

The 6 Domains of Resilience from the Predictive 6-factor Resilience Scale

Vision for resilience

Goals, clarity and congruence

In the Predictive 6 Factor Resilience Scale (PR6) research, Vision is understood as the most important domain, because all other domains of resilience are informed by what it is you want to achieve.

An overall vision is a primary motivator. It's what gets us out of bed in the morning.

In the research, vision breaks down into three components: goals, clarity and congruence.

Goals: To be resilient, you need to have specific goals toward which you are working, and which guide your actions. Those goals must be clear, and the actions you take must be congruent with your goals.

Clarity: When your goal is clear, then when things get tough, you can discern what's important and say yes to that. You can also identify what isn't important (in the context of your vision) and say no to that in the name of saying a hearty yes to what does matter. It alleviates the decision-making struggle when you are dysregulated, helping you stay focused and achieve your goals.

Congruence: Congruence in this context is when all your actions are working together across your larger vision and your specific goals. When your actions are aligned with your vision, everything you do slowly moves you forward in the direction you want to go, helping you achieve things that may seem, from the outside anyway, to be impossible.

Congruence alleviates the frustration that can arise when you take actions that move you toward one goal but that also move you further from the other. It helps you get further faster, because your actions aren't working at cross purposes.



Reflection

I invite you to take some time to do some free writing in response to what you have read above.

Here are some reflection questions if you like to be prompted.

- Do I have a vision for my business and/or life?
 - If so, how has that helped or hindered me?
 - If not, how has that helped or hindered me?
 - Do I check in with my vision regularly?

- If I have articulated them, what are my mission and values?
 - Do I check in with them regularly?
 - Are they posted prominently?
 - How do they or don't they guide my decisions?

- Do I know what my goals are for myself and my business?
 - If so, how has that helped me?
 - What do I struggle with in relation to
 - goals?
 - congruence?
 - clarity?

- How can I use the principle of vision as a support?



Composure for resilience

Emotional Regulation, Self-awareness, Mindset

Emotional regulation: Being able to regulate emotions serves resilience. Emotional dysregulation (which is when the emotion centre, the amygdala, gets activated) makes us flip our lids. The CEO-self (aka the neo-cortex) literally goes offline, and thus communication from it to the rest of us is blocked. This phenomenon is called amygdala hijack.

When you can regulate your emotions, the amygdala calms, and communication once again can flow, so that you can take in information, sort and synthesize it, make decisions and solve problems creatively.

This principle applies as much to small everyday irritants as it does to major crises, and perhaps maybe even more so. Entertaining and feeding small frustrations depletes the energy and focus needed to run your business.

Here are some posts I've written that give tips on how to regulate your nervous system:

- <https://www.shula.ca/manage-anxiety-and-defuse-worry-thoughts-using-these-simple-tools/>
- <https://www.shula.ca/soothing-the-nervous-system-for-stress-relief/>
- <https://www.shula.ca/soothe-discharge-nourish/>
- <https://www.shula.ca/three-principles-of-stress-relief/>

Self-awareness: Self-awareness, the ability to recognize, understand and act on internal prompts, is key to resilience.

This ability relies on the development of skills for regulating your emotions, so you can connect with your inner experience of emotions and bodily felt sense, without being overwhelmed.

Self-awareness enables you to make wiser and more holistic choices that include both emotions and logic.

Journalling can be a way of facilitating self-awareness, and especially prompted journalling. Here are some examples:

<https://newmindsetwhodis.com/products/unbothered-daily-journal>

<https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/product/9781648767692-item.html>

<https://switchresearch.org/en-ca/products/self-love>

Here is one example of a self-awareness practice you can try:

<https://www.shula.ca/stressful-thoughts-women-entrepreneurs%e2%80%af/>



Mindset: While not every problem is rooted in your mindset (and this idea can often be used to blame the victim), how we think about things can have an impact on emotional regulation.

