



Bouncing back in business: nurturing a workforce that withstands and thrives

Tammy Bradly
Dr. Michael Lacroix



Objectives

- Understand what resilience is and why it is critical to both employees and organizations
- Recognize the connection between resilience and mental and physical well-being
- Assess the tangible impact of resilience on work productivity
- Identify the hallmark characteristics of resilient individuals
- Learn strategies to bolster personal resilience and promote it within the workforce
- Go beyond avoiding the impact of mental illness to learn how to foster mental health “flourishing” in employees

Understanding what resilience is and why it is critical
to both employees and organizations

Recognizing the connection between resilience
and mental and physical well-being

Assessing the tangible impact of resilience on
workforce productivity

Tammy Bradly
Sr. Director Clinical Product Marketing

Wrong

Whatever doesn't kill you
makes you stronger

Right

Whatever doesn't kill you
could make you stronger if
you learned the right lessons



Resilience



Resilience refers to an individual's ability to bounce back from stress, setbacks and adversity



In the workplace, it plays a crucial role in maintaining employee well-being and organizational performance

Six qualities of resilient people

- 1 Optimism or Faith
- 2 Integrity
- 3 Social Support
- 4 Decisiveness (attempting to control only those things over which they have control)
- 5 Perseverance and Tenacity
- 6 Self-control



Signs of resilience

- 1 They see themselves as survivors
- 2 They feel in control
- 3 They can manage their emotions under stress
- 4 They are problem solvers
- 5 They are good to themselves
- 6 They have a strong social support network



Why resilience matters



Impact on Job Satisfaction

- Resilient employees experience higher job satisfaction due to their ability to cope with workplace challenges. They maintain a positive outlook even during difficult times, leading to greater overall contentment.
- Helps avoid stress and burnout
- Improves employee's ability to adapt



Self-Esteem and Engagement

- Resilience positively correlates with self-esteem and engagement. Employees who feel confident in their abilities are more likely to contribute actively to their roles and collaborate effectively with colleagues.



Impact to the Workplace

- Increases overall productivity, job satisfaction and employee engagement
- Encourages cooperation and collaboration amongst team members

A resilient workforce improves company performance



55%

Increases company performance by at least **11%** and up to **55%**¹



1.6

High-impact workforce organizations are **1.6** times more likely to achieve better customer outcomes²



25%

Companies in the top quartile of workforce experience are typically **25%** more profitable than their competitors in the bottom quartile²

Resilience building



Physical Resilience

- Focus on nutrition
- Routine exercise
- Sufficient sleep
- Hydration
- Avoid alcohol and drugs
- [Work-life balance](#)



Mental and Emotional Resilience

- Find the positive
- Believe in yourself
- Accept change
- Be thankful for the good things
- Practice mindfulness
- Explore thoughts and feelings
- Set realistic goals
- Get help from a professional
- [Provide stress management workshops and mindfulness training](#)
- [Foster emotional intelligence and self-awareness](#)



Social Resilience

- Stay connected with family
- Have a social network
- Focus on empathetic, trustworthy and compassionate connections
- Join groups
- Give back to the community
- Lean on your social system
- [Build strong social networks within the organization](#)
- [Encourage team bonding and peer support](#)

What can resilience do for me?

- Resilience gives people the strength to tackle problems head-on, overcome adversity and move on with their lives.
- Following large-scale traumas such as terrorist attacks, natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, those of us who demonstrated the behaviors that typify resilience experienced fewer symptoms of depression.
- Even in the face of events that seem utterly unimaginable, resilience allows people to marshal the strength to not just survive but to prosper (see Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning).
- Many other events challenge us and provide the opportunity to develop resilience:
 - Death
 - Divorce
 - Financial issues
 - Job loss
 - Illness



Resilience is learned

- Research shows that the resources and skills associated with resilience can be cultivated and practiced.
- But just because you learn resilience doesn't mean you won't feel stressed or anxious.
- Resilience is a journey, and each person will take his or her own time along the way.
- You may benefit from some of the resilience tips, while friends may benefit from others.
- The skills of resilience you learn during really bad times will be useful even after the bad times end, and they are good skills to have every day.
- Resilience can help you be one of the people who've "got bounce."





Resilience tips: The acceptance triad

1

Accept that change is part of life

- Accepting what cannot be changed can help you focus on what CAN be changed.

2

Cut yourself some slack

- When something bad happens, stress levels go up. Go a little easy on yourself and on others.

