

REVEAL MORE™

Building Personal Resilience
Coaching Cards

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Card 1 *Where do you direct your attention?*

To things that you believe you can affect, change, influence or mitigate, or do you see and notice problems, issues, obstacles, rules, things that prevent you from taking action.

On the scale from 1 to 10 where 1 represents I always focus on what I believe I can affect and 10 I always focus on things that prevent me or get in my way. Where are you?

If it's the latter, start with small challenges, focus your thinking on 'what can I do that will make a difference' practice directing your internal thoughts towards 'what is the opportunity here'.

This is part of brain training, directing yourself to create new patterns that you can repeat, which re-enforces them making them new automatic responses to replace the not useful pattern that was being run.

Card 2 *What do you notice most?*

Opportunities or reasons not to do something. When we say opportunities we are describing the positive options available and reasons not to do something describe the negative reasons or barriers.

This can be nicely put over in the following story.

Two shoe salesmen were sent to Africa to see if there was a market for their product. The first salesman reported back, "This is a terrible business opportunity, no-one wears shoes." The second salesman reported back, "This is a fantastic business opportunity, no-one wears shoes."

The question to ask yourself is, when confronted with a problem or challenge, which salesman are you?

Card 3 *Thinking about your internal voice in your head*

Does this voice encourage you or discourage you in difficult situations? Some people experience their own voice giving them words of encouragement others experience the inner critic and hear themselves says things like 'I am not good enough to do this' or 'I don't know why your trying this it always turns out poorly' as examples.

Five tips to silencing the inner critic. When the critic starts say

1. 'So what, that's what you think but it does not mean it's true'
2. 'Who cares, I don't'
3. 'Big deal on your bike'
4. 'Why not, I am going to anyway'
5. 'What if it doesn't matter if I am.....or not' being whatever the inner critic judgement is

Card 4 *What beliefs about yourself do you hold?*

The beliefs we hold about ourselves our powerful drivers in our thinking and the behaviours we display!

Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives.

Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes. The way we think, our motivational process, our level of emotional control and the life choices we make

Card 5 *Self-efficacy Sources of influence 1* **MASTERY EXPERIENCES**

Proof fuels belief, Mastery comes from experience

Successes build a robust belief in one's personal efficacy. A resilient sense of efficacy requires experience in overcoming obstacles through persistent effort. Some setbacks and difficulties in human pursuits serve a useful purpose in teaching that success usually requires sustained effort.

Card 6 *Self-efficacy Sources of influence 2* **VICARIOUS EXPERIENCES**

Observation of others achieving and demonstrating what is possible

In NLP one of the presuppositions is **'possible in the world possible for me, it's only a case of how'**.

Seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort, raises our beliefs that we too possess the capabilities to master comparable activities required to succeed.

Card 7 *Self-efficacy Sources of influence 3* **MODELLING**

Do what successful people do

Modelling is different to just copying, when you copy you are just replicating the actions and the steps someone who is successful takes.

Modelling requires us to understand the things that are not seen, the beliefs they have which underpin their behaviours, what is important to the exemplar (Values) in the context of the task or process, what they notice and why etc. The more accurately we identify and correctly sequence all these elements the more accurately we replicate their success.

Card 8 *Self-efficacy Sources of influence 4* SOCIAL PERSUASION

Being told by others that we can achieve, overcome, and succeed

People who are persuaded verbally by others that they possess the capabilities to master given activities are likely to mobilize greater effort and sustain it, than if they harbour self-doubts and dwell on personal deficiencies when problems arise.

Card 9 *Are there any particular situations that you find more difficult to cope with?*

Increasing your self-awareness

All self-development starts from the same point. Self-awareness, once we acknowledge particular circumstances present us with some challenges, we can decide to do something about it. Do something different and get a different result. Be honest with yourself, what beliefs, thoughts, self-limiting beliefs do you have about this situation? What do you need to believe in order to make changes?

Card 10 *Where is your current locus of control?*

*Internal or External, Note that, like other preferences, this is a spectrum.
Internal.....External*

People with a high internal locus of control believe in their own ability to control themselves and influence the world around them. They see their future as being in their own hands and that their own choices lead to success or failure. People with a high external locus of control believe that control over events and what other people do is outside them, and that they personally have little or no control over such things. They may even believe that others have control over them and that they can do nothing but obey.

Card 11 *How do you frame bad events?*

Do you view them in isolation or do you use a bad event as evidence of your inabilities and failings in life?

People with high levels of resilience are able to look at events in isolation, attribute factors to failures, and make sense of what went on, picking up valuable lessons and applying them the next time the same or similar situation occurs.

