

RESILIENCE JOURNAL

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Your Resilience Journal

Welcome Letter

The desire to help those around us to the best of our abilities is in all of us. When friends or loved ones are struggling; whether they're processing a traumatic past experience, trying to solve a problem, or feeling anxious about the future, they may turn to you for support. While it's an amazing thing to be someone people trust, it also comes with a responsibility that begins within you.

Your ability to take care of others starts with how well you care for yourself. Before you can offer your full attention to supporting someone else through their pain, it's essential to first understand how to recognize and respond to your own emotional needs.

That is what this journal is for.

Through these pages, you will begin to explore the foundations of your resilience; from how you breathe, sleep and eat to how you handle stress and build your support system. This journal will guide you through the before, during and after moments of supporting others and offers a toolkit that you can return to whenever you need to; whether you're navigating your own challenges or helping others through theirs.

There are no right answers, just be honest about your lived experience. Take your time, and come back to this whenever you need to.

With belief in you,
The WISE Team

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Where you're starting from

Increasing self awareness is the first step to building resilience

What does being resilient mean?

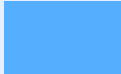
What would being more resilient allow you to do?

What does your most resilient self look like?

Emotion tracker

Happy

Sad



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What pattern do you notice?

Build your B.A.S.E.

BREATHING TECHNIQUES



Effective breathing is essential for both survival and overall well-being. Improving our breathing habits can help regulate the nervous system, lower anxiety, improve focus, and promote emotional stability.

- Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth to promote better airflow.
- Maintain proper posture to allow the diaphragm to expand and contract fully, enabling deeper and more efficient breathing.
- Practice meditation and relaxation techniques to reduce stress and promote more controlled, mindful breathing.
- Engage in regular exercise to improve lung health and increase breathing capacity.
- Ensure access to fresh air and proper ventilation in indoor spaces to support optimal breathing and oxygen intake.
- Optimise your posture and sleep position to maintain a clear airway, promoting deeper, more restful breathing throughout the night.
- Chewing fibrous and chewy foods can positively impact facial structure, enhancing both breathing and oral function by strengthening jaw muscles and promoting proper alignment.

Build your B.A.S.E.

ACTIONABLE STEPS

Engage in daily activities that naturally stimulate the release of “happy hormones” which improve mood, reduce stress, and foster emotional well-being.

Serotonin

The Mood Stabiliser



- Aerobic exercise
- Sunlight exposure
- Meditation
- Diet
- Gratitude
- Quality sleep

Endorphins

The Pain Killer



- Aerobic exercise
- Sunlight exposure
- Laughter
- Music
- Massage
- Acupuncture
- Dark Chocolate

Dopamine

The Reward Chemical



- Exercise
- Music
- Meditation
- Goal-setting
- Quality Sleep
- Engage in hobbies
- Sunlight exposure

Oxytocin

The Love Hormone



- Physical touch
- Laughter
- Meditation
- Gratitude
- Music
- Supportive relationships
- Positive words

Build your B.A.S.E.

SLEEP QUALITY



Prioritize habits that support deep, restorative sleep.

- Engage in deep, slow breathing exercises before bed.
- Meditate while focusing on your breath.
- Establish a Consistent Routine: Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends.
- Avoid screens at least one hour before bed to reduce blue light exposure, which can disrupt your sleep cycle.
- Take a warm bath 1-2 hours before bedtime.
- Reduce lighting in your home to about 25% brightness an hour before bed to support melatonin production.
- Exercise regularly during the day, but avoid intense activity close to bedtime.
- If you're struggling to fall asleep, get out of bed and do a calming activity until you feel tired.
- Maintain a clean, clutter-free, and quiet sleeping space
- Aim for a room temperature between 15.5–21°C (60–70°F), with 18°C (65°F) being ideal for optimal sleep.
- Create a dark sleeping environment, using blackout curtains or sleep masks to minimize light exposure.
- Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night.
- Nap Smartly: If you nap, keep it to either a short 20-minute power nap or a full 90-minute sleep cycle.
- Finish your last meal at least 2-3 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid consuming caffeine 6-9 hours before bed
- Sleep on your left side to help improve digestion.
- Elevate your head slightly if you experience reflux or indigestion.

Build your B.A.S.E.

EATING HABITS



Adopt a nutrient-dense diet that supports a healthy body & gut.

