

# **ENHANCING RESILIENCE**

**FINDING INNER STRENGTH TO MANAGE  
THE DEMANDS OF CLINICAL PRACTICE**

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## FINDING INNER STRENGTH TO MANAGE THE DEMANDS OF CLINICAL PRACTICE

### Welcome!

We all face life hassles, sometimes, arising from challenges arising from our professional and personal lives. However, using resilience enhancement techniques could make facing them easier. Hopefully this workbook will help you do so.

This **Enhancing Resilience** workbook is based on an evidence-based psychological treatment known as 'Strength-Based' Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). An assumption with this approach is that many in clinical practice are already resilient in at least some areas you enjoy, value or are successful in. Even when they may consider these areas to be quite small.

### What is Resilience?

Resilience is the 'inner strength' and flexibility that enables us cope effectively when faced with 'challenges' clinical practice and life more generally may throw at us from time to time. Being resilient can help minimise the impact these challenges have and help us

cope with them better. It's therefore an asset or strength, a desirable quality or characteristic that's likely to benefit our personal and professional effectiveness, achievements, health and psychological wellbeing.

To help you know if **Enhancing Resilience** is for you, it can be helpful to read the case study about Alex who, with a little supervisor support used the workbook to overcome a challenge arising from clinical practice. If after reading the case study you feel the workbook is not for you, that's fine and have a chat with your supervisor. However, also look at the *Moving On* section at the end where you'll find other suggestions and support you may find helpful.

## Alex's Story



I've been working as part of the IAPT psychological therapies workforce within the *Wellbeing Together Service* for the last 2 years. In my last group supervision session I showed the group 10 minutes of a session recording on agenda setting and they gave me some feedback. Although I know they were helpful suggestions, I left supervision feeling unconfident and questioning my competency. I was also feeling overwhelmed and concerned as the feedback got me thinking about my patient waiting times and I noticed that my personal recovery rate was towards the lowest in the service.

I became increasingly anxious about my clinical practice generally and during individual supervision my supervisor noted I was spending a lot of time reassurance seeking, becoming increasingly worried I was letting patients and the service down. The pressure I was putting on myself got worse, I couldn't switch off and kept replaying sessions over in my mind and this started impacting on my home life too. I also began to ruminate about leaving, however every time I raised this with my supervisor she managed to convince me to 'hang in there', although this was becoming increasingly harder.

One day however she mentioned **Enhancing Resilience**, a self-help workbook developed for the IAPT psychological therapies workforce to enhance our resilience if we needed to. At first, I wondered how this could relate to my lack of confidence in clinical practice. However, the workbook explained how recognising our '*inner strengths*' which was easier to identify in activities we do successfully, can help us become more resilient in other areas of our lives we find more challenging.

Over the next week, I started to work through the workbook. First of all I completed the *Successful Regular Activity* worksheet, identifying an activity I was able to do successfully and recognised difficulties I'd faced in the past when trying to do it. Initially, the questions on the worksheet seemed a bit irrelevant and I couldn't quite see how they were relevant to challenges I faced in clinical practice. However, I gave it a go, and chose to identify running as part of my running club as my successful activity. That week I identified challenges I had faced with this activity and how I overcame them to construct my own *Personal Model of Resilience*. This helped me appreciate my strengths, identify successful strategies I'd used when facing difficulties and even recognise some helpful metaphors.

I then considered how my *Personal Model of Resilience* could be used to improve my resiliency, writing down challenges I was facing with my clinical practice on the *Resilience Application Worksheet*. I was encouraged to scan my *Personal Model of Resilience* to see if it could help me recognise some of the successful strategies used

when facing problems running as part of my running group and apply these to challenges in my clinical practice. However, I still wasn't confident that these strategies could be successfully applied to enhance my resiliency regarding clinical practice.

I moved on to complete the *Resilience Plan Worksheet* to identify a specific challenge where I wanted to become more resilient and described the details. Whilst I had a range of areas related to clinical practice that were challenging my resiliency in mind, the one I was struggling most with at the time was facing the feedback I'd recently received in supervision. Using my *Personal Model of Resilience*, I applied some of the Strengths and Strategies I used as part of my running group to enhance my resiliency and face up to the supervision feedback. I then reviewed how it went on a *Review* worksheet.

