

Four Cornerstones of Mental Strength & Resilience

Welcome, and in this first complimentary session we will review **the 4 cornerstones of mental strength and resilience** and explain how you can best intervene with your clients.

When it comes to mental health and wellbeing we want you to think about how to improve **mental fitness** rather than just helping someone with their mental health.

You see, when someone focuses on becoming mentally fit rather than focusing on how to deal with their mental health problems they become proactive.

And a proactive approach to mental wellbeing is an effective one!

The same can be said for physical fitness too. When a client becomes physically fitter, by regularly exercising for example, their physical health improves too.

Focusing on the process, creates the outcome.

IT'S SIMPLE

Do physical fitness every day, improve physical health
Do mental fitness every day, improve mental health

And of course the power of a combined approach of helping people become mentally and physically fit offers the most proactive, lasting and empowering approach of all.

Finally, mental wellbeing is not only a hot topic right now, but is an essential component of living a happy and engaged life.

Whether helping paying clients, employees, friends and family or yourself, **the goal of developing mental strength and resilience is an empowering one** and we know you will enjoy this course and be proud of possessing this RSPH mental wellbeing qualification.

So, let's get into the 4 cornerstones of mental strength and resilience.

Cornerstone one is CHALLENGE

How we see difficulty and hardship is critical to the development of mental strength and resilience. You've heard of the saying what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

Of course, for someone already mentally tough and naturally resilient, this is a powerful statement. Such a person following setback will likely pick themselves back up, feel stronger for doing so and get on...

However, for many the slight hint of struggle sends them into panic and fires up their automatic defence mechanism of retreat.

The thing is our brains are designed to be quite negative. They are primed to constantly scan for threat and look for the danger all around us. It's a natural defence mechanism.

Our job is to help people see challenge differently and retrain their brain a little.

Remember, we are not dealing with clinical mental health conditions but trying to help people become more proactive in terms of their general mental health by becoming mentally fitter.

One of the ways we can do this is to help people shift the meaning they associate with challenge. Difficulty and, of course, setback and challenge doesn't come with any meaning at all. It's just what happens.

We then give stuff meaning. We tell ourselves that the setback means we are just too weak and incapable. We tell ourselves the struggle is just how it is and there's nothing we can do about it. Or that the current challenge just goes to show we'll never get where we want. We tell ourselves the struggle is just how it is and there's nothing we can do about it. Or that the current challenge just goes to show we'll never get where we want.

We give it such meaning. It didn't come with meaning.

We could, instead, interpret setback as another opportunity to get it right. Or the struggle as offering a chance to improve in some way and get better. Or the challenge as indicative of the fact getting what we want is difficult and that we need to up our game to achieve it and that getting it is worth all the effort.

So, we can help others look for the lessons and opportunity in such challenge so that they can take some positivity from it.

One of the best tools for developing the ability to see challenge differently is the practice of **gratitude**.

When we genuinely learn to be thankful and grateful for the people and the many experiences in our lives we shift our perspective on challenge. Without challenge we most certainly have less opportunity to grow stronger.

In the moment, of course, hardship can just seem hard. When someone is continuously experiencing tough times, of course, this can feel overwhelming. But, with help to challenge their mind differently, we can shift how someone sees such challenge.

HERE'S AN ACTIVITY FOR YOU (OR TO GIVE TO ANOTHER)

Think of three people in your life and write a letter to them expressing what specifically you appreciate about them. Now, you don't have to send them this letter. The idea is to just be genuinely grateful for that person and state why you appreciate them.

The consistent practice of gratitude builds your mental strength. Think of a tough time or someone you struggle with. What strength can you take from them or that struggle or experience?

Look for the lesson or a reminder as to what matters in your struggle. And then take some action. ACT, because Action Changes Things.

You, see genuine gratitude makes us feel good. And the more things we appreciate, the more we can see that **the world is contriving to do us good** (not the other way around).

The second Cornerstone is **CONFIDENCE**

Eliminating self-doubt

With confidence we become more decisive. We more readily get out of our comfort zones, try on new experiences and grow.

When we face fear head on and take action to move through it and when we identify beliefs that make us fearful and stop us showing up as a confident person able to deal with stuff we become mentally tough.

