



YOUR WORKING MUM TOOLKIT

ESSENTIAL #1

# RESILIENCE

WHAT IS RESILIENCE & HOW CAN YOU BUILD IT?

# RESILIENCE WORKSHEET

Resilience is the first essential in every working mum's toolkit. Without it, working motherhood can all feel like just one big uphill struggle, but with resilience it can become one exciting adventure!

## What is resilience?

Resilience is our ability to cope with adversity – the tough times. Resilience gives us the strength, courage and stamina to overcome the challenges we experience as working mums - the overwhelm, the guilt, and the exhaustion to name just a few on a rather long list - and ultimately helps us to thrive as a working parent.

## How resilience helps us as working mums

Here are 3 ways resilience helps us every day as working mums:

### 1) Resilience helps us bounce back from parenting 'mistakes'

We all mess up as parents. We've all been late to pick up our kids from kita or school, missed a special event, yelled too much or dropped another ball or five. Having resilience helps us to see these experiences as a lesson rather than a stick to beat ourselves up with. It helps us to forgive ourselves, look for forgiveness from others, banish the guilt and move on. Resilience is realising that a couple of parenting mistakes here and there do not define us as bad parents when we know we're doing the best we can.

### 2) Resilience helps us overcome overwhelm

When it all gets too much and we feel like we have too much to do, that we are doing everything badly and can't cope, resilience can prevent us from completely succumbing to overwhelm. It can help us to pause, take a breath, reassess our situation, perhaps take out our journal or ask for help, and find a solution. It can help 'unstick' us from our mental impasse and find a path forward.

### 3) Resilience gives us courage

If you have downloaded this worksheet, I know you are like me, ambitious for your career, and that ambition often requires us to step out of our comfort zones, try new experiences, seize big opportunities, be assertive and take risks. It's resilience that gives us the courage to do these things, to keep on trying and to cope with setbacks and challenges along the way.

It's in these ways, that resilience is making our lives as working mums possible. Even if you feel you aren't naturally resilient and are inherently sensitive when faced with tough times, the good news is that resilience is a skill and just like any other skill, it's one that can be learned and developed over time. Below are some suggestions to help you do that.

# RESILIENCE WORKSHEET

## 4 ways to build your resilience

### 1) Don't sweat the small stuff

At the end of the day, it's only natural things won't always go to plan. Identify the big ticket items impacting you and focus your time and energy on addressing these. Try to forget the inconsequential work and life dramas that invariably pop up from time to time.

### 2) Reflect on and learn from your mistakes

It's easy to refuse to acknowledge our mistakes, or to allow our mistakes to keep us down. But using our mistakes as a learning mechanism that will propel us in the direction that we want to be moving towards takes resilience.

At the end of each day grab your journal, review your day and write down the answers to these 4 things:

- a) What mistake—big or small—did I make today?
- b) I thought at the time it was the right thing to do because:
- c) Now it seems to me that a more effective course of action would have been to:
- d) The next time a situation like this comes up, I will do better by:

### 3) Acknowledging yourself when you do things well

Equally important as acknowledging our mistakes is acknowledging ourselves when we do things well. People with resilience keep their spirits up and motivation high by giving themselves credit for all the good that they do.

Just as you review your day looking for any mistakes you may have made, think back and recognise what you did well. Write these things down in your journal too.

### 4) Build and maintain your support network

Invest quality time in creating and maintaining meaningful and worthwhile personal and professional relationships. It's these people who can support you during the ups and downs of working motherhood and will do wonders for your confidence and self-esteem.

*Work Happy Mums is the go-to resource for return-to-work professional women and career advancers. We help women get clarity on what they really want from their career after having children, enhance their skills, rebuild their professional confidence, and successfully navigate career and family to be the best they can be at work and at home. For more info visit [workhappymums.com](http://workhappymums.com) and pop on over to our Facebook group to find your tribe of oh so fabulous career- and family-focused women on the same working mum journey as you.*