

Conversations in Mentoring

Resilience and Perseverance

Context

Resilience is the capacity to manage adversity, trauma, or significant stress. The ability to manage difficulty is not something that people either do or don't have. Such capacity can be developed. There are coping strategies that can be learned and practiced. Resilience involves being intentional in how you characterize a challenge and respond.

Perseverance is the capacity to "push through" toward a goal no matter what obstacles pop up. When you persevere, obstacles will still complicate how you move forward; they simply fail to lessen your desire to move forward. Perseverance is sometimes called "the great leveler," because you don't have to be the smartest or best to successfully push through toward a goal.

Approaches and strategies

- Remind yourself of why achieving this goal is important.
- Make a "to do" list, prioritize it, and then deal with one task at a time.
- Give yourself credit for the decisions you're making and acting on.
- Be willing to face your fears and to forgive yourself for struggling.
- Remember that seeking help when you need it is a sign of strength, so seek out support; look for a thought partner and be ready to listen.

Considerations and steps toward a more effective practice

Identify a challenge at work or in life for which it might be easier to walk away or quit, but where you don't want to give up.

- What makes this a challenge? Why is it hard? Why is it hard for you? Why is it important to you not to give up?
- Who might be a good thought partner? What makes them a good resource for this particular challenge?
- What is a first step you can take?
 - Some more focused reflection on the challenge
 - Engage with your thought partner
 - Break down how to tackle the challenge into several steps, prioritize them, and get started
 - Other:

