A note from Amy and Dorian:

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to attend the live Society of 1918 “Emotional Resilience” webinar on April 13th. If you’d like to view the recording, it is available [here](https://cwm.zoom.us/rec/play/v5QucOv9pjg3HdzAtASDBfV5W9XuJ_ms2yBK-6EKmEnkBSYGY1CiY7ZEY-GX3huNkofLoLzgLrXA3oVO?startTime=1586793597000&_x_zm_rtaid=N_6lIIpARY2vCzVxLIL42A.1587570401002.d5e6a93dba72a4a08ae4413acc9924a5&_x_zm_rhtaid=880).

We have put together a “cheat sheet” with **7 Small Practices for Resilience** to share with you as a reminder of what you can do to practice resilience in the challenging moments you encounter. We hope you find them useful, and we encourage you to share them with others.

1. **Peak Experience Values Exercise.** Try this with a friend (instructions below), or reach out to Amy (amy@ovation.coach) to [book a guided peak experience session](https://ovation.coach/).

*With a partner, take turns visualizing a time in your lives when you thought, “Gosh, things just don’t get much better than this.” It can be anything from a single moment or an entire chapter in your life when you felt overwhelmingly happy.*

*It’s important to fully recall the time with all of your senses—sights, sounds, smells, temperature, taste, body sensations. Imagine you’re there once again.*

*While one partner describes their visualization, the other takes notes using the describers exact words as much as possible. The note-taker can then help drill down into the experience to find the feeling states associated with each facet of the experience.*

*The visualizer then chooses the words that resonate or delight them most in the moment, and those can be used as touchstones to core values.*

1. **Inner Mentor Visualization.** Try this on your own (instructions below), or reach out to Dorian (dorian@dorianbaroni.com) of [www.dorianbaroni.com](http://www.dorianbaroni.com) and [www.womenagentsofchange.com](http://www.womenagentsofchange.com) for a guided visualization session.

*Watch the Webinar video (link above) from minutes 41:22 to 49:28 for guidance on how to access your Inner Mentor, or read the instructions below (or have a friend read it to you) and then try it out.*

*“Find a comfortable position. Take a moment or two to center yourself, and do a simple body scan. Bring your attention to your feet on the floor, your legs, your seat on the chair, feel the front of your body, notice your neck and jaw (if tense, take a moment to loosen), cheeks, eyes, forehead. Bring your attention to the top of your head, notice the back of your head, feel the back of your torso, scan down your right arm to your right hand and fingers, scan down your left arm down to your right hand and fingers; take a couple of easy breaths.

Now imagine that there is a beam of golden light glowing from you and pointing up towards the sky, and with your imagination consider taking a gentle walk up the beam of golden light into the sky, through the atmosphere and into the gentle embrace of inky space. There is no worry or fear. It is all a soft and safe-feeling glide. You look around and see another beam of light, a white light intersecting with yours. You feel curious and invited to explore it, so you step across this natural bridge and follow it down through the atmosphere, the sky, the clouds and land somewhere.

You have arrived in the land of your Inner Mentor. You give yourself time to imagine looking around, taking in the view, noticing the many aspects of this imaginary landscape. It feels welcoming, yet new. You take some deep breaths to settle in.*

*Then you look towards the near horizon and you see a person approaching. The person seems familiar, and safe. As they come closer you realize why. They are you, but you as you might imagine your best self in 20 or 30 years. You stop to see how she is, what she is wearing, her expression, the words she might have for you.*

*You find that you have some questions for her. They have to do with the current reality or a specific aspect of it.*

*If you don’t have specific questions, you can ask her:*

1. *What is the potential?*
2. *What feelings are mine to welcome?*
3. *What are some of the dilemmas or hard truths I need to acknowledge?*
4. *What do I need to see?*

*You ask her to give you some symbolic advice or insight from her perspective, in the form of a gift, a poem, a phrase, a color. You know that in this delicate place of the imagination, counsel may come in the form of a metaphor or as a subtle feeling or confirmation of something you already knew/thought but didn’t want to follow through on. You let yourself be surprised by what she may have to offer. You do not push. You just keep noticing.*

*At some point, you’ll know it is time to go. You say your goodbyes, thank her for being her wise self (even if she has not clearly answered your question). And you travel back up to the beam of light, find your golden one, and travel back to here and now.”*

*At this point, before any of this evaporates away, you are ready with pen and paper and you take the time to journal about whatever you saw, heard, were told, were gifted. If nothing ‘happened’, you start to journal anyway. You can start by simply putting pen to paper and writing ‘nothing happened while I was visiting the Inner Mentor’, maybe even writing that stem phrase several times, until (as most often occurs) something might show up that is worth noting. You do not try to engage the rational mind too much in this visit and journaling. You are simply curious and noticing.*

*The advice is to put the journal writing away, and revisit it in a day or two. See what else it may cause you to see or consider. Keep mining it for insights and ways of tapping into your own centered, wise self.*

1. **Breath work**. The 4-7-8 breath (four counts in, 7 counts hold, 8 counts out) is an effective way to reset your nervous system and signal that “all is well.”

