



# RESILIENCE & THRIVING: THE SECRET POWER OF STRESS

Workbook



**National  
Wellness  
Institute**



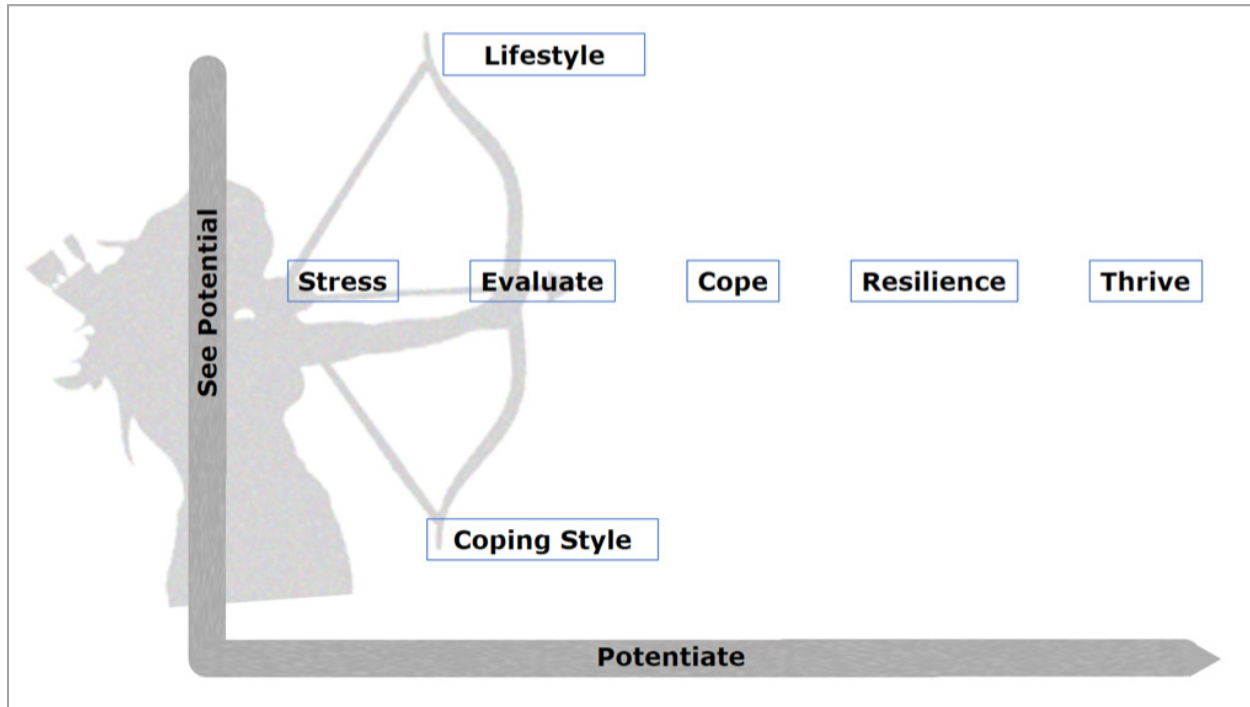
This workbook was designed by Organizational Wellness & Learning Systems and is an adaptation of Module 4 (Stress, Problem Solving and You) from the Team Awareness curriculum, originally developed at the Institute of Behavioral Research (The Workplace Project), under NIH grant.

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a. <b>STRESS AREA.</b> What area of your life has stress?	
b. <b>YOUR RESPONSE.</b> How can you respond better?	
c. <b>GOAL.</b> What goal, intention, or affirmation will work?	
d. <b>A STEP.</b> What specific step can you commit to?	
e. <b>INFUSE.</b> Infuse your affirmation with relaxation.	

*An arrow can only be shot by pulling it backward.  
When life is dragging you back with difficulties, it means  
it's going to launch you into something great.  
So just focus, and keep aiming.*



Much of our stress is a function of our attitude. There are some types of stress – abuse, trauma and grief — that can hurt our well-being, regardless of our attitude. And, many people manage to weather these adversities better than others. Our attitude and skills can make an important difference in how we respond to, or cope with, stress.