I'm so pleased I did, because I realise how things have really started to improve with my clinical practice. I'm engaging more with my colleagues, increasingly using live supervision for reflection and actively seeking feedback from peers. Although, like us all, I have days where self-doubt creeps back in using the **Enhancing Resilience** workbook has been a real turning point. Completing the *Review* worksheet and writing my strengths and successful strategies into the *Staying Resilient* worksheet for future reference has also really helped when applied to other areas of life I've found challenging time-to-time. Although I'm still a bit overwhelmed with aspects of my clinical practice at

times, especially sometimes when working with challenging patients, I now recognise my 'inner strengths'. Yes, I do feel more resilient and better able to use feedback constructively. Oh, and my recovery rates are now in the top fifth for the service.

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## **Time to Get Going!**

***If you think this workbook may help you, let's get going and start to work through the four stages to help you become more resilient. This may sound a bit challenging however you're in control of how much you do at any time. Sometimes progress will be slow and setbacks will happen, this is perfectly normal and to be expected. However, your supervisor is there to help.***

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## STAGE I: RECORDING YOUR SUCCESSFUL REGULAR ACTIVITY

First of all, let's identify 'hidden strengths' in activities you already complete successfully. This will help to increase your awareness regarding some of the helpful strategies you've got that may otherwise be taken for granted. If you're successfully able to do something in your professional or personal life, even if you consider it quite trivial, it means you already demonstrate resilience in some areas.

- ▶ Use the *Successful Regular Activity* worksheet over the page to record an activity you're already able to complete on a regular basis.
  - ▶ It can be helpful if it's something you really enjoy or value such as hobbies, musical or sporting talents, supporting friends or specific areas of clinical practice. It may even include routine activities you successfully achieve such as making it to work on time or living within a budget. Think about details of this activity and write them down on the worksheet.

- ▶ Now write down any difficulties you've encountered when completing this activity. Some people may face a single difficulty again and again, others may experience several.
  - ▶ If you find yourself facing various difficulties you don't need to write them all down. Just choose the most common difficulty you face and note how often you encounter it.
- ▶ Finally, think about things that help you successfully complete the activity you've identified, even in the face of difficulty.

Before you begin to complete your own *Successful Regular Activity* worksheet, let's have a look at Alex's related to a successful activity chosen.

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## SUCCESSFUL REGULAR ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

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### **My Successful Regular Activity**

Describe what it is, how you do it, how often do you do it and who is with you.

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**What?** *Running as part of my running club.*

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**How?** *Run a variety of distances and at a different pace.*

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**How often?** *Weekly.*

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**Who?** *I run with other running club members.*

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### **Difficulties You've Encountered Doing Your Regular Successful Activity**

Describe what they are, the most common difficulty and what helps you to keep going.

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**What?** *When I first started I really struggled to keep up with the other runners.*

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**Most common difficulty?** *Falling behind in the running group, thinking I'd never be able to keep up and was going to have to quit.*

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**How often?** *Every week initially.*

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**What helps you complete this activity?** *The encouragement of the other runners, sharing that they have all been in my position and determination that I was going to complete the run and hope that I was going to get better.*

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## SUCCESSFUL REGULAR ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

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### **My Successful Regular Activity**

Describe what it is, how you do it, how often do you do it and who is with you.

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**What?**

---

**How?**

---

**How often?**

---

**Who?**

---

---

### **Difficulties You've Encountered Doing Your Regular Successful Activity**

Describe what they are, the most common difficulty and what helps you to keep going.

---

**What?**

---

**Most common difficulty?**

---

**How often?**

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**What helps you complete this activity?**

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## STAGE 2:

# BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL MODEL OF RESILIENCE

Based on the regular successful activity you've identified, the next step is to identify strengths you've already got to help you build your own *Personal Model of Resilience*. Strengths don't only influence activities you're already good at, but can help you become successful in other areas too.

