



The Full Guide on Building Resilience

by Zulfan Farhi



THE FULL GUIDE ON BUILDING RESILIENCE

WORKBOOK

by

ZULFAN FARHI

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Disclaimer:

Thank you for considering the resilience book from JIWA (Joint Initiative for the wellbeing of All). I'm very excited to join you on your journey to build resilience and improve your wellbeing.

While I'm confident that you'll find the information here useful, I want you to know that this book is not a substitute for therapy and/or medical care.

It's always recommended to seek professional help for individual questions, issues, and concerns related to mental health and well-being.

If you are experiencing a crisis, please refer to a list of crises support services that may be available in your area.

Thank you for your support of JIWA's mission for the well-being of all. We hope that you find this book helpful and informative on your journey towards resilience.

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INTRODUCTION

If you've ever heard of the word "Resilience" before you may or may not have had an idea of what it truly means. A lot of people use the word but not many use it correctly and much less know how to practice it.

That's exactly why this book was written, my friends. In the post-covid world today, we find a lot of people starting to talk about mental health much more frequently. Look at social media and see how many of your friends now share posts on self-care, boundaries, mental well-being, self-love, and many other new kinds of words that we didn't use much before, especially "resilience".

With that my friends, while I am a strong believer in other people's well-being, there's also the downsides to this level of awareness we now have. Awareness is not the same as literacy. Although we're all aware that something exists, it doesn't always mean we know exactly what it is and isn't. And you might ask, well, what's the problem in that?

The problem starts when we're trying to be mentally healthy or resilient, we tend to depend or approach it in ways that are unproductive and doesn't improve our situation. For example, when someone becomes aware of mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety disorders, they may not always know what those illnesses mean especially if they believe they have it.

This is what mental health experts call "glorification", meaning making something much greater than it really is. To feel sad, and automatically think we have depression. To feel nervous, and believe we have clinical anxiety disorders. You see what I mean?

With this my friends, my journey with this book aims to help you understand what resilience is, what it isn't and how to develop it in yourself, forever. In this book, we'll take a look at the Resilience Factor Model, which dives into key areas to build resilience such as self-efficacy, emotional regulation, empathy, optimism, connection, physical health, and meaning.

I like to put all the factors together to build our *Resilience House*. In the house, you need these resilience factor pillars to hold it all up or else, any natural disaster, conflict, loneliness can break it down. In each section, I like to use metaphors to help you understand it in a simpler yet comprehensive way.

If you've ever used some of our methods such as the SEEDS Method and 2 Step-Strategy Planning in our *Free Resilience Guide*, this book builds on top of that in greater detail suited to your needs. By the end of the book you will have your own resilience house filled decked out with things you need to be resilient in difficult times.

Once you have learned about the key areas of resilience, you will then get to assess yourself and see where your strengths and areas of improvement are. After that, you'll learn strategies and exercises on how to improve areas that you want. We'll revisit the 2-step action and coping plan to take action and prepare for obstacles.

With that my friends, I hope this book benefits you as it did for me. If you're ready then we'll dive straight into...

Understanding Resilience

What is Resilience?

Resilience, without getting too technical, is the ability to adapt and recover from challenges, trauma, or stress. So the first thing I want you

to know about this word is that it doesn't mean that you're never sad, or angry, or anxious. To be a resilient person means that you know how to get back up even when you fall down. You will fall down even when we don't want or expect to.

But that doesn't mean you're not a resilient person. Resilient people are able to draw on their inner strength, such as self-esteem, optimism, and a sense of purpose, to overcome obstacles and thrive. If you see the scale below being resilient doesn't mean always being in the green area but knowing how to get to that state when we fall on the scale.

Healthy	Reacting	Injured	Unhealthy
Normal Mood Fluctuation Able to Handle Setbacks	Irritable Impatient, Overwhelmed Sad	Anger; Anxiety; Always Sad & Negative	Out Bursts, Panic Attacks, Suicidal Thoughts
Normal Sleep Patterns	Trouble Sleeping, Nightmares	Restless, Sleep Disturbed Insomnia	Can't Fall Asleep, Sleeping Too Much or Too Little
Good Energy & Physically Active	Low Energy; Muscle Tension	Increased Aches, Fatigue and Pain	Physical Illness, Chronic Fatigue
Socially Active & Enjoy Company	Decreased Social Activity	Avoid Social Contact, Withdrawal	Solitude, No Contact with Any Friends or Family

To get a better understanding of resilience, let's ask the question: why are some people more resilient than others? How come some people

seem to do well in hard times while others don't? Are people born with it or can we develop it?

Let's take depression for example. Clinical depression, like physical illness and cancer, is considered to be a mental illness. The difference however, is that the causes of depression aren't as clear as causes of physical illnesses. Depression can be caused by many factors such as one's upbringing, society, environment, and genetics.

So, the question "Why are some people more resilient?" just like depression depends on many factors. In simple terms, the reason why some people are more resilient than others are because the conditions are just right for the person to develop strong resilience in the first place. Basically, all ingredients to make people depressed or happy are already there, cooked in the right way, right temperature, and time.

Other people who grew up in conditions where resilience was low tend to also have low resilience and higher levels of mental health issues. There's no one cause why some places in the world have natural disasters and why other countries don't. It's because the conditions for some places are just right for natural disasters to occur. For resilience, these conditions include:



Genetics: Ask yourself if you ever had a family member who had mental health issues? Did you have anyone that was generally always anxious or depressed? Our genes (the things we got from our parents) are not set in stone, but they do set you up for either a calm or nervous attitude and personality. This does not mean you can't change it. You can use strategies to work with what you were born with, especially when you are aware of it.



Your Upbringing: How we are raised contributes to our experience of stress and how we process things that happen to us. Your brain is developing – a work in progress from when you are born until you get older. It doesn't start out 'good to go' it matures with age. So, the early experiences you have as a child shape the way your brain develops, the habits that are formed, the way your brain copes with stressors and perceives the world – parents take note!



Your Current Stress Levels: Stress levels at work (or at home) can contribute to our brain health. If the parts of the brain that process stress are over worked – then this can affect how you cope with stress! If you are in a challenging environment that drains your mental and physical energy too long, you can start to train your brain to be overactive in the areas you don't want it to be like being a robot at home but emotional at work!

These are only a few of the factors that can affect a person's resilience. Of course, there are many more factors at play like your group of friends, your social status, education, and many more. But hopefully now, you get an idea how resilience works and where it came from depending on your unique lived experiences



So, our brains have just the right conditions to either be easily anxious or easily happy. That's why even when two siblings who experienced the same upbringing might not have the same personalities. In depression, some parts of the brain responsible for sensing danger and negative emotions are hyperactive while the parts responsible for calmness and decision making are inactive.

The brain grows with practice, so the more we use areas of anxiety, the more the brain activates survival response. Similarly, when we use parts of the brain that are calmer and more decisive, the calmer and more resilient we will feel. This is what scientists call "neuroplasticity" meaning the brain isn't set in stone. It can change and make new connections to new areas of the brain.

So, with resilience, although there's not much we can do in terms of the conditions we grew up in, this doesn't mean that some of us are doomed to having low resilience. Because now, each of us have a choice to either change our conditions or change how we deal with them.

The House of Resilience Model

So, my friends, with this book hopefully you see that it doesn't have to be that way forever. With the house of resilience model, we want you to start building the house within yourself so you can be protected from the cold winter of life.



This model was developed so that you could understand resilience in the easiest way possible without overthinking. Just as a house needs certain foundations, brick materials, air conditioning, and design, we want you to see how resilience can be improved just like a house need maintenance.

You will learn about the important factors that a house needs to stay strong during harsh weather conditions and seasons just like some parts of the year are more stressful for us than other times. These factors include:

- **Sense of Security – House Maintenance:** Maintaining a house takes confidence and belief in one own ability. Self-efficacy will help a person develop the needed confidence to achieve their goals and be resilient during failure.
- **Optimism – House Lights:** Light provides a way during the dark. Optimism is the light that we need during those difficult and uncertain times. With optimism, we can always have a guiding light that will show us the way no matter the situation.
- **Emotional Regulation – Ventilation and Insulation.** As humans, we're not good at suppressing emotions which is why having a channel where emotions can healthily flow, like air and temperature in a house, is important when building our resilience.
- **Social Connectedness – Being part of the neighborhood:** Resilience grows stronger when you have a strong support system around you. Having someone share your struggle can help you overcome any challenge while strengthening relationships.
- **A sense of Purpose – Putting things in the right place:** Everything that we use or have has a purpose in our lives. Having a sense of

belonging and purpose whether in our families, community or the world at large is what will drive our resilience further.

- **Problem Solving – A Strong Roof:** Just as we need self-efficacy to believe in our ability to achieve our goals, our problem solving is the skill or ability that we need to master in order to achieve them.

