



THE FUTURE OF RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

MINDSET, ENERGY AND
WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION

ODYSSEY GROUP COACHING



The Future of Resilient Leadership:

MINDSET, ENERGY AND WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION

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Message from Barbara

I am guessing you, like me, keep close tabs on your chargers—phone, laptop, iPad... They are all great and make life and work more efficient until there's no juice. We've learned, perhaps the hard way, to habitually check our device's battery and search out places to recharge whenever we set ourselves up for a productive day. But when it comes to our personal efficiency, to the levels of our own energy and bandwidth, well, that's easier to neglect. Our internal batteries get zapped quickly, and burnout is real. Where's the charging station when you need it?



NAVIGATING TODAY'S EVER-INCREASING DEMANDS OF LEADERSHIP CAN BE DEPLETING AND ISOLATING.

Leadership is never easy; its demands can be steep – especially in terms of lifestyle sacrifices. Whether you're a CEO, non-profit leader, business owner or other game-changer, you know that success comes from putting in the legwork and learning from your mistakes. You understand the importance of building *others* up. But why are so many of us less savvy about doing the same for ourselves? My practice is full of accomplished leaders who excel at meeting external demands but are struggling to cultivate a sustainable and fulfilling lifestyle.

TO BE A GAMER CHANGER, YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE ENERGY AND ENDURANCE FOR THE GAME.

Personal resilience is fundamental to expanding your leadership capacity and increasing the energy and equanimity required to meet demands. It's become such a ubiquitous coaching topic that I've developed a methodology to enable leaders like you to become more resilient and impactful. In fact, since Covid-19 upended the world as we know it, human resilience has been recognized by academia, government and research centers as one of the most pressing issues we face, personally and globally. The Stanford Center on Longevity, American College of Lifestyle Medicine and the World Health Organization are amongst the leaders of this charge. Each has substantial research supporting the foundational elements I have found in my own work as imperative to resilience.

Resilient leadership calls for greater levels of alertness, energy and self-awareness to lead with alacrity, purpose and authenticity. Resilient teams and organizations are built on the solid foundation of a healthy, supportive culture. Making a positive change in that culture starts with you, whether you're in the C-suite, a cubicle, or are active in your community. In this paper, I share resources to help you lead from your chair, wherever that chair happens to be.

With gratitude,

Barbara Waxman

Barbara Waxman MS, MPA, PCC

The Pain Point: Burnout

Burnout is real. Numerous surveys and studies report an alarming epidemic of burnout amongst leaders across the globe. Burnout is a painful personal experience and has detrimental effects on employee retention and company performance. The Covid-19 global crisis has upended the world as we know it and has highlighted the significance of personal and professional resilience. It is what has given rise to the evolution of Resilient Leadership™.

It helps to think of "burnout" in literal terms. According to Merriam Webster, to burn is "to consume fuel," and fuel, as we know, is an energy source.¹ Thus, a burned-out leader is someone depleted of energy. However, depletion is rarely a result of one major flare-up. Often, it is a slow and gradual process, an insidious smoldering that can be hard to recognize.²

NEARLY 60% OF LEADERS AND EMPLOYEES FEEL "USED UP" AT THE END OF THE WORKDAY, A STRONG INDICATOR OF BURNOUT.³

ALMOST 44% OF LEADERS AND EMPLOYEES EXPECTED TO HAVE TO CHANGE COMPANIES TO ADVANCE; 26% EXPECTED TO LEAVE.³

The Opportunity: Resilient Leadership

This concept of resilience has become a hot topic of late, but what exactly does it mean? In my coaching work, resilience refers to the capacity to prevail in the face of stressors outside of your control. Resilience is less about avoiding stress than the ability to bounce back from stressors and maintain a sense of physical, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual equanimity.