We must be aware of 'generalising' (an example might be, because I got the order of the documents for an important meeting in the wrong order and got in a rather bad muddle when trying to distribute them around the room I am a bad PA) or putting oneself consistently as the cause! (Everything I touch goes bad)

Card 12 *How well do you stay focused and undistracted?*

On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is easily distracted and 10 is very focused

What distracts you most? Some people find it hard to concentrate if there is a lot of noise going on around them, they may find their interest moving to what is going on elsewhere, or it may be they are stimulated by images or colour, we all have different preferences that get our attention, it's our ability to control and direct our attention that forms the basis of persistence and ability to stay on task.

Card 13 *Do you have a strategy to deal with big issues and problems when they occur?*

Emotionally

State management is defined as our ability to regulate our emotional response in the context of a situation, challenge or difficulty. You may know or have witnessed people who exhibit both exceptional emotional control and poor emotional control. Often the ability to stay calm, controlling the fight or flight response whilst remaining alert is the key to being able to think clearly and make better decisions under pressure.

Card 14 *Do you have a strategy to deal with big issues and problems when they occur?*

Cognitively

When dealing with difficult or challenging problems, the introduction of a time constraint increases the pressure felt by a person, the ability to analyse, prioritise, produce options, select appropriate responses, monitor, amend actions whilst remaining responsive and flexible to a possible changing situation, demand resilience.

Take your time, many situations do not require instant action, they require an appropriate response which can only be determined following a thorough analysis of the information available. Make plans to cope with foreseeable challenges, use probability/impact assessments to affect these plans. Use the wealth of experience and knowledge of people around you to make informed decisions, and break larger more complex problems down into manageable tasks and where appropriate allocate resources roles and responsibilities to complete them.

Card 15 *Do you have a strategy to deal with big issues and problems when they occur?*

Somatically (behaviourally)

The Mercedes model in **NLP** demonstrates that all three areas are *interconnected*. Our internal state, how we feel about the situation, our internal processing, what we are thinking about the situation and our external behaviours, what we do in the situation. Each has a profound effect on the other, if we demonstrate certain behaviours that may be less beneficial both for ourselves and others than we may wish to change them.

Firstly do we have awareness of those behaviours? Being driven from our unconscious we are often not aware at a conscious level of what we do, however other are more likely to see and register these behaviours and are ideally placed to be able to give us feedback. Are we willing to accept the feedback? More importantly are we prepared to act upon it? Other types of feedback that can be considered in the workplace are 360 feedback surveys, customer/client, colleague focus groups, self-inventory questionnaires, appraisal meetings etc.

Card 16 *Thoughts*

What happens in your head when things start to go wrong?

Mindfulness is a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations without reacting to them in any way.

By being fully present in this way – not forcing things or hiding from them, but actually being with them, we create space to respond in new ways to situations and make wise choices. We may not always have full control over our lives, but with mindfulness we can work with our minds

and bodies, learning how to live with more appreciation and less anxiety. In the fast paced society we live in, where connectability and availability through the use of modern technology are encouraging us to expect instant responses, there is little time to think and reflect. Achieving stillness in mind has long been practiced through meditation, yoga and other practices for millennia.

Card 17 *Future pacing*

Your brain knows no difference between actual and simulated events

Future pacing is an **NLP** description for going out in time (into the future) and imagining yourself using new skills or being in situations equipped with different beliefs and thoughts about a situation. Athletes in all kind of sports have been using this technique for many years to enhance performance and to mentally prepare for situations.

The technique is a particularly good way to avoid predicted events for the first time as they occur and having already the perfect outcome the brain instinctively knows what to do, which needs the use of less energy, faster response times and greater accuracy.

Vanessa Mae was once placed into a MRI scanner and asked to think about playing her favourite piece of music, whilst doing so her brain scan was recorded and in a subsequent second session she actually played her violin to the same piece. The comparable brain scans were remarkably similar demonstrating that thinking about doing something uses the same neural pathways and areas of the brain as actually doing it for real.

Card 18 *What goals and objectives have you set for yourself?*

Over the next month, 6 months, 1 year.....

People who have high levels of resilience set themselves challenges even difficult goals that they may fail in their first attempt. By stretching yourself and pushing your boundaries you build experience and knowledge, you create the opportunity to learn from mistakes

'Edison apparently made 2000 bulbs that failed before inventing the one that worked!'

It is important to keep things moving, so for instance having a goal that may take 12 - 18 months to achieve, will have milestones, smaller goals that will be achieved on the way, achieving these smaller and shorter time span milestones is encouraging, you can see your progress, it's reassuring and builds self- efficacy.

Card 19 *Reflecting on experiences*

How much time do you set aside for reflective learning each week?

