

RESILIENCY

Secular psychology and resiliency studies point us to things the Bible has been teaching us all along. The following are important life skills but they each have a much deeper and richer meaning in the context of God's word. As we study the Bible this perspective has been added (shown in boxes) to Dr. Sood's article.

"9 Essential Skills that Make You Resilient" by Amit Sood, MD

1. Composure

"You will succeed if you persevere; and you will find a joy in overcoming obstacles." – Helen Keller

Why It Boosts Resilience: A surprise diagnosis, a stuck elevator, a flat tire, a lost wallet — life offers countless scenarios that throw our equilibrium off balance. These situations (particularly the disturbing ones) can shift our thinking patterns from rational ones to reactive ones.

How to Get Better at It: To be more resilient, stop, recognize the disruption, and take a minute to think about how you want to respond. Opt for solutions that represent your values and protect your interests. A few deep breaths can help too, by stemming the adrenaline surge.

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Isaiah 26:3

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. Psalm 23:1-3

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27

2. Patience

"He that can have patience can have what he will." - Benjamin Franklin

Why It Boosts Resilience: Listening is an art that tests our patience, especially when the other person shares something we don't want to hear or when we'd rather be the one doing the talking. Patience is a marker of resilience.

How to Get Better at It: Giving others our full attention when they're speaking, delaying judgment, and letting others complete their thoughts uninterrupted makes us better listeners — and therefore more resilient. Remember that listening to others helps them feel happier and worthy — your two ears are your most powerful organs of healing others.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.
Galatians 5:22-23

As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. James 5:11

So that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of His holy people in the Kingdom of light. Colossians 1:10-12

3. Optimism

“Courage does not always roar. Sometimes courage is a quiet voice at the end of the day that says, ‘I will try again tomorrow.’” - Mary Anne Radmacher

Why It Boosts Resilience: Hope is the expectation of a better tomorrow. The hopeful are happier, healthier, and even live longer. While it’s certainly easier for most of us to feel optimistic on days when the world is good to us, it’s just as important to stay positive on the darker days.

How to Get Better at It: To get better at seeing the bright spots in tough times (and stay resilient), remember happy moments, the people who support you, your strengths, your purpose, and what you believe in. Hope is partly innate, but to a great extent, is a matter of choice.

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. Romans 5:3-5

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

4. Gratitude

“When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.” - G. K. Chesterton

Why It Boosts Resilience: Gratitude is like pizza toppings. Its presence makes the experience a whole lot more enjoyable. An attitude of gratitude strengthens our relationships and overall well-being.

How to Get Better at It: To get better at being grateful, you need to practice it in both the big and small moments — to savor your successes and find extraordinary within the ordinary. Be thankful for something simple, like a deep breath, a glass of water, a creative insight, a smile, a hug, or something that arrives on time.

**Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.
1 Thessalonians 5:18**

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. Colossians 3:16

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6

5. Acceptance

“Acceptance of what has happened is the first step to overcoming the consequences of any misfortune.”

- William James

Why It Boosts Resilience: Most of us love control, but so much of life is out of our control. You have a choice: Either get rattled by uncertainty or embrace the reality of uncertainty. (Hint: The latter will boost resilience.)

How to Get Better at It: Embracing the uncertainty means engaging creatively with the unknown. Do it by being open and accepting of what comes your way. You’re saying yes to life — to the good, but also to the unpleasant.

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 1 Timothy 6:17

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 1:20

So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good. 1 Peter 4:19

6. Kindness

“Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind.” - Henry James

Why It Boosts Resilience: We choose to be kind — and it takes considerable willpower to do so. Physical illness, fear, losses, insecurities, and most energy-depleting experiences decrease our capacity to act kindly toward others and ourselves. (Think of your temper when your back is aching or you’re stressed at work.) Not treating one another with kindness, however, stands in the way of coping, healing, and problem-solving.

How to Get Better at It: Commit to being kind to others and to yourself (even when it takes more effort). Remaining kind during difficult times might initially need a little extra effort, but eventually becomes effortless.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

1 Corinthians 13:4

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Colossians 3:12

7. Sense of Purpose

"God has a purpose for everything, and it's a proper and a right purpose that will end up giving us more fuller love and compassion from the heart of God." - Jimmy Davis

Why It Boosts Resilience: Recognizing our purpose helps us focus our energy, keeps us engaged, makes it easier to be hopeful, fills us with courage, and — you guessed it — bolsters resilience. Purpose can come from a pursuit to help other people or to abide by a set of values.

How to Get Better at It: To identify what gives your life purpose and meaning, think about it. Write it down. It might be one big thing. It might be a whole lot of little things. You'll know you've landed on it if it makes you smile, fills you with courage, and prompts you to experience the day feeling inspired.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. Romans 8:28

Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 2 Corinthians 5:5

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' Matthew 22:37

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:19-20

For whoever does the will of My Father in Heaven is My brother and sister and mother. Matthew 12:50

8. Forgiveness

"Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude." - Martin Luther King Jr.