Sure, genetics may play a role, but the capacity to become resilient is available to everyone. For this to be possible, it's essential to understand that becoming a resilient leader is not an accomplishment to be checked off your to-do list. Resilience requires a consistent commitment to practice and understand how to build a mindset for success, the creation of rituals and practices to cultivate the energy you crave, and better integration between your professional and personal lives.

RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

The ability to lead oneself and inspire others to act in the face of challenge and change, with clarity of mind, body, and spirit to create good in the world.

Mindset

FIXED VS. GROWTH

Your mindset forms the basis of how you experience success in every aspect of your life. As science confirms time and again, your mind and body are wholly interconnected. Several years ago, I experienced something that profoundly changed my understanding of that mind-body connection. I observed a small group of Tibetan monks meditating on thoughts about heat while they were situated in an igloo. The result? Sitting in nothing more than their saffron robes, these monks began to heat up and even sweat. That kind of mindset control takes years of focused practice. The lesson for us is to understand that perception can be focused in ways that impact reality. Resilient leadership is built on the awareness that cultivating a mindset for success is essential for the kind of results you want to achieve.

In her seminal book, *Mindset*, psychologist Carol Dweck presents solid research proving what many of us understand intuitively: "...the view you adopt for yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life. It can determine whether you become the person you want to be and whether you accomplish the things you value."⁴ People with a fixed mindset perceive traits and abilities as predetermined, or as Popeye says, "I yam what I yam."⁵ Those with a fixed mindset often see failure as being due to limited abilities and typically experience criticism as a personal attack. However, a growth mindset views traits, abilities and intelligence as dynamic capacities that can grow with nurturing and structured investment.⁶

Classic mindset story:
two salespeople from
competing companies
are sent to a foreign
country to assess the
market for shoes.



Fixed Mindset



Growth Mindset

Salesperson One scouts around for a few days and then heads for the closest internet cafe to contact company headquarters. She writes:
"Research complete. Unmitigated disaster. Nobody here wears shoes."

Salesperson Two does their research and heads for the same internet cafe. Once there, she composes the following: "Research complete. Glorious opportunity! Nobody here wears shoes!"

The question is: which salesperson are you?

Energy

YOUR MOST VALUABLE CURRENCY

Contrary to popular belief, your most valuable currency is not money or even time. It is understanding how to expend the energy you have in the time available. Excelling as a leader requires you to manage your energy and ignite it for sustainable peak performance. Most of us view energy as an endless resource and treat ourselves and others like human doings rather than human beings. This reflects a dangerous misunderstanding of energy. To understand how energy relates to resilience it helps to distinguish between three types of energy:



PERSONAL ENERGY

Personal energy is like an internal reservoir that requires daily replenishment as levels become depleted. The problem is that most people treat personal energy as if it comes from vast reserves like the ocean. Instead, personal energy must be cultivated and carefully replenished. It's like that cell phone that regularly needs a recharge or a reservoir that requires replenishment.



INTERPERSONAL ENERGY

Interpersonal energy is derived from relationships with others and is gained or lost due to the quantity and quality of those connections. If personal energy is a reservoir, interpersonal energy is more like an emotional bank account. When invested wisely, interpersonal energy will bolster a sense of courage, equanimity, connection and resilience.^{7,8}



UNIVERSAL ENERGY

Universal energy is free, accessible, and available to be drawn from at will, even when time and resources are scarce. When activated, universal energy can heighten awareness, focus and emotional equanimity while decreasing your stress response. Examples of universal energy include spending time in nature, experiencing the arts and other creative pursuits, and more.

Work-Life Integration

WORK-LIFE BALANCE IS A MYTH

Far too many leaders I work with measure themselves against the holy grail of work/life balance. The truth is that striving for work-life balance can be a set-up for burnout, especially if your work is closely linked with your identity and passion.^{9, 10, 11} Some days or months will require more from one domain than the other. A more realistic yardstick and healthier goal are to strive for work-life integration.^{12, 13, 14}

"WORK-LIFE BALANCE SETS AN UNREALISTIC EXPECTATION OF KEEPING DIFFERENT ROLES IN STEADY EQUILIBRIUM."