**POTENTIAL.** Our challenges can often be those very things that help us to learn, grow, and bring out potential skills, talents, and gifts. As we learn to grow, we “potentiate” — extract and magnify — those gifts so we cope better, become more resilient and thrive.

**EVALUATE.** The ability to pause, reflect, and process information about stress is central to our bringing out the potential of stress. We “see” the potential of hardship or challenge.

**LIFESTYLE.** Our ability to evaluate is strengthened when we practice a healthy lifestyle.

**COPING STYLE.** Similarly, healthy (versus unhealthy) coping strengthens our evaluation.

**COPE.** A primary, or more immediate, goal is to choose a healthy coping behavior.

**RESILIENCE.** Resilience is often one outcome from effective coping. Resilience is not only bouncing back from stress but also learning from it.

**THRIVE.** We thrive when we practice all of the above: when we potentiate, evaluate, practice a healthy lifestyle, choose healthy alternatives, and keep learning. Thriving is the experience of optimal well-being in all domains: physical, emotional, social, intellectual, occupational, and spiritual.

# 1. STRESSOR DOMAINS

**EVALUATE:** From the six domains, choose the one domain that is presenting the greatest amount, number, or intensity of stressors for you right now. It helps to focus on one domain. Within that domain, can you circle one or two specific items that are most disruptive to your life?

<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>RELATIONSHIPS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> PARENTING STRESS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES</li> <li><input type="radio"/> ARGUMENTS, DISAGREEMENTS, CONFLICTS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> SEPARATION, ESTRANGEMENT, DIVORCE</li> <li><input type="radio"/> GRUDGES OR UNRESOLVED ISSUES</li> <li><input type="radio"/> JEALOUSY AND ENVY</li> <li><input type="radio"/> LONELINESS OR SOCIAL ISOLATION</li> <li><input type="radio"/> BULLYING OR DISCRIMINATION</li> <li><input type="radio"/> FEELING EXCLUDED, NOT BELONGING</li> <li><input type="radio"/> ANXIETY AROUND PEOPLE</li> <li><input type="radio"/> ANGER OR IRRITATION WITH OTHERS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> PETTY ISSUES, RUMORS, GOSSIP</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>WORK AND CAREER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> OUT OF WORK OR CAREER DERAILMENT</li> <li><input type="radio"/> NOT ADEQUATELY REWARDED</li> <li><input type="radio"/> POOR OR INADEQUATE BENEFITS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> POLITICS IN THE OFFICE</li> <li><input type="radio"/> BULLYING OR DISCRIMINATION</li> <li><input type="radio"/> BURNOUT, JOB INSECURITY</li> <li><input type="radio"/> FAVORITISM OR NEPOTISM</li> <li><input type="radio"/> UNREASONABLE DEMANDS/DEADLINES</li> <li><input type="radio"/> MICROMANAGEMENT</li> <li><input type="radio"/> MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> TOO MUCH COMMUTING</li> <li><input type="radio"/> NOT ENOUGH INDEPENDENCE</li> </ul>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>HEALTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> LACK OF ENERGY OR SLEEP PROBLEMS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> MOOD PROBLEMS (ANXIETY, SADNESS)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> OTHER MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES</li> <li><input type="radio"/> RECOVERING FROM ILLNESS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> CHRONIC DISEASE</li> <li><input type="radio"/> LOSS OR DETERIORATION OF FUNCTION</li> <li><input type="radio"/> UNABLE TO CONTROL WEIGHT</li> <li><input type="radio"/> RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> SKIN PROBLEMS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> CARDIOVASCULAR ISSUES</li> <li><input type="radio"/> DIGESTIVE OR INTESTINAL PROBLEMS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> SURGERY</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>FINANCIAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> RISING COSTS (FOOD, GAS, OTHER)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> INSURANCE PROBLEMS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK</li> <li><input type="radio"/> LOANS AND DEBTS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> CREDIT CARD PROBLEMS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> LOSS OR DOWNGRADE OF INCOME</li> <li><input type="radio"/> EXPOSED TO THEFT OR ROBBERY</li> <li><input type="radio"/> BUDGET MISMANAGEMENT</li> <li><input type="radio"/> DISAGREEMENTS ABOUT MONEY</li> <li><input type="radio"/> FAILURE TO ADEQUATELY PLAN</li> <li><input type="radio"/> RETIREMENT CONCERNS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> GAMBLING PROBLEMS</li> </ul>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>EMOTIONAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> EASILY UPSET OR ANGERED BY LITTLE THINGS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> HYPERSENSITIVE, WORRY, ANXIETY, PANIC</li> <li><input type="radio"/> OBSESSING ABOUT SOMETHING</li> <li><input type="radio"/> LACK CONFIDENCE, FEEL LIKE FAILURE</li> <li><input type="radio"/> SADNESS, GRIEF, OR FEELING DOWN</li> <li><input type="radio"/> DIFFICULTY CONTROLLING TEMPER</li> <li><input type="radio"/> DISTURBING DREAMS OR NIGHTMARES</li> <li><input type="radio"/> TIREDNESS OR LACK OF ENERGY</li> <li><input type="radio"/> UNEXPLAINED PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS</li> <li><input type="radio"/> UNRESOLVED TRAUMA, MEMORIES</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>SPIRITUAL</b> <sup>[1]</sup></p> <p><b>FEELING:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> FLAT, EMPTY, WITHOUT PURPOSE</li> <li><input type="radio"/> INDIGNANT, IMPATIENT, HYPOCRITICAL (1)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> MANIPULATIVE, SELF-SERVING, COERCIVE (2)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> OVER-FOCUS ON IMAGE, MATERIAL THINGS (3)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> MOODY, SELF-INDULGENT, SELF-HATRED (4)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> REMOVED, AVOIDANT, RECLUSIVE (5)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> SARCASTIC, BELLIGERENT, DISPARAGING (6)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> GREEDY, DEMANDING, ADDICTED (7)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> HARD-HEARTED, IMMORAL, POWER HUNGRY (8)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> FATALISTIC, NUMB, REPRESSED (9)</li> </ul>