- Engage in slow, deep breathing exercises before eating.
- Breathe through your nose while eating to promote calmness.
- Avoid talking while chewing and take time to chew food well.
- Maintain good posture and eat slowly.
- Eat in a calm environment to minimize stress during meals.
- Make a grocery list, plan & prepare meals for the week to avoid impulsive eating and ensure you have balanced options ready.
- Pay attention to recommended serving sizes.
- Try to eat at similar times each day to regulate hunger and maintain steady energy levels.
- Avoid skipping meals as it can lead to overeating later;
- Choose Healthy Snacks: Opt for nuts, fruits or yogurt.
- Practice mindful eating by tuning into hunger and fullness cues.
- Be aware of situations that lead to emotional eating.
- Drink plenty of water throughout the day.
- Aim to eat at least 30 different types of plant-based foods weekly (fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and whole grains)
- Add probiotics to your diet by including fermented foods (yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, miso, & tempeh.)
- Include Prebiotic-Rich Foods (garlic, onions, leeks, & asparagus)
- Reduce consumption of ultra-processed foods high in additives, sugars, and unhealthy fats.
- Eat healthy fats and omega-3-rich foods (fatty fish, flaxseeds, walnuts, and chia seeds.)
- Limit foods and drinks high in added sugars and artificial sweeteners,

Four core areas for enhancing mental & physical wellbeing

Build your B.A.S.E.

What will you do every day this month to build your base?

BREATHING

ACTIONABLE STEPS

SLEEP

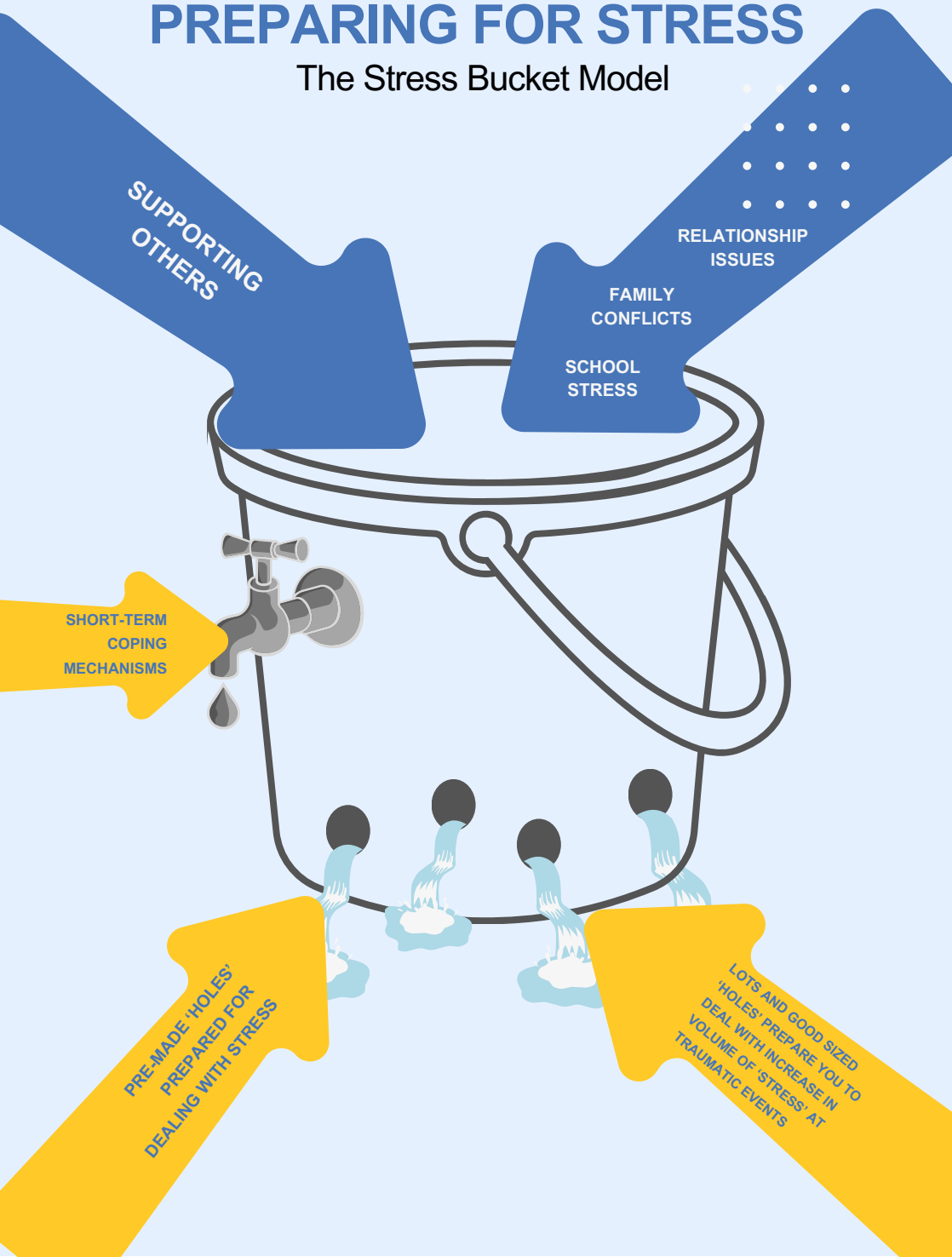
EATING HABITS

B.A.S.E. tracker

Day	Breathing	Actionable steps	Sleep	Eating
1				
2				
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PREPARING FOR STRESS

