

Building Resilience in Tourism & Hospitality Teams



Participant Handout

February 19, 2026

This handout provides key concepts, tools, and worksheets from today's session. Use it to:

- Review core resilience strategies
- Complete practical exercises
- Share tools with your team
- Create an action plan for implementation

Part 1: Understanding Resilience

What Resilience Is NOT

- **Not "toughing it out"** – Resilience isn't about suppressing emotions
- **Not being invincible** – Resilient people still feel stress and struggle
- **Not never needing help** – Resilience includes knowing when to ask for support
- **Not a fixed trait** – Everyone can build resilience skills

True Resilience in Tourism & Hospitality

- Bouncing back after difficult guest interactions
- Adapting when staff call in sick
- Recovering quickly from mistakes without spiraling emotionally
- Maintaining perspective during busy periods
- Using strategies to reset energy between high-demand situations

Two Types of Resilience

Individual Resilience:

- Managing your own stress response
- Recovering from difficult interactions
- Maintaining energy throughout your work day
- Asking for help when needed

Team Resilience:

- Supporting each other during pressure
- Sharing workload when someone struggles
- Creating psychological safety
- Debriefing together after challenges

Both matter. You need BOTH.

Part 2: Building Individual Resilience Skills

The Micro-Recovery Method (60-90 Seconds)

1. **Recognize** → Notice "I'm feeling overwhelmed/frustrated"
2. **Remove** → Step away physically (even 30 seconds)
3. **Reset** → Use a quick technique
4. **Return** → Engage with renewed energy

Six Quick Reset Techniques:

-  **Box Breathing:** In 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4
-  **Mental Rinse:** Visualize stress washing off you
-  **Body Scan:** Tense and release shoulders, jaw, fists
-  **Refocus Statement:** "Next guest, fresh start"
-  **Temperature Shift:** Cold water on hands/wrists
-  **Visual Break:** Look at something calming

The RAIN Technique for Difficult Interactions

- **R - Recognize** what you're feeling ("I'm angry")
- **A - Allow** the emotion without judgment
- **I - Investigate** with curiosity ("What's triggering me?")
- **N - Non-identification** ("This feeling is temporary")

Result: *You respond thoughtfully, not reactively.*

Worksheet: Personal Resilience Toolkit

Take 5-10 minutes to complete this worksheet. These are practical tools you'll actually use.

1. My Go-To Stress Reset Technique Is:

(Choose from the 6 quick reset techniques or something else that works for you)

2. My Physical Warning Signs When I'm Getting Overwhelmed:

(Tension in shoulders? Jaw clenching? Headache? Shallow breathing?)

3. One Person I Can Turn To for Support:

(Colleague, manager, friend, family member)

4. One Thing That Helps Me Recover After a Really Hard Work Day:

(Not just coping - actually recovering)

Part 3: Creating Team-Based Resilience Systems

The Buddy Check-In System (30 Seconds)

5. **NOTICE** – Watch for signs: withdrawal, irritability, mistakes increasing
6. **ASK** – "Hey, are you okay? You seem off today."
7. **RESPOND** – Listen, validate, help problem-solve or get support

This only works if your culture says it's okay to not be okay.

Creating Psychological Safety

Four Essential Elements:

8. **Model Vulnerability** – Leaders share challenges appropriately
9. **No Punishment** – Asking for help doesn't hurt performance reviews
10. **Validate, Don't Fix** – "That sounds really hard" before jumping to solutions
11. **Separate Person from Problem** – "You're not the problem—this situation is challenging"

The 15-Minute Shift Debrief

After a particularly difficult shift, use this structure:

12. **GATHER** – Bring the team together before leaving
13. **ACKNOWLEDGE** – "That was a tough one"
14. **SHARE** – "What was hardest for you today?"
15. **LEARN** – "What would help next time?" (Root cause analysis)
16. **APPRECIATE** – "What did we do well?"
17. **RELEASE** – "Now let's leave it here"

This prevents trauma buildup, creates closure, and builds team bonds.

Part 4: Leadership Strategies

Model Resilience, Don't Hide Your Humanity

✓ DO:

- Share challenges appropriately
- Model healthy coping in real-time
- Say "This is hard for me too" when true
- Show how you recover from setbacks

✗ DON'T:

- Pretend you never struggle
- Hide all stress from your team
- Say "I'm fine" when clearly not
- Project invincibility

Recognition That Builds Resilience

- **Specific Praise** – Name exactly what you saw
- **Acknowledge Effort** – Not just outcomes
- **Public + Private** – Both matter
- **Timely** – Say it now, not at the annual review

When to Intervene

 **Immediate Concerns** → Act now, don't wait

- Self-harm talk, drastic behaviour changes, safety risks

 **Persistent Concerns** → Private conversation + resources

- Performance decline over weeks, withdrawal, physical signs

 **Manageable Struggles** → Monitor and check in regularly

- Normal stress responses, bouncing back with support

Worksheet: Your Action Plan

Start small. Build consistently. Celebrate progress.

This Week:

Which ONE micro-recovery technique will you teach your team?

How will you introduce it to them?

Within 2 Weeks:

How will you implement buddy check-ins or peer support?

Within 1 Month:

How will you create or improve post-incident debriefing?

Ongoing:

What specific resilience behaviours will you model and recognize?

Resources & Support

Industry Resources

go2HR – PHS Advisory Services

FREE access to 1:1 PHS Advisory Services, tools and training

Website: www.go2hr.ca

Email: safety@go2hr.ca

People Working Well

Mental health resources for tourism & hospitality workers

Website: www.peopleworkingwell.ca

Crisis Support (BC)

- **BC Mental Health & Crisis Response:** 310-6789 (no area code required)
- **National Suicide Crisis Line:** 9-8-8 (call or text)
- Get Support - People Working Well: peopleworkingwell.ca/getting-help

Workplace Resources

- **WorkSafeBC:** Managing psychological health & safety
- BC Mental Health & Substance Use Services
- Your organization's EAP program

Remember These Three Things

1. Resilience is a SKILL, not a trait

Everyone can build it. Practice makes stronger.

2. Individual + Team resilience BOTH matter

You need personal tools AND team systems.

3. Start small, build consistently

One technique this week. One system this month. Keep going.

Your team is worth it. You've got this!