[1] There are many models of spiritual stressors. Only one is shown here. The spiritual stressors listed are derived from unhealthy aspects of the nine personality types in the Enneagram. The three-trait clusters listed are not comprehensive. They emerge when there is denial or pushing away of spiritual energy. To learn more visit [enneagraminstitute.com](http://enneagraminstitute.com)

## 2. LIFE STYLE (General routines and habits)

The following items ask about your life-style or your daily or typical habits regarding health. First, use the 1,2,3 ratings to indicate how much each of the statements below is like you.

	Unlike Me	In Between	Like Me	
1. I take time to make sure my life has a sense of direction, purpose, or meaning to it.	1	2	3	<b>Spiritual</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
2. My daily routine includes prayer, meditation, or some way of centering myself and connecting to my spirituality.	1	2	3	
3. I practice awareness of how my attitude or personality can be both a benefit and a hindrance to my spiritual growth.	1	2	3	
4. Every day, I keep my brain active through engaging, creative, and stimulating activities.	1	2	3	<b>Intellectual</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
5. I think about problems and mistakes as opportunities to learn and build my mental skills.	1	2	3	
6. I stay informed through curiosity, reading, and learning.	1	2	3	
7. I make efforts to make my work enjoyable and meaningful.	1	2	3	<b>Occupational</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
8. I regularly seek to express my full self at work.	1	2	3	
9. I approach challenges at work with commitment, confidence, and/or team work.	1	2	3	
10. I take the time to listen to, and enjoy being with, others in my life.	1	2	3	<b>Social</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
11. I give and receive affection from others.	1	2	3	
12. I make efforts to help family, friends, and community.	1	2	3	
13. When sad, upset or angry, I pay attention and listen to what my emotions are telling me.	1	2	3	<b>Emotional</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
14. I notice or seek out positive, uplifting things in my life.	1	2	3	
15. I love and accept myself as I am.	1	2	3	
16. I get regular exercise (at least 3x week), eat healthy foods (vegetables, fruits), and avoid fatty foods and sugar.	1	2	3	<b>Physical</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
17. I get a good night's sleep, and feel rested every day.	1	2	3	
18. I only use alcohol in moderation (if at all) and entirely avoid tobacco and other drugs.	1	2	3	

Next, review your total scores for each of the six areas. These would range from 3 to 9. Notice which areas are lower or higher. Then, notice within each area any items where you rated a "1" or a "2." Circle or check those items. You can also tally your total score, which would range from 18 to 54. There is no "hard and fast" rule, and a score lower than 40 suggests you might seek out support or coaching to enhance your lifestyle.