-Adam Grant



Work-Life Balance



Work-Life Integration

YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL, JUST NOT AT THE SAME TIME.

As with resilience and mindset, cultivating work-life integration to achieve peak performance takes awareness, effort, and ongoing practice. That's where coaching can be a tool for enhancing integration and peak performance. Sometimes an outside, objective perspective offers insight and accountability that can propel you to that next level. Honest self-assessment is a solid first step toward thriving.

Case Study

FROM BURNOUT TO RESILIENCE: A Client's Story

In 2018, I hit a wall that forced me to fundamentally shift how I thought about success, well-being, and my role in a life I did not recognize or believe was in alignment with my values. Prior to 2018, I was a successful 'product' of the hustle culture, driven by income and influence accumulation. I was a highly educated serial entrepreneur and co-founder of three thriving digital agencies. I was also a single mother of three children, one of whom was severely disabled due to a traumatic head injury.

For a decade, my doctor gently warned me about my lifestyle and the fact that while my youth allowed me to 'feel' better than I was, the toll would eventually catch up with me.

"The body always keeps an account, positive and negative," my doctor said. I acquiesced by fitting what I could into my 80-hours-a-week schedule: a fitness class here and there, a supplement added to my diet, catching up on sleep over the weekend, and whatever else the latest wellness advice or innovations provided.

In 2018, my health, physically, emotionally, and spiritually came crashing down. I divorced and burned completely out, stepping down from my agency and other entrepreneurial pursuits. The chickens, as my grandfather would say, had come to roost. I took a one-year sabbatical, believing it was only my career that was the problem. However, after beginning work with Barbara in 2019, I learned that this conviction could not be farther from the truth.

By implementing necessary mindset shifts, energy management, and work-life integration practices, I've been able to return to full health, living daily in alignment with my values. The ripple effect has been profound—with incredible positive impacts on my disabled son's quality of life. Since working with Barbara I have been able to design a nomad business focusing on helping game-changers build influence and impact, and I've created the space and energy to return to my lifelong passions of making art, taking culinary classes, providing temporary foster care to rescue animals, and expanding my participation in ministry and volunteering. Most importantly, I now have the time and emotional equanimity to deepen the relationships that matter most to me.

MARIA JANE

AGENCY CO-FOUNDER, ENTREPRENEUR

The Five Essential Elements™

A PROVEN FOUNDATION FOR RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

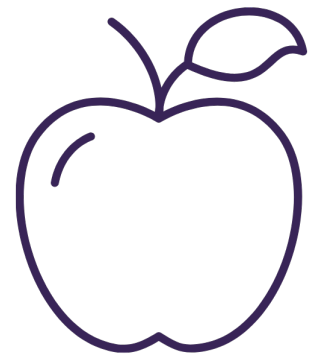
Leadership is not immune to cultural norms that value productivity over passion, achievement over fulfillment, associate success with long hours, minimal sleep, and personal sacrifice. However, these misguided norms are a recipe for burnout and undermine a sense of engagement, focus, productivity, and connection. In contrast, nurturing resilience and a substantial energy reservoir is achievable by embracing the five essential elements of wellbeing.

Any athlete knows that they need to be in game shape for the competition ahead. Their training relies upon having a positive mindset, a set of daily and weekly practices, and a deep and abiding sense of purpose. Training for a leadership role isn't all that different. For some, the planning goal may be about reaching a level of peak performance. The starting point for others may be about avoiding burnout.

The Five Essential Elements™ are “energy building blocks,” the essential pieces that ancient traditions and modern research agree bolster your resilience and decrease stress, resulting in enhanced wellness throughout your life.^{15, 16, 17} Activating The Five Essential Elements™ as a foundation to cultivating your resilience will increase your focus, emotional equanimity, creativity, and your ability to engage with people and causes you care about.