So now I hope you can see how these all come into play. When these resilience factors are not strong enough, our house will be destined for collapse. Moreover, when our house breaks down because of the strong weather and wind, we might be too overwhelmed to rebuild it again.

You start to think “I was always a failure” or “Is there something wrong with me?” or “I wasn’t born with it or I just don’t have it in me”



However, with all of these factors of resilience you will have the exact tools needed to build your resilience house and strengthen it in your own way. As you read through this book, you will also have some worksheets to immediately apply what you learned in the section.

This way you’re already practicing building your resilience as you read this book instead of waiting for you to finish it. I would highly

recommend that you do those worksheets with us because it will all make sense in the end as we assess your level of resilience and give you tools to strengthen it.

After each section you will be given a self-assessment and a strategy planning worksheet. This worksheet is designed to make you prepare specifically for your unique challenges in life and how to overcome them. To briefly explain what the worksheet includes, you first have...

The Self-Assessment: The self-assessment is where you see where your resilience level lies. The questions are based on a scale of 1 – 10 (1 being you either strongly disagree or that it doesn't describe you, and 10 being you strongly agree or that it describes your level) This isn't to test whether you are weak or strong. This is only so that you know where your starting point is. Make sure to record the total score because you'll need that in the end when we put everything altogether on a radar graph. This will show you visually where you have the most room for improvement.

The Goal: The goal section is where you write down specifically what you want to achieve in that area of resilience. For example, you might want to start practicing self-care in the emotional regulation chapter as your goal. Put this down.

The Action Plan: The action plan is where you write down how you're going to achieve your goal. In each section, you don't have to worry about trying to find the perfect action plan. We already prepared some useful action plans for you to strengthen that area of your resilience. Choose any one of the strategies that resonates best with you

The Potential Barrier: This is where you start to get strategic. What makes this plan different is that usually when people focus too much on how they're going to succeed in their goals, they forget to put in place a back-up plan when their plan fails. In this part, you write about what

kinds of barriers that will stand in your way strengthening this area of your resilience. For example, barriers to social connectedness might be feeling shy or isolated from friends and family.

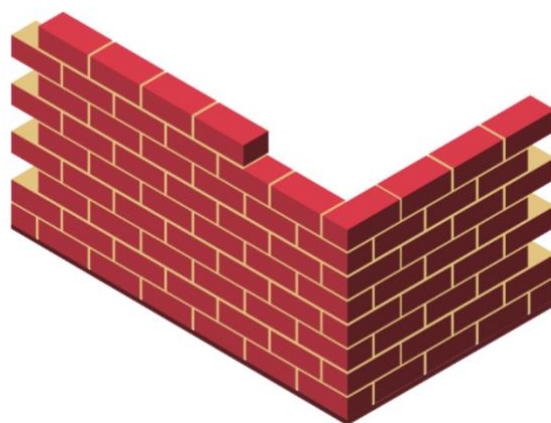
The Coping Plan: The coping plan is the back-up plan you put in place. When a challenge or failure happens, your coping plan is set so that you don't settle for hating yourself or losing hope. This is so that in every plan of action you have, you are prepared for the worst which builds your resilience. For example, since feeling shy or isolated could be a barrier to social connection, a coping plan can be to connect with people that you already know and love instead of meeting new people.

Note: It's better to have more than one coping plan. What happens when you do this, is you start to thicken your mind from being overwhelmed by setbacks and failures. Write down what you can do if say one coping plan doesn't work.

I want you to know that there are many other resources you can refer to make the journey easier for you. You don't have to follow this guide exactly if it doesn't work for you. But I do believe that if you do apply whatever is in this book, you will get the results you want.

In this house, you are always welcome. You are part of our neighborhood. If you ever need help maintaining your home, we are here for you. If you ever need a spare light bulb to light up your house, we're here for you. If you ever need a neighbor to talk to or invite you in for coffee, our door is always open. If your roof is broken, then let us know and we'll teach you how to fix it and make it stronger!

So, with that my friends, I want you to start building your own house of resilience within you. To start let's begin with the first tool...



CHAPTER 1

Sense of Security – A Strong Foundation

In a house, a strong and stable foundation is needed to make sure the house doesn't collapse on us. Before you start building your house, don't you usually see the materials you're using first? Whether it something that can withstand the heat and cold, the strong winds and natural disasters?

If there was no strong foundation the house would collapse and the house would need to be rebuilt again and again. Moreover, you would want to keep your loved ones safe inside the house as well. That is why my friends, with a strong foundation you will give you a sense of security that is needed to be resilient.

What is a sense of security?

A sense of security is like having the feeling of being safe and secure no matter what happens in our lives. This sense of security is the feeling we get when we are in environments or relationships that make us feel safe.

Some people may get a sense of security in having lots of money, being popular, or having lots of things. Although these may bring someone a temporary sense of security, the feeling starts to go away once they already have a lot of money, too much fame and expensive things.

True sense of security is a state of mind and being. There are people who don't have a lot of money but stable finances, unknown to many people and don't have a lot of expensive things, yet still have a good sense of security. This state of mind and being can only be found in meaningful things such as your thoughts, beliefs, behavior's, values and supportive relationships.

When we have a stable sense of security, our house can withstand any challenge keeping you and your loved ones safe. Some of the things that can provide a stable sense of security include:

Supportive Relationships: Having supportive relationships have friends can give you a more stable emotional security better than material things can. When you have relationships that accepts you for who you are yet also encourage you to be the best version of yourself, your resilience grows.

Physical Safety: Having the essential things in life can provide physical security such as a house with strong walls. Just because we might have supportive relationships, it doesn't mean we shouldn't give them a safe environment to live in. Having a stable physical house can set the foundation for stable and supportive relationships.

Financial Stability: Although money can't give us bulletproof resilience, it does have a role in providing financial security. Money only solves money problems at best. They don't automatically make you a better person, or more resilient to stress and failures. There are millionaires who still live with stress and health conditions because of their unhealthy attachment to money. This is why educating ourselves on financial literacy is important if we truly want to have a healthy relationship with money.

Emotional Intelligence: When we can regulate ourselves in difficult emotional times, we can provide ourselves with a sense of emotional security. Others around us will also feel safe without the fear of being emotional punching bags just like children who grew up in explosive environments being shouted by parents. When we strengthen our emotional regulation (which is another chapter later), our emotions are secure just as our happiness and resilience will be.

Self-Care: Having the space to practice self-care is important in making us feel safe in our own skin and environment. When we expose ourselves to toxic and mentally draining situations, we use our mental and physical resources. When we don't replenish and recover these resources, we risk burning out and losing our sense of security in our time and energy.

Preparedness: Having a plan to prepare ourselves for hard times is also an important aspect for having security. Just like having rainy day savings or an emergency fund will help you in emergencies, preparing for the worst will take off the load off our minds about the uncertainty of the future. We may not know what the future holds (especially with covid-19) but we do have a choice to prepare. In our problem-solving chapter, you'll learn specifically how to prepare for problems when they arise.

So, these are some of the few things that can provide us with a better sense of security. Note that they're all not just one thing. Having a sense of security requires us to be dynamic, meaning having different ways to provide safety. For example, money can be used to solve money problems, emotional intelligence can solve emotional issues, and relationships can solve loneliness issues.

Each of the factors have their unique place in providing a sense of security that cannot be replaced by anything else. With that, my friends, I hope you see how you can start building the foundations of your resilience house.

Case Study:

Malala was born in Pakistan and grew up in a region where the Taliban had banned girls from attending school. Despite the danger, Malala's father was an advocate for girls' education and encouraged Malala to speak out against the ban. Malala became a vocal activist for girls' education, speaking out publicly and writing a blog about her experiences.

In 2012, when Malala was just 15 years old, she was targeted by the Taliban and shot in the head while on her way to school. Miraculously, she survived and eventually recovered, thanks in part to the emotional support of her family and community.

However, Malala's story also highlights the importance of financial and physical preparedness. After the attack, Malala and her family were forced to flee their home and seek medical treatment in the UK. The family faced financial challenges, but Malala's father was able to use his network to raise funds to cover their expenses.

Malala's resilience and determination to continue advocating for girls' education also highlights the importance of emotional resilience. Despite the trauma and danger, she faced, Malala continued to speak out and use

her platform to raise awareness about the importance of education for all children, particularly girls.

In addition, Malala's story also shows the importance of having a supportive community and relationships. Malala's family, particularly her father, were instrumental in supporting her activism and ensuring her safety. In addition, Malala has become a global symbol of inspiration and resilience, with many people around the world supporting her mission and providing emotional and financial support.

Action Plan:

If you struggle with a sense of security, don't worry – it's something you can develop and strengthen over time. Identify areas where you lack a sense of security and make it a goal to gain that sense back in that area. Here are some strategies to try:

1. **Build and maintain supportive relationships:** Spend time with people who make you feel supported and loved, and make an effort to strengthen those relationships. Join a club, volunteer, or attend social events to meet new people and expand your network. Try to find particular people that you would like to have in your life and think about where you might find those people.
2. **Develop financial stability:** Create a budget and a savings plan, and work towards reducing debt. Invest in your education and skills to increase your earning potential. Consider speaking to a financial advisor to help you create a plan to achieve your financial goals. With good finances, you can have peace of mind for yourself and your family
3. **Focus on physical safety:** Take steps to ensure your physical safety, such as locking doors and windows, carrying a personal safety device, and avoiding dangerous situations or people. When

choosing a house, it's also important to do research about the neighborhood like the crime rates, available convenient stores, nearest hospitals, police stations and fire department.

4. Practice self-care: Prioritize activities that help you relax, reduce stress, and feel good, such as exercise, meditation, going out into nature, or even watching a light hearted favorite tv show. Make sure to draw the line where you finish work and when you relax. Don't bring work or school issues at home unless it's to communicate your feelings with a loved one.
5. Develop emotional intelligence: Learn to recognize and manage your emotions, communicate effectively with others, and cultivate positive relationships. It is best to start being aware of your emotions on a daily basis. Pay attention to what situations trigger you and make sure to have plans in place to know how to avoid or deal with them.
6. Prepare for emergencies: Create an emergency plan, including a disaster kit and a plan for evacuating your home in case of an emergency. Have a prepared plan like saving an emergency fund, teaching your kids how to respond to trouble, knowing who to contact for any kinds of emergencies etc. These plans can give you peace knowing that you have done your part.
7. Educate yourself: Learn new skills or knowledge to increase your confidence and sense of security in different areas of your life, such as investing, cooking, or first aid. Whenever a problem arises, instead of being overwhelmed, try to study the actual problem and what it requires. In our problem-solving section, you will see that a problem that is thought and put well, is half solved. That is why educating yourself on issues can mentally prepare you and build your resilience.

Coping Plan:

When you don't have relationships that provide that sense of security, who would you go to next? And what would be a last resort for you if you can't find any? Would you consider seeking professional help?

1. **Financial stability:** During hard times, it may not be the best time to invest or start a business. In these situations, it is probably best to start saving and living below your means. Once the season allows, the savings can then be used to invest in your financial stability such as. Finding a new job, a new business, or investing. It is still best to see a financial advisor to see what is best depending on your situation with family, job, living expenses etc.
2. **Physical Security:** If your environment is physically unsafe, it is probably time to consider doing research on how to change either the environment or your position. When we can't do that, we can consider either keeping away from dangerous situations as possible while working towards your action plan to find a safer place or improve your current one.
3. **Self – Care:** Self-care itself is an action plan and a coping plan. Having a routine where we can replenish our mental, and physical resources is important to our resilience. When we can't find time to practice self-care the least, we can do is to set boundaries. It is also important to commit and respect these boundaries we put on ourselves to not overwhelm ourselves
4. **Emotional Coping:** When emotions are high it is easy to react with fast and explosive behavior. As a coping strategy, commit to pausing and slow thinking. This way you make space between you and your emotions rather than being controlled by them. Not everything needs a reaction. Remember that you cannot make a

problem worst by doing nothing. You might make it worst by actually doing something.

5. Preparation: You might feel overwhelmed thinking too much about the future and anticipating all outcomes. Remember that you are already doing enough by preparing. Imagine the worst possibility of outcome and make a single plan to overcome if it arises. Keep it that simple!
6. Educating Yourself: You don't have to learn every single thing about a problem for you to be fully prepared for it. Make it a daily habit to simply learn one thing about your goals and area of interest. For example, if you commit to 15 minutes of reading per day, that's more sustainable rather than trying to cram one book on your head in a day.

Building a sense of security will take time and rushing won't do it good. Practice anyone of these strategies and see which one makes the most impact your life and resilience level. It's okay to not know everything at the beginning (and you shouldn't!). Start from where you are right now and make one step every day. The point is never stop. I know you can do it, my friends.

In the next chapter we'll be looking at the next part of the house that we need to take care of, lights. Like a beautiful home, lights are needed to get around the house as well as see who is outside in the dark. So, let's dive into...

Strategy Planning

Goal	
Action Plan	
Potential Barriers	
Coping Plan	
Coping Plan	

Self-Assessment:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in your ability to achieve your goals?

Questions	Score
1. How secure do you feel in your relationships with friends, family and loved ones?	-----
2. How secure do you feel in the relationships you have to express your authentic self?	-----
3. How secure do you feel in your finances and paying off debt?	-----
4. How secure do you feel in your own skills and abilities whenever an unexpected problem arises?	-----
5. How secure do you feel in your physical environment whether at home, work or community?	-----
6. How safe and secure do you feel in your balancing work, life and family?	-----
7. How confident do you feel in learning about problems that arise instead of being overwhelmed?	-----
8. How safe and secure do you feel about the knowledge you have in solving future problems?	-----
9. How secure do you feel in managing your own emotions, thoughts and behavior’s whenever you encounter stress?	-----

Calculate your score by assigning a point value to each question, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. Add up your scores to get a total score out of 90.

Total score: -----



CHAPTER 2

Optimism –The House Lights

In this chapter, we'll explore the second component of the Resilience House Model: optimism. Optimism means to view problems as temporary, specific to the situation, and changeable. Optimistic people tend to have a positive outlook on life and are more resilient when faced with adversity. Let's dive in and explore how we can cultivate optimism in our lives.

What is optimism?

Optimism is the belief that things will work out for the best. While self-efficacy means to believe in your ability, optimism means to believe in the process. Optimistic people have a positive outlook on life and tend to view problems as temporary setbacks that can be overcome. They

believe that their efforts will lead to success, and they tend to focus on the positive aspects of a situation. Research has shown that optimism is associated with better mental health, physical health, and overall well-being (cite)

Optimism can be seen as the light that brightens your house in times of darkness. Just as a lighthouse illuminates the path for ships navigating through stormy waters, optimism can provide us with the hope and direction we need to navigate through challenging times. In our house, we need lights to see the outside world just as we need it to see inside for our room, our belongings and our family.

With optimism, we can see the potential in every situation and have faith in our ability to overcome adversity. In the cold darkness of winter, light can also generate heat and warmth for ourselves and others. Optimism like a light that clears the path of uncertain times, can also provide us with relief and warmth when we face doubts.

Our situations might be confusing and people might doubt you, but the light of optimism in your house will reassure you that everything will be okay. Just like day, night is also temporary. You know that after the moon, the sun will come again. And when the sun sets, there will always be light to guide us. Just remember to pay the electric bill!

With our light, it doesn't come cheap to maintain. Just like electricity needs to be paid, our optimism needs to be maintained as well. We need to take care of it by nurturing it in an environment where it can grow just like a plant needs specific sunlight, heat, and water to grow.

To strengthen our optimism, we need to see what it is that makes us lose it. Is it something to do with our friends? Our families? Our environment? Our thoughts and beliefs? These factors can either make or break our optimism. When the environment is just right then

optimism can grow easily. If not, it will be hard for us to be positive when everyone around us is negative.

This means having a supportive social network of friends, family and professionals. To pay attention to what we look, listen and and feel on a daily basis. To remove things that don't benefit us, and make room for things that will. When we start taking care of the light within us, the light will take care of us in return by lighting the way to safety, back to home.

Case Study:

Barbara Hillary was a retired nurse and cancer survivor who became the first Black woman to reach the North and South Poles at the age of 75.

Barbara Hillary had always been a trailblazer, but after being diagnosed with lung cancer, she faced a new set of challenges. She underwent surgery to remove a lung and was told that she would never be able to travel to high altitudes again. Despite this setback, Hillary refused to let cancer define her life.

Instead, she set her sights on a new goal: becoming the first Black woman to reach the North Pole. At the age of 75, Hillary embarked on a grueling journey across the Arctic Circle. She faced subzero temperatures, fierce winds, and treacherous ice floes, but she remained optimistic and focused on her goal.

After reaching the North Pole, Hillary set her sights on a new goal: becoming the first Black woman to reach the South Pole. Once again, she faced numerous obstacles, including the high altitude and extreme cold. However, she refused to give up and remained optimistic and determined.

Thanks to her optimism and determination, Hillary not only reached both poles but also inspired countless others to pursue their dreams, no

matter their age or circumstances. She proved that even in the face of adversity, it is possible to achieve incredible things with a positive attitude and a willingness to persevere.

This is only one out of many told stories, how our light, our optimism will guide us to our success.

The benefits of optimism

Optimism has been linked to a range of benefits, including:

- Better mental health
- Greater resilience
- Improved coping skills
- Better physical health
- More success in achieving goals

Action Plan:

While some people are naturally more optimistic than others, optimism is a skill that can be developed. Here are some strategies for cultivating optimism:

1. **Practice gratitude:** Focusing on the good things in your life can help shift your mindset towards positivity. Write down specifically simple things that made you grateful even though it was small. Maybe it was seeing a cat roll on its back for you? A person in the driveway giving you way first? Write them down and see how it changes how you feel, and think about people and the world.
2. **Visualize success:** Imagine yourself succeeding in the things you want to achieve. This can help you build confidence and optimism about your abilities. Make sure to use all senses. When you achieve this what does it look like? Who is around you? What are you

hearing, smelling, feeling, tasting, etc. The more senses you visualize with, the more possible it becomes to your mind.

3. Focus on changing how you view a problem: Instead of dwelling on the how massive the problem is, try to focus on what would it take to solve this problem. Some helpful questions to change your views can be like
4. “What is something about this situation that is good for me?”
5. “How can this make me grow as a person?”
6. “What would my future self-thank me for in this situation?”
7. Surround yourself with positive people and influences. Join a new club that you know you will find like-minded people. You may find people who are struggling with the same problem as you
8. Engage in activities that bring you joy and happiness. Don’t focus on short term pleasure and emotional highs. Focus on what makes you consistently happy that doesn’t make you feel regretful after. For example, a light hearted show that you love? A simple activity like cooking or playing games that can tune out negativity.

Coping Plan:

1. Identify triggers for negative thinking and develop a plan to counteract them. For example, if you are trying to find a stable job but keep getting rejected, I think it’s time to consider seeing a job coach, network with new people or even try alternatives such as starting your own side hustle if you’ve always wanted to try
2. Practice self-compassion and avoid self-criticism. Avoid trying to make everything perfect. Perfection will always steal your joy just

like comparing yourself others will. Focus on the next step and celebrate the small wins even with all the losses.

3. Take breaks when feeling overwhelmed or stressed. Don't think that you can cheat sleep, rest and recovery by being super passionate and coffee. You need a break just like a machine needs time to cool down.
4. Write out all the possible outcomes of something you are trying to aim. Either you win, lose, or whatever it may be. For every outcome, write down specifically what you will do next especially when you don't get what you want. This way your mind doesn't easily fall to despair and automatically knows the next step and follow it.
5. Seek support from family, friends, or a mental health professional if needed. Your passion can only bring you so far and fast, but without help, you'll be just as burnt out as the last person who tried what you did. I saw a comforting quote the other day that said "All the dead bodies on Mount Everest were once really passionate climbers, so maybe just chill?"

Like a guiding light, optimism gives us hope and enables us to see the possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead. Just like Barbara, she used her optimism to guide herself through stormy waters in the form of cancer. Optimism helps us navigate the challenges of life with courage and resilience. It empowers us to look beyond the present difficulties and imagine a better future.

With optimism, we can weather any storm and emerge stronger on the other side, or in Barbara's case, at opposite ends of the world! But with that, you should also know that you can't do it alone too soon. Taking care of the light in your house takes times, effort and sometimes even money to invest. But it will be worth it.

Besides, do you know any house that doesn't need electricity or light?

Strategy Planning

Goal	
Action Plan	
Potential Barriers	
Coping Plan	
Coping Plan	

Self-Assessment:

Now that we've explored what optimism is and the benefits of cultivating it, let's do a self-assessment and create an action and coping plan to help you improve your optimism:

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from setbacks, stay optimistic, and maintain a hopeful outlook, even during challenging times. Let's take a moment to assess your own resilience skills.

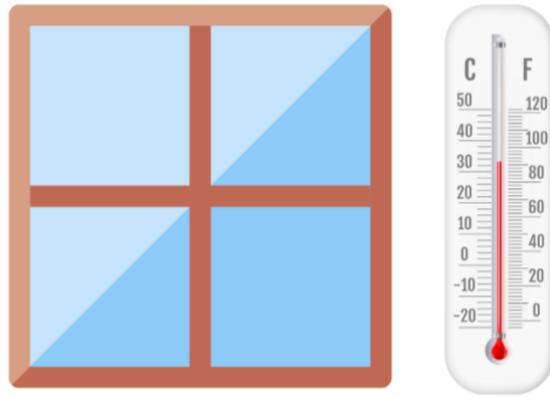
On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in your ability to remain optimistic?

Questions	Score
1. How easily do you maintain a positive outlook in difficult situations?	-----
2. How often do you focus on your strengths and abilities rather than dwelling on your weaknesses?	-----
3. How often do you maintain hope for the future, even in the face of setbacks or obstacles?	-----
4. How often do you practice gratitude and appreciate the good things in your life?	-----
5. How often do you surround yourself with positive people and seek out sources of inspiration and motivation?	-----
6. How much do you avoid negative self-talk and instead use positive affirmations to boost your confidence?	-----
7. How often do you find ways to maintain a sense of humor and find joy even in challenging circumstances?	-----
8. How much do you set goals for yourself and work towards achieving them, even if progress is slow?	-----
9. How often do you take care of your mental and emotional health, seeking professional help if needed?	-----

Calculate your score by assigning a point value to each question, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. Add up your scores to get a total score out of 90.

Total score: _____

Now, let's go to our next resilience factor. In a house, you'll need a way to take care of the indoor air quality and temperature. How do you do that? Well it's something called...



CHAPTER 3

Emotional Regulation – Ventilation and Insulation

Ventilation is necessary to make sure that the air quality in a house is suitable for living. In the same way, emotional regulation helps us regulate our emotional state by allowing us to release pent-up emotions in a healthy way. Just like how opening windows and doors can bring in fresh air and allow stale air to exit, expressing our emotions in a healthy way can help us release negative feelings and promote positive ones.

Insulation is important for maintaining a consistent temperature inside a house, regardless of the temperature outside. Similarly, emotional insulation allows us to maintain a stable emotional state despite external factors that may trigger strong emotions. This involves using

coping mechanisms to protect ourselves from negative emotions, such as setting boundaries or practicing mindfulness.

In both cases, ventilation and insulation work together to create a comfortable and safe environment. Similarly, emotional regulation allows us to create a sense of emotional stability and well-being. Just as a well-ventilated and insulated house is better equipped to withstand external factors, individuals who are skilled at emotional regulation are better able to handle stress and difficult situations.

With emotional regulation, no matter where we are in life, we are able to come back from failure. Suppressing our emotions and pretending they don't exist won't help us just as closing all windows and not insulating the house can't protect us from bad air quality and extreme hot and cold weather.

That's why for your resilience house, make sure that you have channels where you can release bad air quality in the form of negative emotions and let in good air in the form of positive emotions and calmness.

Case Study:

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson is a successful actor, producer, and former professional wrestler. He grew up in a tough environment and faced a lot of challenges throughout his life. However, he was able to overcome his struggles by learning to regulate his emotions.

In his early wrestling career, Johnson struggled with anger issues and would often lose his temper in the ring. He realized that his anger was holding him back from achieving his goals and decided to take control of his emotions. He started practicing meditation and visualization techniques to help him stay calm and focused during matches.

As his career progressed, Johnson faced other challenges that required him to regulate his emotions. When he first started acting, he struggled with anxiety and self-doubt. He worked with a therapist to learn coping skills and mindfulness techniques to help him manage his emotions.

Today, Johnson is known for his positive attitude and motivational messages. He continues to practice meditation and other mindfulness techniques to stay centered and focused in his personal and professional life. By regulating his emotions, he has been able to achieve great success and maintain a sense of peace and balance in his life

Improving Your Emotional Regulation: Here are some strategies for improving your emotional regulation:

1. **Practice self-awareness:** Pay attention to your emotions and learn to recognize when you're feeling overwhelmed or triggered. This can help you manage your emotions more effectively.
2. **Use positive self-talk:** Instead of engaging in negative self-talk or criticizing yourself for feeling a certain way, try to reframe your thoughts in a more positive light. (e.g. I'm feeling overwhelmed right now, but I know this will pass so I will give myself time before making any big decisions)
3. **Engage in relaxation techniques:** Techniques like deep breathing, meditation, or yoga can help you manage stress and anxiety. You can even watch your favorite show on Netflix to release you from past stress and future worries.
4. **Express your emotions:** Whether it's through journaling, talking to a friend, or engaging in creative expression, finding a healthy outlet for your emotions can help you regulate them more effectively. I personally find walking to be helpful to help me organize my thoughts and feelings.

