THE **HR** PROFESSIONAL'S
POCKET GUIDE TO

EXTREME RESILIENCE

THE **FOOLPROOF** METHOD FOR
ELIMINATING **STRESS** AND **BOUNCING**
BACK FROM **ANY** CHALLENGE YOU FACE

SRIKUMAR RAO, Ph.D.

THE HR PROFESSIONAL'S GUIDE TO

EXTREME RESILIENCE

THE FOOLPROOF METHOD FOR
ELIMINATING STRESS AND BOUNCING BACK
FROM ANY CHALLENGE YOU FACE

SRIKUMAR RAO, Ph.D.

[1]

HOW TO USE THIS POCKET GUIDE

THIS GUIDE IS NOT designed to overwhelm you with a large volume of information. It is instead designed for one very simple purpose: to show you the shortest and most direct route to bouncing back from any challenge and completely eliminating stress from your life.

For the purposes of our time together, I want to remind you of our working definitions of "extreme resilience" and "stress."

> ***EXTREME RESILIENCE: The ability to bounce back from any challenge, problem or setback so quickly that, to the outside observer, it does not appear as though your journey was impacted at all.***

> ***STRESS: The natural byproduct of believing that your reality should somehow be other than it currently is.***

This pocket guide is intended to serve as a quick refresher of the fundamental process you can use to develop extreme resilience and

eliminate stress. Use it anytime you encounter a "problem," or something that creates stress, upsets you, angers you, frustrates you, or makes you angry.

While you can read this pocket guide in just a few minutes, you can benefit from its wisdom in far less time than that.

Rapid transformation need not take more than a split second. For in that amount of time you can use the material in this guide to remember exactly who is in control of your experience of life.

Notice I did not say who is in control of your life. I said who is in control of your *experience* of life. These are two very different points of control.

Despite how fervently your mind might disagree, you are not in control of your life. You are not in control, you have never been in control, you will never be in control.

Even so, this guide will give you a simple process to unlock the door to a completely new level of achievement. It is on this level that "extreme resilience" will transform from something you work at learning to something you embody on a consistent basis. And as you develop that ability, you will find that the stress that was once present in your life as a fairly constant companion will slowly begin to disappear. With practice (and this **is** a practice), you will find that stress, as you used to know it, no longer exists in your reality.

[2]

UNDERSTANDING WHAT CREATES THE NEED TO "BOUNCE BACK"

RESILIENCE IS THE ABILITY to bounce back from adversity. *Extreme* resilience is the ability to do that very quickly. But what creates the need to bounce back in the first place? Is it the "adversity" or is it something else?

The feeling you have when you get "knocked down" and have to bounce back is a byproduct of the mental models through which you filter the events of your life. Mental models are your rules about how life is supposed to go and what it means if that doesn't happen.

If your mental models identify X, Y and Z as "problems" in your life or work, that will create a feeling of adversity and challenge. Your mental model will then dictate that the next course of action is to "bounce back" from this problem.

If you allow a mental model like this to run without interference, your life will become a never-ending roller coaster of victory and defeat. Some days will be great, other days will be disaster.

The most direct route to developing extreme resilience is to shift your mental models so that "bouncing back" is hardly ever required.

You are not developing an ability to "weather the storm" and rough it out, you are changing your mental models to ones that no longer perceive a storm as something to be "weathered." It is neither good nor bad, it is just part of the journey.

This is extremely counterintuitive. It is also extremely powerful.

Just because this concept is easy to understand does not mean it is easy to LIVE. It's the living that matters. This is an art that requires practice for true mastery. It is a process, not an event.

You change your mental models by choosing ones that serve you. How do you know if a mental model is not serving you? If you are feeling something other than what you want to feel, you are operating within a mental model that is not serving you.

[3]

THE PRACTICE

THE THREE STEP PRACTICE that follows is very simple but not easy. In fact, you may find it extremely challenging at first. Do not be alarmed if that's your experience. What you're attempting to do is something that 99% of humanity does not even know is possible.

If you persevere, this simple practice will unlock for you the opportunity to develop extreme resilience and completely remove stress from your reality.

How long will it take? It does not matter how long, for each time you practice it you will move one small step closer to mastery. The journey to mastery never ends, it only deepens and becomes more valuable. Since it never ends, you never have to worry about getting to the end!

STEP 1: BE GRATEFUL

The very first step in the practice is to be grateful. Do not be grateful **for** something, simply be grateful. This helps you develop the habit of detaching gratitude from outcome. It is easy to be grateful when things are going your way. It is **powerful** to be grateful simply because you choose to be.

It is important to remember that gratitude is not a thought, it is a **feeling**. It is a feeling you want to practice by drawing on some time in your past when you truly did feel grateful. Bring that memory to the present in the form of feeling and practice recalling that into your body as quickly as you can. What does gratitude feel like? It feels like wholeness. It feels like the absence of need. It feels like a joyful, but quiet, peace.

STEP 2: Quiet Your Mental Chatter

Your mental chatter, that voice talking to you in your mind, is a byproduct of your current mental models. It does not create the events in your life, it creates the stories you *tell* yourself about the events in your life. *"This is good, that is bad, I want this to happen, I don't want that to happen."*

Learning to quiet this chatter helps you create the space required to **choose** how you will respond to what happens to you at work and at home. An effective way to quiet your mental chatter is to place your awareness on your breathing.