EXERCISE & NUTRITION

Diet and exercise are the foundational elements of a holistic approach to health, a first line of both defense and offense.^{18, 19} In popular parlance, two adages are true: you are what you eat and use it or lose it. Research has conclusively shown that diet and exercise modifications substantially improve long term survival and result in a portrait more nearly approaching total health.^{20, 21} Eating a plant-based diet rich in vegetables, fruits, beans and legumes, nuts/seeds, and whole grains can lower inflammation and the risk of many chronic diseases.²⁰ If burnout is related to fuel, then how we fuel our body and use that energy must be the primary considerations.



Recommended E&N Practices:

- Eat a diet of whole, mostly plant-based foods with healthy fats.
- Commit to regular exercise, optimally 150-300 minutes of moderate intensity, along with at least two days weekly of strength training.
- Actively monitor your alcohol and sugar intake.

REST & RENEWAL

Skimping on sleep is frequently the default approach when one is busy or overwhelmed, and thus rest and renewal are often the most undervalued of the five elements—to our detriment. Harvard School of Medicine's Healthy Sleep project and a growing body of research confirms the many benefits of sleep, including improved learning, memory, overall health, and longevity.^{22, 23, 24, 25}

Healthy sleep hygiene and mindfulness practices such as meditation, quiet walks, prayer, or yoga are central components to rest and renewal. Together, these practices can reduce stress, enhance focus, creativity, attention, and a sense of wellbeing.^{24, 25, 26, 27, 28}



Recommended R&R Practices:

- Begin and end each day with a grounding ritual, perhaps a gratitude reflection or short meditation.
- Identify an effective go-to recharge method, like power naps.
- Develop a strong social support system both inside and outside of work.

FOCUS & GROWTH

If energy is our most valuable currency, attention is our most precious commodity. Focusing attention is challenging given the constant barrage of incoming information from social media and the distractions from technology. As a result, most people tend to multitask, thinking they can get more done in less time. The truth is multitasking makes one less productive and less able to learn and grow.²⁹

Mindset and cognitive training are the bedrock of resilience. They can be cultivated by specific practices such as gratitude, engaging fully in one's activities, savoring pleasure, practicing mindfulness, and nurturing self-compassion.^{30, 31} Creativity also falls into this category as it results in a greater sense of social well-being and improved mood.^{32, 33}



Recommended F&G Practices:

- Do not multitask, bundle complementary tasks for productivity.
- Begin and end each day with a mindfulness ritual that is grounding.
- Cultivate a creative pursuit.

JOY & PASSION

Any high performer's most significant competitive advantage is not the sum of their accomplishments but their humanity—their meaningful relationships and emotional connection to their sense of purpose and passion. Leaders who avoid burnout maintain the ability to find joy and satisfaction in their work (despite its demands) and cultivate strong peer relationships.^{34, 35}



Joy comes when actions align with values, and passion ignites energy, which helps prevent burnout. Recent research has found that people who work on something they are good at or feel passionate about report feeling greater life satisfaction and happiness.^{36, 37}

Recommended J&P Practices:

- Be a regular participant or contributor to the causes you care about.
- Stay connected to small moments of joy that create an exponential effect.
- Practice gratitude daily.

TIME & EFFORT

Time is a non-renewable resource. To work at a level of optimal performance, you must plan to have the energy available for the associated demands.³⁸ It is worth repeating—a leader's most valuable currency is not money or even time. It is understanding how to expend the energy one has in the time available and requires daily planning.³⁸



Those who are energetic and resilient guard their time, set boundaries, and know when to say “no” and when to jump in. They take breaks from their work approximately every 90 minutes to stretch, walk around and re-charge for the next challenge. People who manage their time and focus their energy tend to achieve more goals and experience a better quality of life.³⁹

Recommended T&E Practices:

- Set healthy boundaries and say no relentlessly.
- Create a daily practice to optimize use of personal, interpersonal and universal energy.
- Use technology wisely.