Why It Boosts Resilience: No matter how wonderful your friends, loved ones, and colleagues are, you will have misunderstandings and they will disappoint you. You have a choice: Fester the resulting hurt or find healing. Forgiveness decreases the load of your hurts, which frees up your brain to focus on the things that make your life meaningful and bring you joy.

How to Get Better at It: To be resilient, take back the power from the person who hurt you by letting go of the grudge, at least for today, and spend your energy toward actions that fulfill your life's purpose.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. Matthew 6:12

But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matthew 6:15

Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them. Luke 17:4

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:13

“In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Ephesians 4:26-27

9. Connection

“Loneliness does not come from having no people around one, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important.” - Carl Jung

Why It Boosts Resilience: Loneliness doesn't mean we don't have people around us or we don't have people to do things with. We can feel lonely in a party of a hundred people or feel deeply connected in the company of one or two good friends. Loneliness is a lack of true connection to others, and it's harmful to our minds and our bodies.

How to Get Better at It: Build resilience by cultivating strong relationships with at least a few people. They will help you nurture hope and courage — and they can boost physical health and longevity, too.

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:26-27

For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Romans 14:7-8

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. John 15:5

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

1 Peter 5:9

20 Tips for Building and Cultivating Your Resilience by Amit Sood, MD

1. For minor annoyances, ask yourself: Will it matter in five years? If it won't matter in five years, perhaps it isn't worth disrobing your peace today.
2. Give no one the power to lower your self-worth. Believe in those who believe in you. Look at yourself with the eyes of the people who accept and love you unconditionally.
3. At least once a week spend quality time with someone who inspires you.
4. Volunteer. Research shows that volunteering is associated with better physical and emotional health and even increased longevity.
5. Think of the larger purpose of your life. Live our days aligned with that sense of purpose.

6. Embrace your vulnerability. Be authentic. Accept that it's okay to feel sad once in a while.
7. Recognize that most people are struggling in their own unique way. Keep a low threshold when it comes to offering forgiveness.
8. Be kind, especially to yourself. Kindness is a marker of strength and not weakness.
9. Lower your threshold to feel grateful. Be grateful for a deep breath, the smell of coffee, the smile of a loved one, or the taste of water.
10. Instead of fighting the uncontrollable, creatively work with what is.
11. Make a 'not-to-do' list to keep your days light, alive and humming.
12. Feel connected to nature. Spend time noticing trees, birds, clouds, lakes, and rivers.
13. If there is a lot going on, consider 'scheduling your worries' instead of letting worries usurp your entire day.
14. Read good books. Watch inspiring movies.
15. Sleep at least 7 to 8 hours every night.
16. Practice deep breathing and other forms of meditation on most days. Aim for at least 15 minutes.
17. Avoid prolonged sitting.
18. Optimize the dose of news you consume every day. For any headline that distresses you, read something that inspires you or helps boost well-being.
19. Get up for the dining table a little hungry.
20. Nurture your spirituality and make time to integrate it into your life.

PERSONAL RESILIENCY BUILDERS

(as shown in a growing body of resiliency research)

1. **RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** – forgiveness, gratitude, calling, purpose, ultimate victory, trust, dependence, awareness of how God is at work, strength, wisdom, context, comfort, peace, joy, love, etc.
2. **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS** – friendships, mentors, family, church family, ministers, counselors, doctors, etc.
3. **ACTS OF SERVICE / HELPFULNESS TO OTHERS** – giving of yourself
4. **LIFE SKILLS** – good decision-making, assertiveness, impulse control, etc.
5. **HUMOR** – ability to laugh & see the humor in the midst of difficulty.
6. **SELF AWARENESS** – knowing what we need or don't need, listening to the subtle cues of our bodies and our moods, making decisions based on who we are.

7. **PERCEPTIVENESS** – insightful understanding of people and situations.
8. **INDEPENDENCE** – being able to distance yourself from unhealthy people or situations, being able to go your own way when you know it is the right way for you.
9. **POSITIVE VIEW OF PERSONAL FUTURE** – optimism, hope, seeing the good.
10. **FLEXIBILITY** – ability to adjust, to change, to bend as necessary to positively cope with situations.
11. **LOVE OF LEARNING** – capacity and desire to learn new things.
12. **SELF-MOTIVATION** – internal initiative, the ability to self-start, self-direct.
13. **COMPETENCE** – being good at something.
14. **SELF-WORTH** – positive self-image, self-confidence, self-regard.
15. **PERSEVERANCE** – ability to keep going despite difficulties.
16. **CREATIVITY** – expressiveness through art, imagination, creative thinking, etc.

Table 1

Which of the Personal Resiliency Builders come most naturally to you?

Choose one of the Personal Resiliency Builders and talk about a way that this Builder can be strengthened in your life.

Table 2

Read Philippians 4. How does this passage help us build resiliency?

What other verses of scripture or stories from God's word help build resiliency?

Table 3

Read some of the prayers for resiliency.

Talk about a sentence from the prayers that is meaningful to you.

How does prayer help build resiliency?

Write a prayer for resiliency.

Table 4

Draw a picture of resiliency.

As you draw, talk about how music can build resiliency.

What songs or lyrics have been helpful to you?