3

It's not just stress: Let yourself have feelings and grieve losses

- Depending on the situation, you may experience anger, sadness, fear. This does not mean act out your emotions but to be aware of them. Be aware of the body sensations that accompany strong emotions and let them pass through you.

Resilience tips: Get support and start moving on

4 Make connections

- Accepting support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience. Look into groups that can help foster your interests or teach you relevant coping skills.

5 Express yourself

- If it's too hard to talk to someone about your feelings, do something else to capture your emotions, like start a journal or create art. Look for opportunities for self-discovery.

6 Take decisive action

- Focus on what you can control. Act on adverse situations as much as you can; don't just wish. Set realistic goals and do something toward achieving them daily.





Resilience tips: Work on your head

7

Be mindful of the good things in your life

- Resilient people count their blessings. Let the people in your life know what they mean to you. Take a few minutes every day to reflect on one aspect of your life that you're thankful for.

8

Identify your resources and strengths

- Too often we focus on our weaknesses. Instead, focus on using your strengths and resources to identify solutions. Reflect on how you have successfully dealt with other challenges in the past.

9

Maintain a hopeful outlook

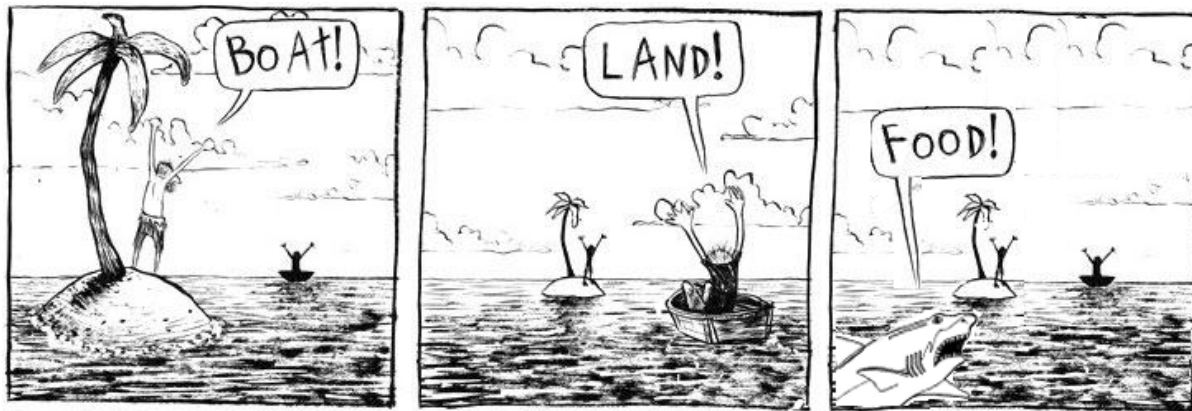
- No one can reverse what happened, but you can change how you interpret and respond to events. Develop a vision that inspires you to move forward. Be the model you want to set for others.

Resilience tips

10

Keep things in perspective

- Everything comes to an end. Think back on a time when you faced up to a challenge. Think about the important things that have stayed the same as the world was changing. Use relaxation techniques to center yourself. Visualize what you want rather than worry about what you fear.



Takeaways: 3 resilience practice exercises

1

Change the narrative

- Stop ruminating
- Expressive writing can help

2

Face your fears

- Expose yourself to what scares you
- Consider the worst-case scenario

3

Cultivate forgiveness

- Let go of anger
- Forgive yourself

Bolstering resilience/ fostering “flourishing”

Dr. Michael Lacroix
Medical Director, The Hartford

What we mean by “mental health” is changing

- “Mental health” during Covid (from both employers and employees) was all about avoiding “mental illness:” depression, anxiety, burnout, PTSD, ...
- Employers focused on EAPs, access to services, meditation training, etc.
- Now, employees are confronting their employers over flexible/hybrid/remote work and degree of oversight/control in their jobs.
- They’ve discovered that work-life balance = better mental health.
- What they’re really striving for now is more mental health.
- “Mental health” is more than the absence of mental illness.

“Mental health and mental balance is critical to leading a healthy life.”