Your Next Best Steps

THE FOUNDATION TO CULTIVATING A NEW KIND OF ROI

THE FIVE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS™ ASSESSMENT

Assess Your Current Energy State

Any athlete knows that they need to be in game shape for the competition ahead. Training for leadership, personally and professionally, isn't all that different. For some, the planning goal may be about reaching a level of peak performance. The starting point for others may be about avoiding burnout. The Five Essential Elements™ Assessment is appropriate in all cases and includes 25 evidence-based questions to assess your "energy building blocks," the essential pieces that ancient traditions and modern research agree bolster your resilience and decrease stress, resulting in enhanced wellness.

THE FIVE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS™ ACTION PLAN

Turn Insights into Meaningful Action

With this knowledge in hand, the next step is to turn these insights into action. Developing a specific plan to hone one habit at a time will, in turn, activate an essential element of energy that will result in building resilience, strengthening capacity to avoid burnout, and ultimately achieving peak performance over the long term. It's not important where you choose to begin. For some it may be choosing the proverbial low-hanging fruit; the easiest habit to create. For others, the best place will be to begin with the one change that will yield the greatest impact on energy. Making a choice you are willing to commit to is what is most important.



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CBS THIS MORNING

Middlence: How to Thrive in Midlife

LINK VENTURES: CEO SUMMIT

Longevity & The Consumer

VERSE MEDIA: THE VERSE

Feature by Stephanie Carter

HOW WOMEN LEAD

Transform Your Energy and Impact

YPO GLOBAL: LATIN AMERICA

Mindset and Tools to Live, Love and Lead

PORTFOLIA

Life 2.0: Futurists and Longevity Experts Share Trends and Tech

AICPA FINANCIAL PODCAST

Middlence: New Age, New Stage, Midlife Redefined

STANFORD CENTER ON LONGEVITY

Advisory Council Member

MODERN ELDER ACADEMY

Faculty/Thought Leader

**COACH, GERONTOLOGIST, SPEAKER,
AUTHOR, ANGEL INVESTOR**

Barbara Waxman, founder of Odyssey Group Coaching, is passionate about building leaders' personal and professional skills so they can thrive while increasing their ability to manage complexity and maximize their effectiveness. With more than two decades of experience coaching CEOs, C-suite leaders and entrepreneurs, Barbara utilizes a holistic approach to help clients lead and communicate authentically, sustain high performance and expand their influence and impact.

Barbara is a highly sought after coach, workshop leader, and keynote speaker who works with leaders from across the country and abroad. She is part expert coach, caring truth-teller, strategic thought partner and accountability advocate. Her experience as a Gerontologist and coach has culminated in the proprietary transformative coaching model, Entrepreneurship Turned Inward®, and her science-based Five Essential Elements® process. Barbara has worked in the automotive, financial services, health care, nonprofit, and technology sectors, among others.

Barbara serves as an Advisory Council Member for the Stanford Center on Longevity, a faculty member at Chip Conley's Modern Elder Academy, and an angel investor in the Active Aging and Longevity Fund with Portfolia. She has appeared on CBS This Morning, and has been featured in Marin Magazine, Arianna Huffington's Thrive Global, and is a frequent podcast guest. Barbara recently authored *How to Avoid Burnout, Provide Exceptional Care, and Enhance Work-Life Integration*, a chapter in the upcoming book *The Successful Health Care Professional's Guide: Everything You Need to Know But Weren't Taught in Training* (Springer Publishing). Barbara is also the author of two books examining aging including, *The Middlence Manifesto: Igniting the Passion of Midlife*. Barbara holds master's degrees in Public Administration and Gerontology from the University of Southern California and is a graduate of Colgate University. She earned her coaching certifications from the International Coach Federation and The Hudson Institute.



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