- ▶ Search for strengths you already use to complete any activity you can successfully carry out. These can be personal qualities or even attitudes you already have.
- ▶ Strengths will be different for different people but if you have difficulty recognising those you already have, the following may help.
  - Getting along with colleagues
  - Working well in a team
  - Completing tasks even if struggling at first
  - Getting a job done when you'd rather be doing something else
  - Working to challenging deadlines
  - Asking for help if needed
  - Becoming familiar with interventions and following protocols
  - Solving problems
  - Undertaking risk assessments
  - Using humour appropriately
  - Keeping yourself healthy

- ▶ Now identify specific strategies you've used when completing the successful regular activity on your *Successful Regular Activity* worksheet and add any more you believe may be helpful in other challenges you may face.
- ▶ Sometimes images or metaphors can have a positive impact on how we feel and behave more than words. So describe any you may use to get through challenges and ways in which they help you.

Before you create your own *Personal Model of Resilience*, let's have a look at Alex's worksheet.

## PERSONAL MODEL OF RESILIENCE WORKSHEET

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### Strengths

List the strengths you identified in your successful regular activity

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*My determination to finish every run even when slower than I would have liked.*

*Able to see my progress, even if slow at times.*

*I can keep focused on running when the weather is not so good.*

*I'm usually able to complete the run when sometimes others give up.*

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### General Strategies

Write down strategies you applied that helped you complete your successful regular activity

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*Thinking about the long term goal.*

*Trust in my ability to improve.*

*Use humour.*

*Give myself time to practice between sessions.*

*Stick to the task until I get the results I want.*

*Use encouragement of others to spur me on and listen to advice about how to improve.*

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### Images or Metaphors

Write down images or metaphors you have for your successful regular activity and briefly describe them

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*"Enjoy the journey as much as the destination".*

*"If the going gets tough the tough get going", really helpful in fast pace or long distance runs I find more challenging.*

*An image of my partner at the end of the run to greet me.*

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## MY PERSONAL MODEL OF RESILIENCE WORKSHEET

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### Strengths

List the strengths you identified in your successful regular activity

---

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### General Strategies

Write down strategies you applied that helped you complete your successful regular activity

---

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### Images or Metaphors

Write down images or metaphors you have for your successful regular activity and briefly describe them

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## STAGE 3: APPLYING YOUR PERSONAL MODEL OF RESILIENCE TO AN AREA YOU FIND CHALLENGING

Well done on getting this far and completing your own *Personal Model of Resilience*. Consider ways you could apply it to other challenges you encounter to become more resilient. These may be challenges you're encountering professionally.

- ▶ Think about areas you'd like to become more resilient in and write them down on the *Resilience Application* worksheet.
- ▶ Now look at your *Personal Model of Resilience* for strengths, strategies and metaphors or images you've already identified that help you keep going.

- ▶ Think about these and consider if any could be helpful if you applied them to areas you'd like to become more resilient in.
- ▶ Write these down in the second part of the *Resilience Application* worksheet. Looking back at those you've listed in your *Personal Model of Resilience* from time to time may help.

Before you start your own *Resilience Application* worksheet, let's have a look at what Alex has included.

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## RESILIENCE APPLICATION WORKSHEET

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### Areas where you'd like to enhance your resiliency

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Face, reflect on and apply any challenging feedback during supervision or from my peers, rather than taking this personally and wanting to give up.

Build on accessing support when feeling overwhelmed with demands of the role.

Talk to peers openly and share experiences and not let fear of being judged get in the way of learning and my reflective practice.

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### Strategies you feel it would be helpful to apply

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Trust in my ability to improve.

Thinking about the long term goal.

Using humour.

Give myself time to practice between sessions.

Stick to the task until I get the results I want.

Talk to peers about their experiences.

Use feedback to learn, providing me with a chance to make things better.

Say to myself "Enjoy the journey as much as the destination" if I'm feeling uncomfortable.

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## MY RESILIENCE APPLICATION WORKSHEET

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**Areas where you'd like to enhance your resiliency**

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**Strategies you feel it would be helpful to apply**

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## STAGE 4: PRACTICING RESILIENCE

You've completed your own *Resilience Application* worksheet, well done! Sometimes however, even though we may logically think our *Personal Model of Resilience* may help, we may not have enough belief in it to try it out. If this is the case, *Putting Your Personal Model of Resiliency Into Action* can help. This can be very powerful as learning through experience may provide you with evidence you're becoming more resilient.

