story* exercise. Then, find a companion or companions to work with the *Collaboration* exercise. Find a real challenge and complete that exercise. Finally, alone or with your companion, work on the *Transformation* exercise.

1. Tell your story builds confidence. In this first exercise, select a skill flashcard, such as Belief. Remember a past challenge where you were successful using something like the skill presented on the flashcard. Work on answering the questions while keeping the past challenge in mind. Look to the flashcard *Example* for ideas about how to put together your story. This is where we see how our heroes

go about life in their ordinary world before their call to adventure. Luke is a farm boy on the planet Tatooine. Dorothy is a farm girl living in Kansas. And, Frodo is a small Hobbit living in the Shire.

2. Collaboration moves you from the familiar to the unknown in the Hero's Journey. Collaboration means to work together. Remember Luke had Obi Wan, Dorothy had Glinda the Good, and Frodo had Gandalf to help form social support systems to work together as they moved into the unknown. You also want a companion to work with to develop your skill and meet the challenge. Find a real challenge you, your companion or someone you know is facing and apply the skill using the questions to guide you.

3. Transformation asks that you think about, or reflect on, the skill you just used. This is where our heroes, surrounded by their social support systems, make their return to their known world. Each of our heroes has changed or transformed in some way. Luke gets a hero's welcome with his companions. Dorothy returns to her family with the knowledge that to do anything, you must believe in yourself. Frodo realizes he can no longer go back to his ordinary life in the Shire and decides to leave with Bilbo, Gandalf, and the elves. Looking at the Hero's Journey, you moved from the known by doing the *Tell your story* exercise. Then you moved to an adventure in the unknown, *Collaboration*, where you worked with another person to deal with a real challenge by applying a skill. And, now, you return from the adventure. *Transformation* is thinking about how you have changed after working with the exercises. How did your thinking change? What did you learn from working on a real challenge with another person? What did you learn from the skill you just practiced? Try describing the skill in a few of your own words. Today is the day your story begins, and no matter how difficult the journey, you get to write the conclusion.

Try the exercises. These exercises can be completed orally. Alternatively, writing responses can often help to better organize thinking. If you have limited time, then consider completing the Belief and Trust skills. Then, go to the Strength Skill and practice a relaxation exercise, such as diaphragmatic breathing. Though each skill is unique, the learning exercises for each skill are nearly the same. This repetition of exercises is intended to build confidence and reinforce the idea that each of us can be resilient and work comfortably with others as we deal with real life challenges. It is therefore essential that you work with a companion while completing the resilience exercises. These Basic Resilience Exercises are a much abridged version of the more detailed Resilience Workbook (<https://resilienthacks.org/STEM.pdf>).

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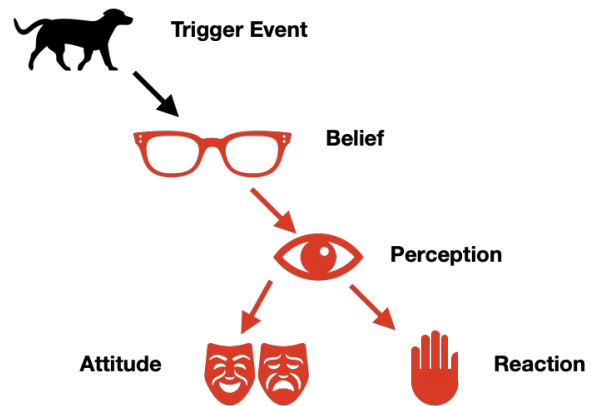
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Belief Skill Flashcard

Belief is accepting something as true or real. Belief affects attitude. Changing one's belief changes one's attitude.

A Story to Tell: Belief is accepting something as true or real. The way I view things is shaped by my beliefs. That means that my beliefs control my actions and my attitude. My attitude is the way I feel about something. Let's consider an example. Perhaps, my neighbor's dog has been barking for an hour. My attitude might be one of displeasure based on my belief that the dog barks for no reason. Or, my attitude might be one of concern based on my belief that the dog is barking because something is very wrong and I need to investigate. The way I perceive, or view something, is shaped by my belief. My attitude is the result of that belief.



When I face a challenge, I have choices to make. Sometimes I can change the challenge to make it more workable so the outcome is better. Sometimes the challenge may seem to be unchangeable. I then have to change my belief so I have a better attitude dealing with the challenge. I have to ask myself if the belief I now have is stopping me from reaching a goal. Perhaps, I am afraid. What then might be a better belief. Changing a belief doesn't always happen instantly. It takes a lot of courage and persistence to make change. But, once I make the decision to find a more workable belief, I also make the choice to try and win rather than give up. I may find that with that better attitude, I can also make the challenge more workable for me.

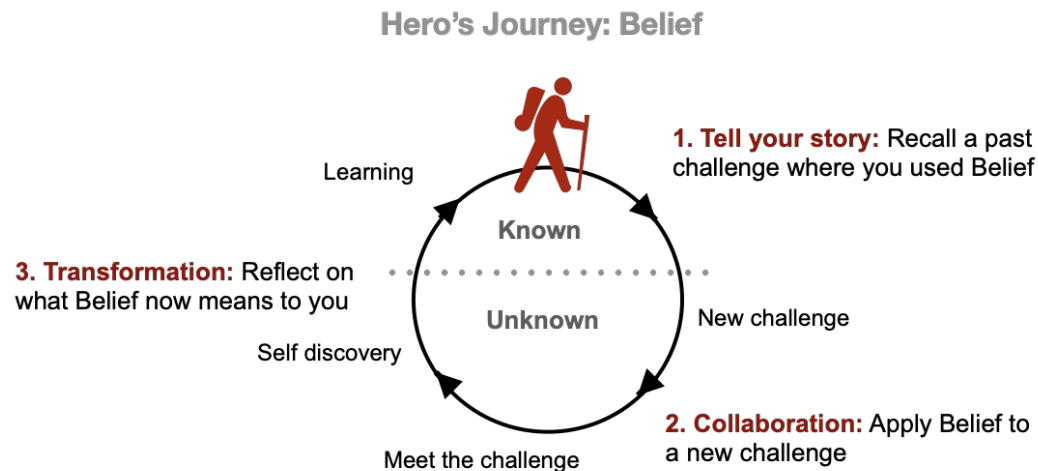
Why: Your beliefs control your actions and the way you feel about something, your attitude. This is because your belief affects your perception, the way you see, hear and become aware of things around you. Changing a poor belief for a better belief changes your perception and attitude to help you better deal with your challenge. Beliefs can affect your health.

