

# THE WELLNESS HUB

## RESILIENCE VS MENTAL TOUGHNESS

Mental wellness every day



# RESILIENCE

## **What is Resilience?**

Contrary to belief, we are not born resilient but rather resilience is developed by going through life experience and learning from it. Dr Schwartz a specialist in Resilience Informed Therapy, defines it as:

*“Resilience is not a trait that you either have or do not have; it is a set of strategies that can be learned and practised and by anyone. There is a wide range of resilient behaviours, some of which will resonate with you and some will not. My invitation to you is to create your own personalized approach that helps to build your resilience each day.”*

Dr Arielle Schwartz (1)

However, this is not a one-off investment, general life and stressors can deplete our resilience. It is the combination of partaking in simple activities on a daily basis that fulfils our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs, enabling us to build our resilience. It is an accumulation of small steps such as calling a friend, going for a walk, reading a good book or dancing in the kitchen (yes, that's a confession) that has the greatest impact.

Furthermore, bringing into our conscious awareness actions of what we already do can boost resilience and help mental toughness (more about this in the next section). It is likely that you already practise many healthy habits and recognition can boost resilience. How? Simply reminding the conscious mind of the gains can serve to remind the conscious mind of existing capabilities and strengths (1). This pack will help you to identify these.

There are commonalities between resilience and mental toughness specifically relating to emotional control and mindset development.

# MENTAL TOUGHNESS

## ***What is mental toughness?***

A term that has historically gained a poor reputation for being aggressive and ultra-masculine. It was first associated with enhancing sports performance. However, the concept is becoming more widely accepted in work environment. It can be described as

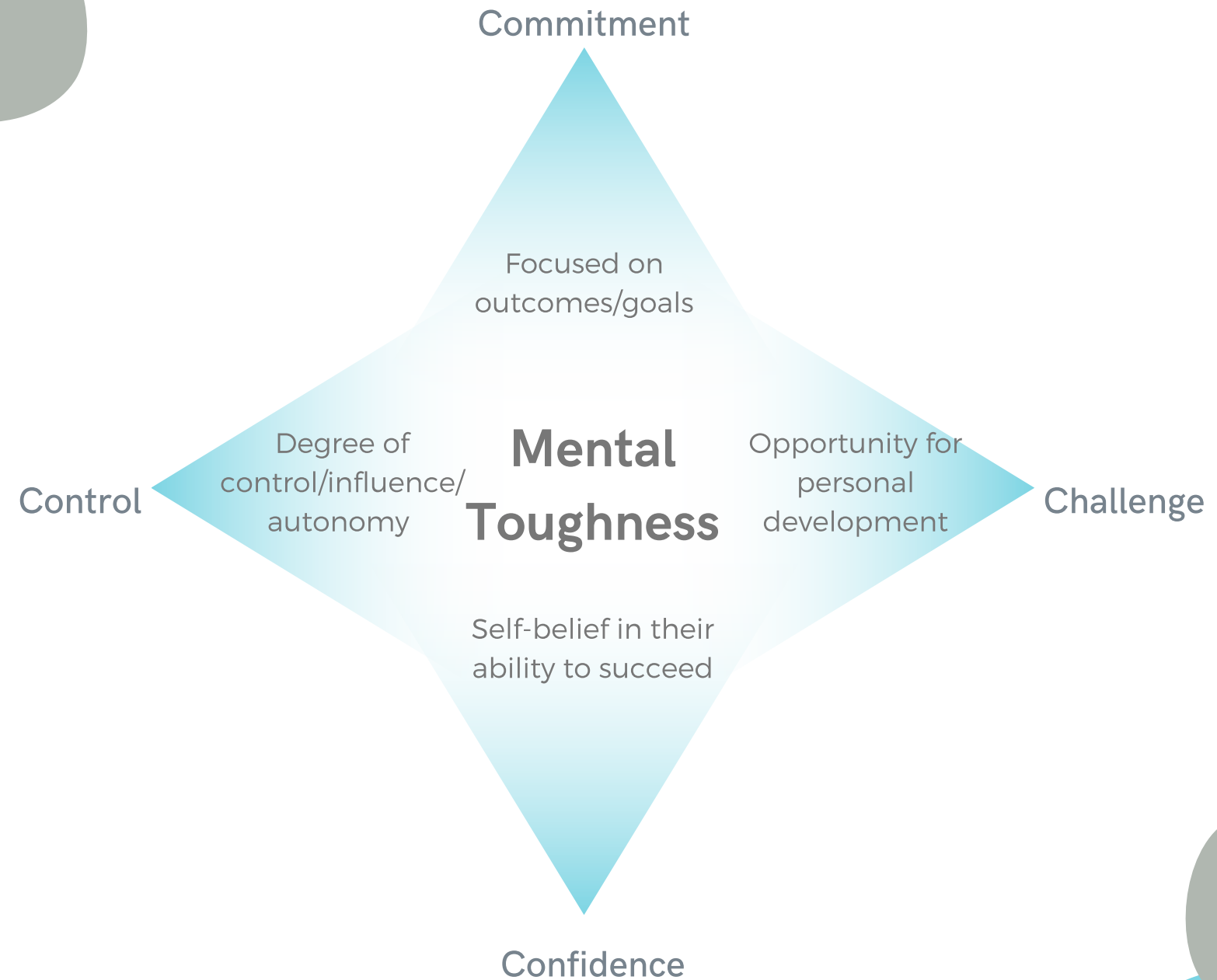
*“The capacity for an individual to deal effectively with stressors, pressures and challenge and perform to the best of their abilities, irrespective of the circumstances in which they find themselves”*