However, if developing your *Personal Model of Resilience* has been enough and you already feel more resilient that's great. The choice to continue with the workbook is up to you.

- ▶ Write down the area you'd like to enhance resiliency in.
  - ▶ It's important to be as specific as possible by writing down the 4 W's (What, Where, When, Who) in the *Area You'd Like to Enhance Resiliency* section.

- ▶ Plan the *Strategies You Want to Test*.
- ▶ In the *Predicting Your Own Resilience* section write down what you think could happen, think about what you feel being resilient will look and feel like, and how long you'll be resilient for in that situation.
- ▶ Think about barriers that might get in the way or stop you from acting on your plan.
  - ▶ Write these down in the *Possible Barriers* section.
  - ▶ Make a plan in advance for overcoming them in the *Strategies to Overcome Barriers* section.
- ▶ Planning in advance will make it much more likely you'll succeed in carrying out your plan.

Before we go any further, let's have a look at what Alex has included in the *Putting Your Personal Model of Resiliency Into Action* worksheet.

## PUTTING YOUR PERSONAL MODEL OF RESILIENCY INTO ACTION

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### The Area You'd Like to Enhance Your Resiliency

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**What?** Facing up to feedback.

**Where?** In my supervision session.

**When?** Next week.

**Who?** Myself and colleagues.

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### Strategies You Feel it Would Be Helpful to Apply

Strategies to put into action	How will I apply the strategy to the challenge identified?
Use feedback during supervision as an opportunity to learn and make things better.	When I receive feedback, I won't consider it as a personal criticism but first reflect on it and use it to try to make improvements in my clinical practice.
Give myself time between supervision sessions to apply feedback.	Before responding to the feedback too early, I'll take time to read, reflect, do some personal research and discuss with colleagues.
Stick to the task until I get the results I want.	I'll believe in my ability to improve, identify things I need to do and if necessary ask for some help, but I'll stick at it. I'll say to myself "Enjoy the journey as much as the destination".

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## Predicting Your Own Resilience

What would being resilient look like?	What would being resilient feel like?	How long?
<i>I'd listen to feedback and try to take it on board, before giving up.</i>	<i>My emotions will initially go down, but I'll feel better later.</i>	<i>20 mins</i>

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## Predicting Your Own Resilience after Encountering Difficulties

My thoughts	My emotions
<i>What am I going to do, this is so challenging! But I can reflect on areas to address and try other strategies.</i>	<i>I'll feel a little frustrated, however I'll feel better in time after taking a bit of time.</i>

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## Possible Barriers

### The following things may get in the way

*Whilst I can work on the feedback, there are lots of other priorities which I need to attend to in my role.*

*My colleagues can not always help me as they are busy with their own clinics.*

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## Strategies to Overcome the Barriers

### I may overcome these problems by

*Seeking help from more experienced colleagues, to advise on how I might organise myself to manage other demands of the role.*

*Make an agreement with colleagues around availability in the team and how to access support from each other.*

*Discuss how I'm feeling with my supervisor to see if there's any wider support the service can offer.*

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## PUTTING YOUR PERSONAL MODEL OF RESILIENCY INTO ACTION

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### The Area You'd Like to Enhance Your Resiliency

---

**What?**

---

**Where?**

---

**When?**

---

**Who?**

---

### Strategies You Feel it Would Be Helpful to Apply

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**Strategies to put into action**

**How will I apply the strategy to the challenge identified?**

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### Predicting Your Own Resilience

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**What would being resilient look like?**

**What would being resilient feel like?**

**How long?**

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## Predicting Your Own Resilience after Encountering Difficulties

**My thoughts**

**My emotions**

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## Possible Barriers

**The following things may get in the way**

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## Strategies to Overcome the Barriers

**I may overcome these problems by**

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***Now it's time to Put Your Personal Model of Resiliency Into Action to test your strengths and strategies out against challenges you face.***

## Review Your Personal Model of Resiliency

If you managed to put your *Personal Model of Resiliency* into action, very well done. Finally, it's time to review your model by completing the *Review* worksheet. It will help if you do this as close as possible to putting your personal model into action.