The Stress Bucket Model



PREPARING FOR STRESS

The Stress Bucket Model

Stressors (What's Filling Your Bucket?)	Short-Term Coping Mechanisms (Current "Holes")	Effectiveness (Short-Term/ Long-Term Impact)	Strategies to Enhance Long-Term Coping (Make "Holes" Bigger)
Lack of sleep	Consuming caffeine, napping at irregular hours	Energy boost but disrupts sleep pattern	Sleep routine, reducing screen time, meditation for better rest
School deadlines	E.g., Procrastinating, working late	Short-term relief but increases stress later	E.g., Time management, setting boundaries, regular breaks
Relationship conflict	Venting to friends, avoidance	Short-term emotional release, may cause tension	Open communication, setting healthy boundaries, relationship counseling

BUILDING A SUPPORT SYSTEM

Who can you go to for support?

Name

What support do
they give you?

BUILDING A SUPPORT SYSTEM

Understand & communicate your needs

Stress signals

What do you “look like” under stress?

Coping Preferences

How do you like to be supported?

Share this with the people around you

BUILDING A SUPPORT SYSTEM

Consider your culture

Stress signals

How do people in your community express distress?

Coping Preferences

How do people in your community support each other?

Be conscious of the cultural norms of others

BUILDING A SUPPORT SYSTEM

Understand the needs of those around you

Stress signals

Ask what do they “look like” under stress?

Coping Preferences

Ask how do they like to be supported?

Encourage open communication with friends & family

SELF CARE STRATEGIES

While supporting someone else

Maintain self awareness

Ask yourself

What are my physical and emotional limits / boundaries?

Maintain self awareness

Ask yourself

What will I do if my boundaries are crossed?

Maintain self awareness

Ask yourself

How can I take a break if I need to recharge?

Maintain self awareness

Ask yourself

How can I ask someone for additional support?

SELF CARE STRATEGIES

While supporting someone else

Grounding Technique

If you need to ground yourself / regain focus during stressful situations

Time Required:

2-5 minutes (can be adjusted to fit the situation).

Instructions:

While staying aware of your surroundings, take a moment to
pause

Take a slow, deep breath to prepare.

5 Things You Can See:

Quickly scan your surroundings and name five things you can see.

Focus on practical or neutral items in your environment, such as a
chair, a tree out the window, a vehicle, or the sky.

This helps redirect your attention away from any stressful stimuli.

4 Things You Can Touch:

Identify four things you can physically touch around you.

Notice textures and sensations: the ground beneath your shoes,
the coolness of a wall or the sensation of your own hands holding
something.

If it helps, physically touch each object for a few seconds.

SELF CARE STRATEGIES

While supporting someone else

Grounding Technique cont.

3 Things You Can Hear:

Tune in to three sounds around you: the wind, cars in the distance, the movement of people, or the sound of your own breathing. Choose sounds that help ground you to the present moment rather than overwhelming noises.

2 Things You Can Smell:

Identify two smells in your environment: the outdoors, a scented chapstick or an essential oil,

1 Thing You Can Feel Internally:

Notice one internal sensation in your body: the taste in your mouth, a feeling in your chest or stomach, the sensation of breathing in and out.

Take a Grounding Breath to Finish:

Inhale slowly, hold briefly, then exhale fully. With this breath, remind yourself of your strength and resilience in managing the situation, and allow yourself a moment of calm before continuing.

SELF CARE STRATEGIES

After supporting someone else

DECOMPRESSION TECHNIQUES

Collect your thoughts and emotions in a calm setting, allowing space to mentally and physically decompress.

Practice deep breathing: Use slow, deep breaths to regulate your nervous system. Focus on inhaling deeply through your nose, holding briefly, and exhaling slowly.

Engage in stretching to relieve muscle tension and promote relaxation.

Use physical movement to ground yourself: Simple activities like walking or moving freely can help discharge built-up stress & re-centre your focus.

Use grounding techniques: Reconnect with the present by focusing on your senses, such as feeling your feet on the ground, noticing your surroundings, or using an object as a sensory anchor.

Engage in self-soothing activities like meditation, listening to calming music, or a warm shower to unwind, release emotional tension, and promote self-compassion.