5. Seek professional help: If you're struggling to manage your emotions on your own, consider seeking the help of a mental health professional. When I was starting out with therapy, it was difficult at first and sometimes I didn't understand why I was going there but overtime it will all make sense and you'll be glad that you sought help from people.
6. Deep breathing exercises: When you feel overwhelmed by emotions, take a few deep breaths. Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, and exhale for 8 seconds. Repeat this 3-5 times to help calm your mind and body.
7. Five things: When your emotions are running wild, try to practice the 5 things method. Find one thing you can touch, one thing you can see, one thing you can feel, one thing you can hear, and one thing you can taste. This way you are bringing your attention away from your mind and into the present moment.

Action Plan:

1. Take note of your emotional state throughout the day. What triggers your emotions, and how do you typically respond? Use any one of the strategies and apply it to your daily lives.
2. Choose one of the strategies for improving emotional regulation listed above that resonates with you.
3. Practice the strategy consistently for one week. Take note of how it affects your emotional regulation.

Coping Plan:

1. Identify three specific situations in which you tend to struggle with emotional regulation.

2. Think about how you can apply this strategy in each of the situations you identified. Write down specific actions you can take to apply the strategy in each situation.
3. When you encounter one of these situations, take out your coping plan and follow the steps you have identified. Take note of how effective the plan is in helping you regulate your emotions.

As we conclude our chapter on emotional regulation, think of how you can build ventilation and insulation in your resilience house. Whether it's talking to a family, a friend, or a professional counselor, your house must have a way to express negative emotions so that positive ones can come more freely. Just as someone as angry as "The Rock" can become someone of positivity, so can you today.

In our next chapter, let's take a look at the windows and doors. Why? Well with any home, the quality of life living it depends on how we connect with the people in the neighborhood. So, let's dive into...

Strategy Planning

Goal	
Action Plan	
Potential Barriers	
Coping Plan	
Coping Plan	

Self-Assessment:

Emotional regulation is the ability to manage your emotions in a healthy and productive way. It involves being aware of your emotions, understanding how they influence your behavior, and using strategies to cope with them effectively. Let's take a moment to assess your own emotional regulation skills

On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in your ability to regulate your emotions?

Questions	Score
1. How much do you recognize and label your emotions accurately?	-----
2. How often do you take the time to understand the root causes of your emotions?	-----
3. How often do you practice mindfulness or other techniques to stay present and focused?	-----
4. How much do you have a list of healthy coping mechanisms to deal with stress and negative emotions?	-----
5. How much do you avoid lashing out at others or engage in other positive behaviors when you are feeling upset?	-----
6. How open are you in seeking help or support from others when you need it?	-----
7. How much do you take care of your physical health by eating well, exercising regularly, and getting enough sleep?	-----
8. How much do you seek out opportunities to learn about different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives?	-----
9. How much do you take the time to reflect on your own emotions and how they might be affecting your interactions with others?	-----

Calculate your score by assigning a point value to each question, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. Add up your scores to get a total score out of 90.

Total score: _____



CHAPTER 4

Social Connectedness: Being Part of The Neighborhood

Just like in the previous section, we saw that windows are a good way to allow ventilation in the house leading to better air quality. Well there's also another purpose to those windows. Since ventilation is usually more comforting when it's talked out with a trusted friend, windows allow us to see and connect with the world outside.

Even with a nice warm house during the cold dark winter, the house gets warmer and happier when you invite people that you really trust and feel safe with inside. It's one thing to drink hot cocoa under your warm blanket and Netflix, it's a whole other feeling when you share it with someone you love and enjoy being with.

Although some people prefer to be alone, loneliness isn't as beneficial to our health in the long term. Even if we don't have a big group of friends,

the high-quality friendships we have in life directly and indirectly contribute to our resilience and well-being. How? Many depressed people report feelings of loneliness with no one that understand how they feel. Whereas people who have a strong social support who they can trust with anything reported higher levels of resilience and wellbeing (cite)

Remember a time where you thought you could never have succeeded if it weren't for someone that supported you through it. Would it have felt the same if you went alone?

This occurrence of despair is not a sign of weakness in a person but a cry for help, to be seen and understood. That being said, it is also important to note that windows and doors also serve another purpose: boundaries. Although there are people that we would love to invite in, there are also things and people in life that we must be aware before letting them in.

These can be strangers who promise you love, money or any benefit so fast and easy like a scammer or invasive sales person. It could be even close people within your family and friends. So, knowing that social connectedness is important to our health and resilience, we must also be aware of the kinds of relationships and connections we make whether healthy or detrimental to us.

Although it's not easy to burn bridges, it's always worth building new, stronger, and better ones.

Case study

The Harvard Study of Adult Development is a very long study that began in 1938 following the lives of 724 men, including President John F.

Kennedy. In the 1970s, the study expanded to include the men's wives and children.

In the 1970s, the researchers found that the quality of participants' relationships had a significant impact on their health and well-being. They found that those who had strong, supportive relationships with their spouses, family, and friends were happier and healthier than those who did not.

The researchers also found that those who reported feeling lonely and isolated were more likely to suffer from physical and mental health problems, including heart disease, depression, and cognitive decline.

Over the years, the study has continued to find that relationships are a crucial factor in health and well-being. In a 2017 TED talk, the current director of the study, Dr. Robert Waldinger, shared some of the key findings from the study. He reported that close relationships, more than money or fame, are what keep people happy throughout their lives.

The study has also found that the quality of relationships matters more than the quantity. In other words, it's not about having a lot of friends or social contacts, but about having deep, meaningful connections with others.

The Harvard Study of Adult Development has been ongoing for over 80 years and continues to provide valuable insights into the factors that contribute to a happy and healthy life. The findings suggest that investing in our relationships and cultivating strong social connections is essential for our well-being, regardless of our age or stage of life.

To see where you're at right now, let's take a look at how socially connected you are

Improving Your Social Connections:

Here are some strategies for improving your social connections:

- **Make time for social interactions:** Set aside time each week to engage in social activities and interactions, such as meeting up with friends, attending social events, or joining a club or organization that you are interested in. It's usually where you'll find like-minded people who understand you more than you think.
- **Be open-minded and non-judgmental:** When interacting with others, try to approach them with an open mind and without judging them and simply to understand how they perceive life. You'll find that people have interesting stories and backgrounds that will change how you view the world.
- **Practice active listening:** Listen actively to others by giving them your full attention and focusing on what they are saying and not saying. I usually like to ask more about the people because I find it gives them comfort in expressing themselves. Although people may not have had the same life as us, we tend to find things in common and relatable which reminds us how human we all are. There's no perfection here, just connection.
- **Share your own experiences and feelings:** When appropriate, share your own experiences and feelings with others. This can help build trust and deepen your relationships. After you've asked about themselves, the people that care enough would want to know about you. When you find these people, stick to them and nurture the relationship.
- **Stay connected through technology:** Use social media, video calls, and messaging apps to stay connected with friends and family who live far away. In today's world, everything and everyone is connected literally at our fingertips. If you ever felt open to contact

a friend and see how they are doing, follow it! One phone call might even save someone's life.

- **Attend community events:** Attend community events and activities to meet new people and engage with your community. I know this might be difficult for introverts, but what I'm talking about here is events that align with your values. Beliefs and personality. When I was in university, the student council would initiate events based on the student's MBTI personality test. Pretty cool isn't it?
- **Practice gratitude:** Show appreciation for the people in your life by expressing gratitude and thanking them for their support. When was the last time you stopped wanting? It might have been a while ago but have some time where no matter what is going on in your life, make room for gratitude. Look up old memories that made you happy even though they're in the past.

Action Plan:

1. Take note of your current social interactions throughout the day. How often do you engage in social activities with the people you genuinely enjoy their presence? How often do you actively listen to other people's stories and understand how they view the world?
2. Choose one of the strategies for improving social connections listed above that resonates with you. Maybe you already have a relationship that you want to nurture or maybe you're open to building new relationships. Whichever it is, choose what works for you.
3. Commit and practice the strategy consistently as part of your routine. Take note of how it affects your social connections and well-being. Adjust if you need to. Maybe you find that some strategies work better than others.

Coping Plan:

1. Identify three specific situations in which you tend to struggle with social interactions (right introverts?). But that's okay. I'm not saying that you need to start changing your personality to suit others. I'm saying that you need to start embracing your true personality with others who that can support and bring about the best in you.
2. Think about how you can apply this strategy in each of the situations you identified. Write down specific actions you can take to apply the strategy in each situation. Remember not to put pressure on yourself. This is a long-term journey, not an overnight fix!
3. When you encounter one of these situations, take out your coping plan and follow the steps you have identified. Take note of how effective the plan is in helping you improve your social connections. If you find that it is difficult to do it alone, remember you can always seek out professional help who can give you objective advice that you may not be aware of.

Improving your social connections is not a one-night success. Just like the relationships you have today took time and effort, newer relationships will take more time and effort to be fulfilling. But that's okay! As you're practicing to be more socially connected, it gets easier and more natural to the point it will become your personality.