Reflective learning is a way of allowing a person to step back from their learning experience, to help them develop critical thinking skills and improve on future performance by analysing their experience. This type of learning helps move the person from surface to deep learning and can include a range of activities including self-review, peer review, keeping a learning log and personal development plans.

Reflection should become a routine part of working life that is more or less instinctive. People who routinely plan, record and reflect on their learning tend to see more opportunities for personal development. It's a matter of capturing the moment.

Card 20 *What was the last thing that went wrong for you?*

What did you learn from it?

So if our first or several early attempts prove unsuccessful we can make the assumption '*what we are doing is not working*' and therefore we must **do something differently**.

The proverb serves as a useful prompt that we must not give up but try again, the critical part is do not keep doing the same thing over and over again for as Einstein once *said 'Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results'*.

Continuous improvement involves the cycle: **Plan, Do, Check, Act** ensuring that we make the necessary adjustments before trying again and we are able to attribute the output to the changes.

Card 21 *Outlook on life*

Are you naturally more optimistic or pessimistic about issues and problems?

Optimistic.....Pessimistic

Those with a greater level of **optimism** are in a mindset of **being solution focused**, believe they can overcome the problem and see it as a challenge. People, who are naturally pessimistic in outlook, tend to expect the worst, can believe failure is inevitable and therefore convince themselves it's not worth taking the risk of trying.

Research has shown that optimism is correlated with many positive life outcomes including increased life expectancy, general health, better mental health, increased success in sports and work, greater recovery rates from heart operations and better coping strategies when faced with adversity.

Card 22 *Framing events*

Think of a time when something has not worked out? How are you framing it? Have you been blaming yourself for the failure?

How you frame a situation will affect how you perceive it, how you feel about it and what action you take. For example, you could reflect on an experience in terms of how you failed or you could reflect on the same experience in terms of what you have learned.

Whichever frame you choose will change the results. So it's good to know which frame you are using. Framing and reframing are powerful tools in managing your state and enabling you to be in the most resourceful state to achieve outcomes.

Card 23 *Seeing things in isolation*

Life is complicated and challenging and things happen for a reason

People with high levels of personal resilience very often have great analytical skills. They have the ability to take raw data either qualitative or quantitative and turn it into information that they then use to analyse the situation.

Some examples of analytical skills include the ability to break arguments or theories into small parts, conceptualize ideas and devise conclusions with supporting arguments. Additional examples include detecting patterns, brainstorming, being observant, interpreting data and integrating information into a theory.

Card 24 *Taking decisive actions*

Could you, be trying to be a perfectionist, acting the pacifist, the apprehensive because of the unknown or the play it safe to avoid possible further hurt?

There are four types of personality that have the most trouble making decisions.

The **perfectionist** who wants everything to be perfect and ideal, the thought of having to make a decision that may lead to anything else than perfect is often viewed as unacceptable and a failure resulting in indecision, waiting in case the decision can be improved. Uncertainty is the perfectionist's enemy.

The **pacifist** who wants to avoid conflict, goes with the flow in order not to upset anyone. Rarely takes decisions, accepting the decisions of others but who negates their own needs, the risk being it drains the person's creative energy and blinds them to new opportunities.

The **apprehensive** personality, who endlessly runs through 'what if' scenarios most of which have a poor outcome. They can spend more time reasoning with themselves in the privacy of their own head than focused on the difficult decision to be made.

The **Traumatised** people who have experienced some trauma in their lives resulting in some form of emotional hurt, the priority for these people is protection from further hurt. They are likely to put off making decisions entirely or hand over the responsibility to someone else. The protective emotional wall that has been built up and maintained leaves them isolated and unconnected with others.

Card 25 *Seeing things from a different perspective*

'Don't judge a man until you have walked a mile in his moccasins'

The NLP notion of perceptual positions was originally formulated by John Grinder and Judith DeLozier (1987) "**Perceptual Positions**" has been an important and useful distinction in NLP, one that can be used to enhance our flexibility, wisdom and resourcefulness. There are three major perceptual positions:

SELF position is experiencing the world from my own position: I see and hear other people and the world around me from my own point of view, have my own feelings, etc. This is also called association.

OTHER position is experiencing the world literally from some other person's position. If I remember a conversation with a friend, I recall it as him, seeing and hearing events from his viewpoint, feeling his body feelings, etc.

OBSERVER position means experiencing the world from the outside, as an observer. If I do this, I literally observe myself and whatever situation I am in from the outside, as if seeing someone else. This is also called dissociation.

Brilliant people in many disciplines are able to shift their perceptual position flexibly, and this is a basis for their special skills.

Card 26 *Motivational Direction*

Are you moving towards goals or ambitions or away from problems and issues in your life?

Towards and away from motivational strategies are used not exclusively, but we are likely to have a stronger preference for one than for the other. Those who utilise toward strategies, set goals easily and have ambitions

to achieve in the future their journeys end is the accomplishment of the goal, it's a pleasure and they feel good when they have achieved it.

In contrast people who are away from motivated, wait for the level of discomfort of pain felt in their current situation before doing something to alleviate it or bring it to an end or because of previous experience are motivated to take actions that will prevent them from being in that painful position once more.

Each of these two strategies has benefits to them as well as downsides. Even though it may seem a better choice to be motivated towards pleasure instead of moving away from pain, they are both great motivators, and great systems for your body to keep you out of trouble as well. Since it is the away from pain system that keeps you from placing your hand on a hot stove, because you know it will mean extreme pain.

Card 27 *Talking to someone*

A problem shared is a problem halved

Talking through problems, issues and challenges with someone else helps to clarify your thoughts, when you are articulating the subject to someone else you are having to mentally organize all information you have about the problem. Moreover, by making your problem explicit, you free it from useless psychological noise, such as your anxiety or frustration for not being able to solve it. Uncovering hidden assumptions by assuming the other person's total lack of knowledge on the subject, you focus on explaining what you know, instead of focusing on figuring out solutions. By making your knowledge and assumptions explicit, you often access different or overlooked information, and thus access entirely new avenues of thought. When we externalise the problem we use different parts of the brain and therefore are approaching the issue differently.

Card 28 *Taking personal responsibility*

Take charge and be in control

When you take **personal responsibility**, you take ownership of situations that you're involved in. You see them through, and you take responsibility for what happens – good or bad. You don't blame others if things go wrong. Instead, you do your best to make things right.

People who were encouraged to take personal responsibility for their actions also have more positive social interactions. It also builds trust within teams and organizations, because people know that they can depend on each other.

Card 29 *Managing strong feelings and impulse*

Good things come to those who wait

In the late 1960s, Walter Mischel and Ebbe B. Ebbesen at Stanford University submitted hundreds of four-year-olds to an ingenious little test of willpower: the kids were placed in a small room with a marshmallow or other tempting food and told they could either eat the treat now, or, if they could hold out for another 15 minutes until the researcher returned, they could have two.

Most children said they would wait. But some failed to resist the pull of temptation for even a minute. Many others struggled a little longer before eventually giving in. The most successful participants figured out how to distract themselves from the treat's seduction — by turning around, covering their eyes or kicking the desk, for instance — and delayed gratification for the full 15 minutes.

In follow-up studies, Mischel found unexpected correlations between the results of the marshmallow test and the success of the children many

years later. The first follow-up study, in 1988, showed that "preschool children who delayed gratification longer in the self-imposed delay paradigm, were described more than 10 years later by their parents as adolescents who were significantly more competent."

A second follow-up study, in 1990, showed that the ability to delay gratification also correlated with higher SAT scores.

A 2011 brain imaging study of a sample from the original Stanford participants when they reached mid-life showed key differences between those with high delay times and those with low delay times in two areas: the prefrontal cortex (more active in high delayers) and the ventral striatum (an area linked to addictions) when they were trying to control their responses to alluring temptations.

Card 30 *Who else may have faced this problem and overcome it?*

You're not the first and you won't be the last

Another useful approach to involve others and benefit from their participation in resolving an issue or overcoming a challenge is Action learning. Action Learning is an approach to solving real problems that involves taking action and reflecting upon the results, which helps improve the problem-solving process, as well as the solutions developed by the team.

The action learning process includes:

1. a real problem that is important, critical, and usually complex
2. a diverse problem-solving team or "set"
3. a process that promotes curiosity, inquiry, and reflection

4. a requirement that talk be converted into action and, ultimately, a solution

5. a commitment to learning.

In many, but not all, forms of action learning, a coach is included who is responsible for promoting and facilitating learning as well as encouraging the team to be self-managing. In addition, the learning acquired by working on complex, critical, and urgent problems that have no currently acceptable solutions can be applied by individual, teams, and organizations to other situations.

The theory of action learning and the epistemological position were developed originally by Reg Revans (1982) who applied the method to support organisational and business development, problem solving and improvement.

Action learning has been demonstrated to be very effective in developing a number of individual leadership and team problem solving skills; it has been used extensively as a component in corporate and organizational leadership development programs. Because complex problems require many skills, individual team members can develop a customized learning agenda for themselves. This strategy is quite different from the "one size fits all" curriculum that is characteristic of many training and development programs.

Card 31 *Make connections and a strong network*

A strong network is like money in the bank

The three forms of networking

Managers who think they are adept at networking are often operating only at an operational or personal level.