Reach out to your support system: Share your experiences and feelings with a trusted friend, family member, or adult who can provide a supportive ear and allow you to process emotions in a safe space,

SELF CARE STRATEGIES

After supporting someone else

DECOMPRESSION TECHNIQUES

Acknowledge Your Efforts: Recognize the efforts you put in, reminding yourself that you did your best with positive talk and affirmations like "I helped with the best I could under the circumstances."

Rest and Sleep Well: Quality sleep is crucial for emotional processing, hormone regulation, and cognitive recovery.

Engage in creative or mindful outlets: Engage in relaxing activities like drawing, journaling or gardening.

Spend time in nature or take gentle walks: to help reset your mind, reduce stress, and foster a sense of calm and connection.

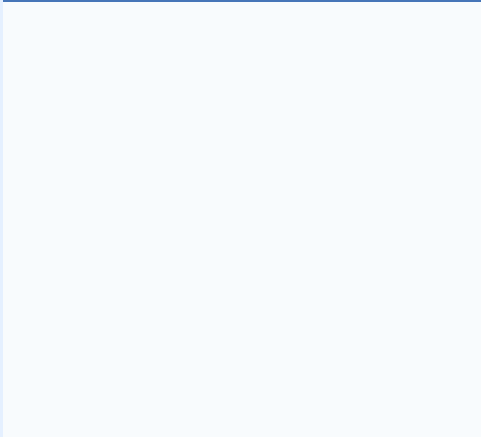
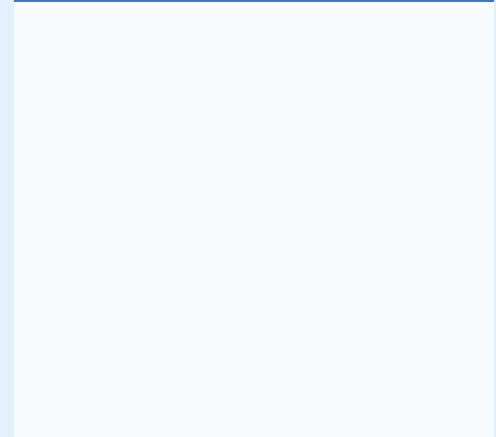
Stay Aware of Your Reactions: Monitor your emotional and physical responses in the days following supporting someone, noting any persistent anxiety, distress, or discomfort that may require additional support.

Use Peer Support or Counselling Resources: If available, speak to peer support officers, counselors, or mental health professionals

DECOMPRESSION PLAN

What strategies will you use to decompress?



TRUSTED RESOURCE LIST

CRISIS LINES	National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline = Call 988 National Crisis Lifeline = Text MN to 741741. Suicide Prevention = 612-873-2222 Crisis Intervention (Hennepin Co.) = 612-873-3161 Crisis Intervention (Ramsey Co.) = 651-266-7900 Men's Crisis Help line (St. Paul area) = 651-379-6367 National Runaway Hotline = 800-621-4000 Ramsey County Mental health Crisis = 651-266-7900
MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES	Walk in Counselling Center = 612-870-0565 WAARM (support after a mental health related ER visit) = https://washburn.org/warm/ Ramsey County Mental Health Center = 651-266-7890 / 1919 University Ave. W., Suite 200, Saint Paul Mental Health Resources = 651-659-2900
SEXUAL & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCES	Asian Women United of Minnesota = 612-742-8823 Minnesota's hotline for domestic violence, sexual violence & human trafficking resources = Call: 866-223-1111 or Text: 612-399-9995 <i>Minneapolis - Hennepin County:</i> Child Abuse / neglect report = 612-348-3552 Cornerstone Advocacy Service = 952-884-0330 Adult Protection = 612-348-8526 Rape/Sexual Assault Center = 612-825-4357 Sexual Assault Resource Services = 612-873-5832 Sexual Violence Center = 612-871-5111 <i>St Paul - Ramsey County:</i> SOS (Sexual Offence Service) (24hr Crisis) = 651-643-3006 St. Paul Domestic Abuse Intervention = 651-645-2824 Children's Crisis Response (24/7) = 651-774-7000 Domestic Violence Emergency Hotline = 800-799-7233 Emergency Social Services after 9pm = 651-291-6795
LGBTQ+ SERVICES	Trans Lifeline's Hotline (peer support) = 877-565-8860 OutFront Minnesota (MN's largest 2SLGBTQIA+ advocacy organization) = 800-800-0530 Pride Institute (LGBTQ+ Addiction Treatment) = 952-934-7554
HOMELESSNESS RESOURCES	Hennepin Shelter Hotline = 612-204-8200 People Serving People (Shelter) 612-340-5400 Youth Link (homeless youth 16-19) = 612-252-1200 The Bridge for Youth (emergency homeless shelter for youth) = 612-377-8800
LEGAL ASSISTANCE	Legal Assistance Ramsey County = 651-222-5863

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