How: Look at your challenge with an honest view. Can you change the challenge to make it simpler and more workable? If the challenge appears not changeable, then changing your belief can change how you feel about the challenge.

- What is your challenge? Can you change the challenge to make it more workable, or doable? Is the outcome, the way the challenge turns out, changeable? If so, then what might be a better outcome?
- Or, if the outcome is not changeable, then what is your worst fear? There is a belief supporting that attitude of fear. What is a more positive belief? Positive is defined as one that is better or more useful.
- Sometimes a challenge needs a change of belief before a more positive outcome can be found. And, sometimes changing the outcome of a challenge may be necessary before finding a more positive belief.

Example: I need to tie a bowline knot, but I am not very good at tying knots.

- My challenge is to tie a bowline knot.
- The outcome is not changeable, so I will work on a changing my belief.
- My fear is that I can't tie difficult knots.
- I see that my belief is holding me back because I have given up on knot tying all together.
- A more positive way to look at my challenge is that I can learn to tie knots by first practicing an easier knot, like the square knot, and then work on harder knots, like the bowline.
- So, my belief becomes: Practice on the easier until I become successful and then move to the more difficult.



Tell your story: Recall a past Belief challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will link this new learning to earlier learning, something you did with success in the past, to make the Belief skill more memorable, less likely to forget.

To think about: How you perceive events is shaped by your beliefs. Changing your belief changes your perception, giving you control, inner strength and courage to better deal with challenges.

Let us look at Belief as a resilience skill. Read the Belief Skill Flashcard. Think of a past challenge where you successfully used the skill of Belief or something like Belief. Work on answering the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon what you prefer. You can answer orally. Writing your responses can often help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. Did you change the challenge to something more positive or workable?
3. Or, did you change your Belief to something more positive?

Detailed questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. If you **were able** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 1. What was your more positive outcome to the challenge?

3. If you **were unable** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 1. What was your worst fear or concern?
 2. Now the tricky part. Can you describe the belief that caused fear or concern?
 3. What was the more positive belief that you used to replace the fearful belief? If you are struggling to describe the fearful and positive beliefs, then describe how you worked around the fear that confronted you. That description will help to find the more positive belief you used.

Collaboration: Apply Belief to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will help to improve communication with others, see others views, and reach out to others while problem-solving a challenge.

You are strongly encouraged to do this exercise with another person so that you become comfortable working with people while solving challenging problems. The social support provided by others is very important to being resilient. So, find a companion with whom you can discuss and work. Find a real challenge you, your companion or someone you know is facing and apply the Belief skill using the questions to guide you. Collaborate by discussing or writing the challenge in as much detail as you feel necessary to allow you and your companion to make the decision as to whether you can alter the challenge outcome so it is more manageable. Or, if the outcome appears to be not changeable, to improve attitude by changing a belief. Even if the challenge seems terribly overwhelming, we can still change the way we react to the challenge and have some healing value. Look at the Belief Skill Flashcard, including the example, to get an idea on how you might discuss your answers to the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon which you prefer.

Brief questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Can you change the challenge to something more positive or workable? Or ...
3. Can you change your Belief to something more positive?

Detailed questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. If you **are able** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 1. What is a more positive, yet realistic, outcome to the challenge?
 2. Sometimes when a challenge is changed a more positive belief is found. Are you now able to see a more positive belief and a change of attitude?
3. If you **are not able** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 1. What is the worst fear or concern?
 2. Can you identify the fearful belief that caused the fear or concern?
 3. What is a more positive belief that can replace the fearful belief? If you are struggling to identify the fearful and positive beliefs, then discuss how you could work around the fear or concern. That discussion will help to identify the more positive belief.
 4. Sometimes a challenge needs a change of belief before a more positive outcome can be found. Are you now able to change the outcome to make it more positive and manageable?

It can be helpful when you are working in a group to share and discuss challenges and outcomes. Or, if you are writing your responses to the questions, then posting challenges and outcomes often show that many of the challenges we personally face are shared by many others too.





Transformation: Reflecting on Belief

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and more usable.

1. You have discovered how you used something like Belief on a challenge that you faced in your past. You, along with a companion, have also used the Belief skill on a current challenge. Now, think about or reflect upon the Belief skill. What is a word or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Belief for you? This is a good oral exercise in a group setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise.
2. Reflect upon the skill of Belief. Meaning, how have you changed since working with the exercises. How did your thinking change? What did you learn from working on a real challenge with another person? Try describing the Belief skill in a few of your own words.

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment helps you monitor your progress and adjust your learning.