Any focused breathing exercise which has a longer out-breath than in-breath will work, so choose a rhythm that’s comfortable. Do at least three breaths, several times a day.
2. **Body scan**. Simply notice the sensations in your body, starting with the soles of your feet and working up. Consciously relax any areas of tension you discover. Pay particular attention to your abdominal area, chest, shoulders, neck, jaw, and forehead, or any areas where you know you hold tension.
3. **Gratitude practice**. Quietly hold something in your mind for which you feel grateful. It can be something as small as the cup of hot tea or coffee in your hand, or something more encompassing. Anything for which you are thankful will help you maintain perspective, and return to a state of grace. Research has shown that taking on a daily gratitude practice of noticing 3 things you are grateful for has a beneficial effect in rewiring your brain to notice more of the positives of life, which helps with innovation, creativity, quality of life, and your immune system.
4. **Emotional acknowledgement**. Especially during those times when it’s hard to connect with a sense of gratitude, it’s important to acknowledge the feelings that *are* present. “Name it to tame it,” as we say in the coaching world.

Take it a step further—notice the subtleties of your emotional state. This can help ease the pain of grief, anger, or sadness. Find the most specific word you can—for instance, are you simply sad or are you bereft, devastated, despondent? Are you mildly annoyed, frustrated, furious, or resentful? Expanding your emotional vocabulary will contribute to your emotional literacy, which supports your emotional intelligence.
5. **Check your emotional energy.** Emotions are highly contagious, so before you engage with others, ask yourself how your emotional energy will affect those you’re about to mix it up with. Ask yourself how your emotional energy will affect your ability to be present, to act with intention, to get the results you desire.

Is your emotional energy in alignment with your most closely-held values? If not, try one of the exercises above to center you once again.

We hope you’ll find these exercises and practices to be helpful whenever you feel affected by stress or overwhelm. You will find attached to this email that list of resources that we referenced in the webinar. Let us know how we can support you.

-Amy and Dorian

Resistance is futile. Resilience is key.

The emergence of the novel coronavirus pandemic is an urgent invitation to experience the creativity of transformation. Resilience drives our ability to pivot into new ways of operating, and requires us to collaborate in innovative ways to bring about lasting solutions.

Rather than retreat into reactive responses—anything from unrealistic denial to compulsive worrying to unhelpful blaming—women are being called to reach for their higher selves and take leadership positions in all areas of society. Our capacity for resilience will make a key difference between creative and reactive responses to issues that go beyond the current crisis, and touch all facets of society.

Executive Coaches Dorian Baroni ’81 and Amy Steindler ’80 have listed their go-to resources for resilience, and will share practical tools and advice in an upcoming webinar for Society of 1918 members. <date/time to be entered here>

Start with the body-mind connection.

Whether you’re aware of it or not, your mind has a powerful effect on the health of your body. The body-mind connection is one of the strongest tools we have to calm triggered nervous systems, relieve anxiety, and create more present-moment awareness. We recommend simple self-care practices such as gratitude practice to improve our resilience over time. Something as simple as a daily morning practice of noticing and naming to yourself 1 to 3 things you are grateful/thankful for, will enhance your brain’s positivity bias over time, thus delivering greater resilience in the face of stressors in your environment.

Other simple forms of self-care include:

* Scheduling time in your daily routine for a couple of minutes of intentional breathing, which means taking a long 4-6 count in-breath and a longer 6-8 count exhale. The longer exhale indicates to the parasympathetic nervous system that all is well.
* Taking time every day to spend a few minutes in nature without cellphones or other media distracting you from your surroundings. Focus on the beauty.
* Remembering to put on a favorite piece of music at least once a day and intentionally enjoy it.
* Taking a virtual exercise class.
* Reaching out to friends via FaceTime, Zoom or Skype to remind yourself that we’re all in this together.
* Scheduling space for joy in your daily agenda, even in small doses, to boost your resilience and your immune system. You’ll find those bits of joy only if you look for them, so focus your attention, and your intentions, on things that delight you.
* Browse the resources listed below for more creative ideas for stacking your resilience deck!

Resources for Resilience: Websites

**-Mindfulness and Well-Being: Greater Good Science Center, University of California at Berkeley**

[**https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/**](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/)

With a tagline that reads, “Science-Based Insights for a Meaningful Life,” this website is Amy’s go-to for information and inspiration on mindfulness and well-being. Chock-full of accessible content, you’ll find practical advice on maintaining your resilience in uncertain times.

**-Meditation and Mindfulness: Author and Co-Founder of the Insight Meditation Community of Washington, Tara Brach**

[**https://www.tarabrach.com/**](https://www.tarabrach.com/)

Guided meditations and mindfulness resources to support your well-being. In addition, Tara’s book, “[Radical Acceptance](https://amzn.to/2QflLwJ)” is an excellent introduction to a mindful path to healing, and basic principles of present moment awareness.