Effective leaders learn to employ networks for strategic purposes.

	Operational	Personal	Strategic
Purpose	Getting work done efficiently; maintaining the capacities and functions required of the group	Enhancing personal and professional development; providing referrals to useful information and contacts	Figuring out future priorities and challenges; getting stakeholder support for them
Location and temporal orientation	Contacts are mostly internal and orientated toward current demands	Contacts are mostly external and orientated toward current interests and future potential interests	Contacts are internal and external and orientated towards the future
Players and recruitment	Key contacts are relatively nondiscretionary; they are prescribed mostly by the task and organisational structure, so it is very clear who is relevant	Key contacts are mostly discretionary; it is not always clear who is relevant	Key contacts follow from the strategic context and the organisational environment, but specific membership is discretionary; it is not always clear who is relevant
Network attributes and key behaviours	Depth: Building strong working relationships	Breadth: reaching out to contacts who can make referrals	Leverage: Creating inside-outside links

Card 32 Pay attention to your needs and feelings

You know yourself best 'Listen to your needs'

Too much work and not enough play, makes Jack a dull boy. Proverb

Mental

Sarah Stewart-Brown, professor of public health at the University of Warwick and a wellbeing expert, says: "*Feeling happy is a part of mental wellbeing. But it's far from the whole.*" Feelings of contentment, enjoyment, confidence and engagement with the world are all a part of mental wellbeing. Self-esteem and self-confidence are, too.

Learning new skills can be useful, but research shows it can also improve our mental wellbeing. It doesn't have to mean getting more qualifications. There are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life. Many of us associate learning with childhood or our student days. As adults, it can seem as though we have less time or need to learn new things. But evidence shows that continuing to learn throughout life can improve and maintain our mental wellbeing.

Physical

Exercise helps memory and thinking through both direct and indirect means. The benefits of exercise come directly from its ability to reduce insulin resistance, reduce inflammation, and stimulate the release of growth factors—chemicals in the brain that affect the health of brain cells, the growth of new blood vessels in the brain, and even the abundance and survival of new brain cells. Indirectly, exercise improves mood and sleep, and reduces stress and anxiety. Problems in these areas frequently cause or contribute to cognitive impairment.

Many studies have suggested that the parts of the brain that control thinking and memory (the prefrontal cortex and medial temporal cortex) have greater volume in people who exercise versus people who don't. Rest and relaxation is the cessation of work, exertion, or activity which could result into peace, ease, relief from disturbance, mental &

emotional tranquillity and healing. The importance and benefits of rest and relaxation

The benefits of rest and relaxation are:

- It restores/refreshes us when tired
- Rest repairs the body - The activities of the body slow down when we sleep, therefore body building cells carry on their recuperative work.
- Rest gives more energy
- Relaxation give better sleep
- Rest enhances immunity
- Rest helps increase concentration
- Rest gives better problem-solving abilities
- Rest and relaxation gives greater efficiency
- Rest and relaxation ensures smoother emotions — less anger, crying, anxiety, frustration
- Rest results in less headaches and pain
- Relaxation and sleep gives the heart a rest by slowing the heart rate
- Rest reduces blood pressure
- Rest and sleep slows the rate of breathing, resulting in balance of the Autonomic Nervous System

Emotional

A useful definition of emotional wellbeing is offered by the Mental Health Foundation: 'A positive sense of wellbeing which enables an individual to be able to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life;

people in good mental health have the ability to recover effectively from illness, change or misfortune.

Everyday emotional well-being also involves identifying, building upon, and operating from your strengths rather than focusing on fixing problems or weaknesses. The better you are able to master your emotions, the greater your capacity to enjoy life, cope with stress, and focus on important personal priorities.

Card 33 *Success breeds Success*

Think of a time when you have been faced with something not going to plan that you turned around and got a good outcome.

Maya Angelou once said, *“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”* And what’s the best way to make people feel? **By telling a compelling story.**

The same can be said of the stories we keep about ourselves and our achievements in our heads, by accessing the story we get all the feelings that happened at the time of the event, we feel good, it lifts our spirits and we find further motivation to repeat it again. From a broader perspective the art of storytelling has been around for thousands of years, and has been used to bond individuals into groups and communities as well as to hand down information, demonstrate values, rules and mantras. We all like a good story, so if you are managing or in a leadership position what stories do you use and tell in your organisation?

Card 34 Goals

Choose a small goal or achievement that you can make happen.

It's surprising how many things we may commit to doing, sometimes starting them but never actually completing them. A good practice is to write down what we have decided to do and by when we are going to have achieved it.