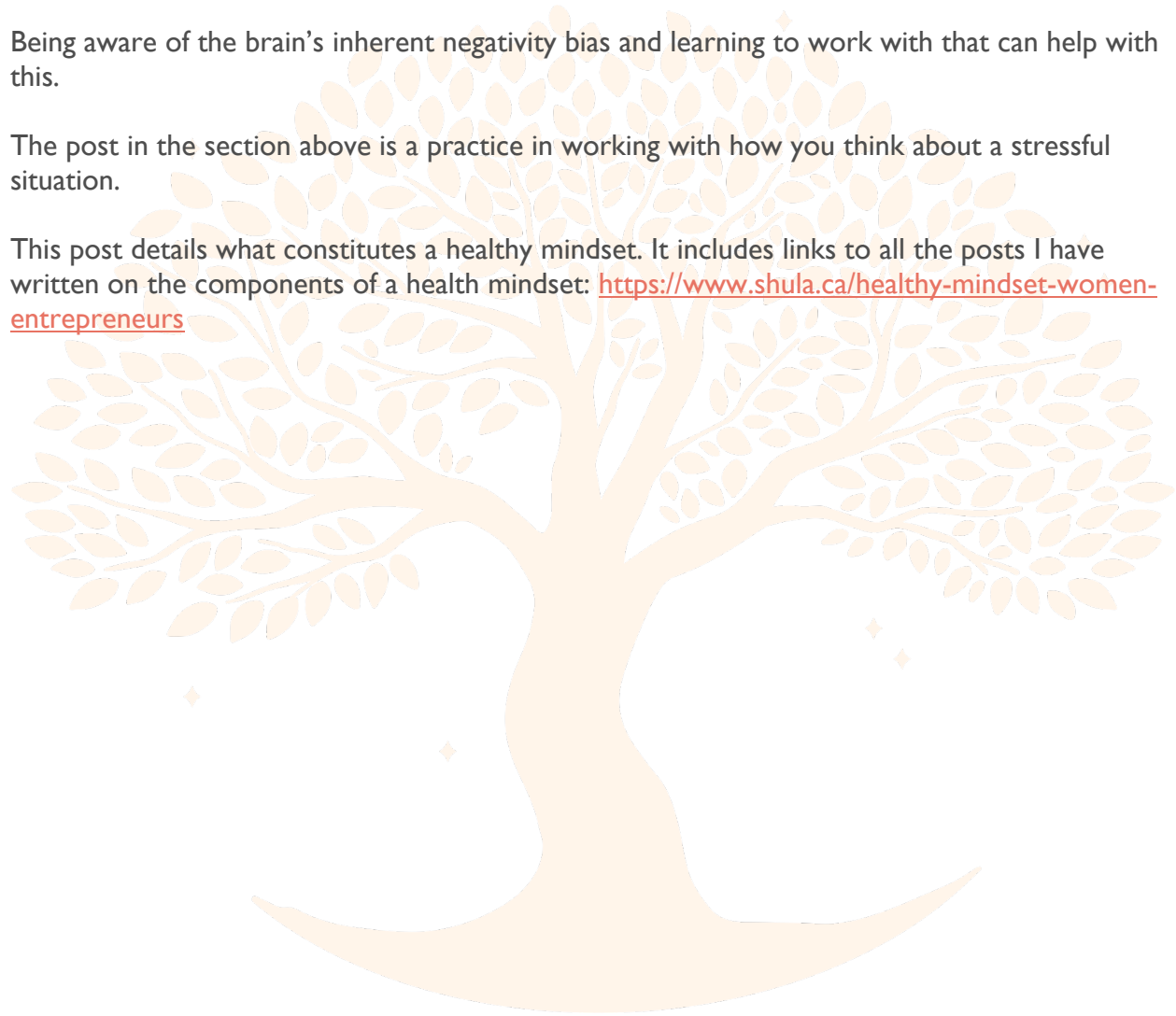
If we tell ourselves something is a disaster, that makes us anxious, and we become dysregulated.

