

## Introduction to Resiliency Maps

Resilience has been described as “the ability to recover from or adjust easily to change and misfortune”. It is our ability to bounce back, be flexible, retain a sense of curiosity, hopefulness and balance, even in the face of adversity, pressure or stress. It is our ability to maintain momentum during change and adversity.

When our resilience is low it can feel like a bucket with holes in it: all the things we want to keep leak out, like energy, health, momentum, enthusiasm, motivation. To keep these we need to find out which holes we need to plug.

There have been few good ways to measure resilience. Essi Systems in the USA developed a Stress Map, allowing people to assess their causes of stress, symptoms, and ways of coping. This Stress Map won the Silver Award in the United States national Health Information Awards in 1994 for Health Promotion/Disease and Injury Prevention Information. It is very highly thought of, and the only tool recommended for assessing stress levels and capabilities by Robert Cooper. The Map is used extensively in the North America, and is used for profiling organisations as well as individuals and teams. Union Carbide had used the Map for over 3 years. Hewlett Packard and Texas instruments use it extensively. It is used in the health area by Kaiser, various hospitals, and a hospital in Indiana offers programmes based on the Map to businesses in their area as preventative health care.

In August 2000 Essi Systems made available an upgraded Map, with a much more positive take on stress. It is the Resilience Map, which allows people to look at where they are currently with their resilience, and also look at where they want to go. Like all good maps, it also has shows ways of getting there. This is leading edge in the area of resilience and now used by 3M.

The Map comes with a booklet asking questions around environmental demands – work and non-work, environmental assets – work and non-work resources, resilient beliefs and attitudes, personal coping abilities, social coping abilities, and health and functioning. It takes around 30-45 minutes to complete. Scores are transferred onto individuals’ Maps. The booklet contains a second half which explains the constructs assessed, and provides hints in each area to strengthen resilience.

A workshop will consider results, discuss strengths, and discuss ways to enhance resilience. Participants will be invited to take part in their own 21-day programme for strengthening resilience, with the support of another attendee. This will enable them to have support while increasing their resilience.

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## The Maps

Maps are used to show us where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there. This is why Essi Systems call this instrument a Map; it shows how resilient we are at the moment, how resilient we could be, and has ideas for getting there.

The Maps measure a range of factors over four performance zones of Caution and Strain, which identify vulnerable areas, and Balance and Optimal, which identify Strengths.

1. Environmental Demands are explored, including Work and Non-work Pressures and Changes.
2. Environmental Assets are considered, including Work and Non-work Resources.
3. Resilient Beliefs and Values are identified, including Self Esteem, Positive Outlook, Personal Power, and Purpose in Life.
4. Personal Coping Capabilities are considered next, including Self Care, Direct Action, Situation Mastery, Adaptability and Time Management.
5. Next the Map asks the individual to consider Social Coping Capabilities of Support Seeking, Expression, and Empathising.
6. Finally the Map helps to explore Health and Functioning in the areas of Behavioural Health, Physical Health, and Emotional Health.

The Maps can be used time and again, and are aimed at making constructive changes in our lives. The question booklet is divided into two parts. The first has the questions to answer, the second describes what each construct means, and includes ideas for enhancing resilience. The second part is very useful as a starter for people to decide where and how to make changes. Some assistance is recommended for most people, through either one-on-one coaching to discuss their Map, what it means, and where to start. This could also happen through a team workshop to generate ideas on what they can do. People can then follow their own individual programme they develop for themselves, or in conjunction with a colleague or coach.

With teams, team members complete their own individual Maps, then Bronwyn collates each Map on a confidential basis. A team Map is then developed, showing overall team strengths, vulnerabilities and risks. This enables the team to identify where they need to focus, and work pressures and assets can be clearly identified. It enables managers and teams to assess where changes can be made, and what to reinforce. For individual changes, it is recommended that participants work with a colleague or buddy from the workshop for a minimum of 21 days, during which they support one another to make one change. Advice is given on selecting what to change, and how to make it a small change to begin with, but one that may have impact in a variety of areas on their Map.