Social connectedness isn't about becoming friends with anyone whether they are toxic or healthy. Your social connectedness refers the how strong each of your relationships are that can get you pass hard times. In the long run, as your relationships strengthen, your resilience strengthens as well.

Now, let's see the even bigger picture. As we started with our relationships with ourselves, and then with people, let's look at about something greater; the purpose of your life.

Strategy Planning

Goal	
Action Plan	
Potential Barriers	
Coping Plan	
Coping Plan	

Self-Assessment:

Questions	Score
1. How often do you participate in community events or activities, such as festivals, fairs, or parades?	-----
2. How frequently do you interact with your neighbors or people in your local community?	-----
3. How often do you attend religious or spiritual gatherings, if applicable?	-----
4. How involved are you in local volunteer organizations or community groups?	-----
5. How often do you attend local sports games or other recreational activities?	-----
6. How often do you shop at local businesses or support local markets?	-----
7. How frequently do you enjoy engaging in conversations with people?	-----
8. How much do you feel like you have a sense of belonging in your community?	-----
9. How much do you feel like you can rely on others in your community for help or support in times of need?	-----

Calculate your score by assigning a point value to each question, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. Add up your scores to get a total score out of 90.

Total score: -----



CHAPTER 5

A Sense of Purpose: Everything in The Right Place

If you look at your house right now, no matter where or what you look at, there's something in common with all them even if you don't realize it. This one thing that connects all of these things is a purpose. Whether it's your table, the bathroom, the things you have like plates, Wi-Fi, all have a purpose of being there.

Rarely would you put something in your house that doesn't fit or have no use in your life whatsoever, well not unless you're a hoarder. But even then, you start to realize how much space is taken by things you don't even like or need. So, in this part of your resilience journey, you need to start reconnecting with your sense of purpose and how you fit in the world.

Studies have found that people who suffer from depression find no purpose in their lives. This may not be true but the feeling of having no purpose can negatively affect our resilience and how we go about our lives. It's hard to truly be resilient when there's no point in being resilient in the first place.

I know it's hard to think about all these things such as what should you actually be doing in your life, who should you be and where you should go. But I want to let you know that you don't have to think that far. Actually, it might even overwhelm you overthinking and comparing yourself to others, which misses the point of this book.

To start, I just want you to start thinking about what the purposes of little things in your life right now. Don't think about your job, or career, or passion or anything like that. Right now, just focus on the things you have like inside your room. Your table, your computer, your phone, or whatever it may be.

Notice what purpose they serve in your life and whether they're actually things that make you happier or less. When you start noticing the things you DO need, try to see things that you DON'T need. What are they? What's something you thought you needed before, but now you think it could benefit someone else more than you. Maybe consider donating it to them!

As you build this sense of purpose in the little things, you will then start to be aware of the bigger things like your job, relationships, and place in this world. But let's not go too fast too soon. Start small because that's how it always starts!

Case Study:

Rachel Ricketts was an anti-racism activist. She was a successful lawyer who didn't find much meaning in what she was doing. As she

started to feel more unhappy, she decided to take a break from thinking too much about her career and started to focus on things that genuinely made her happy.

She didn't quit her job but she started to make room for things she wanted and enjoyed. Rachel then started to practice mindfulness, meditation and doing simple things in her life. She started to find joy again in simple things like cooking, spending time with loved ones, and going out to nature and see the world not just from her phone.

It was because she stopped focusing too much on how to do better, and more on being better. To stop doing more and be more. A more loving person, a more present mother, sister, and friend. It didn't take a whole change in her life, job, relationships to start to feel happy. All she needed was to start somewhere small.

She started to see the purpose of everyday things to make you happy like having good food to eat, loved ones to love and be loved by, money to survive and live, and most importantly a beautiful home to stay in.

Through her work, she continues to be an inspiration for people who fight against racism. She is still a successful lawyer in her field but more importantly, she's more purposeful. But to gain that purpose, it's time to start focusing on the little things that we can bring into our lives. The things that aren't really flashy, or popular, or Instagram worthy, but happier, calmer, and more purposeful.

To start that journey, let's take on step by seeing where you are right now in your level of purposefulness. Even if you find that you don't have purpose, that's totally fine. That's where you can start!

Improving your sense of purpose:

- Start to be aware of the purpose of little things in your life, such as your belongings. Remove things you don't need and donate them to someone you think can benefit from it
- Explore more of your likes and dislikes. Try new things and see which of them you find the most enjoyable whether it's a new hobby like exercising, cooking, painting etc.
- Find out more of your strengths and weaknesses. What is something that people say you're really good at, or something you want to be good at? Follow it!
- Set some very easy goals to put into your daily life that includes you being present like meditating or spiritual prayers. This way every day you start to build more purpose into your life no matter how little
- Set out a plan for yourself every week. I know planning sounds so daunting, but it can be as easy as just putting down grocery lists, weekend hangouts on your phone. Schedule time where you do things you enjoy not so people notice.
- Connect with like-minded people. One of the best places to find purpose is to talk to people that understand what you're going through. I'm talking about the people that have similar wants, humor, personality and goals

Action Plan:

1. Reflect on your self-assessment and see which of the areas you want to improve in. Some areas might be stronger than others so it's better to focus on where you have large room for improvement.

2. Choose one or two strategies or practices that you think you can easily apply in your life. Promise to yourself and to a trusted one that you will stick to it even in hard times. (Especially in hard times!)
3. Practice the strategies consistently for one week. Take note of how much you feel a sense of purpose growing. If it doesn't work out then you can try something else or even better, see a professional to help you find what it is you value.

Coping Plan:

1. Identify one or two situations where you know you will start to lose that sense of purpose. This could be like losing a loved one, not getting that job, failing that exam, or anything unexpected.
2. When you find yourself in these situations, write down how you're going to recover and cope with it such as talking to a loved one, seeing a job mentor, or finding a study group. Take out your coping plan especially in these hard times when you know you will struggle.
3. It's important that you give yourself love and compassion when dealing with struggles. A coping plan is not meant to make you into a robot, but to guide yourself to a better state no matter the situation. This way you will always know how to find a sense of purpose in the hardest places.

Just like Rachel Ricketts, it should never be hard to start seeing your purpose. Although it will be difficult and at times, overwhelming thinking about how your life should be, remember it's not about how your life "should" be, how it can and must be.

When you "should" all over yourself you are filling yourself with resentment and sense of failure. But when you see that all these lessons are teaching how your life can and must be, it fills you with enthusiasm and purpose, not hate.

Take whatever small step you can to bring your purpose back to your life. Start cooking, painting, playing, talking, singing, praying, or whatever it may be. Once you're really serious, then you can start thinking about the grand purpose of things such as your career, relationships, faith and passion.

And hopefully, once you find that sense of purpose back into your life, maybe you can be that person that helps someone else do the same.

Strategy Planning

Goal	
Action Plan	
Potential Barriers	
Coping Plan	
Coping Plan	

Self-Assessment:

Questions	Score
1. How much do you feel like you understand your values and beliefs?	-----
2. How much do you feel like you are actually living the values you have for yourself?	-----
3. How much do you feel like you know where you are going in life?	-----
4. How much do you feel like your life has a sense of meaning and importance?	-----
5. How clear are your goals in life to you?	-----
6. How much do you feel like you are working towards your goals?	-----
7. How much do you feel like you are using your talents and strengths in a meaningful way to you?	-----
8. How much do you feel like you are making a positive impact in the world?	-----
9. How much do you feel like you are growing and learning as a person?	-----

Calculate your score by assigning a point value to each question, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. Add up your scores to get a total score out of 90.

Total score: -----



CHAPTER 6

Problem Solving – A Strong Roof Against the Storm

A house without a strong roof that can withstand heavy rain is bound to leak, get damaged and end up not being a house at all. That's why, my friends, a strong roof can give us the technical skills to solve the problems before they arise. To set the roof before the rain just like bringing an umbrella just in case it rains.

Problem solving is important since it gives us a sense of adaptability, meaning confidence that we can handle any situation in a planned way. Where self-efficacy meant our confidence in ourselves, our problem-solving skills is our competence. This is the skill we need to actually prove that we can solve the problems we face.

With a strong problem-solving skill, we can not only weather any storm, but become smart enough to use it to our advantage. Instead of seeing problems as burdens, we see them as opportunities to grow and succeed when everyone else is scared and panicking.

In this section, I left it last because if you notice, the structure of each resilience factor includes an action plan and a coping plan. For problem solving, however, the structure is slightly different. Problem solving requires us to understand the kinds of problems we face, which of them are worth solving, and how we can think of ways to solve them.

By the end of this section you will have a structure designed specifically to solve whatever problems you may face in a simple, yet effective way. As the saying goes “A problem well put, is half solved!”