If we can see it as at least neutral, that supports a calmer emotional state and helps us function better.

Being aware of the brain's inherent negativity bias and learning to work with that can help with this.

The post in the section above is a practice in working with how you think about a stressful situation.


This post details what constitutes a healthy mindset. It includes links to all the posts I have written on the components of a health mindset: <https://www.shula.ca/healthy-mindset-women-entrepreneurs>



Reflection

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Here are some reflection questions if you like to be prompted.

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- Do I have a toolbox for emotional regulation?
 - If so, how have these tools helped or hindered me?
 - If not, how has that helped or hindered me?
 - Do I check in with my emotions regularly?
 - Does that help or hinder me and if so how?
 - Where am I stuck and want or need support with emotional regulation?

 - What are my self-awareness practices?
 - Do I use them regularly?
 - How is this helping me (or not)?
 - Where am I stuck and want or need support with them?

 - What does mindset mean to me?
 - How do I work with my mindset?
 - How is my mindset helping me?
 - How is my mindset hindering me?
 - Where does this concept not apply?

 - How can I use the principle of composure as a support?
 - What support do I need for developing composure skills?



Reasoning for resilience

Creativity/problem-solving, anticipate and plan, resourcefulness

Reasoning relies on composure, because when you are upset, you can't think straight.

When you are in the throes of an amygdala hijack (IOW emotions are high) your pre-frontal cortex goes offline, and it's hard to access your CEO-self--for your life *and* for your business.

Composure in the PR6 model means being attuned to yourself (self-awareness) so that you can care for your emotions (emotional regulation) and be curious about and maybe change your thinking (mindset).

With composure, you can more easily access the strengths of the reasoning domain.

Creativity/problem-solving: Activating the CEO-brain is at the heart of this resilience skill. When mind-body communication is flowing well, and you can take in a balanced view that includes both "positive" and "negative," you can see opportunities in the challenges, and apply your creativity to solve problems.

Anticipate and plan: The main and most important aspect of developing resilience, according to the PR6, is to be proactive. This means making resilience skills development and practice an integral part of your every day.

Taking action to be prepared is a key to resilience. Being prepared helps alleviate the cognitive load when the emotional stakes are high and your CEO-brain is less accessible. Then, when you're stressed, you can refer to your plans and execute tasks without having to solve complex reasoning problems first.

Anticipating and planning involves thinking through how things may go wrong and, as much as possible, implementing practices and structures that prevent or minimize the negative impact.

Resourcefulness: This involves keeping your eyes open and collecting the right information, tools, techniques and people to help you solve problems and find ways to reach your goals.

Building your network of tools and support ahead of time means it will be there when you need it. Building your resourcefulness toolkit after the shit hits the fan is practically impossible because you'll be too busy putting out fires.



Reflection

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Here are some reflection questions if you like to be prompted.

- When I think about composure this week, and in the context above, what comes up for me?

- How am I at creativity and problem-solving?
 - How do I access these skills?
 - How do I cultivate these skills?
 - When I need help with the, what do I do?

- How do I anticipate and plan a) for my business and b) for my mental wellness?
 - If I do for my business, how does that help or hinder me?
 - If I don't for my business, how does that help or hinder me?
 - If I do for my mental wellness, how does that help or hinder me?
 - If I don't for my mental wellness, how does that help or hinder me?
 - Where am I stuck and want or need support with anticipating and planning in either or both of these areas?

- What does resourcefulness mean to me?
 - How am I resourceful?
 - Do I need to be more resourceful?
 - Do I need help with this? If so, what kinds of help do I need?

- How can I use the principle of reasoning as a support?
- What support do I need for developing reasoning skills?



