

Episode 4: How resilient are you, really?

Hi Guys!

Welcome to Episode 4 of *The Resilient Type* podcast!

Today, I'll be going back to basics and finally addressing the subject that probably led you here... resilience! This episode is called *How resilient are you, really?*

If you've checked out empoweredmillennialgirl.com or if you follow me on my socials, you'll know that resilience is kind of my jam! And in this episode, I'll be identifying 3 major myths about resilience, explaining why your understanding of resilience might be wrong, and how to work out how resilient you really are. By the end of this episode you'll understand why these 3 common assumptions about resilience are wrong, what resilience really is, and how to identify your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to resilience.

If you're listening on the go, take a screenshot, share it on Instagram and tag me @empoweredmillennialgirl so I can send you some love!

A story about resilience

I remember when I first moved to Australia. I was 15 and I arrived at a really awkward point in the school year – Term 3.

It was different, but I liked it – the humidity was a bit of an assault on the senses, but there was none of the small-town gossip, no expectations or assumptions, just complete anonymity. A fresh start.

Finding a home was our first priority. Getting enrolled in a good school was the next. The stuffy black blazer and polished shoes of grammar school were swiftly switched for a green polo shirt and trainers, and the ever-present Irish mizzle was replaced by endless sunshine.

Despite not knowing anyone in Perth, the people seemed friendly, so I was happy enough. I was even appointed a “buddy” on my first day who showed me around. We got on well, and she even introduced me to a larger group of friends. When I came home that first day, I was ecstatic!

Then the second day began. My “buddy” was nowhere to be found, however I did manage to find the larger group of girls I had been introduced to the day before. I sat with them at recess and lunch, but I was largely ignored.

Days passed. My “buddy” didn't come back to school for a week, and when she did return, she barely mumbled a ‘Hi’ before completely ghosting me. When I asked about her, I was told she didn't actually hang out with that group at all. I was dumped.

Look, I'm not going to lie, I was upset about this. But I made a conscious effort to get to know the girls who did at least tolerate me, and I was determined to win them over. And I did.

Luckily, they were all pretty sensible – they didn't party and they were pretty good students. In very little time, I developed a good friendship with the group, and this friendship lasted until we all went our separate ways at the end of Year 12. You could say, it worked out okay in the end.

This was one of my first tastes of resilience... at least that I can remember clearly.

3 major myths about resilience

What do you know about resilience?

Some of your ideas might be incorrect, so to begin, I'll share 3 myths you might be believing, so we're on the same page.

Myth 1: Resilient people immediately bounce back to work through problems

I've gone through my fair share of challenges, but have I immediately bounced back from adversity? Um, not quite... Even so, that doesn't mean I'm not resilient.

We're human beings, not robots! We're all unique and process things in our own way and at our own speed. Taking the time to adequately recover is critical to maintaining resilience and preventing burnout. Once we slow down and take the opportunity to process what's happened before moving into "problem-solving" mode, then we can successfully work through our problems to find a solution. And to me, that's true resilience.

Myth 2: Resilient people tackle challenges alone

While some of us (me included) like to think we're lone wolves who don't need anyone, human beings are wired for connection. Back in the day, being accepted by and connected to others literally ensured our survival. It isn't that dramatic now, but relationships are still important because they add meaning to our lives.

Connection is also one of the key pillars of resilience. Why? Not only does sharing a problem relieve the stress associated with it, but others can also offer us solutions we may not've considered. While sharing your struggles and asking for help is difficult, it's essential if you want to improve your resilience.

Myth 3: The focus of resilience is to manage negative emotions

In psychology, there's a concept called *negativity bias*. In a nutshell, negativity bias is our tendency to react more strongly to negative events, and also to dwell on negative events more than positive ones. Sure, fearing the sabretooth tiger that could be around the corner was a

priority in our early existence, but our focus can now expand past negative emotions and experiences!

While managing negative emotions is definitely a necessary part of the process, there needs to be a balance of both positive and negative. Resilient people can recognise the importance of both positive and negative emotions. That's why the strongest people often find positive meaning, like lessons, in difficult times. How can you apply this to your own life? Next time something negative happens to you, try using positive emotions to rebound from it.

Why your understanding of resilience might be wrong (and what it really is)

How would you define resilience?

Nod if you agree with the following explanation:

Resilience: The ability to deal with setbacks or overcome adversity in order to succeed.

What if I told you that this doesn't truly define resilience? That this only really outlines the behaviour involved and doesn't actually identify what resilience is. Whaaat? I know.

The problem with thinking about resilience in terms of behaviour is that it doesn't help us figure out how to become more resilient. It only shows us the end result.

So how can we become more resilient?

Well, the University of Pennsylvania has spent 25 years researching resilience and running resilience training programs. In their research, they identified 7 key factors of resilience.

These include:

1. Emotion regulation – how well you regulate and express your feelings in a socially acceptable way.
2. Impulse control – how well you control your impulses.
3. Causal analysis – how well you uncover the facts that led to a certain situation.
4. Realistic optimism – how much you believe you'll eventually succeed (with effort and action).
5. Self-efficacy – how much you believe in your capacity to succeed.

6. Empathy – how well you understand and share others’ feelings.
7. Reaching out – how good you are at asking for support.

You probably won’t be strong in all of these areas, and that’s okay. For example, I’m really good at seeming “put together” in public, but to be honest, I’m not be very good at asking for help. The key, then, in building resilience is to identify your strengths and weaknesses and improve the areas that need a little boost!

But how can you do that?

How to work out how resilient you really are

Well, the quickest and easiest way is to take [The Resilience Quiz](#)! It’s a free 10-minute quiz that I developed to assess you on each of the 7 factors of resilience.

I created this quiz because it’s often difficult to assess the exact level of skill in each of these areas, especially when each factor is also multi-faceted! So if you’re interested in taking the quiz and working out how resilient you are, you can gain access to this resource by signing up to my resource library at empoweredmillennialgirl.com

Of course, you’re welcome to work out your strengths and weaknesses yourself, but it will take some time. I just wanted to give you the option.

In summary:

- The 3 major myths about resilience are that (1) resilient people immediately bounce back to work through problems, (2) resilient people tackle challenges alone, and (3) the focus of resilience is to manage negative emotions.
- Resilience is built through emotion regulation, impulse control, causal analysis, realistic optimism, self-efficacy, empathy and reaching out.
- To work out how resilient you really are, you need to work out what your strengths and weaknesses are based on the 7 factors of resilience. (I’ll link the resource library in the episode description.)

Now that you’re aware of the main myths around resilience, understand what resilience really is and know how to identify your strengths and weaknesses in this area, you can move forward with clarity and start improving your resilience ASAP.

Thanks for joining me today. I absolutely love talking about this subject so I've actually got another resilience themed episode coming up next that I think you're going to find super helpful. Keep listening!

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