**-Engaging Your Growth Mindset: Researcher Carol Dweck**

[**https://www.ted.com/talks/carol\_dweck\_the\_power\_of\_believing\_that\_you\_can\_improve**](https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve)

Carol Dweck’s research on the power of Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset showcases how a Growth Mindset, especially in times of turbulence, allows us to focus on what there is to learn from a situation rather than what there is to lose. She doesn’t advocate abandoning realistic thinking, but rather suggests we integrate curiosity and imagination into realistic thinking so we can consider the gifts within the challenges of our current experience. Adopting a growth mindset works whether we’re faced with a massive challenge like Covid19 or a smaller (at least in comparison) challenge like preparing for a key presentation at work.

Dorian recommends Dweck’s book, “Mindset: Changing the Way You Think to Fulfill Your Potential.”

**-Overall Emotional Intelligence: The School of Life**

[**https://www.theschooloflife.com/**](https://www.theschooloflife.com/)

This UK-based website offers books, videos, and well-written posts to help you live a productive and happy life, at work, at home and in your relationships. Their work is concise and practical.

**-Finding Perspective: Otto Scharmer, Presencing Institute and Peter Senge, MIT**

[**https://www.presencing.org/**](https://www.presencing.org/)

Dorian points out that the key to separating ourselves from the unhelpful, limited narratives that we create when we’re triggered is to find a way to recognize the bigger picture. Stepping back from the immediacy of stressors and researching the larger implications or contexts of things helps create some distance between ourselves and our immediate response to uncertainty. It allows us to take a balcony view and consider what lessons are there for ourselves and others in the present situation. Learning about Systems Thinking can be an invaluable way to bring more strategic thinking to our situations. The insights of Peter Senge from MIT, or Otto Scharmer from the Presencing Institute are particularly useful to gain a much more strategic and systemic perspective on current events. A recent post by Otto Scharmer highlights [8 emerging lessons](https://medium.com/presencing-institute-blog/eight-emerging-lessons-from-coronavirus-to-climate-action-683c39c10e8b) we may be able to draw from the current coronavirus crisis. An [older video reminder](https://medium.com/presencing-institute-blog/eight-emerging-lessons-from-coronavirus-to-climate-action-683c39c10e8b) by Peter Senge reminds us to consider the webs of interdependence that unite us all.

**-Developing Courage: Author Brené Brown**

[**https://brenebrown.com/**](https://brenebrown.com/)

Researcher and author Brené Brown is responsible for introducing conversations on vulnerability and courage in both the personal and professional arenas. Her books and videos are accessible and relevant, and her new podcast, “Unlocking Us,” will be released this spring.

**-Calming the Voices of Self-Criticism: Author Tara Mohr**

[**https://www.taramohr.com/**](https://www.taramohr.com/)

Resilience is, in part, the art of compassionately mastering your Inner Critic, and no one does it better than Tara Mohr. When you feel you can’t possibly overcome the obstacles you’re presented with, it’s usually because some voice in your head is telling you that you don’t have what it takes. Mohr’s book, “[Playing Big](https://amzn.to/2QbCot8)” is the textbook Amy uses to help clients tame the voices that hold them back.

**-Self-Compassion: Author Kristen Neff**

[**https://self-compassion.org/**](https://self-compassion.org/)

Resilience is also, in part, turning to ourselves the kindness we so readily extend to others. Recognizing when we, ourselves, are in pain and need help, can change the way we move through the world, and make us better at helping others.

-**Perspective Building: Researcher Nelisha Wickremasinghe**

Dorian recommends [this article](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ace3421f407b409c63a1bec/t/5e71086e6d4f737077c82399/1584466032753/Nelisha%2BWickremasinghe_Ashridge%2Barticle_TriMotiveBrain%26SelfCompassion.pdf) that appeared several years ago for the Ashridge Executive Education journal, in which the author outlines the importance of practices of Self-Compassion in a VUCA world.

Courses and Retreats

**Sounds True**

[**https://www.soundstrue.com/store/**](https://www.soundstrue.com/store/)

Publisher of authors like Kristen Neff, Tara Brach, Jack Kornfield, Dan Siegel, Ram Dass and other luminaries of mindfulness, resilience, and self-compassion. There are free resources as well as books and audio books for sale. They also sponsor online courses and retreats.

**Kripalu**

[**https://kripalu.org**](https://kripalu.org/)

Programs ranging from self-help to yoga to healing arts, Kripalu is a haven for retreat seekers. <Closed through April 24 due to coronavirus>

**Omega Institute for Holistic Studies, Rhinebeck, NY**

[**https://www.eomega.org/**](https://www.eomega.org/)

“Awakening the Best in the Human Spirit,” Omega’s programs include wellness, sustainability, self-expression, and self-care.

**Ovation Coaching, LLC**

[**Leadership Through Your Own Lens®**](https://ovation.coach/work-with-amy/corporate-programs-leadership-training/through-your-own-lens/) **Retreats**

Amy’s signature program, Through Your Own Lens®, is designed to teach new perspectives that support growth and resilience for women leaders. Intractable problems and stubborn issues become manageable, and participants leave with inspiration and practical solutions.

**Women Agents of Change**

[**Change Starts With You®**](http://www.womenagentsofchange.com/) **Online Programs**

Dorian’s online women’s leadership program, Change Starts With You®, is designed to support women with transforming intentions into actions that bring about positive changes in themselves and their immediate spheres of influence.