



## STRATEGIES FOR MINDFULNESS AND RESILIENCE

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First, what are mindfulness and resilience? Mindfulness is “paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 2007). Resilience is one’s ability to utilize and optimize a range of psychological qualities to withstand stressors (Sarkar and Fletcher, 2014).

Mindfulness helps us pause and pay attention so we can access those psychological qualities under stress.

Resilience stems from an appropriate amount of challenge coupled with appropriate support: too much challenge without support leads to burnout, low self-esteem, and job dissatisfaction; too much support without challenge leads to job dissatisfaction due to feeling stagnant in our own growth. Mindfulness practice allows us to assess how much challenge and support we have in any given moment. With that assessment, we can seek more support if needed, or feel prepared and equipped to rise to the challenge when appropriate.

Here are some ways that may help you foster mindfulness and resilience.

1. Pay attention on purpose. Driving to work, walking the halls, speaking to colleagues, even charting, these are great places to notice what’s happening in the moment. Notice sounds, textures, sights, smells, as well as anything you might feel internally. Pausing to pay attention throughout the day helps your brain learn to be present which will help you make the best possible assessment of stressful situations, and make informed decisions. Bonus, the better we are at making decisions under stress, the more we trust ourselves and the more resilient we become!
2. When things become stressful, pause, take a breath, and ask yourself, “is this outside my skill set?” If the answer is yes, consult or bring in another specialist, you are not alone. If the answer is “no,” take a moment to recall the years of training and experience that got you here. Mindfully reflecting on our experience can help foster confidence and allow us to access our skill sets under stress and grow to trust ourselves and build even more resilience.
3. Become a continuous learner. By asking ourselves “what did I learn from this situation?” we become more inclined toward learning rather than outcomes, allowing us to maintain our sense of self and our worthiness not matter the outcome.



4. Cultivate relationships through present moment focus. The more present we are, the more connected we feel to others. Not only does this build our support network for when we feel challenged, but also fosters a sense of belonging and safety. When we feel safe, our frontal lobe kicks on and allows us to access our skill set when we need it most.

As Brene Brown tells us, overwhelm is our *perception* of our ability to handle a situation, not our actual ability. Practicing mindfulness throughout the day can help us assess whether our perception is accurate and allow us to seek support where needed and rise to the challenge when the moment calls for it, making us a resilient workforce!