Using a diary can be helpful as well, commit in writing the goal or objective on the day you decide that is what you want, then go to the date when you want to achieved it by and write an entry to remind yourself. You may even want to choose some milestone dates and write into those where you will be on your journey; these can serve as encouragement especially if you reach the milestone before the date or have surpassed it. Learning logs can be useful, we often overlook the things we have achieved and the small steps that make up the journey

'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step'.

Lao-tzu, The Way of Lao-tzu

Chinese philosopher (604 BC - 531 BC)

Card 35 *Problem Solving*

Crosswords or Sudoku build problem solving abilities

1. **Focus on the solution** – not the problem

Neuroscientists have proven that your brain cannot find solutions if you focus on the problem. This is because when you focus on the problem you're effectively feeding 'negativity' which in turn activates negative emotions in the brain.

2. Have an **open mind** Try and entertain *'ALL POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS'* – even if they seem ridiculous at first. It's important you keep an open mind to boost creative thinking, which can trigger potential solutions. 'No idea is a bad idea' and this aids creative thinking in brainstorming and other problem-solving techniques. It's often the crazy ideas that trigger other more viable solutions.

3. View problems neutrally. If you think about it what is a problem? It's really just feedback on your current situation. All a problem is telling you is that something is not currently working and that you need to find a new way around it. So try and **approach problems neutrally** – without any judgment.

4. **Think laterally** Change the 'direction' of your thoughts by thinking laterally. *'You cannot dig a hole in a different place by digging it deeper'*. Try to change your approach and look at things in a new way. Try flipping your objective around and looking for a solution that is the polar opposite! by this we mean what would i have to do, to make this even worse. Even if it feels silly, a fresh & unique approach usually stimulates a fresh solution.

5. **Use language that creates possibility**. Lead your thinking with phrases like *'what if...'* and *'imagine if...'* These terms open up our brains to think creatively and encourage solutions.

6. **Simplify things**. As human beings we have a tendency to make things more complicated than they need to be! Try simplifying your problem by generalizing it. Remove all the detail and go back to the basics. Try looking for a really easy, obvious solution – you might be surprised at the results!

Card 36 *Hobbies sports or interests*

Activities outside work provide interest and relaxation

A number of positive attributes that link into building resilience can be found in pursuing sports, hobbies and interests.

- These include having a sense of belonging, being a contributor and having involvement with other people.
- Having the opportunity to tap into good influences & form healthy relationships.
- Understand / exercise personal responsibility and meet obligations.
- Having the opportunity for learning, developing life skills, highlighting achievements.
- Developing coping strategies problem solving skills, taking risks, being brave, having a laugh.
- Recognising Core self, having a sense of hope and purpose, dealing with ones feelings, getting to know oneself more fully, fostering talents.

Card 37 *Experiential learning*

Fake it until you make it

You can start to build your confidence right now by telling yourself that you've got it in you; the more you believe that you are capable, the more you will be.

The placebo effect tells us that expectations alone can be strong enough to overcome diseases and afflictions, and the self-fulfilling prophecy illustrates how your predictions about a situation influence the outcome, so why shouldn't you be able to alter your expectations about your own abilities and experience a renewal of confidence?

Get into the routine of telling yourself that you can be successful in all aspects of your life, and you may find that you can not only handle many more challenges but that you have been able to all along.

Card 38 *Awareness*

What do I do well?

“Use your signature strengths and virtues in the service of something much larger than you are.” ~ Martin Seligman (2002)

Martin Seligman is a pioneer of Positive Psychology (the term itself was coined by Abraham Maslow), not simply because he has a systematic theory about why happy people are happy, but because he uses the scientific method to explore it. Through the use of exhaustive questionnaires, Seligman found that the most satisfied, upbeat people were those who had discovered and exploited their unique combination of “signature strengths,” such as humanity, temperance and persistence. This vision of happiness combines the virtue ethics of Confucius, Mencius and Aristotle with modern psychological theories of motivation.

Seligman’s conclusion is that happiness has three dimensions that can be cultivated: the **Pleasant Life**, the **Good Life**, and the **Meaningful Life**.

The **Pleasant Life** is realised if we learn to savour and appreciate such basic pleasures as companionship, the natural environment and our bodily needs. We can remain pleasantly stuck at this stage or we can go on to experience the **Good Life**, which is achieved through discovering our unique virtues and strengths, and employing them creatively to enhance our lives. According to modern theories of self-esteem life is only genuinely satisfying if we discover value within ourselves. Yet one of the best ways of discovering this value is by nourishing our unique strengths in contributing to the happiness of our fellow humans. Consequently the final stage is the **Meaningful Life**, in which we find a

deep sense of fulfilment by employing our unique strengths for a purpose greater than ourselves.