Your Change of Behavior	Your response			
	 Worsened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Honestly answer the following questions. If you worsened or did not change, try repeating the exercises again.				
Ability to apply the Belief skill to a personal challenge				
Ability to reach out to a social support system (companions) to better deal with personal challenges				
Ability to work with a personal challenge through to its end				
Feel more confident about yourself				

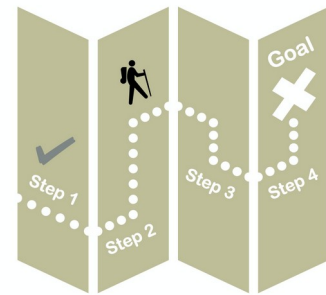
Persistence Skill Flashcard

Persistence is facing a challenge with the belief you will succeed.

A Story to Tell: There is something very powerful about writing a goal. It helps me organize my thoughts into a short and clear statement of what I intend to do.

I like to keep my goal statement brief and to-the-point. I shrink the task into a few words. Just a simple phrase like “Hike the Long Trail.”

I can then place limits on the goal. Limits make the goal manageable by setting how much. “Hike a section of the Long Trail over two days.” Is that doable I ask myself. There is nothing to be gained by setting myself up for failure. Yes, I know I can hike with a backpack and camp for two days. I don’t worry about the details about what I will do each day. That will come later. This simple goal statement makes me believe I can persist and reach my goal. Persistence is the determination and belief I will succeed.



A goal without a plan is only a wish. I want to make sure I can persist. I decide how I will complete the goal, step by step. Each step brings me closer to the goal. I write each step in a way that I can check-it-off when I have completed it. I study a map and trail description of the Long Trail. I get a sense of how difficult the hiking will be from where I want to start to where I can end the hike. My step-by-step plan looks something like the following:

1. Check weather and trail conditions.
2. Make sure I have everything I need in my backpack the day before I leave.
3. Arrive at the starting area at 8 AM.
4. Hike 10 miles for about 6 hours to get to the campsite.
5. Stay at the campsite shelter or if filled use my tent.
6. Hike 10 miles for about 6 hours to get to the pickup area.

I can rework my plan as I prepare. If needed, I can add more steps.

Marking my progress as I complete the steps builds my belief that I can complete the goal. When I have completed all of the steps, I have reached my goal. I have persisted.

Why: Persistence encourages you to make change, mark your progress, and build belief that you can reach your goal.

How: Consider creating a realistic goal and the steps needed to reach the goal so that when all of the steps are completed, you have attained your goal. You have persisted.

- Think about your challenge. Recognize the importance of believing you can meet the challenge.
- Create a simple goal to build the belief you can meet the challenge. The goal must be reachable within a sensible time limit.
- Create the steps that describe the actions needed to reach your goal. Create as many steps as needed so that as you check off the completed steps you see your progress. You persist by building belief in yourself.
- Remember to reward yourself as you persist.

Example: I have a hard time studying for tests.

- My challenge is to improve my studying habits.
- My goal is to “Create test study plan.”
- I’ll ask my instructors and look for expert advice on how to best study for tests.
- Step 1. I’ll find out exactly what the test will cover.
- Step 2. Instead of cramming the night before the test, I will study over several sessions of shorter times over several days. This might be studying for an hour every other day. I will stick to this schedule. It will become a habit.
- Step 3. I’ll remove anything that will distract me while I am studying.
- Step 4. I’ll reread my class notes and rewrite, in my own words, anything that seems difficult.
- Step 5. I’ll practice the homework and class problems that will be covered on the test.
- Step 6. For one of my study sessions, I may study with other people to be sure I am understanding everything that will be on the test.
- Step 7. I’ll remember to reward myself each time I study for the test. This will help me persist.
- Step 8. The night before the test, I will quickly review just before going to sleep and make sure I get a good night’s sleep.
- Step 9. If I am really nervous just before the test, I will practice a relaxation exercise. See the Strength Skill Flashcard to learn about diaphragmatic or belly breathing.
- Doing well on the test is a good reward for persisting in my study plan.

Hero’s Journey: Persistence



Tell your story: Recall a past Persistence challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will link this new learning to earlier learning, something you did with success in the past, to make the Persistence skill more memorable, less likely to forget.

To think about: Persistence is facing a challenge with the determination and belief you will succeed. Creating a reachable goal and the steps to meet that goal improves persistence and promise of success.

Let us look at Persistence as a resilience skill. Read the Persistence Skill Flashcard. Think of a past challenge where you successfully used the skill of Persistence or something like Persistence. Work on answering the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon what you prefer. You can answer orally. Writing your responses can often help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. What was your goal?
3. What were the steps needed to reach your goal?
4. What made the goal reachable?

Detailed questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. What made you believe you could meet the challenge?
3. What was your goal?
4. Did you have to reach your goal by a certain time?
5. What were the steps needed to reach your goal?
6. What made the goal reachable?
7. Did you reward yourself in some way as you persisted?

Collaboration: Apply Persistence to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will improve communication with others, see others views, and reach out to others while problem-solving a challenge.

You are strongly encouraged to do this exercise with another person so that you become comfortable working with people while solving challenging problems. The social support provided by others is very important to being resilient. So, find a companion with whom you can discuss and work. Find a real challenge you, your companion or someone you know is facing and apply the Persistence skill using the questions to guide you. Discuss or write the challenge in as much detail as you feel necessary to allow you and your companion to more easily answer the questions. Even if the challenge seems terribly overwhelming, we can still change the way we react to the challenge and have some healing value. Look at the Persistence Skill Flashcard, including the example, to get an idea on how you might discuss your answers to the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon which you prefer.

Brief questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. What is your goal?
3. What are the steps needed to reach your goal?
4. What makes the goal reachable?