- Mariel Hemingway

Familia, La Buena Vida



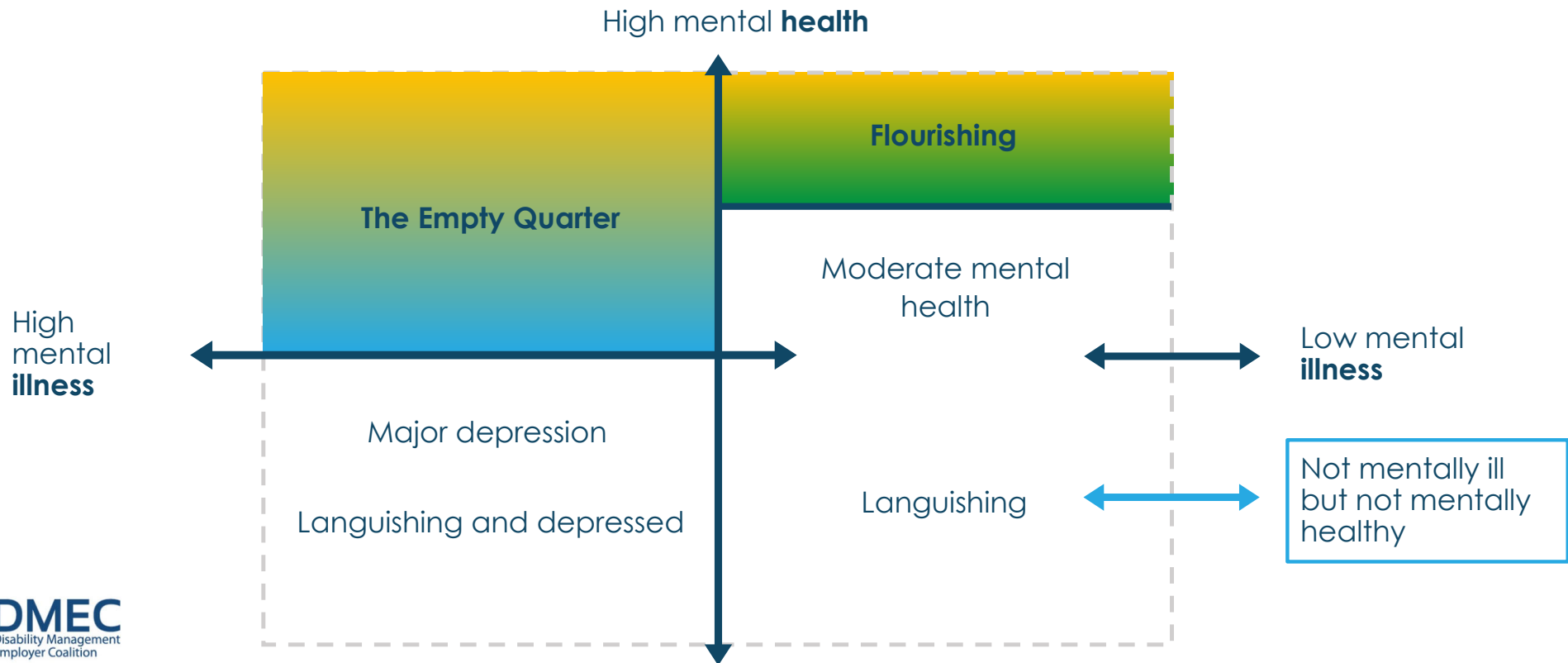
... Woke up happy by
accident ...

Can we wake up happy by design
and not just by accident ?

