

THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

Worksheet for Rick Hanson | The Science of Hardwiring Happiness and Resilience (Episode 192)

The human brain evolved to be pretty good at surviving in a kill-or-be-killed world, but it turns out that being on constant alert for potential danger doesn't always make us feel good, treat others well, or serve us when we're trying to get an anxiety-free night of good sleep. But [*Resilient: How to Grow an Unshakable Core of Calm, Strength, and Happiness*](#) co-author Dr. Rick Hanson knows a few things about giving our brains a much-needed update for life in the modern world.

[In this episode](#) we'll talk about why learning to rely on ourselves rather than others (or the world at large) is ultimately empowering, why our brains are often teflon for our good experiences and velcro for our bad experiences and what we can do to mitigate this negativity bias, and how to ensure we're focused on the right metrics for emotional health and happiness.

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The Resilient Matrix

In [*Resilient*](#), Dr. Rick Hanson says that the path your life takes is dependent upon how to manage your challenges, protect your vulnerabilities, and increase your resources.

“Let’s say you’re doing dishes and the water itself is full of germs and crud,” says Rick. “That’s a challenge. Let’s say, also, that you have a little cut on your hand that the germs can penetrate. That’s your vulnerability. So what do you do? You put on the big yellow gloves and do the dishes. That’s the resource that protects your vulnerability and manages the challenge. That’s kind of everyday life. I recognize that resources, vulnerabilities, and challenges are out in the world, in the physical body, and in the mind. That gives us nine ways we can make things better. That’s a 3×3 matrix.

“That said, I tend to focus on resources, because that’s where we have opportunity. Often we can’t do much about challenges and vulnerabilities. While it’s super important to grow [resources] out in the world — including build up your relationships with others, build up your bank account, build up your likes on Facebook. And it’s also good to build up resources in the body — good nutrition, exercise, and whatnot, again, it’s a pretty slow road.

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But to grow resources in your mind, to grow confidence, skills with other people, know-how, to grow inner peace, to grow insight, to grow self-awareness, to grow patience, those are things that first you can always make bigger — because you can work with your mind all the time. And second, you take the results with you wherever you go.

“So of those nine ways to make the world better, I focus on growing resources in the mind. To me, that little box in the 3×3 matrix, that’s where there’s great opportunity.”

Using the matrix below, chart the ways you currently deal with your resources, vulnerabilities, and challenges in the world, body, and mind. Do you find imbalances that could be improved or areas that need more attention? How might you focus on developing resources in the mind?

	Resources	Vulnerabilities	Challenges
In the World			
In the Body			
In the Mind			

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Self-Reliance is the Compass

One key point Rick makes in [Resilient](#) is that we may not be able to count on others or the world, but we can count on our own strengths. While this might sound like a fatalist attitude, it's really a reminder that while we can't control everything life throws our way, we *can* control how we react to it.

“The weather may change,” says Rick. “Your partner may drop the rope. But what you can count on is what's inside you. It doesn't mean to be cynical or pessimistic about what other people can do for you. Do what you can to help the world and other people and your body be more reliable.”

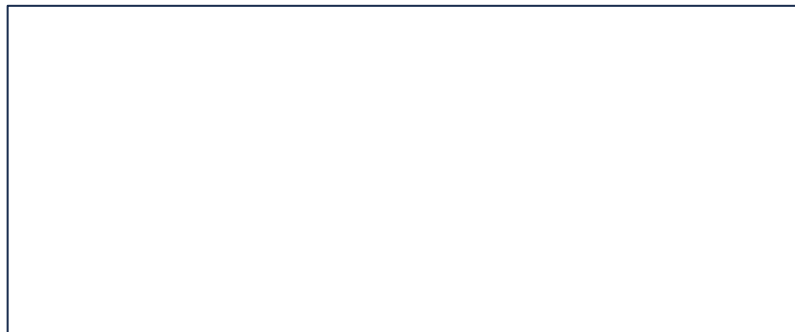
Do you consider yourself fairly self-reliant, or do you have some work to do? Jot down a time life threw something your way and you weren't quite prepared to deal with it. Since then, have you become better able to roll with this kind of interruption to your day, or do you still have trouble? In what ways might you approach a place of greater self-reliance?