Detailed questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. What makes you believe you can meet the challenge?
3. What is your goal to meet the challenge? The SMART acronym can be used to describe the parts of goal setting. Goals are:
 1. (S) *Specific* by having a stated purpose.
 2. (M) *Measurable* by setting limits and timelines.
 3. (A) *Assignable* by saying who is involved.
 4. (R) *Realistic* meaning practical and reachable.
 5. (T) *Time* related by setting a date or time for when the goal is to be completed.
4. Is the goal attainable?

5. Is the goal reachable within a sensible time limit?
6. Describe the steps that are needed to reach your goal. It is important to develop a realistic goal along with the smaller, more manageable, steps required to attain the goal. Every step has a purpose. Each step moves you closer to reaching your goal. When all of the steps have been completed, you have met your goal.
7. Do you have enough steps to mark your progress and build belief that you can persist?
8. How will you reward yourself as you persist?





Transformation: Reflecting on Persistence

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and more usable.

1. You have discovered how you used something like Persistence on a challenge that you faced in your past. You, along with a companion, have also used the Persistence skill on a current challenge. Now, think about or reflect upon the Persistence skill. What is a word or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Persistence for you? This is a good oral exercise in a group setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise.
2. Reflect upon the skill of Persistence. Meaning, how have you changed since working with the exercises. How did your thinking change? What did you learn from working on a real challenge with another person? Try describing the Persistence skill in a few of your own words.

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment helps you monitor your progress and adjust your learning.

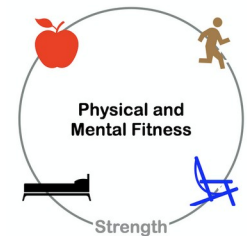
Your Change of Behavior	Your response			
Honestly answer the following questions. If you worsened or did not change, try repeating the exercises again.	 Worsened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Ability to apply the Persistence skill to a personal challenge				
Ability to reach out to a social support system (companions) to better deal with personal challenges				
Ability to work with a personal challenge through to its end				
Feel more confident about yourself				

Strength Skill Flashcard

Strength grows from proper nutrition, exercise, relaxation and sleep.

A Story to Tell: Life is a journey of change. Sometimes change is very kind. Other times it is crushing. The journey of change demands strength. I want to be physically strong and healthy.

Fitness gives me the strength to help with changes that become challenges. I choose to be fit, to build strength to get through those challenges. I think of fitness as a ring of linked parts. Proper nutrition, exercise, relaxation, and sleep form the parts. I begin simply by keeping nutritious foods, such as fruits, in plain view. I find that physical exercise is an enjoyable escape from stress. So, I make sure I get a proper amount of exercise hiking and biking. I make time to relax and sleep, too. I monitor my progress. I feel stronger, and that encourages me to keep going. If I am feeling good, then it's a lot easier to cope with life's challenges. Building strength is about self-care. How do you build strength?



Why: Practicing a healthy diet, physical exercise, relaxation, and good sleep habits improves your physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Strength is about good self-care. When you feel good, challenges are more easily managed.

How: Find and practice plans for diet, exercise, relaxation, and sleep to fit into the way you live, your lifestyle. Be sure to meet the goals of good nutrition, aerobic exercise, reducing stress, and adequate sleep.

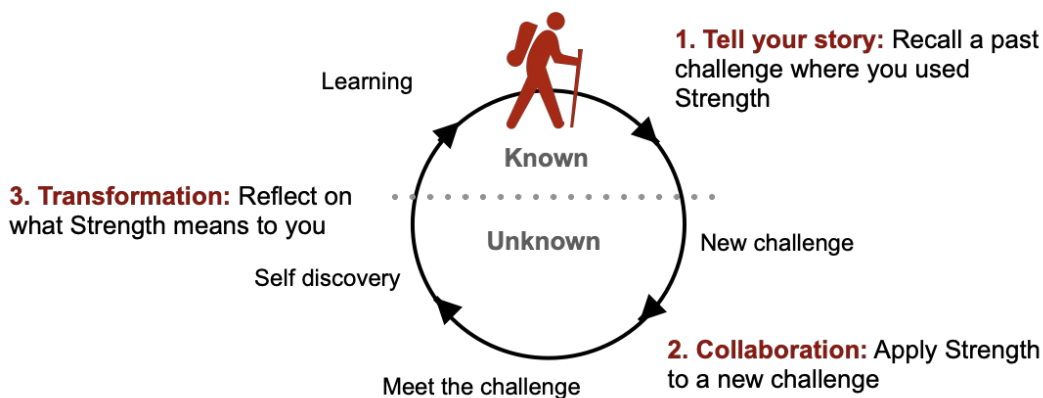
- Think about your challenge. How can your challenge be improved by diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep.
- Find and practice a nutritious diet that fits the way you live yet lowers your health risks. Consider well researched plans such as MyPlate, Healthy Eating Plate, Mediterranean, or DASH.
 - MyPlate [MyPlate](#)
 - Healthy Eating Plate [Healthy Eating Plate - Harvard Health](#)
 - Mediterranean, example: [A Complete Mediterranean Diet Food List and 14-Day Meal Plan](#)
 - DASH—Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension [DASH Eating Plan | NHLBI, NIH](#)
- Find and practice a physical exercise plan that fits the way you live and offers at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity spread evenly throughout the week. For example, if you were to go for a brisk walk or ride a bike at a steady pace for thirty minutes five days a week, that would be considered moderate-intensity exercise spread evenly through the week.
- Find and practice a relaxation exercise, such as slow diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, social resilience, and mindfulness-based stress reduction.
 - *Diaphragmatic Breathing* is a simple relaxation exercise of slow breathing with focus on movement of the diaphragm. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach. Breathe so that the hand on your stomach moves up and down. Try to keep the hand on your chest from moving up and down. As you exhale, focus on the word “relax.” example: [The Power of Breath: Diaphragmatic Breathing - Whole Health Library](#)
 - *Progressive Muscle Relaxation* (PMR) brings awareness of the body by focusing on slowly tensing and then relaxing muscle groups example: [Progressive Muscle Relaxation and Progressive Relaxation](#)