Card 39 *The personal test of resilience*

Choose to do one thing every day for a period of 30 days

Here are a few reasons to do something new for 30 days. 30 days is just about long enough to add something to your life or subtract a habit as a consequence. Your 30 days are going to be more memorable,

- You will not forget them for as long as you live, you will be able to recall exactly what happened each day.
- Your self-confidence will grow, you may experience difficulty and challenge but you will overcome.
- You will become more adventurous after all you will have the confidence to take on anything you really want to and will do stuff that you believed you were not capable of doing.
- As a consequence of doing something new for 30 days you will notice and accept that small sustainable changes that you keep doing are more likely to stick.

So if there is stuff you have always wanted to try, try it and try it every day for 30 days

Card 40 *Do something difficult for you*

We do 3 things, what we are good at, what we like to do and what we are made to do

Doing something that is difficult tests resolve, naturally you are unlikely to have skill or maybe even a great deal of competence due to not having practiced doing it.

Nobody is making us do the thing we find difficult, nobody else may know the challenge we have set ourselves and nobody would be any the wiser if you gave up! Only you. This is a personal resilience test, and everyone who does this kind of challenge gets different learnings and discoveries about themselves.

Card 41 Purpose

Finding your sense of purpose in life

Know that there is a difference between having a “life purpose” which is a specific destination and having a “sense of purpose” which is a feeling that provides you direction. Having a sense of direction will help you make career and life choices even if you don’t have a specific life purpose. Declaring a definitive purpose defines a specific destination. The latter—living with a sense of purpose—identifies a feeling. If you haven’t identified your life purpose, choosing to find your direction over a destination can make your life easier. You can quit beating yourself up for not having one purpose in life.

“When you release the need to know the definitive answer to the purpose question, you live for a feeling instead of a goal. You appreciate what sparks your love, gratitude, laughter, pride and awe instead of losing these moments to your to-do lists”. Dr. Marcia Reynolds

Card 42 Change

Your personal review of your current ability to deal with imposed change

- Do you feel vulnerable to change? If so talk to someone, '*a problem shared is a problem halved*'.
- Are you proactive when faced with imposed change? Look for the opportunities, sometimes these may not be obvious '*every cloud has a silver lining*'.

- You are never just experiencing one emotion when faced with change, there will be a variety and some of them very different, for instance you may be experiencing fear but also excitement, where is your focus? Control that focus and recognise you have positive emotions about the change.
 - Seek reassurance from previous experiences or the experiences of others going through change.
 - If you experience a dip in motivation, or a lowering of your mood, take positive action to get back on track. Take a walk, enjoy some fresh air, do something that you enjoy doing to interrupt your undesired state and set yourself up to succeed.
 - Take a step back and calm your mind so that you can see things with a greater degree of clarity
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Card 43 *Inner circle*

How open and honest are you with the issues and challenges you face?

Constructive criticism is an important ingredient for personal and professional development and for strengthening relationships, whether it's from your manager, a friend at work another work colleague.

'Feedback is the breakfast of champions'. Ken Blanchard

Yet we must embrace feedback if we are to get better. Keep these steps in mind when your chosen mentors give you some helpful feedback.

1. **Practice active listening.** Feedback, however painful, is truly a gift so treat the “giver” appropriately. While receiving feedback, maintain good eye contact and keep your body language open—no crossed arms or legs! Summarize what you heard and ask clarifying questions.
2. **Never argue;** just say thanks. Your natural tendency may be to turn your “clarifying questions” into a spirited defence. Feedback is the other person’s observations and probably their thoughts on you, defending

yourself sends the signal to the giver that you are unreceptive. There is only one appropriate response to constructive criticism and that is, “Thank you.”

3. **Evaluate it**, slowly. Just as you shouldn’t summarily reject feedback, you shouldn’t automatically accept it either. Get in the practice of evaluating the feedback slowly. Chew on it for a day or more. Does the criticism seem true; is it something you already knew was a limitation? Have other people said similar things to you?

Card 44 *Emotional intelligence*

Self-Awareness, Awareness of others, Self-management, managing relationships

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to identify, use, understand, and manage your own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict. This ability also allows us to recognize and understand what others are experiencing emotionally. This recognition and understanding is, for the most part, a nonverbal process that informs thinking and influences how well you connect with others.

Emotional intelligence differs from how we think of intellectual ability, in that emotional intelligence is a learned—not acquired. This learning can take place at any time in life so the social and emotional skill set, known as emotional intelligence, is something we can all have.

It is important to remember that there is a difference, however, between learning about emotional intelligence and applying that knowledge to your life. Just because you know you should do something doesn’t mean you will—especially when you become overwhelmed by stress, which can override your best intentions. In order to permanently change behaviour in ways that stand up under pressure, you need to learn how to

overcome stress in the moment and in your relationships in order to remain emotionally aware. Dan Goleman 1996

Card 45 *Energy*

Managing your energy

Consider the effect of high and low energy levels on your emotions.