**GRAND TOTAL**

# 3. COPING STYLE (Specific responses to stress)

Think about the more stressful and difficult events that have occurred in your life within the recent past. How have you handled or coped with these events? How do you respond to ongoing problems that you encounter? From the list below, check off all those items that fit with your general STYLE or way of responding to stress.

- |  |                          |   |                          |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1. I seek ideas or support from others.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. I withdraw from the situation .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I talk to people to help me feel better.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. I avoid being with people in general .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I plan a course of action and follow-through until the problem is addressed .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18. I "take my frustration" out on others (e.g., yelling or being snappy).....            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I see problems as challenges and find the strength and confidence to tackle them.....       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 19. I otherwise act aggressively (e.g., drive my car fast, express anger) .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I am patient with myself and give myself the caring I need.....                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20. I daydream about better times.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I remind myself that I am not the only one with problems or challenges .....                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 21. I "zone out," become numb, let my mind drift (e.g., watch too much TV).....           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I do things to ground or center my body (deep breathing, yoga, qigong, tai chi, etc.).....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 22. I become compulsive (e.g., shopping, eating, exercising, drinking) .....              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I get exercise or do physical work.....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 23. I eat too much or too little.....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I do activities or hobbies to refresh myself (garden, sport, read, play, take a bath) ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 24. I crave sweets (chocolate, cookies, candy, soda) or eat junk food .....               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I pray, meditate, or do spiritual reading .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 25. I drink alcohol (beer, wine, liquor).....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I try to get extra sleep or rest.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 26. I smoke or chew tobacco .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I remain hopeful that I can be successful in dealing with the problem .....                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 27. I drink more coffee/cafeinated drinks more than I should or know is good for me ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. I find confidence in setting goals.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 28. I use a drug to take the edge off.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. I take things in stride, knowing I can usually bounce back from problems.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 29. I cry, become very moody, get jittery, all hyped up, or anxious.....                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. I tend to look on the bright side .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 30. I get easily exhausted and fatigued.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SCORING: Tally up the number of boxes you checked in Column 1 (Items 1-15); Tally up the boxes in Column 2 (Items 16 - 30). Which column has the higher number? Column 1 responses tend to be more effective. Column 2 responses are less effective; especially as habits. Below are some ways to categorize the various coping styles. Use the categories below to better help you label when you choose one type of coping and make adjustments as needed.

Five Cs of Resilience		Avoid/Aggress	
1-2	social support (Community)	16-17	withdrawal/avoidance
3	problem solving (Commitment)	18-19	aggression
4	approach challenge (Confidence)	20-21	tuning out
5-6	patience and humanity (Compassion)	Attach/Addiction	
7-11	exercise, rest, spirituality (Centering)	22	compulsive behavior
Psychological Capital		23-24	use food
12	<b>H</b> ope (H of Psychological Capital)	25-28	substances (alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, drugs)
13	<b>E</b> fficacy (E of Psychological Capital)	Aroused (hyper or hypo)	
14	<b>R</b> esilience (R of Psychological Capital)	29	emotions
15	<b>O</b> ptimism (O of Psychological Capital)	30	energy depletion

Here are some recommendations. Five Cs of Resilience: If these are low, consider finding others in your life who do a good job of practicing these and ask them to help you. Also, review for confidence (4) or efficacy (13), consider [happyfornoreason.com](http://happyfornoreason.com) or [characterlab.org](http://characterlab.org); for compassion (5-6), [self-compassion.org](http://self-compassion.org); For centering (7-11), consider [healerwithin.com](http://healerwithin.com). For commitment (3) or if Avoid/Aggress is high (16 to 21), consider [contextualscience.org/act](http://contextualscience.org/act). We recommend an Internet search for "Psychological Capital" for recent advances and resources. For Attach/Addiction (22-28) a good place to start is any 12-step program (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous). For Aroused (29-30), there are many YouTube guided visualizations and relaxation. Also consider [relaxationresponse.org](http://relaxationresponse.org). In general, if you are looking to focus on building more of your strengths, consider [greatergood.berkeley.edu](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu).