- o *Social Resilience Model (SRM)* uses stabilization skills to reduce and prevent the symptoms of stress. In its simplest form, SRM focuses on accessing the parasympathetic (rest and digest) system through several processes. [An Introduction to the Social Resilience Model - Threshold GlobalWorks](#)
- o *Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)* is the practice of bringing awareness to the present moment. example: [Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction \(MBSR\) Program](#)
- Practice good sleep hygiene by keeping a consistent sleep-wake schedule, exercising and not having long naps and naps within a few hours of bedtime. Keeping the same fall asleep and wake times lets our brain know when we want to be tired and when we need to be alert.

Example: I get anxious before and during tests. That hinders me from doing well. I need to find and practice a relaxation exercise.

- My challenge is to be relaxed before and while taking tests.
- I'll try an easy relaxation exercise, such as diaphragmatic breathing. Diaphragmatic breathing is an exercise of slow controlled breathing. I place one hand on my chest and the other on my stomach. I breathe slowly so that the hand on my stomach moves up and down. I try to keep the hand on my chest from moving up and down. Each time I exhale, I focus on the word "relax." I practice diaphragmatic breathing for several weeks for about ten minutes before I go to sleep.
- I'll also try exercise to lower my stress, eat healthy foods to increase my energy, and get good sleep. These will improve my likelihood of doing even better on the test.
- I'll adjust or change any of the plans that are not working and monitor the changes.
- Just before a test, I will practice diaphragmatic breathing thinking of the word "relax."

Hero's Journey: Strength



Tell your story: Recall a past Strength challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will link this new learning to earlier learning, something you did with success in the past, to make the Strength skill more memorable, less likely to forget.

To think about: Strength grows from proper nutrition, exercise, relaxation and sleep.

Let us look at Strength as a resilience skill. Read the Strength Skill Flashcard. Think of a past challenge where you successfully used the skill of Strength or something like Strength. Work on answering the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon what you prefer. You can answer orally. Writing your responses can often help you to

better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. How was your challenge related to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep?
3. What made you feel you were successful meeting the challenge?

Detailed questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. How was your challenge related to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep?
3. If a diet, how was it “healthy” and how did it fit into the way you live, your lifestyle?
4. If a physical exercise plan, what kind of exercise and how did it fit your lifestyle?
5. If it was a relaxation exercise, how did it relax you and fit your lifestyle?
6. If it was good sleep, then how did you improve your sleep and how did this fit your lifestyle?

Collaboration: Apply Strength to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will improve communication with others, see others views, and reach out to others while problem-solving a challenge.

You are strongly encouraged to do this exercise with another person so that you become comfortable working with people while solving challenging problems. The social support provided by others is very important to being resilient. So, find a companion with whom you can discuss and work. Find a real challenge you, your companion or someone you know is facing and apply the Strength skill using the questions to guide you. Discuss or write the challenge in as much detail as you feel necessary to allow you and your companion to more easily answer the questions. Even if the challenge seems terribly overwhelming, we can still change the way we react to the challenge and have some healing value. Look at the Strength Skill Flashcard, including the example, to get an idea on how you might discuss your answers to the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon which you prefer.

Brief questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. How is your challenge related to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep?
3. What is your goal?
4. What are the steps needed to reach your goal?

Detailed questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. How does it relate to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep.
3. Find and practice a healthy diet that fits your lifestyle yet lowers your health risks. Consider researched diet plans such as MyPlate, Healthy Eating Plate, Mediterranean, and DASH.
4. Find and practice a physical exercise plan that fits your lifestyle and provides at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity ideally spread evenly throughout the week.
5. Find and practice a relaxation exercise. Like any physical exercise, you will need to practice with these relaxation exercises to get results. Consider a simple relaxation exercise, such as *Diaphragmatic Breathing*. Other relaxation exercises are *Progressive Muscle Relaxation*, *Social Resilience Model*, and *Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction*.

6. Practice good sleep hygiene by keeping a consistent sleep-wake schedule, exercising daily and eliminating long naps and naps within a few hours of bedtime.
7. How will you ensure that you persist with the challenge?
8. Will you create a realistic goal to build the belief to meet the challenge? Describe your goal.
9. Is the goal reachable within a realistic time limit?
10. Describe the steps that are needed to reach your goal.
11. Do you have enough steps to mark your progress and build belief you can persist?





Transformation: Reflecting on Strength

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and more usable.

1. You have discovered how you used something like Strength on a challenge that you faced in your past. You, along with a companion, have also used the Strength skill on a current challenge. Now, think about or reflect upon the Strength skill. What is a word or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Strength for you? This is a good oral exercise in a group setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise.
2. Reflect upon the skill of Strength. Meaning, how have you changed since working with the exercises. How did your thinking change? What did you learn from working on a real challenge with another person? Try describing the Strength skill in a few of your own words.

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment helps you monitor your progress and adjust your learning.

Your Change of Behavior	Your response			
Honestly answer the following questions. If you worsened or did not change, try repeating the exercises again.	 Worsened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Ability to apply the Strength skill to a personal challenge				
Ability to reach out to a social support system (companions) to better deal with personal challenges				
Ability to work with a personal challenge through to its end				
Feel more confident about yourself				

Trust Skill Flashcard

Trust develops by engaging, reaching out, and giving support.