Camila Cabello



Mental health (statistically) has two dimensions



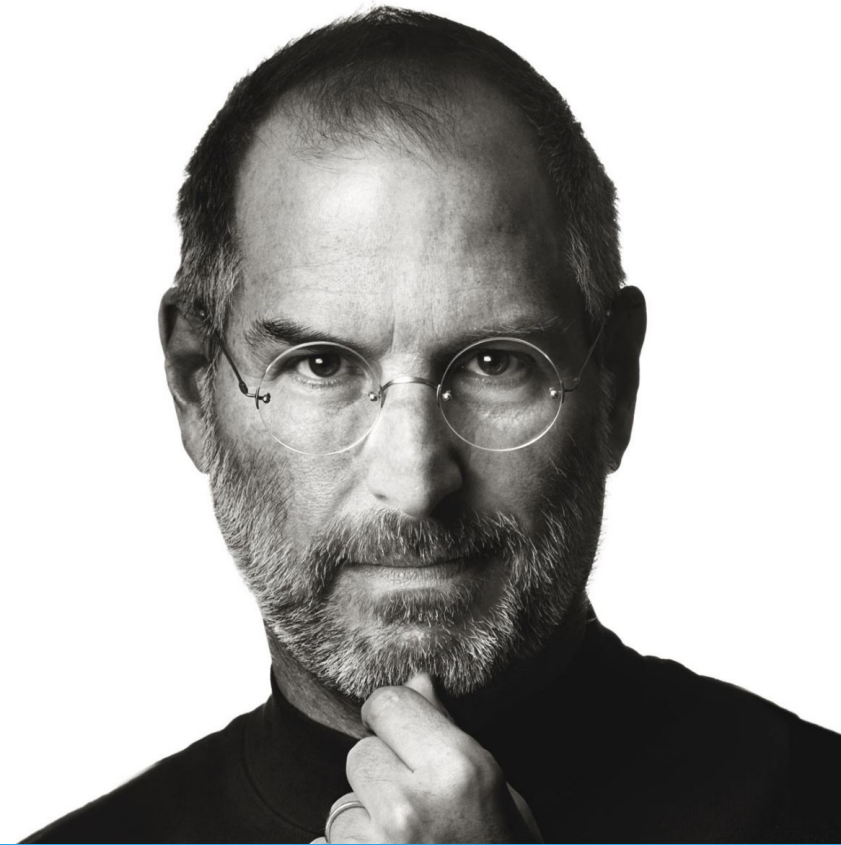


What is flourishing?

- A state in which a person feels **positive emotions** toward life and is functioning well psychologically and socially.
- Flourishing individuals have **excellent emotional health**, miss fewer workdays and have fewer physical limitations in their daily lives.
- Flourishing individuals are free of mental illness, but they also are filled with emotional **vitality** and are functioning positively in the private and social realms of their lives. Flourishing individuals are **truly living rather than merely existing**.
- Only about **20%** of adults fit these criteria.

“The minute you can understand that you can poke life, and if you push in, then something will pop out the other side; that you can change it, you can mold it — that’s maybe the most important thing: to shake off this erroneous notion that life is there, and you’re just going to live in it versus embrace it, change it, improve it, make your mark upon it.”

Steve Jobs (1994)



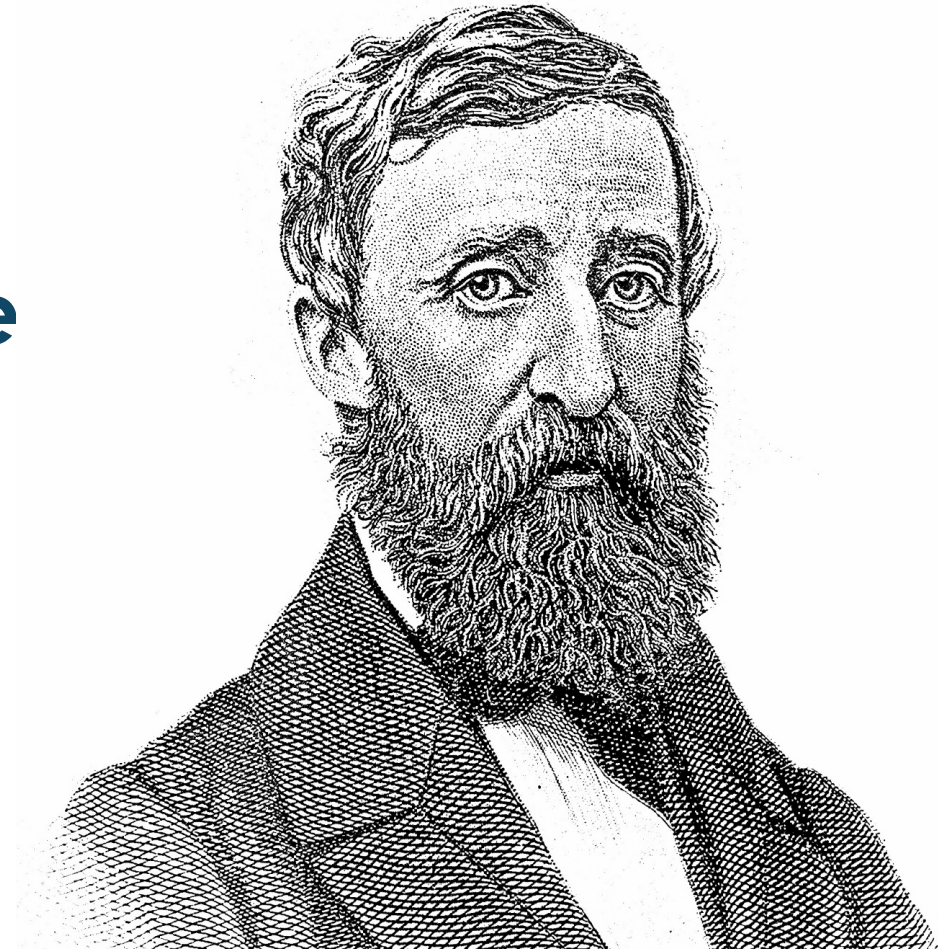


What is languishing?