Health for resilience

Food, sleep and movement

The PR6 research holds health—specifically three elements that support brain health—as the second part of the foundation of resilience—along with vision. The research posits that a healthy body provides a strong foundation for resilience so you can focus on your sense of purpose and goals.

Adequate food, sleep and movement are the three specific factors identified in the PR6 research that have a direct impact on brain and mental health, and your brain and mental health both have a profound effect on your ability to take action toward your goals.

It's important to note that in the PR6, the health domain refers only to the health of the body's physical structures. I am sharing some reflections here that go beyond the PR6 research. Health includes the physical, mental and spiritual (meaning beyond the individual).

The domains of collaboration, reasoning, composure and tenacity support mental wellness/health.

The vision domain includes spiritual wellness/health in the sense of connection with powers greater than or outside our individual selves. This includes such as the motivational power of values, faith, beliefs, of our vision for ourselves and our businesses, other people, trends in the world, the power of the natural world, to name only a few.

The collaboration domain can be understood as thinking of ourselves as one element in a vast living system that also needs attention and care in order for we individuals to be well and resilient.

Coming back to physical health, and connecting that with the Women Entrepreneurs' Support Community as created in service of liberation, here are some biases that can come into play in this area.

How health is defined is important. When it is mistaken for or confused with thin, able-bodied, fit, strong and free from diagnoses, then “health” becomes a point of oppression, and ironically then a threat to both mental and physical health.

Lack of adequate nutrition, sleep and movement must be viewed in context, and not independent of systems of power. When that lack becomes a way to blame a person for not being resilient, that is problematic and also an incorrect use of the research information.

The point is that we can be empowered to use this information within our own context to help our bodies and brains function better. It is important as part of your mental health plan to include awareness of and care for your physical body, including your brain.



Within your capacity, making sure to have adequate and regular nutrition intake will support your resilience. (Remember what it felt like the last time you went all day without eating?)

Carbohydrates support cognitive functioning (they break down into glucose which is brain fuel), as do certain fats, but both are vilified in today's "wellness" climate. Inadequate calorie intake (resulting from restricting food intake or intake of certain foods or food groups, aka dieting) also impacts cognitive function. And if your brain isn't doing well, and the shit hits the fan, you're more likely to lose your cool.

Making sure you move regularly supports both mental and physical functioning. I'm using the term movement rather than exercise because for those of us who don't or can't "exercise," or who don't like it, exercise isn't a useful way to think about this.

The PR6 research holds that "exercise" 4 times per week is optimal. But they studied only able-bodied, mostly white, middle-class adult professionals.

In my experience and according to research into exercise and movement, movement snacks can serve better for in-the-moment mental health support. In any case, something is always better than nothing, and small, frequent practices build capacity over time. What matters is finding something that works for you and starting there.

Sleep is pivotal to mental and physical health, and there's more to its impact than simply fatigue. Here's an article that outlines some of the negative side effects of lack of sleep: <https://www.healthline.com/health/sleep-deprivation/effects-on-body>.

Sleep is complicated because it is affected by stress and other factors (such as parenting small children), so "getting sufficient sleep" is often easier said than done.

That said, some actions that promote sleep are within our control, and are valuable self care, whether or not they result in actual sleep, so any steps you can take to promote sleep are good. As with exercise and nutrition, small steps add up.