A Story to Tell: I learned to trust as a toddler. Without trust, I would not have survived. As I got older, I learned that my peers, those I hung around with, shaped me to act with the world as we understood it. We became a like-minded group. We trusted each other and shared common values. The ways my peer group behaved, so I too behaved. When our values were virtuous, we gained in honor. If our values were faulty, we dishonored ourselves. I learned an important lesson. I have learned to choose carefully with whom I want to spend time because they will shape my beliefs.

I learn about people by interacting and then engaging with people. Empathy is the key that opens the lock into the lives of others. Empathy is not sympathy. Empathy lets me understand what another experiences from their point of view. I have to halt my beliefs so that I can try to understand those of another. In a way, I see through their eyes. I am walking the walk of another person. I can connect with another person. Then trust can develop by reaching out to engage and provide support. A challenging decision, whether to trust another. Yet, I did it as a toddler.

Support comes in many forms. As I face a challenge, I look to my strengths and weaknesses. Where I find need, I find experts to provide their point of view. Each person has a role to play in meeting the challenge. As you might expect, family members are part of my social support. All of these people form a system, a social support system to meet the challenge. Yet, each person is one I can reach out to. I think they can reach out to me, too. They are my social support system. I wonder, who do you reach out to when you face a difficult challenge?

Why: Social support is considered one of the best protections from the effects of stress and suicide. Trust is foundational to all relationships, whether personal, professional or organizational.

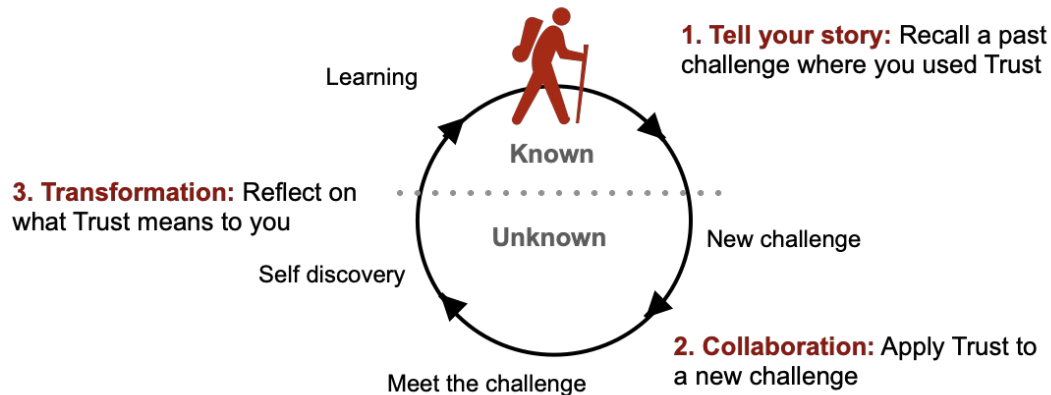
How: Develop your social support system by keeping in mind the challenge or challenges you may be facing. Consider people who would be helpful dealing with the challenge and the role each would play.

- Consider your challenge and identify your strengths and weaknesses to become aware of your needs as well as your strong points.
- Consider people who best meet your needs while making sure you are comfortable reaching out to them and they are comfortable reaching out to you.
- Name the people in your support system, roles they play, and how to contact them.
- Remember that you also want to sustain your support system, too. What strengths do you bring to help your support system?

Example: I have an uneasy feeling that one of my friends might be thinking about hurting themselves. I am unsure how to handle this situation.

- The challenge is to help a person who may be considering hurting themselves.
- I see that by helping my friend I am now part of my friend's social support system and I have a role to play.
- I ask my friend about thoughts of hurting themselves.
- If my friend answers yes, I immediately contact people in leadership positions that have expert training on the best way to handle this challenge.
- I am prepared to reach out and help my friend as the experts assist my friend.
- I remember that I can always call 911 for immediate emergency assistance.

Hero's Journey: Trust



Tell your story: Recall a past Trust challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will link this new learning to earlier learning, something you did with success in the past, to make the Trust skill more memorable, less likely to forget.

To think about: Empathy is often described as putting aside one's own beliefs and instead "seeing through the eyes of another" or "walking in the shoes of another." Empathy is not the same as sympathy. Empathy is a critical thinking skill to help give you awareness of what another person is experiencing. As an example, notice that every *A Story to Tell* segment that introduces every resilience skill is written in the first person, "I." By writing these in first person, you are encouraged to try to see through the "eyes" of the person writing a story and ask the question, "Just who is this person?" This is done to encourage empathy. Reading a novel can be a good way to learn empathy.

Empathy comes about by seeking to understand what another person is experiencing from their point of view. Trust develops by reaching out to engage with the other person. The ability to reach out and find social support is an important part of being resilient. When and where we reach out, our challenges, our attitudes and the attitudes of people offering help all have an effect on us. Each person within our social support system has a role to play, helping in some special way with the challenge. Remember that we also need to help those in our social support systems, too. Trust is foundational to all relationships, whether personal, professional or organizational.

Let us look at Trust as a resilience skill. Read the Trust Skill Flashcard. Think of a past challenge where you successfully used the skill of Trust or something like Trust. Work on answering the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon what you prefer. You can answer orally. Writing your responses can often help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. What made you reach out to others?
3. How did those you reached out to help you with your challenge?

Detailed questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. When you think about the challenge, were you able to see some of your strengths that could help with the challenge? Were you able to see some of your weaknesses?
3. Did you use this understanding of strengths and weaknesses to find a person or people to help you with your challenge?
4. What helped you to reach out to that person or people?
5. What do you think helped them reach out to you?
6. After the challenge, did you keep that person or people as part of your social support system?

Collaboration: Apply Trust to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will improve communication with others, see others views, and reach out to others while problem-solving a challenge.