- Languishing, the absence of mental health, is more prevalent than major depressive disorder.
- Languishing is a state in which a person is **devoid of positive emotion** toward life, is not functioning well psychologically or socially and yet is not depressed.
- In short, languishers are **neither mentally ill nor mentally healthy**.
- Languishing is a “disorder” that exists on the mental health continuum.
- Think of it as a **life of quiet despair** that parallels clinical accounts of patients who describe their lives as “hollow” and languishing as **apathy or ennui**.
- Languishing is associated with emotional distress and impairment at levels comparable to the impairment associated with a major depressive episode.

***“The mass of men live life
of quiet desperation”***

Henry David Thoreau

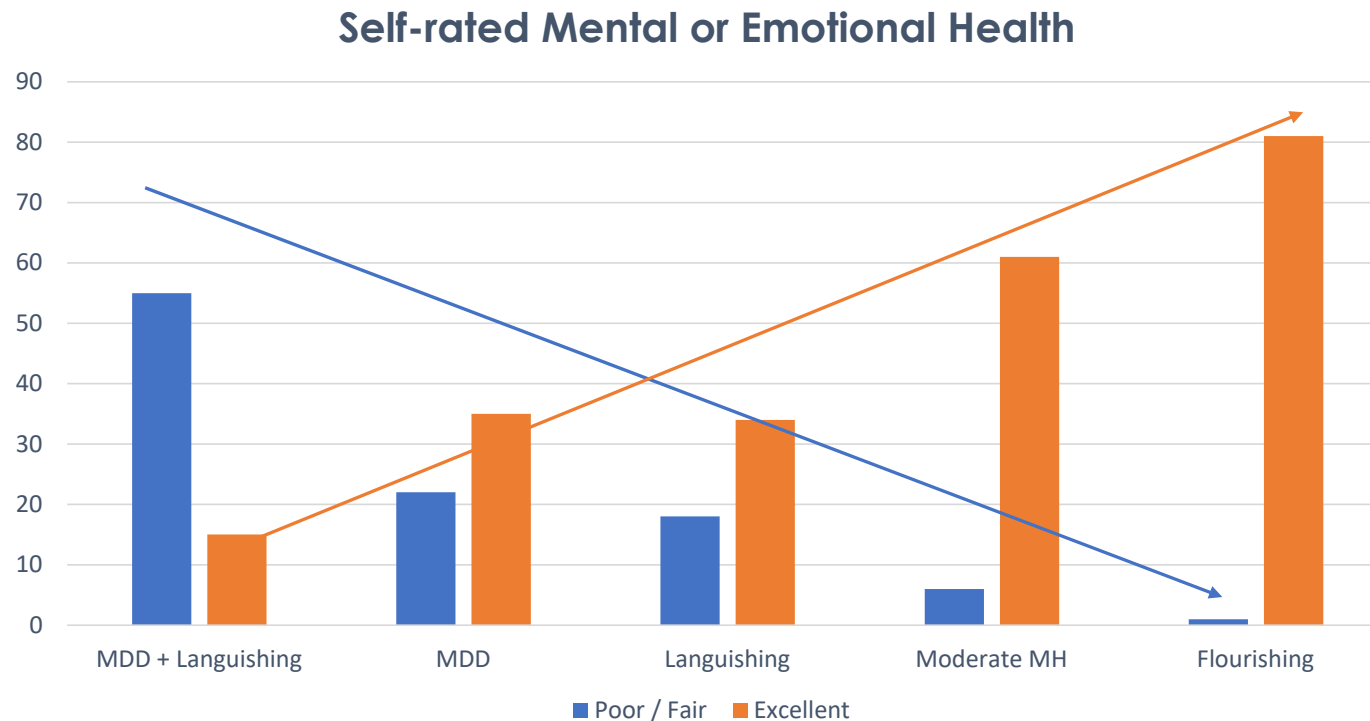


Midlife in the US study (MINDUS)

- **3,032** adults ages **25-74**
- MacArthur Foundation
- Mental Illness assessed by DSM structured interview
- Mental Health assessed separately for Flourishing/Languishing
- **86%** did NOT have a history of MDD
- But only **22%** fit criteria for Flourishing
- **59%** were rated as having moderate mental health
- **20%** fit criteria for Languishing
- Flourishing adults were in better health/active overall
- Folks with severe depression and those with severe languishing were equally likely to miss work and be unproductive