# 4. TRAITS AND STATES: RESILIENCE & THRIVING

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The following sets of statements are for reflection and not for rating. As presented here, resilience, thriving, and potentiating are not GOALS to be achieved in the future as much as a state of being, internal trait, or quality that you carry with you. These are not the outcomes of effectively coping. They are an overarching attitude or pre-condition to help approach stress.

## **RESILIENCE [1]**

- I am able to adapt to change.
- I often bounce back easily from hardships or illnesses.
- I can deal with whatever problems come my way.
- I usually give my best effort, no matter what the circumstances.
- My past successes have given me confidence for new challenges.
- My past failures have taught me ways to grow and learn.
- I am someone who recovers from life's difficulties and keeps moving.
- Early hardships in my life have strengthened my personality.

## **THRIVING [2]**

- I feel good most of the time.
- My life is going really well.
- I am accomplishing my life goals.
- I often feel engaged and excited in my daily life.
- I often feel together with, belonging to, or supported by others.
- My sense of aliveness is strong.
- I get to do what I am good at every day.
- I learn something new all the time.

## **POTENTIATING [3]**

- I see how my behaviors lead to the positive changes I now have in my life.
- Obstacles I face turn into stepping stones for my growth.
- I am designed to make the most out of my life.
- I always look for the positive opportunity if I worry, doubt, or fret.
- It doesn't matter what happens but rather how I deal with it.
- I am good at making lemonade when all I have is lemons.
- When things appear bad I think "how can I at least make this better for others."
- I create alternative solutions and scenarios for the best outcome.

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[1] Adapted from Connor, K. M., & Davidson, J. R. (2003). Development of a new resilience scale: The Connor-Davidson resilience scale (CD-RISC). *Depression and anxiety*, 18(2), 76-82. [2] Adapted from the following: Su, R., Tay, L., & Diener, E. (2014). The development and validation of the Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving (CIT) and the Brief Inventory of Thriving (BIT). *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, 6(3), 251-279. Duan, W., Guan, Y., & Gan, F. (2016). Brief Inventory of Thriving: a comprehensive measurement of wellbeing. *Chinese Sociological Dialogue*, 1(1), 15-31; Butler, J., & Kern, M. L. (2016). The PERMA-Profil: A brief multidimensional measure of flourishing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 6(3). [3] Adapted from Holiday, R. (2014). *The obstacle is the way: The timeless art of turning trials into triumph*. Penguin; McGonigal, K. (2016). *The upside of stress: Why stress is good for you, and how to get good at it*. Penguin. Bennett, J. B. (2014). *Raw Coping Power: From Stress to Thriving*. Organizational Wellness.

# 5. GOAL SETTING & POSITIVE INTENTIONS: FIVE STEPS TO TRANSFORMING STRESS

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**STRESS AREA.** Which of the six domains of your life has the most stress?  
Write in your response from **1. Stressors** on page 4

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**YOUR RESPONSE.** How can you respond better to your stress?  
List one or two effective ways that you might cope with the situation.

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What lifestyle factors can you add to help you respond better?  
(see **2. Lifestyle** on page 5, and identify factors you have or can add)

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What coping style factors can you add, modify, or remove to help you respond better? (see page 6, **3. Coping Style**)

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**GOAL.** If you used the coping tool(s) selected above, what goal would you achieve that addresses the stressor listed above?

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**A STEP.** What specific step of your goal can you commit to?

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**INFUSE.** Infuse your affirmation with relaxation. Follow instructions from workshop.

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