You are strongly encouraged to do this exercise with another person so that you become comfortable working with people while solving challenging problems. The social support provided by others is very important to being resilient. So, find a companion with whom you can discuss and work. Find a real challenge you, your companion or someone you know is facing and apply the Trust skill using the questions to guide you. Discuss or write the challenge in as much detail as you feel necessary to allow you and your companion to more easily answer the questions. Even if the challenge seems terribly overwhelming, we can still change the way we react to the challenge and have some healing value. Look at the Trust Skill Flashcard, including the example, to get an idea on how you might discuss your answers to the following questions.

1. What is your challenge?
2. What are your perceived strengths and weaknesses? Consider your challenge and identify your strengths and weaknesses to better identify your needs.
3. Who meets your needs? Consider people who best meet your needs while making sure you are comfortable reaching out to them and they are comfortable reaching out to you.
4. What roles do they play? Identify those individuals in your support system, roles they play, and how to contact them. Some people may have important roles in your social support system, while others may have more limited roles.

If you are working with a larger group of people on this Trust exercise, there are ways to enrich your exploration. First, treat everyone's challenge anonymously by writing each challenge on a small piece of paper and then placing the papers into a hat or some container. Next, without reading the challenges, have each person in the group pick a challenge from the container. Everyone then pairs into smaller groups of two and each group will work with a picked challenge. By exploring someone else's challenge we have to "see through the eyes" of the person who wrote the challenge in order to understand what the person was trying to convey — that's empathy! Next, keep in mind that the person who wrote the challenge is reaching out to you to help solve the challenge — that's trust! Try to understand the challenge to the best of your abilities, and discuss or write your responses to the questions above.

If you are working within a group environment, then consider posting your outcome with other groups' outcomes so that everyone can view the posted materials. Through this learning process, you can see how social support systems work together to apply resilience skills to solve real life challenges. You

might also find that a lot of the challenges you face are the same as those challenges that other people face, too.





Transformation: Reflecting on Trust

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and more usable.

1. You have discovered how you used something like Trust on a challenge that you faced in your past. You, along with a companion, have also used the Trust skill on a current challenge. Now, think about or reflect upon the Trust skill. What is a word or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Trust for you? This is a good oral exercise in a group setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise.
2. Reflect upon the skill of Trust. Meaning, how have you changed since working with the exercises. How did your thinking change? What did you learn from working on a real challenge with another person? Try describing the Trust skill in a few of your own words.

How am I doing?

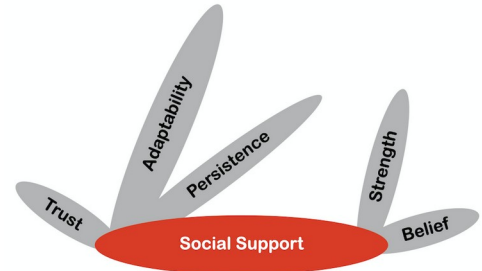
Objective: Completing this assessment helps you monitor your progress and adjust your learning.

Your Change of Behavior	Your response			
	 Worsened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Honestly answer the following questions. If you worsened or did not change, try repeating the exercises again.				
Ability to apply the Trust skill to a personal challenge				
Ability to reach out to a social support system (companions) to better deal with personal challenges				
Ability to work with a personal challenge through to its end				
Feel more confident about yourself				

Adaptability Skill Flashcard

Adaptability is the flexibility to meet a challenge.

A Story to Tell: The courage to change is what matters. To grow and thrive means that I need to adapt, to make change and fit a new purpose. I must be flexible and willing to change. I like to think of adaptability as a kind of Swiss army knife, a “MacGyver” that comes up to the rescue. The Swiss army knife has tools that can be used to meet many challenges. I could use the blade to whittle a toothpick and then use the same blade to sharpen a pencil. I also think that the Swiss army knife is somewhat like my social support system with resilience skills as the tools. There is an important difference, however, my social support system and I together use these resilience tools to come to the rescue with solutions to challenges. Adaptability is where I face the challenge of change. I can succeed and perhaps even improve.



Support comes in many ways. It may be a close group of people who sustain me as I sustain them. It may be a mentor that guides me through a challenge. And, it may even be a real Swiss Army knife that provides support. Whatever the means, adaptability offers the confidence and understanding that I can meet the challenge. I keep in mind that there are times when I can change the challenge to make it more positive and workable. In doing so, I have adapted. When I am unable to change the challenge, I change the way I perceive the challenge by working on my belief. My belief is that I can succeed in some way. I create a reachable goal so I can succeed. As my attitude improves, the challenge becomes more manageable. I have adapted.

Challenges, both personal and as a community, can range from simple to very complex. I may work closely with my social support system and research the challenge to determine if a skillful solution is already developed. Or, perhaps we can adapt the skillful solution to better meet my challenge. I may find myself blending other resilience skills to create a new skill to reach an attainable goal. I discuss the challenge and the possible solution with others to be sure it can meet its purpose. If the skill will be used again, I can include a definition about the skill, why the skill meets the challenge, and how the skill meets the challenge.

Why: Those who believe they have the ability to succeed are more likely to pursue a challenge as something to be mastered rather than as a threat to be avoided. Developing the skill to best adapt to a challenge gives you confidence and control.

How: Developing your skill can be a goal setting process that calls for planning, cooperation, and persistence to fully define and develop.