Remember this: if you're feeling something other than what you want to feel, you are using a mental model that does not serve you.

The challenge is to **stop** believing your mental model about the way you *think* the world works.

> ***Every problem in your life, including stress, is something you create by believing that reality should be, in some way, OTHER than it actually is.***

STEP 3: Exercise Your Power to Choose

Remember that, in **all** situations, you have the power to choose the emotional domain you occupy. You have the power to choose the way you experience the events of your life. You have the power to

choose the story you tell yourself or whether or not you tell yourself a story at all.

I'm going to suggest a new way for you to control the emotional domain you live in. Feel free to adjust this for your needs, of course. But I'm confident that choosing something in this general direction will radically change your life. It will put you on the fast track to developing extreme resilience.

This new mental model is called: **Wonderful, No Matter What.**

If you prefer, you can also call it by its other name: **Is It Good? Is It Bad? Who Knows?**

Using this model, you occupy the emotional domain where events are received with gratitude and an understanding that **all** of them play a part in your journey towards mastery.

This approach does not mean you are looking at life through rose colored glasses, completely ignoring reality. It simply means you are looking at life using glasses that **serve** you instead of disturb you.

You will "bounce back" instantly from any challenge simply because you will no longer have a mental model that interprets the events of life as things to "bounce back" from.

Exercising this power to choose the emotional domain you occupy does not keep you from making smart decisions. It does not keep you from working hard. It does not keep you from making adjustments to your path. It does not keep you from achieving everything you want in life.

It only keeps you from telling yourself those "stories" about the events of life that lead to a mediocre existence full of endless ups and downs.

[4]

SOME FINAL WORDS FOR YOUR JOURNEY

NEVER FORGET THAT THIS journey is a never-ending one. You never "get there." So in order to make this a satisfying and fulfilling path, it is smart to detach yourself from setting any goals for this endeavor.

Choosing to begin and continue the journey IS the goal. The point on which to place your focus is on the *process*, not the destination. This is a piece of wisdom that you can apply to every part of your life: **always focus on the process, for that is what you control. Never get attached to the outcome.**

The funny part about this principle is that the less attached you are to the outcome you want, the greater the probability that you will actually achieve that outcome. (I didn't make up these rules, mind you, but I've learned to pay attention to them!)

As you repeat the practice outlined on the preceding pages, you will begin to notice that "stress," as you *used* to know it, stops making such frequent appearances in your life. Eventually, you will prove to yourself that the "stress" you used to experience was actually something that **you** created.

This is a humbling and empowering realization. It is humbling because you discover that you were creating the suffering you experienced. It is empowering because you realize that, if you're powerful enough to do *that*, you are powerful enough to do other things too--things that actually serve you.

I will leave you with one last tip... Some might consider this a radical one. And in today's world, it surely does qualify as radical.

But it is perhaps the most powerful way to move through this world.

The "tip" is to remove yourself as THE CENTER of your Universe and to replace that center with a cause **bigger** than just you.

When it comes to developing extreme resilience and removing stress from your life, living and working in service of something bigger than you is a profound way to do it.

There is a power that comes from this revolutionary act that is unlike anything you have experienced.

As you begin this journey towards developing extreme resilience and completely removing stress from your reality, know that you are about to walk on a path that will radically change (for the better) how you experience the world.

Don't worry about "getting there" or reaching some arbitrary destination your mind sets for you.

Just focus on paying attention to the journey itself. It probably won't be long until you realize that the "journey" is all there really is!

AN INVITATION FROM SRIKUMAR RAO, Ph.D.

If you have found this booklet valuable and think your company would benefit from Dr. Rao's work, consider this your invitation to begin the discussion about that possibility.

Dr. Rao has offered his workshop, "How to Eliminate Stress and Cultivate Extreme Resilience," to hundreds of CEOs, many of whom have asked him to present to their companies.

You could very well be responsible for helping your friends and colleagues develop extreme resilience and completely eliminate stress from their lives.

To explore bringing Dr. Rao's work to your company, please email Dr. Rao directly at srikumar.rao@theraoinstitute.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Srikumar Rao conceived the innovative course Creativity and Personal Mastery (CPM). Students found it so overwhelmingly powerful that it remains the only business school course in the world to have its own alumni association.

He was an executive at Warner Communications and McGraw-Hill and later taught CPM at some of the world's leading business schools, including Columbia, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, London Business School, and Haas School of Management at the University of California at Berkeley.

The course shows students how to discover their unique purpose, creativity and happiness, through group work and a philosophical perspective. Its popularity has led to write-ups in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and dozens of other publications.

Rao is also an executive coach to senior business executives, whom he helps find deeper meaning and engagement in their work.

He has been a keynote speaker at many prestigious conferences around the world.

His programs have helped thousands of executives and entrepreneurs all over the world discover deeper meaning, and enabled them to achieve quantum leaps in effectiveness. Graduates of Rao's workshops have become more creative and more inspiring leaders.

He's the author of Are You Ready to Succeed: Unconventional Strategies for Achieving Personal Mastery in Business and Life, and has been a contributor to Forbes, Fortune, Harvard Business Review, and Inc. His latest book is titled Happiness at Work: Be Resilient, Motivated, and Successful – No Matter What.