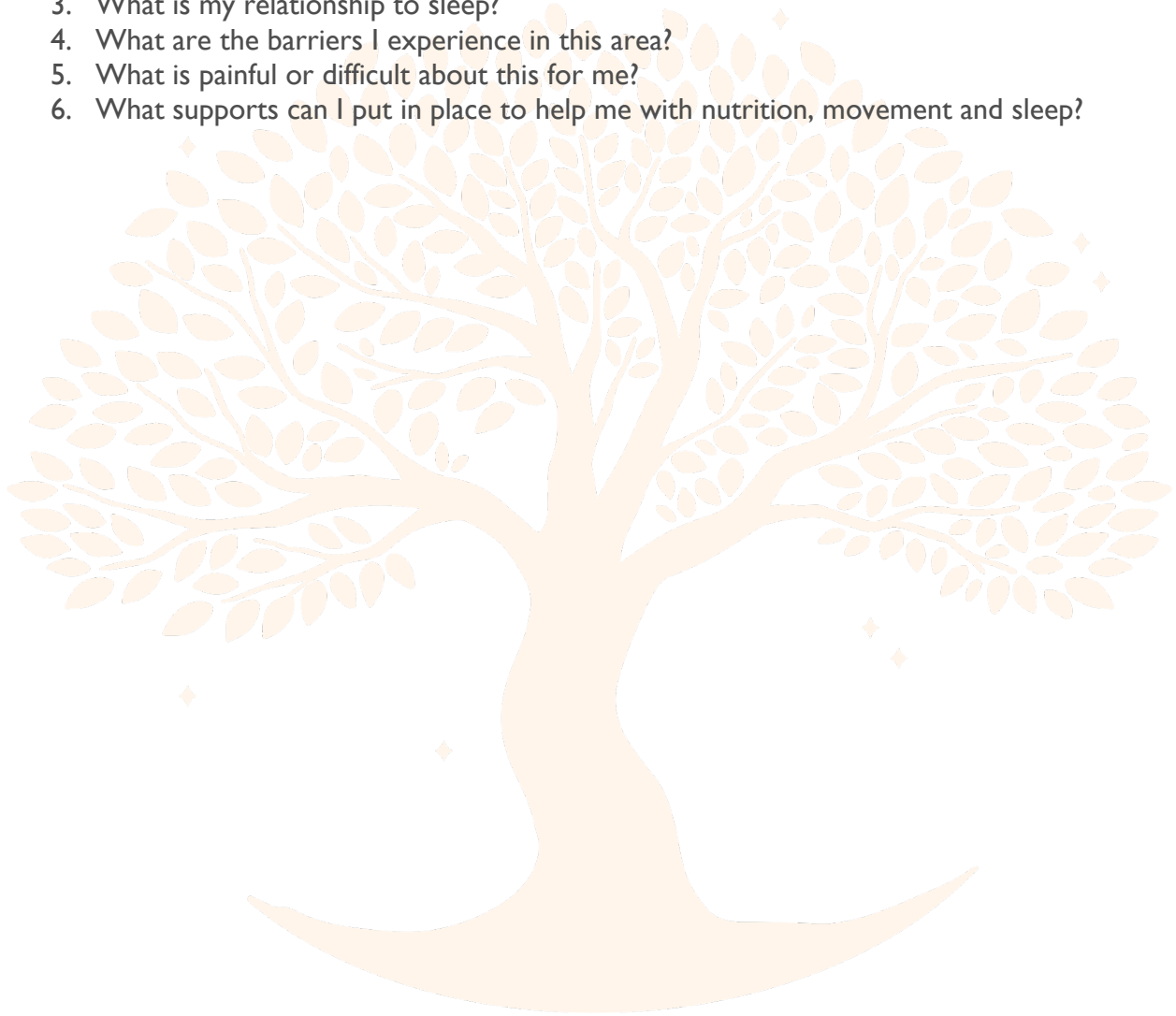


Reflection

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Here are some reflection questions if you like to be prompted.

1. What is my relationship to nutrition?
2. What is my relationship to movement?
3. What is my relationship to sleep?
4. What are the barriers I experience in this area?
5. What is painful or difficult about this for me?
6. What supports can I put in place to help me with nutrition, movement and sleep?



Tenacity for resilience

Persistence, failing forward, realistic optimism

Persistence: In order to be resilient, in other words, to advance despite adversity, we need to be willing to stay with a problem.

Persistence is the key component of the tenacity domain.