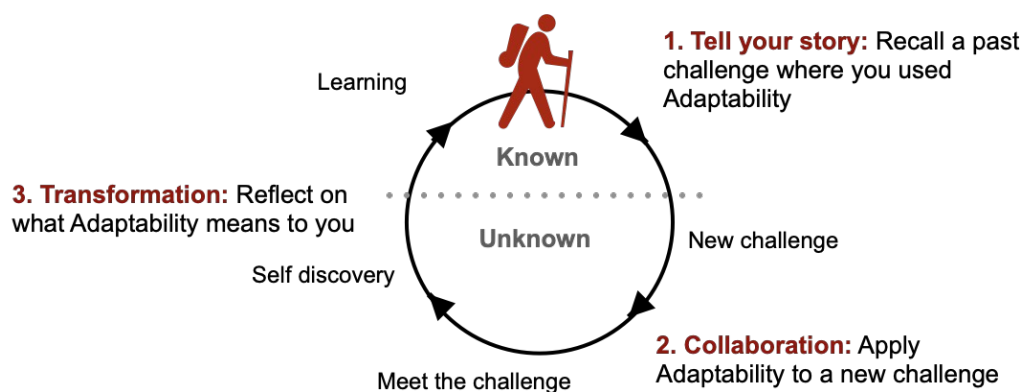
- Consider your challenge and research the idea. Perhaps a skillful solution is already developed.
- Discuss the skill idea with others to assure the idea is understood and meets its intended purpose.
- Consider creating the skill as a goal that is reachable along with the steps needed to reach the goal.
- Steps can also include a definition *About* the skill, *Why* the skill is important, and *How* the skill meets the challenge.

Example: Using the idea of “Who am I going to call when ...,” I want to adapt my social support system

to include people who have abilities I may need. I will start with the simplest and move to the more essential people of my social support system. I will also adapt my cell phone app to include them.

- (*The About...*) The challenge is to extend my social support system using my phone contact list.
- (*The Why...*) Preparing for the future shapes me to adapt to unexpected challenges.
- (*The How...*) Using my phone app, begin with the less critical contacts and move to more important contacts.
- Add services such as electricity, water, gas, plumber, and transportation assistance.
- Add healthcare such as physician, dentist, and veterinarian.
- Add emergency services such police, fire, and poison control.
- Add family, associates, and friends and the roles they play in the social support system.
- Add In Case of Emergency (ICE) contact.

Hero's Journey: Adaptability



Tell your story: Recall a past Adaptability challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will help to link this new learning to prior learning, something you did with some success in the past, so as to make Adaptability more memorable.

To think about: Adaptability is the confidence and understanding to create and pursue a skillful outcome that best meets the challenge.

Let us look at Adaptability as a resilience skill. Read the Adaptability Skill Flashcard. Think of a past challenge where you successfully used the skill of Adaptability or something like Adaptability. Work on answering the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon what you prefer. You can answer orally. Writing your responses can often help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. Did you in any way do any research to see if a skillful solution had been already developed?
3. Did you talk with others to be sure the adapted skill could meet its purpose?
4. What was the adapted skill?
5. How did you adapt and change?

Detailed questions:

1. What was your challenge?
2. Did you in any way do any research to see if a skillful solution had been already developed?
3. Did you discuss the skillful solution to be sure the idea could meet its purpose?
4. Did you develop or consider creating the skill as a goal that is reachable along with the steps necessary to reach the goal?
5. What was your goal and what were the steps that were followed to meet the goal?
6. What was the adapted skill?
7. How did you adapt and change?

Collaboration: Apply Adaptability to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will improve communication with others, see others views, and reach out to others while problem-solving a challenge.

You are strongly encouraged to do this exercise with another person so that you become comfortable working with people while solving challenging problems. The social support provided by others is very important to being resilient. So, find a companion with whom you can discuss and work. Find a real challenge you, your companion or someone you know is facing and apply the Adaptability skill using the questions to guide you. Discuss or write the challenge in as much detail as you feel necessary to allow you and your companion to more easily answer the questions. Even if the challenge seems terribly overwhelming, we can still change the way we react to the challenge and have some healing value. Look at the Adaptability Skill Flashcard, including the example, to get an idea on how you might discuss your answers to the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief* questions and as *detailed* questions depending upon which you prefer.

Brief questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Can you research the challenge to see if a possible solution already exists?
3. Can you talk with others to assure the adapted skill is understood and meets the intended purpose?
4. What is the adapted skill?

Detailed questions:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Consider your challenge and research the idea. Where might you look for potential solutions?
3. Discuss the skill idea with others to be sure the idea is understood and can meet its intended purpose. The skill idea or “sharing of a vision” may be considered a leadership process, especially if you intend to get help from others. These people play an important role in providing you with their view points as to whether you appear to be on the right track.
4. Do you want to create the skill as an attainable goal along with the steps to reach the goal? If so, what is the goal and what are the steps?
5. If you intend to share the skill with others, how will you make the skillful solution more understandable? Will you create a definition *About* the skill, *Why* the skill meets the challenge, and *How* the skill meets the challenge?

Transformation: Reflecting on Adaptability

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and more usable.





1. You have discovered how you used something like Adaptability on a challenge that you faced in your past. You, along with a companion, have also used the Adaptability skill on a current challenge. Now,

think about or reflect upon the Adaptability skill. What is a word or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Adaptability for you? This is a good oral exercise in a group setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise.

2. Reflect upon the skill of Adaptability. Meaning, how have you changed since working with the exercises. How did your thinking change? What did you learn from working on a real challenge with another person? Try describing the Adaptability skill in a few of your own words.

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment helps you monitor your progress and adjust your learning.

Your Change of Behavior	Your response			
Honestly answer the following questions. If you worsened or did not change, try repeating the exercises again.	 Worsened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Ability to apply the Adaptability skill to a personal challenge				
Ability to reach out to a social support system (companions) to better deal with personal challenges				
Ability to work with a personal challenge through to its end				
Feel more confident about yourself				