Energy states can be high or low and as either positive or negative. Typical feelings involving high positive energy are hopefulness, passion, challenge, and connection; other feelings of high positive energy are alertness, focus, enthusiasm, and optimistic attitude. This energy state gives you the opportunity to embrace challenges and respond in a high-quality way. It is the only type of energy that fosters full engagement with life in the moment and therefore high performance.

You can also have high energy that is negative, and it carries with it the emotions of frustration, anger, anxiety, tenseness, and fear. While these feelings may spark a high level of energy, they also interfere with your thinking and decision making. They may be helpful in case of a physical emergency when your goal is simply to survive, but in most situations a high level of negative energy is counterproductive.

Sometimes you should intentionally experience low positive energy by strategically disengaging in order to allow yourself to rest and recover in your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions. It is critical to spend sufficient time at this energy level in order to renew yourself and enable your embracing of the next challenge. Low negative energy, leaves us feeling exhausted, burned out, sad, or hopeless. It can also be manifested in moodiness, irritability, and impatience. This category of energy may constitute a type of enforced recovery from stress and overwhelming challenge. It is critical that you develop skills to move out of this toxic level of negative energy.

- Understand your own energy highs and lows, we all have them, some people are at their best in the mornings, others come alive later in the day. Use your cycle effectively to match activities and set yourself up for success.
 - Watch what you eat, and when you eat. Foods that are high in caffeine or sugar produce energy spikes but they do not last, consider eating slow release foods like bananas, nuts & porridge.
 - Know when you have reached the limit, our ability to maintain high levels of concentration and activity are time limited, so break up longer periods of time with a break or even move onto something different and come back later.
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Card 46 *Adapting to new environments*

Survival is dependent on our ability to adapt and change

Major change is triggered when people face a significant discrepancy between what they expected and what actually happens during change. People adjust to change, not by learning to like what is taking place, but by forming new expectations that can lead to success under the new conditions. At a personal level, three types of energy are required to make these adjustments in expectations:

- Mental (to figure out what is happening and how to respond)
- Emotional (to deal with various feelings like loss, anxiety, threat, relief, joy, optimism, etc.)
- Physical (to accommodate the bodily implications of stress, excitement, etc.)

To realize the intended benefits of a major change, the people affected must possess sufficient energy for the adaptation process to unfold. The capacity to adapt involves the mental, emotional, and physical means to incorporate new mind-sets and behaviours—to absorb the key implications of a change. Aggregate change demand

that exceeds available adaptation capacity leads to overload, which causes dysfunctional mind-sets and behaviours—in other words, future shock. Daryl R. Conner (2010)

Card 47 – 48 *Set up cards*

Both card 47 & card 48 give you some suggestions on how you may use the cards.

Something to consider is there is no right or wrong way to use the cards! Here we have what we believe is the largest collection of questions, challenges, information and tips relating to Personal Resilience in one place but organised into an accessible format.

You cannot go to the supermarket and buy a kilo of personal resilience, or go on a course and come away with it. It is achieved by recognising where you are in a number of areas, have a desire to grow it and be prepared to do more of what works for you, try and experiment with new techniques and reflect.

Card 49 *The personal Resilience model*

Resilience is made up of many elements; we have grouped them into Personal Control, Challenge and Commitment.

Personal Control

Identifying those things that you have control over ensures that we use our energy wisely not wasting physical, mental or emotional energy on things we have little or no control over. Our confidence is raised as we see the results of our efforts and we may also become stronger by

supporting others on matters and challenges that they have more control over than we do, but benefit from their involvement.

Challenge

The way in which we deal and view Challenges that we face is important, interestingly just the way in which we frame what is in front of us can affect our approach. It is what is going on inside our heads, how we are emotionally when facing challenges and difficulties and the strategies that we run to either overcome or capitulate to failure.

Commitment

What we are prepared to give and do to achieve the result we are looking for. And when faced with it not all going swimmingly to plan, how and where, we find the inner strength to find solutions, implement new or different approaches. Sometimes stated as grit and determination they are qualities that we can learn to develop.

Where these three circles in the diagram overlap can be articulated quite simply, attitude is a choice, our will determines the future and creates opportunity. Resilience is achieved with a combination of both unconscious strategies & conscious attitude and will.

The Best You

The seven cards entitled 'The Best You' are for you to consider, they represent different aspects of life that all contribute to personal resilience. We all have the opportunity to be the best we can be, there will no doubt be one or more of these cards that will be a stretch for you adding to your personal development journey.