Einstein pointed out the importance of persistence for success when he said that “It’s not that I’m so smart, it’s just that I stay with problems longer.” (Yes, he really did say this. See The Ultimate Quotable Einstein, Calaprice, 2013).

Realistic optimism: The willingness to stay with a problem comes from an attitude of realistic optimism.

This is not toxic positivity and in fact is an antidote to it. Here is a post I wrote that goes into more detail: <https://www.shula.ca/toxic-positivity-realistic-optimist/>

Research shows that people who are overly optimistic or pollyanna-ish about success in their projects are in fact less likely to succeed because they tend to give up at the first sign of trouble.

It’s important to be aware of the real struggles you will face along your path, and about your capacity to address them--either on your own or with a team (and building a team of supporters, paid or otherwise is part of reasoning, under resourcefulness, and of collaboration).

The attitude of realistic optimism says, “I know that it’s a tough road and there will be plenty of challenges, and I am hopeful about my ability to succeed.”

Fail forward: The beauty of the challenges along the road is that they can *build* resilience.

Things that don't go well can be mined for learning and used to tell the story of your strengths.

Here is an exercise I developed as part of my mental health plan workshop that you can use to mine a "failure" for gold that you can use to help yourself "fail forward": <https://www.shula.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/fail-forward-1.pdf>



Reflection

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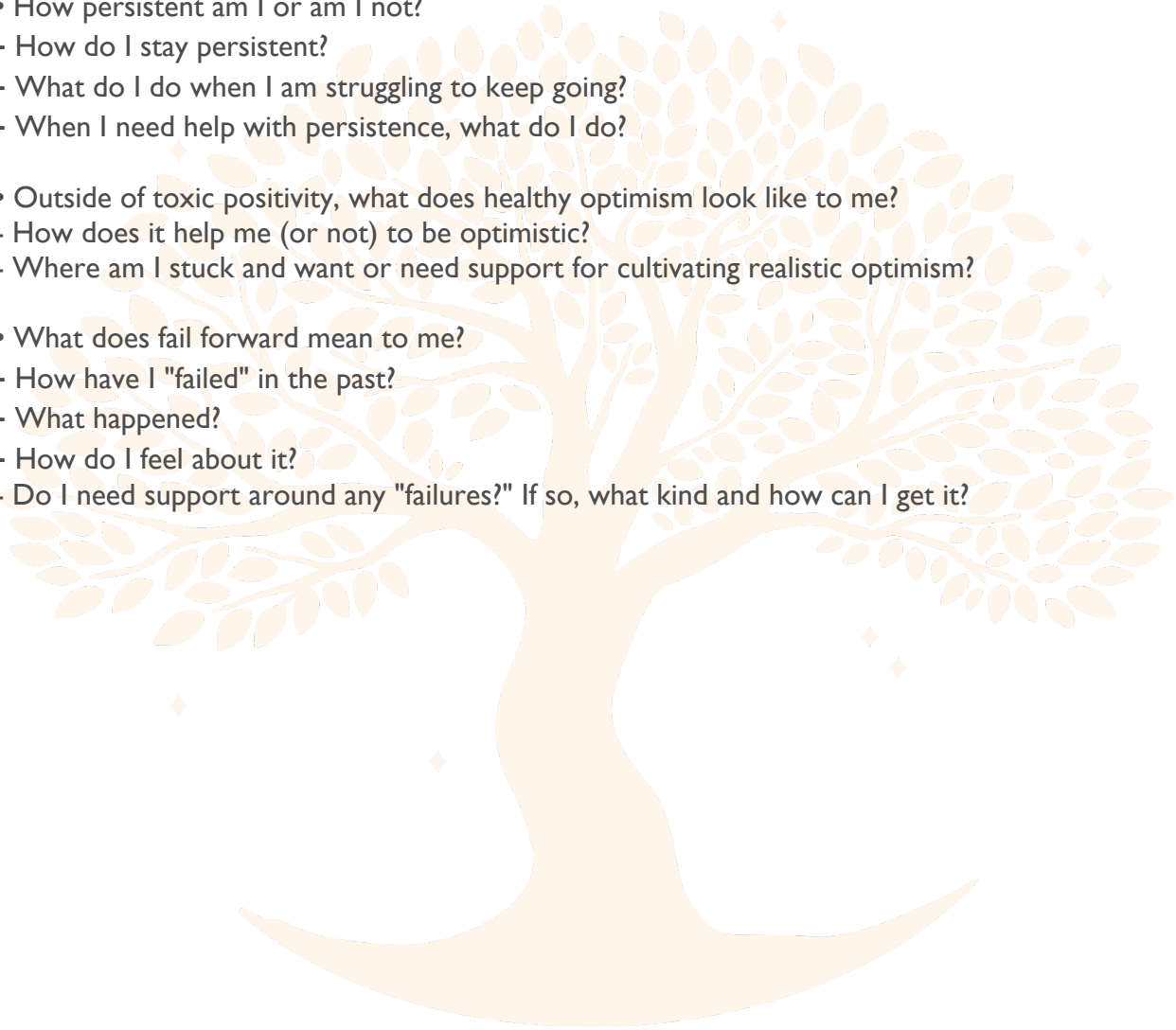
Here are some reflection questions if you like to be prompted.