Table 5

**Write on the popsicle sticks notes to yourself
that will help build resiliency.**

**(quotes, lyrics, verses, story reminders, people who love you and are part
of your network of support, reminders to take care of yourself, prayers,
things you are grateful for, gifts God has given you, etc.)**

Table 6

Read one of the children's books.

Share with a friend at the table what it teaches about resiliency.

Prayers for Resiliency

Lord, I reach out to You for Your guidance.
Please show me which way to turn.
Calm my anxious thoughts, come speak into my mind.
Strengthen me as I falter and feel weary.
May I feel strength rising up within my heart.
Bring clarity into my visions and dreams.
I trust that You are with me, no matter where I go.
You journey with me always.
Amen.

O Lord,
You are the light that guides my feet.
You are the map that gives me direction.
You are the peace that makes me strong.
You are the leader whom I faithfully follow.
May Your light illuminate my life
And Your guidance bring direction.
May I find inspiration in Your word
And peace in my heart as I follow You.
Amen.

Thanks be to you, our Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits which You have given us,
for all the pains and insults which You have borne for us.
Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,
may we know You more clearly,
love You more dearly,
and follow You more nearly,
day by day.
Amen.

Lord,
I would love to be with my friend as they manages such hardships.
I would love to hold their hand and whisper words of comfort.
I would love to change their situation and bring new happiness.
I would love to help give her peace as she lies to rest.
I would love to wake her with new hope every morning.
I would love to know how to lead her through this hard time.
I would love to bless her with peace and joy and hope.
You are closer, stronger, wiser than I.
You are with her, Heavenly Father.
You are with her, and will hold her and protect her forever.
I trust in you.
Amen.

As I go to work,
Be with me Lord.
Be the patience when I'm frustrated.
Be the endurance when I am tired.
Be the wisdom when I am uncertain.
Be the inspiration when I'm out of ideas.
Be the peacemaker when I feel hurt.
Be the comforter when I feel overwhelmed.
Be the energy when I am weary.
Be the guide when I am confused.
Be the forgiver when I get it wrong.
Be with me Lord, today.

God of grace,
You make me softer, kinder, gentler, generous, forgiving and loving.
Yet at times I know these gifts wear thin. I feel impatience rising, I sense
resentment brooding and revenge is on my lips.
So I pray today and all days for more of Your Spirit. May the grace that You
pour out open the door for a renewing of my mind, a restoration of my heart
and a transformation of my soul.
Thank you that in You I find new strength discover more patience and walk
with grace at work in my life.
Amen.

I know I am weak Lord,
so I will allow You to carry me through this valley.
I struggle to think clearly,
so I depend upon Your living word to lift me.
I feel such darkness around,
so I look to Your light.
I walk with a heavy heart,
so I will give You each burden.
I wonder if my heart can take the strain,
so I rest in Your love and peace.
Remind me of the warm glow of Your hope in dark places.
Amen.

Lord, at the moment nothing seems to be able to help the loss I feel.
My heart is broken and my spirit mourns.
All I know is that Your grace is sufficient.
This day, this hour, moment by moment, I choose to lean on You,
For when I am at my weakest Your strength is strongest.
I pour out my grief to You and praise You that on one glorious day
When all suffering is extinguished and love has conquered
You will wipe every tear from our eyes.

Some Resiliency Verses

**“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.”
Job 1:21**

**“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are
no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will be joyful in God my Savior.” Habakkuk 3:17-18**

**“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the
Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9**

**“For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and self-
control.” 2 Timothy 1:7**

**“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right
hand.” Isaiah 41:10**

**“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”
John 16:33**

“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” Romans 8:18

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9

“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” Isaiah 40:31

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” Hebrews 12:1-3

Some Resiliency Quotes

“Life doesn’t get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger and more resilient.”

— Steve Maraboli

“The oak fought the wind and was broken, the willow bent when it must and survived.” — Robert Jordan

“If your heart is broken, make art with the pieces.” — Shane Koyczan

“It's a funny thing about life, once you begin to take note of the things you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things that you lack.”

— Germany Kent

“There comes a time in your life, when you walk away from all the drama and people who create it. You surround yourself with people who make you laugh. Forget the bad and focus on the good. Love the people who treat you right, pray for the ones who do not. Life is too short to be anything but happy. Falling down is a part of life, getting back up is living.” — José N. Harri

“My barn having burned down, I can now see the moon.” — Mizuta Masahide

“You may have to fight a battle more than once to win it.” — Margaret Thatcher

“Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and
got back up again.” — Nelson Mandela

“Note to self: every time you were convinced you couldn’t go on, you did.”
— Unknown

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something
else is more important than fear.” — Ambrose Redmoon

“The difference between a strong man and a weak one is that the former does
not give up after a defeat.” — Woodrow Wilson

“Only those who dare to fail greatly, can ever achieve greatly.”
— Robert F. Kennedy

“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.”
— Helen Keller

Toughness is in the soul and spirit, not in muscles. -Alex Karras

You never know how strong you are, until being strong is your only choice.
- unknown

I can accept failure, everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying.
- Michael Jordan