Conclusion:
**Languishing is
as burdensome
to psychosocial
functioning
as MDD**


MINDUS study: Correlating mental illness and mental health




Group membership determined by DSM and Evaluator ratings

The path to flourishing

- Rising to life's challenges, making the most out of your setbacks and adversities
- Finding meaning and enjoyment in one's relationship with the world
- Finding fulfillment in creativity and productivity
- Looking beyond oneself and helping others find lasting meaning, satisfaction and wisdom in life



**“Happiness is...
doing what you
really want”**

A top-down view of a rustic-themed still life. A piece of off-white paper, held by a gold-colored binder clip at its top edge, is the central focus. It features the handwritten text 'Recipe for a Happy Life' in a dark blue, cursive script. The paper is placed on a light brown, textured fabric surface. To the left of the paper is a small bunch of fresh green parsley. Above the paper, a single clove of garlic lies on the fabric. To the right, a cluster of several bright red tomatoes, still attached to their green vine, is visible. In the bottom left corner, two more tomatoes are partially shown. The entire scene is set against a plain white background, with a solid blue horizontal bar at the very bottom of the frame.

Recipe for a
Happy Life

1. Rise to life's challenges, making the most out of your setbacks and adversities (1)

Challenges can help you grow.

- It is when people are tested that they learn the strength of their character. Growth after suffering can stem from:
 - *New perceptions of one's self*
 - *Change in relationships with others*
 - *Changed philosophy of life*



1. Rise to life's challenges, making the most out of your setbacks and adversities (2)

Focus on opportunities for personal growth:

- Psychological turning points can provide insights.
- Focus on shifts that bring about profound psychological change.
- Also, shifts in identity and meaning brought about more gradually.
- A major event or transition may trigger reevaluation and change or simply reinforce existing beliefs.

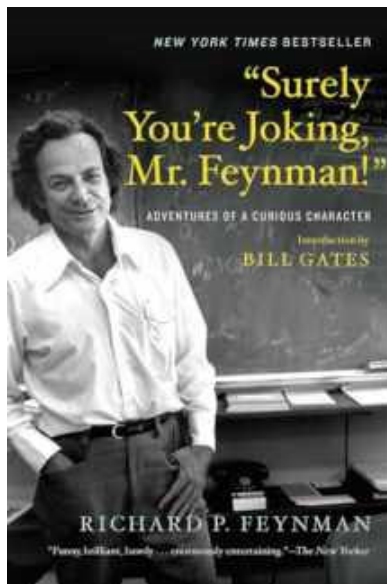


2. Finding meaning and enjoyment in your relationship with the world (1)

Set goals and engage: Vital engagement that is both enjoyed and meaningful is a key to optimal development.

- Enjoyment is found through the tackling of opportunities that challenge a person's skills.
- Engage with science or art, broadly defined.
- Vital engagement is found not only in creative work, but also in hobbies, sports, raising children, teaching, performing a craft well, etc.



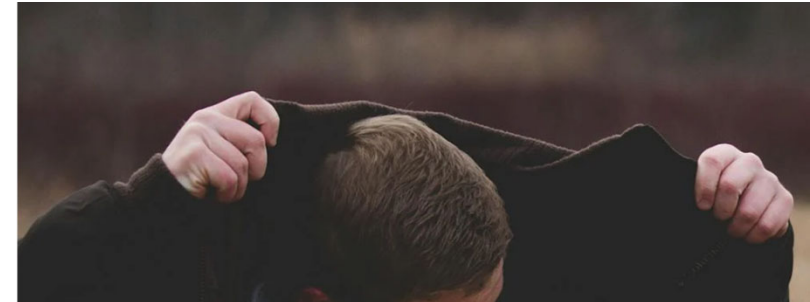


Fall in love with some activity, and do it! Nobody ever figures out what life is all about, and it doesn't matter. Explore the world. Nearly everything is really interesting if you go into it deeply enough. Don't think about what you want to be, but what you want to do.

2. Finding meaning and enjoyment in your relationship with the world (2)

Emphasize intimacy, affection, and shared fun in relationships.

- Relationships and intimacy may be the most important source of emotional well-being.
- Social relationships consistently predict subjective well-being in every country studied.
- Most people mention close relationships as giving life meaning.
- Positive close relationships are associated with good mental and physical health.