- When I think about tenacity this week, and in the context above, what comes up for me?

- How persistent am I or am I not?
 - How do I stay persistent?
 - What do I do when I am struggling to keep going?
 - When I need help with persistence, what do I do?

- Outside of toxic positivity, what does healthy optimism look like to me?
 - How does it help me (or not) to be optimistic?
 - Where am I stuck and want or need support for cultivating realistic optimism?

- What does fail forward mean to me?
 - How have I "failed" in the past?
 - What happened?
 - How do I feel about it?
 - Do I need support around any "failures?" If so, what kind and how can I get it?



Collaboration for resilience

Connection, boundaries, perception

Connection: Individual and mutual connection is one way we can give ourselves experiences of safety.

This ties back to composure.

Humans are wired for connection with other humans. Across many studies, the data suggests that when social connection is interrupted or missing, that creates distress.

A distressed mind is a dysregulated one and that separates us from the skills we need so much as entrepreneurs. On the other hand, connection with safe others is regulating, allowing access to frontal cortex and executive function that are so key to entrepreneurship.

This is why we are stronger with support, and coaches, therapists and biz besties can mean so much to us.

Giving *and* receiving support are important aspects of resilience.

Giving support can lift your mood and alleviate stress because of the sense of meaning and contribution that can arise, which also facilitates the activity of your CEO-self.

Receiving support can give you a sense that you're living in a world of mutual care, rather than a world of danger that you are facing alone, providing yet more emotional regulation. Supporting others can give a sense of perspective, too: "My problem doesn't dominate my awareness. It's no longer the entirety of my experience and I'm no longer drowning in it."

Self-connection (through journalling, quiet time alone, self-empathy, self-kindness, encouraging self-talk and therapy, to name a few strategies) is also regulating and thus facilitates cortical function.

Connecting with others can also give a sense of meaning and purpose to life beyond our entrepreneurial identity--and it's important to note that tying self-worth to success in business is one of the factors that has a negative impact on mental health.

Finally, spirituality and meaning play an important role in this domain. A longitudinal study of ageing people conducted in the UK found that, on the whole, the participants who had a greater sense of meaning in life a few years earlier were later living lives characterised by mental and physical health and well-being.



Meaning can be found in your vision (the first domain of resilience), and in many other ways. A strong sense of self is key to psychological health, and a sense of connectedness to things greater than your individual sense of self and the concerns attached to that self is also important to resilience. This connectedness may be to the natural world, to your community, to activism, and/or to a sense of greater forces at work in the world--divine or otherwise.