(Clough & Earle 2002)

Mental toughness refers to the capacity to manage stressors while *maintaining* a continued sense of control, whereas resilience refers to the ability to bounce back *after* stressors happen (2). Mental toughness can be an outcome of resilience being rehearsed and habitual. Essentially, a resilient mind creates toughness when the mind is treated like a muscle that becomes stronger through repetition.

Clough and Earle proposed a quadrant model to help explain the elements of mental toughness. The resources contained in the hub have been designed to help you consider your strengths and characteristics contributing to your resilience and enhancing mental toughness. There is evidence that when mental toughness is advocated in the work setting it can contribute to burnout prevention and supports reconnection to the personal purpose (3).

# MENTAL TOUGHNESS



# BRIEF RESILIENCE SCALE

This brief resilience scale can help identify your reaction when facing difficult events. Research indicates that building resilience is important to those who are recovering from terminal illness or trauma ( 8). It is a useful tool to use to determine how you are currently feeling and with the following worksheets what may be depleting your energy. Use this in conjunction with other material in this series to renew your resilience. (9)

Respond to each statement below by circling one answer per row	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	1	2	3	4	5
I have a hard time making it through stressful events	5	4	3	2	1
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event	1	2	3	4	5
It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens	5	4	3	2	1
I usually come through difficult times with little trouble	1	2	3	4	5
I tend to take a long time to get over setbacks in my life	5	4	3	2	1

**Scoring:** Add the value (1-5) of your responses for all six items, creating a range from 6-30. Divide the sum by the total number of questions answered (6) for your final score.

Total score: \_\_\_\_ / 6

My score: \_\_\_\_ (average)

BRS score	Interpretation
1.00-2.99	Low Resilience
3.00-4.30	Med Resilience
4.31-5.00	High Resilience



# DEPLETION AND RENEWAL

Take a moment to identify situations, habits or anything that depletes your energy.

Place these at the bottom of the triangle (the pointed end). Consider when these are most likely to take place, which ones are in your control and can be limited. What changes might you be able to make to nullify some if not all, that deplete you?

Also take the time to identify situations, people and habits that nourish you and renew your energy levels. These are the factors that will support and boost your resilience (this is also known as the exhaustion funnel (10), renewing your energy links to all other worksheets in this series (DOSE, mindfulness, habit change) .

What lifts/nourishes/energises you? What gives you vitality?



What drains you or Increases feelings of stress/anxiety or overwhelm?

# RESILIENCE VS MENTAL TOUGHNESS

## **References**

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- 3) <http://clok.uclan.ac.uk/30897/>
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- 9) Smith, B.W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P. and Bernard, J. (2008). The Brief Resilience Scale: Assessing the Ability to Bounce Back. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 15, 194-200.
- 10) <https://www.ciras.org.uk/articles/2018/how-to-avoid-being-sucked-down-the-exhaustion-funnel/>