Case Study:

Bill Gates is known for his ability to approach complex problems with a systematic and analytical mindset, which means he saw problems not as something to worry about but something that needs to be studied and understood without emotions.

This is what has helped him achieve great success in his career and personal life. One example of how Gates used problem-solving skills to make his life easier is when he co-founded Microsoft with Paul Allen in 1975. At the time, personal computers were still a relatively new and not many people could afford or access them. However, Gates knew people needed it in their lives. And so, he then created Microsoft

Gates and Allen worked tirelessly to overcome technical challenges and find new solutions to problems that had never been encountered before. Eventually, their hard work paid off, and today, Microsoft is the default operating system for personal computers

Gates' approach to problem-solving didn't stop there. Bill gates continued to tackle complex issues, such as global health and education, using a combination of creativity, analytical thinking, and strategic planning. By approaching problems in a systematic and logical way, Gates was able to make his life easier and achieve great success in his career and personal life.

Benefits of Problem Solving on Our Resilience:

- Problem-solving skills help you approach challenges and obstacles in a proactive and effective way, rather than becoming overwhelmed or reactive.
- By developing problem-solving skills, individuals become better equipped to cope with unexpected setbacks and difficulties, which can help to build their resilience.
- Effective problem-solving skills can lead to a greater sense of control and empowerment, as you learn to take charge of their situations and work towards solutions.
- Problem-solving skills can also help individuals to develop a more positive and proactive mindset, which can improve their overall emotional well-being and reduce your stress and anxiety.
- When you develop your problem-solving skills, you may also be better equipped to help others who are experiencing similar challenges, which can build their sense of social support and connectedness.

Improving your problem-solving skills

To solve a specific problem, we first need to identify how to put the problem in a way that we understand. Basically, before we start building

our house, we first need to see how is the foundation, is it stable or unstable? Is the material you're using to build the house strong enough to withstand strong winds, heavy rain or an earthquake?

With this we first have to make the problem into a specific question. This question can't be too general. It has to be SMART:

Let's say you have the specific goal in mind to save money:

- Specific – You want to specifically save money/reduce debt/spend on family
- Measurable – Let's say you want to save a measurable amount of \$500 by the end of the month
- Achievable – it is definitely achievable if you have a stable income more than \$500 (for example, you earn \$1500 every month)
- Realistic – Don't expect to save \$2000 by the end of the month if you only earn \$1,500
- Time bound – you can achieve this goal in this month (30 days)

So, looking at your SMART Goals, we can see that the problem statement is "How can I save \$500 per month, while reducing debt, yet still have some to enjoy with family?" Sounds SMART doesn't it? Whether it's your family, career, finances, or personal issue, how can you structure put your problem in a SMART statement?

After you've made your SMART problem statement, you can start exercising the problem solving...

Action Plan:

1. After figuring out your problem statement, branch out into how you're going to solve the issue.

2. After one branch of “How?” branch out into more “How?” and write the specific consequences for each choice if you were to make it.
3. Make sure to include all possible ways you can take to solve the issue and see which of the approaches you are most confident in. (e.g. are you confident in starting a new business to build more income?)
4. No approach is perfect so choose which choice you are willing to take (e.g. spending on lower quality products and spending less on expensive restaurants to save money)

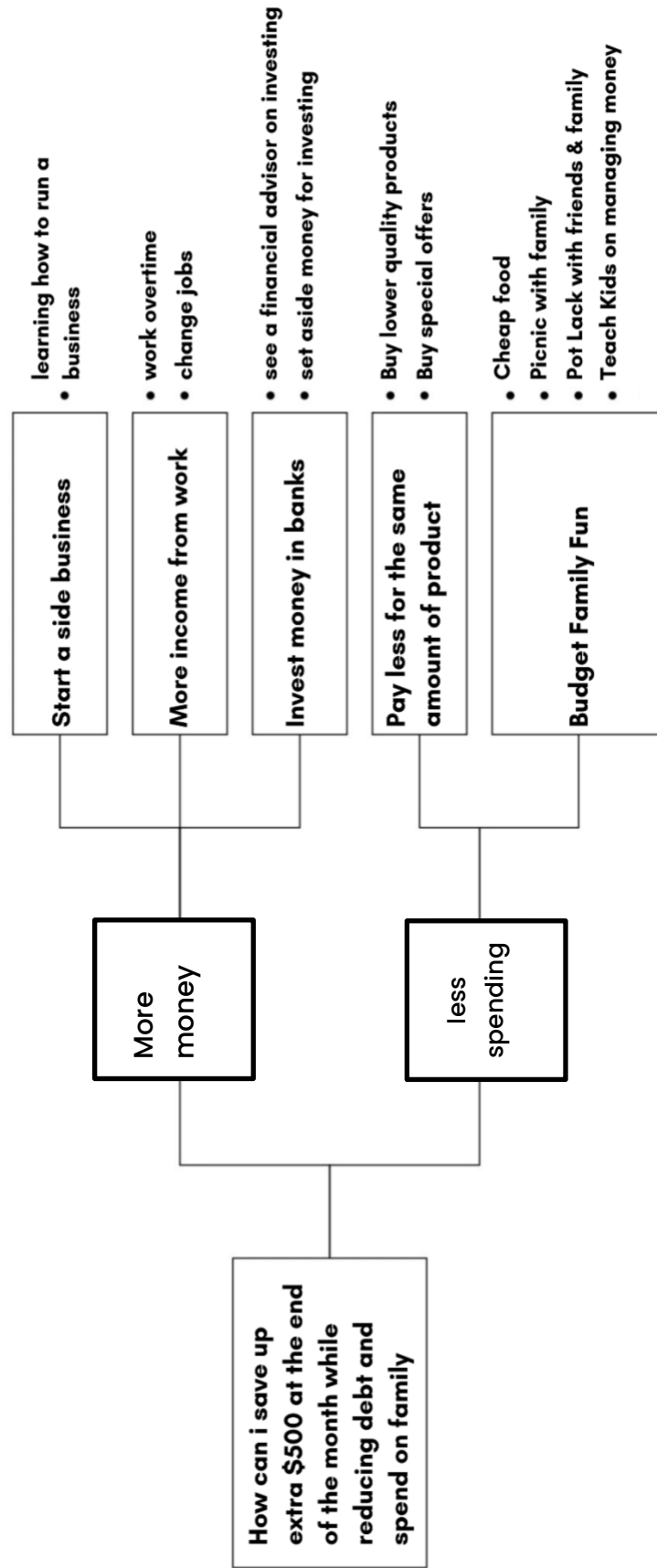
Coping Plan:

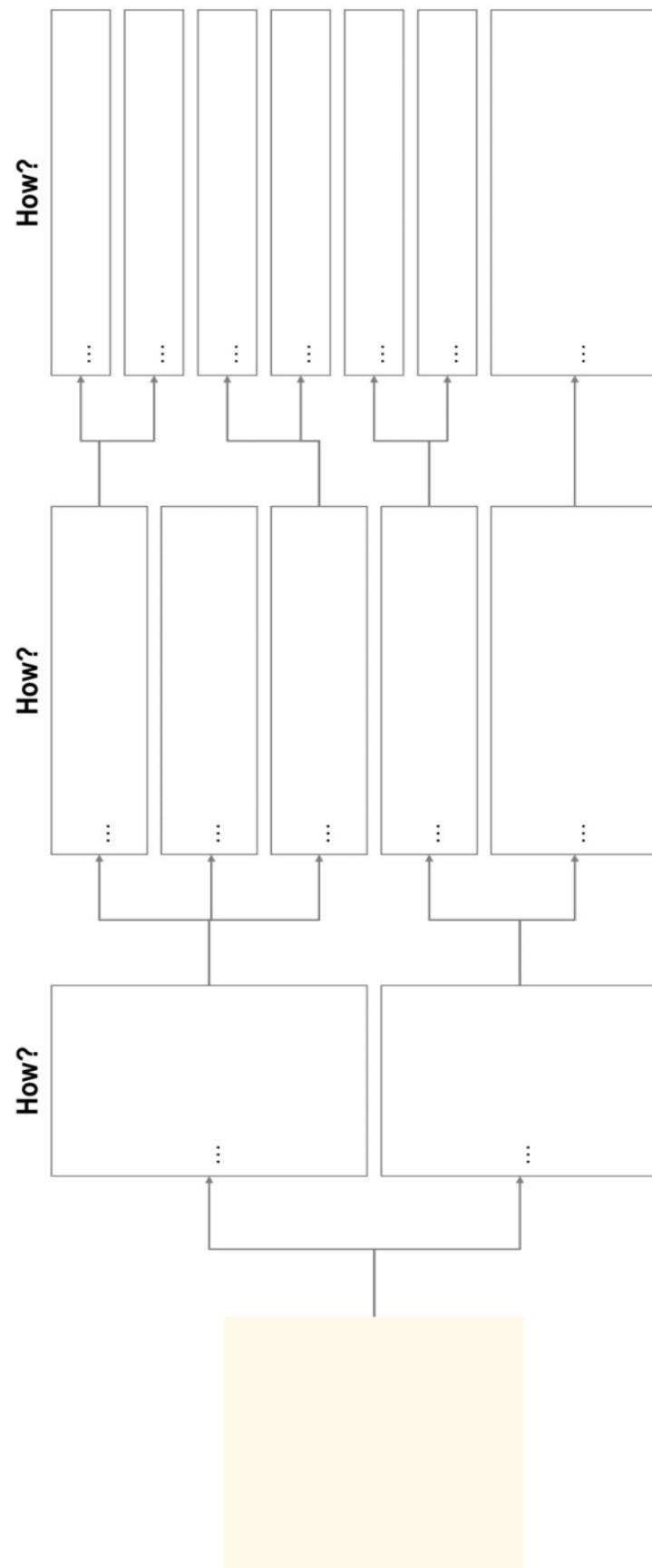
1. You will definitely find yourself in hard situations where you’re tempted to spend. Maybe friends will try to bring you out to eat. Offer alternative ways to spend time such as simple picnics, having a potluck etc.
2. When you’re tempted to borrow money, reflect how you’re only going to only build more debt which goes against your goal.
3. Refer to your problem-solving tree consistently to see alternative ways to solve issues if one way doesn’t work. This way you will always have an insurance plan if anything doesn’t go your way instead of being emotionally reactive.

