



Emotional Style Assessment

1. RESILIENCE

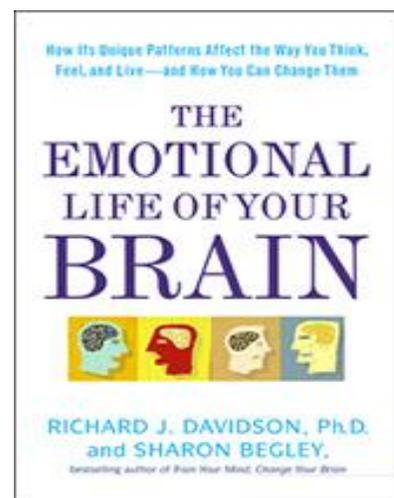
Each of us is a color-wheel combination of the six dimensions that make up our Emotional Style. Resilience is the ability to recover from adversities we encounter in life. Some are small, and some are large, but how quickly you recover from setbacks in life is in part automatic. When you are flooded with negative emotions, your brain and body immediately activate mechanisms to dampen the emotion and return you to your baseline mood. This happens with positive emotions, too.

The following ten questions are designed to help you better understand your Emotional Style of 'Resilience'. If you are tempted to think long and hard about a question, or if you feel that there are too many nuances or exceptions, resist. The most accurate results come from making a snap judgment about whether a question is True or False about you. There are no right answers here - take it from the profile's creator, CIHM Founder Richard Davidson. This is not a pop quiz - it's about better understanding who you are, how you perceive the world, and how you navigate the obstacles of life.

The profile consists of simple 'True/False' statements and should take only a couple minutes to complete. You can even ask someone close to you to answer these questions about you for an additional perspective. That serve as a reality check.

Following the assessment are some exercises that can help you adjust your resilience. Nothing is guaranteed, of course, and what you get out of it depends a great deal on what you put in.

Remember, this is simply a starting point to learning more about Emotional Style. To learn more about how Dr. Davidson describes the neural underpinnings of Emotional Style, the remaining five dimensions and strategies and tips to shift within the continuum of each, we encourage you to read the book!



RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT

Question	T or F?	Score
1. If I have a minor disagreement with a close friend or spouse—closer to “no, it’s your turn to do the dishes” than “you cheated on me?!”—it typically leaves me out of sorts for hours or longer.		
2. If another driver uses the shoulder to zoom up to the front of a long line of traffic waiting to merge, I am likely to shake it off easily rather than fume about it for a long time.		
3. When I have experienced profound grief, such as the death of someone close to me, it has interfered with my ability to function for many months.		
4. If I make a mistake at work and get reprimanded for it, I can shrug it off and take it as a learning experience.		
5. If I try a new restaurant and find that the food is awful and the service snooty, it ruins my whole evening.		
6. If I’m stuck in traffic because of an accident up ahead, when I pass the bottleneck I typically floor it to vent my frustration but still seethe inside.		
7. If my home’s water heater breaks, it does not affect my mood very much, since I know I can just call a plumber and get it fixed.		
8. If I meet a wonderful man/woman and ask if he/she would like to get together again, being told no typically puts me in a bad mood for hours or even days.		
9. If I am being considered for an important professional award or promotion and it goes to someone I consider less qualified, I can usually move on quickly.		
10. At a party, if I’m having a conversation with an interesting stranger and get completely tongue-tied when s/he asks me about myself, I tend to replay the conversation—this time including what I should have said—for a long time afterward.		
TOTAL =		

Scoring: Give yourself one point for each True answer to questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 10, and one point for each False answer to questions 2, 4, 7 and 9. All other answers score zero.

Plot your score on this scale:



Fast to Recover

Slow to Recover

High scorers on this dimension show persistence of negative emotions following adversity. They also show heightened sensitivity to negative feedback.

Middle scorers on this dimension exhibit a pattern between the high and low scores. They show some persistence of negative emotion following adversity and recover at a moderate pace.

Low scorers on this dimension recover quickly following adversity. They can also be less responsive to cues that provide negative feedback.

In order to have a healthy emotional life, you need to be able to respond to your own emotions, which is difficult to do if you move too quickly past them. If you are extremely resilient, others may perceive you as unfeeling and walled off. This may impair our ability to experience empathy.

It is also easy to understand how someone might benefit from being faster to recover. If setbacks leave you unable to function for long periods of time, it can prevent you from achieving what you want and can make relationships difficult.

Key Tools to adjust your resiliency include:

Mindfulness meditation. This produces emotional balance, and helps you to recover, but not too quickly. It awakens the chain of associations that keep us obsessing about and even wallowing in a setback. This involves observing your thought and feelings from the perspective of a nonjudgmental third party. One attends just to the bare facts of a perception received through the senses or the mind, without reacting to them in any way.

By learning to observe nonjudgmentally, you can break the chain of associations that typically arise from every thought. If you find that you are beginning to judge the thoughts, return to a state of nonjudgmental awareness. Practicing breathing awareness is a good place to start to learn mindfulness meditation. (See more on this in the Self-Awareness Dimension.)

Cognitive Reappraisal Training. This teaches people to reframe adversity in such a way as to believe that it is not as extreme or enduring as it could be. This type of training is best conducted with a skilled cognitive therapist.

Tonglen Meditation. Known as "taking and receiving" meditation, try this for 5 to 10 minutes, four or five times a week:

1. Visualize as vividly as you can someone you know who is suffering for whatever reason. (Or you can visualize a generic person, such as a garbage picker in Delhi, or a starving child in Sudan.)
2. On each breath inhalation, imagine that you take in this person's suffering. Feel it viscerally: As you breathe in, imagine his or her pain and anguish passing through your nostrils, up your nose, and down into your lungs. (Or you could also imagine the suffering leaving him or her each time you inhale.) As you breathe in, conjure an image of pain and anguish leaving his or her body like a fog dissipating under a bright sun.

3. On each exhalation, imagine that his or her suffering is transformed into compassion. Direct this compassion toward him or her: As you exhale, imagine the breath flowing toward him or her, a gift of empathy and love that will envelop and enter him or her, assuaging her pain.

Another way to speed up your recovery from adversity is to try to leave the situation where the setback occurred, if possible, and go to one with less emotional resonance. Leave the "combat zone" and walk outside, or at least in another room.

To slow down your recovery and enable you to feel distress longer and more intensely, try to do the opposite – remain in the situation associated with the adversity, or place reminders of it around you. For example, some people report that they feel no empathy for victims of natural disasters. If you want to become less unfeeling, try placing photographs of earthquake and tsunami victims on your refrigerator. That may help you feel their pain.

The exercises in this segment and the other five segments all work through the mind to actually change your brain. They have the power to alter your neural systems that underlie each of the six dimensions of Emotional Style:

- Resilience
- Outlook
- Social Intuition
- Self-Awareness
- Sensitivity to Context
- Attention

Any decision to shift your set point on any of these dimensions should be based on thoughtful introspection about whether it is keeping you from being the person you wish to be and living the life you aspire to.

Emotions help us appreciate others and the world around us; they make life meaningful and fulfilling.