- ▶ Note how it went when you *Put Your Personal Model of Resiliency Into Action*.
- ▶ Think about anything you learned and

write these down in the *My Learning column*.

- ▶ In the *Changing Behaviour* column make a note of anything you may do differently next time.

Before you complete your own *Review* worksheet, let's have a look at Alex's worksheet looks like.

## REVIEW WORKSHEET

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### Strategies You Planned to Put into Action

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Use feedback as an opportunity to learn and improve.

Give myself time to reflect and practice between supervision sessions.

Stick to the task and seek advice from my supervisor and colleagues to aid my clinical skills.

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What you predict resilience will look like?	What you predict resilience will feel like?	How long you predict you will remain resilient?
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I'll listen to my feedback and act on it rather than taking it personally.

My emotions will go up and down, but I'll feel better later.

20 mins

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### The Results What happened was

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Even though at times I felt a bit deflated, I considered my supervisor and colleagues feedback. Although I still felt like the feedback was a little personal at times, I listened carefully and learned something from it and helped me reflect on my practice and with some of my own research I identified things I could do. At the end of the day I feel good about myself having listened to the feedback, reflecting and found a really good paper to read. I can now use this to improve and hopefully this will impact positively on my clinical practice.

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### My Learning Putting strategies I have learned into action

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Usually I would end up very frustrated and taking this personally. But applying my personal model of resilience and applying relevant strategies can help. I found taking myself out of the situation and giving myself some time helped me think and apply myself more to improve, even if I didn't feel very good at the time. It also stimulated me to do some reading about addressing some of the areas raised and this also helped me improve and realise that developing practice extends beyond training. This makes me feel more confident that I can handle things like this again in the future and can move on to improve.

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**Changing Behaviour** Based on my learning I'm going to do the following differently

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*I'll use feedback from others as an opportunity to reflect and do additional reading or study if needed to improve, seek support from others and believe in myself.*

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**Next Steps** Other strategies I may want to put into action

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*Use feedback and practice skills between supervision sessions to improve, and talk to peers about their experiences.*

*Build on the skills I learnt during training to be better at reflecting on my practice and make reflective practice core to my ongoing development.*



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## MY BEHAVIOURAL EXPERIMENT REVIEW WORKSHEET

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**Strategies You Planned to Put into Action**

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**What you predict  
resilience will look like?**

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**What you predict  
resilience will feel like?**

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**How long you predict you  
will remain resilient?**

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**The Results** What happened was

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**My Learning** Putting strategies I have learned into action

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**Changing Behaviour** Based on my learning I'm going to do the following differently

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**Next Steps** Other strategies I may want to put into action

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## Moving On and Staying Resilient

Well done for getting this far. Hopefully by this point all your hard work is paying off and you're beginning to feel a little more resilient in your clinical practice and potentially also in your personal life. If you find that completing this workbook becomes easier, then it may be time to move to the final stage; *Staying Resilient*. Otherwise, go back and try the approach on other professional or personal challenges. To help you stay or become more resilient in the future, completing the *Staying Resilient Worksheet* can help. Write down the strengths and strategies you've found helpful whilst using this workbook. You can then refer back to this worksheet if you find yourself struggling with challenges to your clinical practice or general 'life hassles' again in the future. Like us all, you will face these.





## STAYING RESILIENT WORKSHEET

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**Strengths I now recognise I have**

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**Strategies I already have found helpful in challenging situations**

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**New strategies I have learnt working through this workbook**

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**Things that helped me put these strategies into practice**

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**Sources of support that can help me**

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## Getting Other Sources of Support

You may have given this **Enhancing Resilience** workbook a really good go and found it helped you become more resilient in your professional or personal life. However, you may still find yourself struggling with some things, if so please talk to your supervisor, manager or GP to discuss support available in your area.



Providing the source is fully acknowledged, all materials in this work may be freely copied, for clinical purposes only.

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