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## The *Resilience* Factor: Mastering Stress in Pivotal Times

Whether you're just starting out as an entrepreneur, in the thick of your business, career or reinventing yourself at midlife, change brings stress. Maybe you lost a job you had held for a long time, or the industry you are working in is rapidly evolving. Or perhaps you are starting your first independent venture, looking for ways you can quickly scale it to new heights.

Today we face what I call pivot times. The rate of change is greater than it has ever been in the history of mankind. Exponential change is everywhere and change often triggers us to feel stressed.

How we deal with stress not only determines our happiness and quality of life but it can actually be a life and death matter as well. One new [study](#) for instance shows a clear link between emotional stress and increased risk for heart attack and stroke.

So if change is not going to slow down, and we truly want to be happy, healthy and successful, we may have to adjust how we deal with it. For entrepreneurs and business leaders, this requires us to build up our resilience (aka "The Resilience Muscle.")

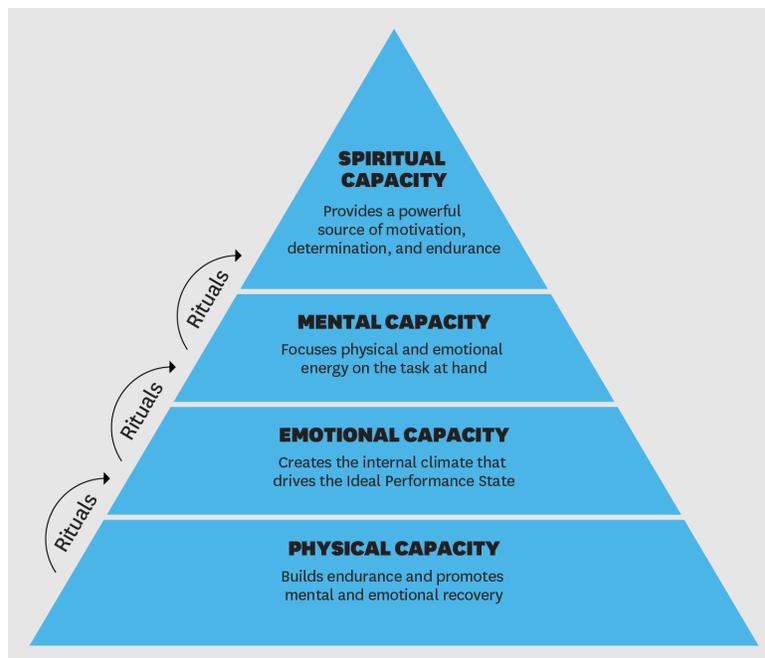
Gary Vaynerchuk says being resilient is like a boxer that gets [punched in the face](#) but repeatedly moves forward nonetheless. You have to be willing to not only take the punches, but also have an attitude that says, "keep 'em coming." Here are three ways you can build your resilience muscle for entrepreneurship and life:

1. **Be Self-Aware.** Self-awareness requires working on yourself. If you are not self-aware, you are at a great disadvantage in every space – health, relationships and particularly in business. How do you frame the situation you're in? What language and "story" do you tell yourself and others about the change you are facing? Whether it's marketing, brand positioning, changing your job or career, or making health or relationship changes, you and your team must define change in positive and powerful terms. You must make friends with change again and again.
2. **Ask: "What Can I Learn?"** Resilience is about how you spring back stronger from difficulty. Richard Branson stresses [using failures as learning experiences](#). This is the idea that every reversal/setback

contains a nugget of new information we can use to propel us forward. In most cases we would have loved to have had that information weeks, months or even years ago, but that no longer matters. The important thing to ask is, "now that I know this, what can I do with it?" Think of it like the loading a spring to prepare you for a huge lead ahead.

**3. "Cultivate Rituals for Recovery:** In their influential article "[The Making of a Corporate Athlete](#)," authors Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz detailed two decades of research on world-class athletes and what CEOs and other business leaders can learn from them. A key trait they found is that successful athletes have the ability and take the time to recover from the stress of competition. The study showed that the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual rituals for recovery not only assisted top athletes to perform at their best but business people as well.

Entrepreneurs and business leaders face even more ongoing stress than professional athletes. So if you try to face stress without allowing time for recovery, your performance will fall. But if you take time to recover, even if the intervals are short, you will come back with a new frame of mind and renewed energy to face whatever is coming.



<https://hbr.org/2001/01/the-making-of-a-corporate-athlete>

#### Additional Resources:

- <https://hbr.org/2016/06/resilience-is-about-how-you-recharge-not-how-you-endure>
- <https://www.yogajournal.com/teach/5-ways-make-every-yoga-class-restorative-therapeutic>