



What is Resilience?

Key Concepts:

- Your resilience capacity can be thought of as the amount of energy you have stored in your inner battery.
- The greater your capacity and your resilience, the more energy you have available.
- Having more energy gives you greater ability to self-regulate your emotions and behaviors so you can choose how to respond rather than react automatically.
- Learning and applying the coherence techniques can increase your energy reserves, thereby increasing your resilience capacity.
- Plugging energy “leaks” throughout the day so you don’t waste energy is key in building and sustaining your resilience. Getting enough sleep to recharge your inner battery is also essential in building your resilience.

What is resilience and what does managing your energy have to do with it?

You’ve likely experienced times when you feel you don’t have much energy and may have used phrases like “I’m running on fumes,” or “I’m drained” to describe the feeling of being tired. It’s common that when your energy is low and you feel drained, it can be difficult to think clearly, perform tasks well and bounce back, all of which are good indications that your resilience is low.

So, what exactly is resilience and how can you have more of it?

HeartMath’s definition of resilience is a broader understanding of resilience:

Resilience is the capacity to prepare for, recover from and adapt in the face of stress, challenge or adversity.

A key word in the definition is **capacity**, which is how much of something you have. You can think of your current resilience capacity as the amount of energy you have stored in your inner battery. It’s how much energy you can draw upon to handle your daily challenges and tasks. Resilience is the energy you have available to use not only physically, but also mentally, emotionally and spiritually. When you have a high level of resilience or a fully charged inner battery, you have greater capacity to remain calm, think clearly and be in control of your emotions so



you don't overreact. In other words, you can more effectively handle challenges and flow through them rather than become stressed, which further drains your energy reserves.

When you are resilient, you are better able to bounce back and recover faster after challenging situations. This helps offset much of the lingering wear and tear that affects not only you, but the people around you too.

By building your resilience you'll be better prepared, adapt more quickly, make smarter decisions and remain clear in situations that arise throughout the day. Having greater resilience doesn't mean you will not find yourself in difficult situations. What it does mean is you'll have an internal capacity that will give you the ability, energy and resolve to handle whatever comes up.

On the other hand, similar to a drained car battery making it impossible to start your car, when your inner battery is depleted, there isn't energy to draw from when you need it, making it difficult to be your best and respond well in tough, and often, in very ordinary situations. You also may end up draining even more energy.

A key in building and sustaining resilience is managing how you spend and renew your energy. The goal is to not waste energy unnecessarily and to effectively replenish your energy reserves.

Learning and applying coherence techniques can build your energy reserves, giving you more energy to draw from when you need it. If you do not monitor and manage your energy, you can become depleted, making it more difficult to handle daily situations well.

Plugging energy leaks also is important in building and sustaining your energy reserves. Greater reserves enhance your ability to maintain your mental focus and clarity and your emotional composure throughout the day.

A very important way to renew energy and recharge your inner battery is by getting enough uninterrupted, regenerative sleep. Sleep is one of the most basic ways the body renews its energy levels. Sometimes though, it's difficult to get a good, rejuvenating sleep. The techniques you will learn can help you gain more of the benefits of sleep.

Energy-Draining Situations/Events Exercise

Identify situations that cause stress, the corresponding feelings that typically drain your inner battery and what you currently do now to handle them. Write them on the lines below.



Examples:

| Situations | Feelings | Current Solution |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Late for work | Anxious | Call co-worker |
| Argument with spouse | Angry, helpless | Wait for it to blow over |
| Can't get enough sleep | Frustrated, tired | Leave work early |

| Situations | Feelings | Current Solution |
|------------|----------|------------------|
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Energy-Renewing Situations/Events Exercise

Identify situations or interactions and the corresponding feelings that renew you and recharge your inner battery. Write them on the lines below.



Examples:

| Situations | Feelings |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Hanging out with friends | Appreciation, happiness |
| Acknowledged for a good job | Confident, sense of accomplishment |
| Serving others | Proud, fulfilled, sense of honor |

| Situations | Feelings |
|------------|----------|
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The power of the Quick Coherence Technique comes from activating renewing emotions. When you self-generate renewing emotions, in the moment, you replace depleting emotions with ones that can renew your system. The technique is simple and each step is important. With practice, the coherence you establish in your system becomes your new reference point making the shift easier and more automatic.

Step 1

Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Find an easy rhythm that's comfortable.

Step 2

As you continue heart-focused breathing, make a sincere attempt to experience a re-generative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life.

Suggestion: Try to re-experience the feeling you have for someone you love, a pet, a special place, an accomplishment, etc., or focus on a feeling of calm or ease.

Quick Coherence Applications

- For no specific reason
- At the start of the day
- When beginning a project or sending emails
- Before or during a challenging situation

Once you are familiar with practicing the steps above, try the Quick Steps.

Quick Steps

1. Heart-Focused Breathing
2. Activate a positive or renewing feeling

Heart-Focused Breathing™ Technique



The Heart-Focused Breathing Technique is a simple to use, energy-saving, self-regulation strategy designed to reduce the intensity of a stress reaction and to establish a calm, but alert state. It helps you to take a “time-out” where you can step back and neutralize depleting emotions.

Combining the simple act of focusing on the heart area with a slightly deeper level of breathing helps draw energy away from distressed thoughts and feelings by interrupting your body’s mechanical stress response.

We can gain benefit from conscious breathing if we use it to help us shift into and sustain a more balanced state, understanding that breathing is only the start of what we call the coherence-building process.

Step

Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Find an easy rhythm that’s comfortable.

Heart-Focused Breathing Applications

- Neutralize emotional reactions in the moment
- Reduce the impact of stress
- Plug energy drains

Once you are familiar practicing the step above, try the Quick Step.

Quick Step

Heart-Focused Breathing