“No one ever said on their deathbed, ‘Gee, I wish I had spent more time alone with my computer.’”

- Danielle Berry

3. Find fulfillment in creativity and productivity (1)

Don't shape yourself to fit in with your work; seek to shape the work to fit you.

- Creativity is a characteristic of a flourishing individual. Self-actualized people display a broad predisposition to creativity.
- Creativity is a possibility for everyone.



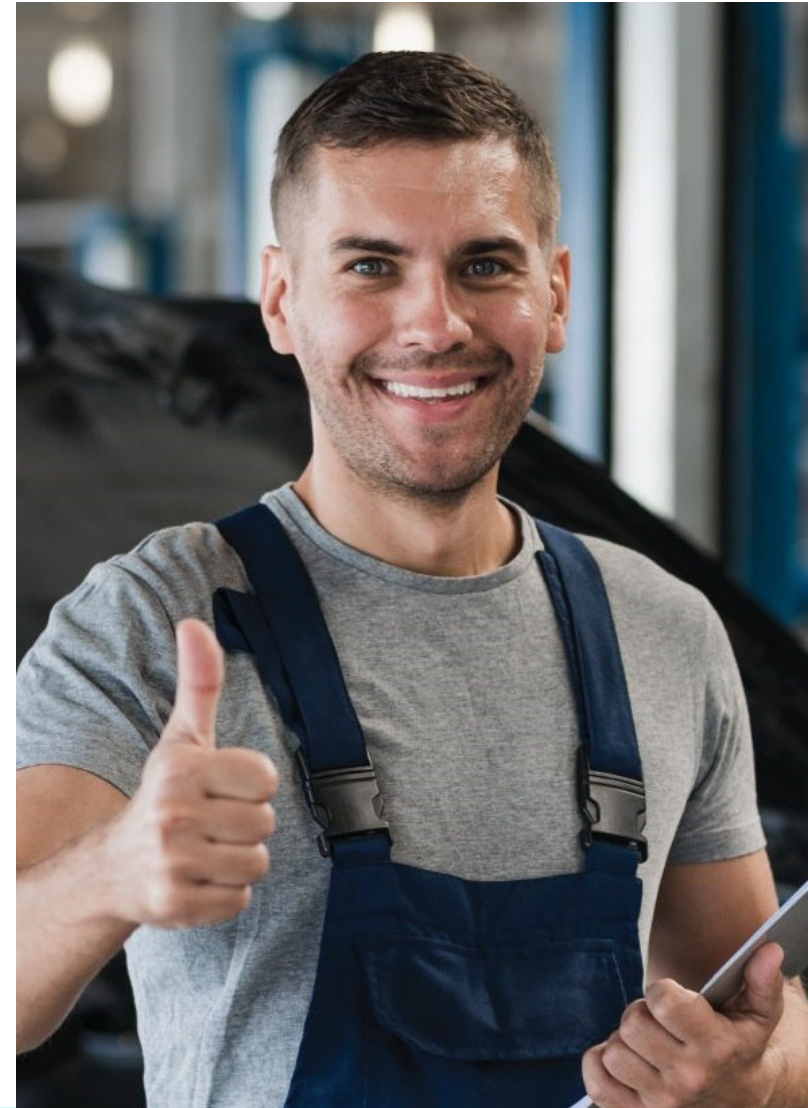
***Creative is
intelligence
having fun”.***

- Albert Einstein

3. Find fulfillment in creativity and productivity (2)

Promote well-being in the workplace, which will enhance profits, productivity, employee retention and customer satisfaction.

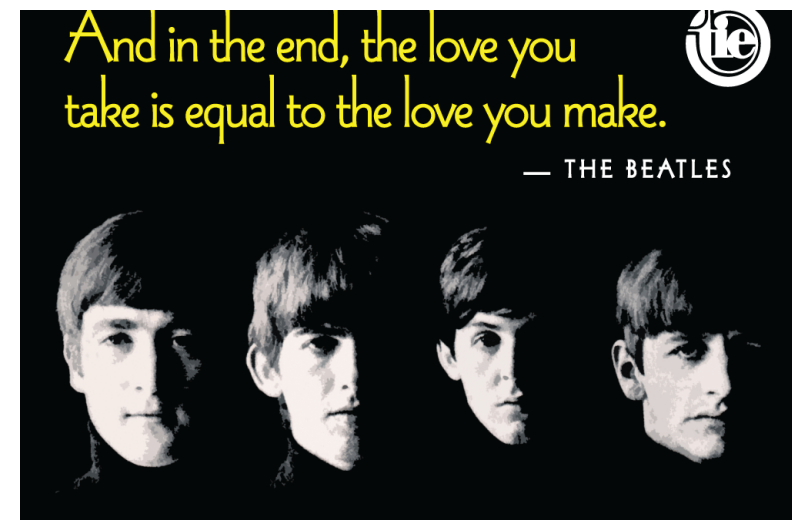
- A healthy work force means happier and more productive workers.
- Positive workplace perceptions and feelings are associated with higher customer loyalty, higher profitability and higher productivity.
- As much as a quarter of the variation in adult life satisfaction can be accounted for by satisfaction with work.