Boundaries: Giving and receiving support are both important aspects of resilience.

a) Giving and receiving support need to take place in the context of boundaries, or you will be working at cross purposes.

Good boundaries are important for the kinds of healthy relationships that support resilience because otherwise, relationships can become stressors.

Giving to the point that there is no energy left for your self or your business obviously is harmful. Receiving support we don't want is a boundary violation that adds stress and requires emotional labour to navigate.

b) When asking for support, it's important to get the context right.

Identify what support requests are fit best in the collegial context and which fit better in situations where there is more personal connection.

It's also beneficial to identify who is likely to provide the kind of response that's helpful, and who isn't, and make your support requests accordingly.

c) When giving support, discern (or ask) what response is wanted in the moment.

Sometimes it's helpful to respond to and validate emotions, and sometimes advice is what's wanted.

It's best to ask what's wanted first, and to start with even a brief validation of the emotions, if only to support the frontal cortex coming back online so it can take in the advice you have to offer.

Three resources:

Nedra Glover Tawwab, Set [Boundaries, Find Peace](#). (book and workbook)

Terri Cole [Boundary Boss](https://www.terricole.com/) <https://www.terricole.com/>

Karlee Fain has a bunch of helpful free resources <https://www.karleefain.com>.



Perception

It's interesting to note that it's not actual available support that has an impact on your mindset and thus your resilience, it's your perception of it.

It's important to regularly recall your network and connections and remind yourself that support is available, and to consistently tell yourself support is there for you.

The practice of actively asking for help in the right places teaches you that help is available, so that when the crap hits the fan, one of your responses can be to reach out to the support you trust is there.

This is also where spirituality can come in. It can be helpful to have a sense of powers greater than you that are at work in the world and whose efforts or actions will positively impact you, even though you are unaware of those actions and efforts.

This can start, as above, with an inventory of "benefactors," people you know love and/or care for you and your wellbeing and success. It can expand to include the forces of the so-called natural world (I say so-called because how are we not part of that very world?) like the sun and the seasons. It can also include a sense of a specific greater or higher power or powers (such as the Universe, the Divine, Goddess/es or God/s, for just a few examples).

John Makransky teaches the field of care meditation. While I have engaged in what I call a "powers greater than I" inventory for many years, I never had a felt experience of connection with them. I no longer feel like a single, solitary atom spinning in a cold, black void, but rather can really feel in the whole of me a sense of being held in a great, spiritual field of care.

You may or may not have that same experience with these guided meditations. I'm sharing in the hope that, if nothing else, it might be a pleasant experience for you, and maybe will open a door to more if that's what interests you.

Here is the Field of Care practice from Sustainable Compassion training (SCT): <https://sustainablecompassion.org/audio/field-of-care-meditation/>

Here is the link to all the practices from SCT: <https://sustainablecompassion.org/audio/>

Here is a link to a 30-minute practice that includes all the aspects of SCT: <https://sustainablecompassion.org/video/ana-hristic-leads-sct-at-courage-intensive-1/>

Here is an academic article about SCT: <https://sustainablecompassion.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Frontiers-SCT-published-article.pdf>



Reflection

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Here are some reflection questions if you like to be prompted.

- When I think about collaboration as an element of resilience, what comes up for me?

- What have my experiences been with
 - collaboration?
 - connection?
 - boundaries?
 - perceptions of support?

- How does connection work for me? How doesn't it work for me?
 - How do I feel connected with others?
 - What is my sense of connection with powers or forces greater than I?
 - Do I want more of a sense of connection, with others or with powers greater than I? If so, how can I cultivate that?

- How do I work with boundaries in my business and life?
 - What do I want to let go of or change in this area?
 - What resources or support do I need for that?

- Do I have a sense of support in my life and business?
 - If yes, I can take some time now to reflect on and savour that support.
 - If not, do I want to change that and if so, what can I do?