Problem solving, like having a roof over your head will be an important area of building your resilience house. Preparing your problem-solving skills will make sure you have the skills to overcome any challenges that come unexpectedly. With your self-efficacy, optimism, and problem solving, you’ll be the most resilient version of yourself.

EXAMPLE

It's an example of how to plot your problem solving plan

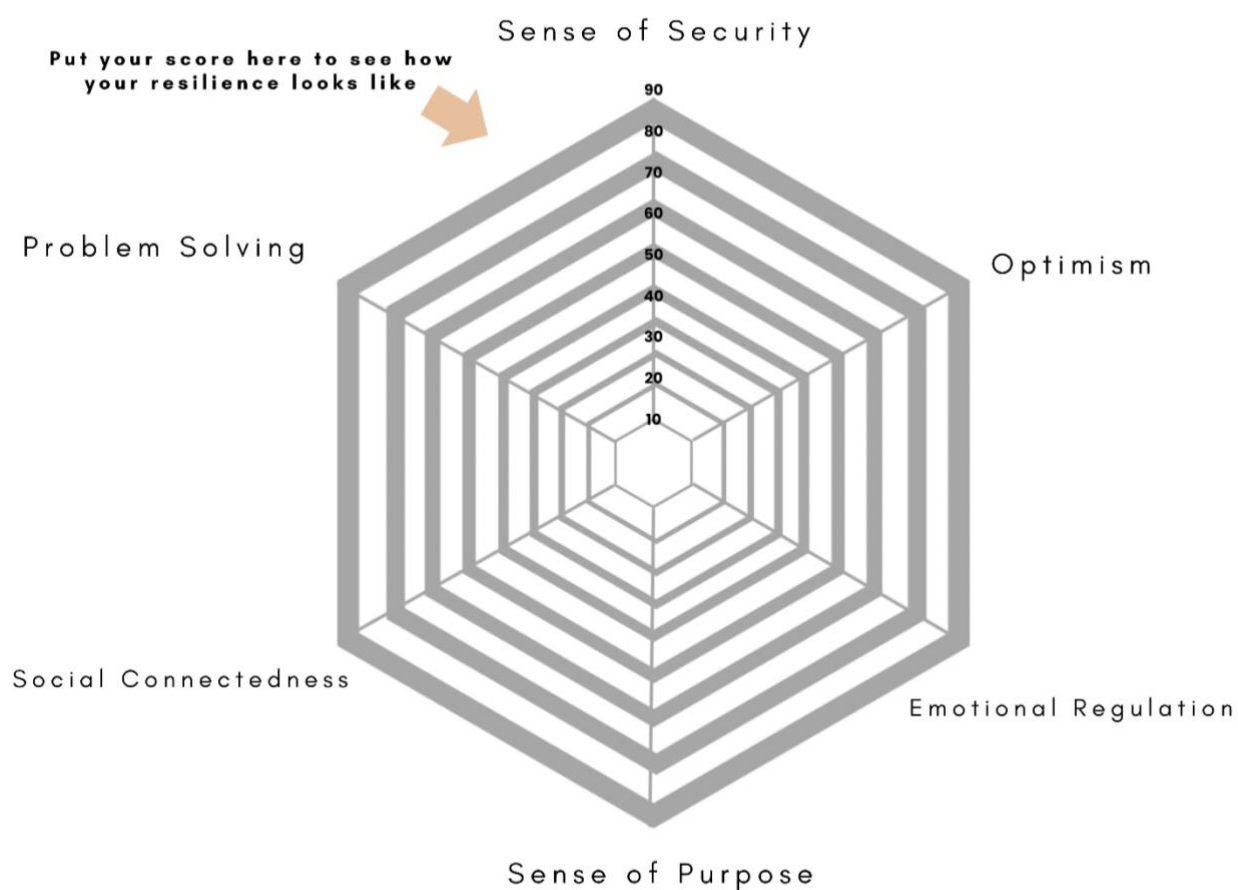




Building Your Resilience House

In all the sections we covered, my friends, I specifically wanted you all to record your self-assessment to see where you all stand in terms of your resilience level. Take note of the scores you have and plot it on the radar graph below. This way you can see a visual representation of how resilient you are.

Visual Representation of Your Resilience



Total Score: _____

I want to remind you again, my friends, that this doesn't represent your set personality. This is only a starting point and you already have the tools and skills to build it stronger.

Looking at the radar graph, which area do you think you have the most room for improvement? What kinds of strategies did you find the most convenient for you? How will you take action on it? If troubling times show up, what coping strategies did you put in place?

To see where your overall resilience lies the total score for the resilience radar graph is 540.

- **Strong Resilience:** If you have a score of more than 370 then the strength of your overall resilience house is strong with good foundations on how to deal with stress, achieve your goals, and bounce back from failure
- **Average Resilience:** if you have a total score between 270 - 370, then you have a basic foundation on building resilience with more room for improvement. This is where you tolerate stress but can't seem to overcome them long term, you have clear goals that you want to achieve but don't have



a set plan on how to achieve them, and you tolerate failure but don't take action to learn and grow

- **Low Resilience:** If you have a total score of less than 250, then your resilience house is bound to collapse if not strengthened. This is where you are unable to cope with stress, lack of clarity on achieving your goals, and unable to bounce back from failure.



Make it a daily or weekly practice to see where do you lie on the radar graph. Has there been improvements lately? If so, celebrate and let yourself feel that accomplishment without regret! If there's no improvement or decrease, then that's okay too. That's when you need to bring in people that you trust or a professional to guide you through understanding your emotions, values and goals.

Don't worry too much about making the perfect progress. Just as it doesn't take one night to build a beautiful and strong home, it won't take one night for you to be 100% resilient to all challenges of life. If you rush it, you might make your house not as strong as it could be.

More resources

Like I said in the beginning, this book doesn't have to be the only book on your journey to building your resilience. It can at least be a start or a friend alongside your journey. With that, my friends, there's plenty of other resources that you can read, and listen to on our website, our podcast, our articles, and many more to come.

Join our community where we focus on one thing and one thing only, and that is build a compassionate community who are sensitive to each other's wellbeing. When you join, you are automatically part of that cause that never stops.

Conclusion

With this, my friends, I hope you see how you can start building and strengthen your resilience. Your house is yours to build, design, decorate, and to invite whoever. Take care of your house, and it will take care of you. Maintain it with your self-efficacy, fill it with the light of optimism, open windows and doors for ventilation and insulation of your emotional well-being, invite nurturing neighbor's, and setup a strong roof with your problem-solving skills.

I promise you that if you practice even one area of your house, it will strengthen your house as a whole. You don't have to start big to be a more resilient person. All you need to begin is to be aware that you are worth strengthening and that you don't have to do it alone. Find people who are just like you. At JIWA, it's a great start to find people who have the same goal as you. To feel better, do better, and be better.

I hope this book benefited you in at least one way or more. With that, I hope you never stop believing in yourself to overcome any challenges that comes your way. I hope you never give up hope in the people that believe in you. Most of all, I hope you never think of yourself as unworthy of love and strength ever again. That's it from me, my friends.

Your friend at JIWA

Zulfan