4. Look beyond yourself and help others to find lasting meaning, satisfaction, and wisdom in life

**Consider the possible value for yourself of doing volunteer work:
Many people do well by doing good.**

- How do you feel when you give blood, give a donation to your favorite charity or arts organization, give an extra big tip?
- Helping others leads to feeling better emotionally and feeling better about yourself.
- It is also associated with better general health and with enhanced longevity.



So, optimal mental (emotional) health is ...

- Yes, the absence of mental illness
- Also, more than just living **IN** life
- Embracing life! Changing it! Making your mark!
- We can achieve this:
 - Learn from adversity
 - Look for meaning and enjoyment
 - Strive for productivity and creativity
 - Look beyond yourself
- If we do, we will have fuller lives and make the world a better place!

“Make the world a better place one person at a time. Start with yourself.”

- Linda Poindexter

Mental health applies to organizations also

“Four foundations for all sustainable business and personal excellence,” are as old as Aristotle. “People are not motivated to do their best unless they feel some significant degree of satisfaction at work. They must sense that their work is a good thing and doing it must bring some measure of happiness.”

Truth Beauty Goodness Unity



"A guide to achieving the highest level of excellence in your company and your career."—Daniel Tully, Chairman, Merrill Lynch

**TOM
MORRIS**

**IF
ARISTOTLE
RAN
GENERAL
MOTORS**

The New Soul of Business

Creating a resilient culture



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Embrace diversity to enhance resilience.
- Ensure fair treatment and equal opportunities for all employees.



Learning from Mistakes

- Cultivate a safe environment where failures are seen as learning opportunities.
- Encourage open communication and constructive feedback.

How can we support our managers?



Recognizing Their Role

- Train managers to understand their impact on employee resilience.
- Equip them with tools to promote well-being and manage stress.



Coaching and Development

- Provide ongoing coaching to enhance managerial skills.
- Offer resources for handling employee challenges effectively.

Training for employees

Evidence-based Programs

- Implement workshops on:
 - Stress management
 - Emotional regulation
 - Resilience-building
- Combine training with practical application in real-work scenarios

“It is not what happens to you that matters; it is how you take it.”

Hans Selye

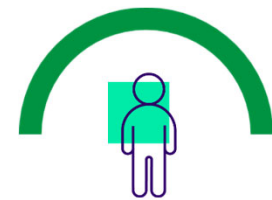
“Your manager has more impact on your mental health than your therapist or your doctor. Having a good boss can literally change your life.”

Prashant Bhansali



Optimal recovery involves physical, mental, and social well-being

Recovery



Healthy Body

- Eating
- Activity
- Weight
- Smoking
- Drinking



Healthy Life

- Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)
- Financial stability
- Social and community context
- Neighborhood and physical environment
- Access to nutritious food



Healthy Mind

- Resilience
- Manage stress

Fostering a resilient workforce can reduce risk of workplace accidents

- Resilience helps employees adapt, cope, gain resources and respond positively to stressors in the workplace.
- When resilience is low, employees may have difficulty managing stress, which can lead to increased accidents and injuries.
- Excessive sleepiness, which can be a result of poor resilience, greatly increases the risk of workplace accidents.



Why it matters

- “Highly resilient” workers are **31%** more productive than their less resilient counterparts during challenging times, such as the pandemic.
- Employees with poor resilience have **55%** lower engagement at work and are **43%** less likely to want to stay with their employer.
- Burnout, which is often linked to poor resilience, costs U.S. [industries more than \\$300 billion annually](#).
- Annual total expenditures of work-related stress and poor mental health have been estimated at **\$190 billion and \$211 billion** respectively.

Questions?

Tammy Bradly

tammy.bradly@enlyte.com

Dr. Michael Lacroix

john.lacroix@thehartford.com