Let me say that again more slowly. There are two main barriers to feeling more confident. Our fear, and our more limiting beliefs. We must teach others to face their fears rather than shy away from them. And we must help people become more aware of the beliefs they possess that limit them and help them change them.

Try this for a moment. Think about something that scares you or ask your client or employee to think of something that is holding them back. You're looking for a recurring problem that's just not going away.

Clarify what they must believe for it to reoccur again and again.

Question that belief in terms of where it originated, whether it is true, whether it is always true indeed what evidence really exists for it to be a fact of life. Get clear on

how this belief is negatively affecting things, what will happen if nothing is done to address it and create a new one to override or replace it.

Ask what would be better if this new belief was installed inside of their mind as a genuine new belief and what would this new belief better support and enable in their life.

Now, convert this new belief into a positive affirmation. Make sure it is stated in the present tense and state it 5-10 times a day for the next 90 days.

See where it takes you. Oh, and one last thing. Get clear on how one would act differently with this belief installed. **And start acting this way now.**

Now, of course, this can take time. And we know that when people overcome their limitations they can truly thrive. We know that when we help clients overcome their resistance to exercising consistently and eating better they build their confidence too.

The point is that there are things we **can** do to help clients build their Confidence and with their new perspective on how they see Challenge, we are beginning to develop mental fitness.

The third Cornerstone is **COMMITMENT**

Committed people have focus. They set goals and become motivated. They are driven by a sense of purpose and become defiant in the face of struggle.

Being committed is about never giving up. It is about seeing through what you start. Becoming the sort of person who keeps their eyes on their own path, sees through what they start prioritising themselves in their own life.

You are likely a committed individual. I mean you have committed to engaging in this lesson and I assume this mental strength and resilience course. You have focus and your sense of purpose drives you.

The magic is that when you learn to better help others, you help yourself too. **As you teach, you master.** And as you master this, you too will thrive.

Commitment comes from having vision. When you begin to see your future vividly and plan a strategy to make how you see things a reality you develop commitment.

Ask yourself what do you want?
What do you really want?

State it out aloud and feel excited at the prospect. Now take action. Any immediate action that inches you in the right direction. There you go, **committed.**

Finally, cornerstone four is **CONTROL**

When you feel in-control, you are in charge once again of your own destiny. People who perceive they are in control possess better mental health and wellbeing as a consequence.

When you feel in-control, you are in charge once again of your own destiny. People who perceive they are in control possess better mental health and wellbeing as a consequence. When you realise what you do, indeed, have control over and let go of what you don't, your mental wellbeing prospers.

The blame game. It is time to stop blaming. Blaming doesn't serve you. Notice your clients blaming the weather, the economy, the Government, their partner, the cost of living, their circumstances and past...

When we blame we adopt a victim mentality. And, instead, we must become the victor. Stop the pity party and take back control. Life doesn't happen to you but for you. It's all about perspective.

Remember, stuff that happens carries no meaning. We give stuff meaning. So, give stuff meaning so that it serves you.

You decide whether what happens hurts you, makes you sad and angry or whether you'll choose to try harder, drive through tough times and feel better and so make increasingly better decisions that better serve you.

This is what we must teach more. This is how we help clients to get mentally fit knowing the knock-on effect is the benefit to their mental health.

Try this. Make a list of 5 things that you feel out of control of. Consider, how else could you see them to feel in-control.

Change occurs from the inside out.

We sometimes think the best way to help others is by making things easier for them in their outside world. It's not. Not long-term. **We must help them get stronger inside.**

And these are the four Cs of mental fitness. Help people see **Challenge** differently. Build their **Confidence**. Create **Commitment**. And teach them to take back **Control**.

There are more ways to help them, of course. There is more to get our head into. **And if you truly want to help others, having a mental fitness toolbox offers you a massive advantage.**

My name's Darren Tebbenham and I've been working in this field for three decades. My Master's degree is in sport psychology. I have worked in Motivational Interviewing in cardiac rehabilitation, as a Personal Trainer and as a "Head" Coach offering personal and group coaching to clients stuck in a rut and unable to properly

address their weight, physical health and mental fitness. I run the European Institute of Fitness and have helped more than 3000 personal trainers from more than 30 different countries around the world. I've got loads to share with you.

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