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Resilience is the Keel

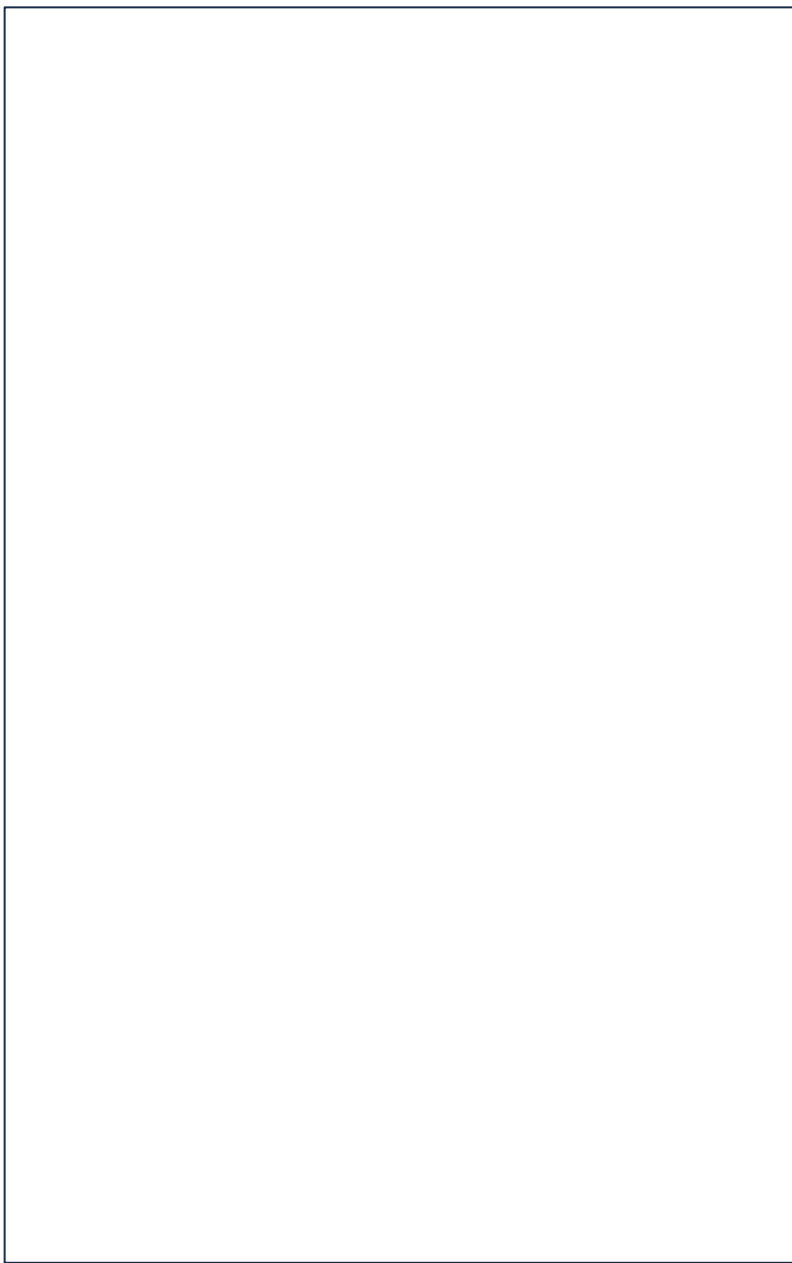
“Resilience is the capacity inside us to both survive the worst day of our life and thrive every day of our life,” says Rick. “It’s not just for combat or trauma or growing up in great poverty. It’s for dealing with everyday stresses so that as life challenges us, we are not swamped by it. It’s a little bit like a sailboat with a keel. The challenges come, the waves come, the weather changes, the storms arrive, and they affect you, but they don’t sink you. And if they bang on you hard, you recover quickly. That’s what resilience fundamentally is. Resilience is the result of inner strengths of various kinds...and the strength of strengths is learning. Because if you know how to grow from your experiences, you know how to become stronger, wiser, happier, calmer...you can apply that to everything, including confidence of self-worth.”

Looking back to Rick’s Resilient matrix, we see how building up resources in the mind – what Rick calls inner strengths (and the box most in our sphere of control) – is the surest way to facilitate resilience. How developed are your inner strengths, and how buff is your strength of strengths: learning?



Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here.](#)

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We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these valuable insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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