



**People
Working
Well**

**Building Endurance in
Your Team: Resilience in
Community Social Services**

With Brandy Zimmerman

Chat Prompt

“In one word or phrase, how would you describe the energy on your team right now?”



Let's Name What's True

- You know mental health: you work in it daily
- The challenge: turning that inward, toward your team
- Today's shift: from resilience as individual effort to resilience built together



What We'll Cover Today

- What resilience actually means (and what it doesn't)
- What's depleting your team's resilience right now
- Individual and team-level strategies you can use this week
- What leaders and shift leads can do, whatever your title

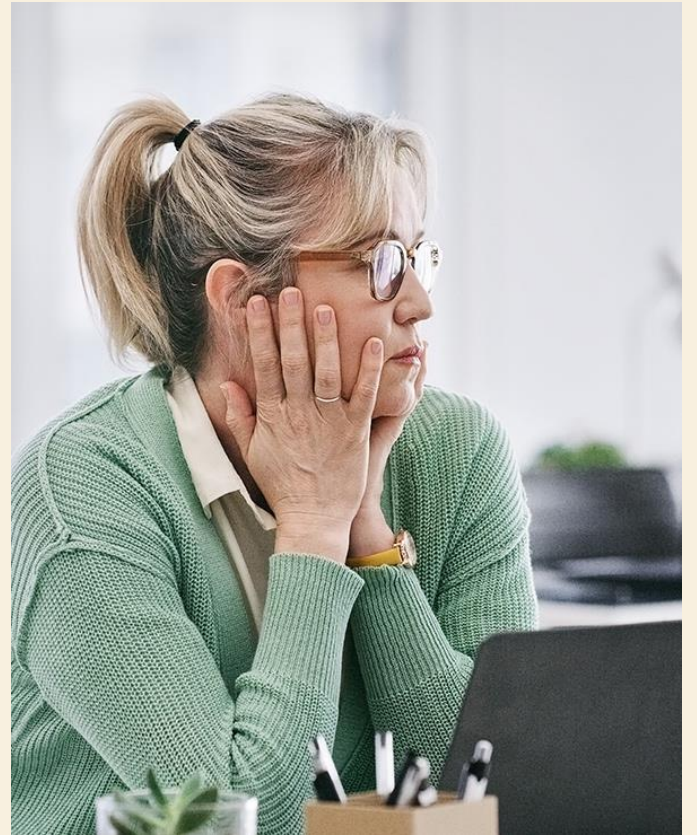


Part 1

What Resilience Actually Means

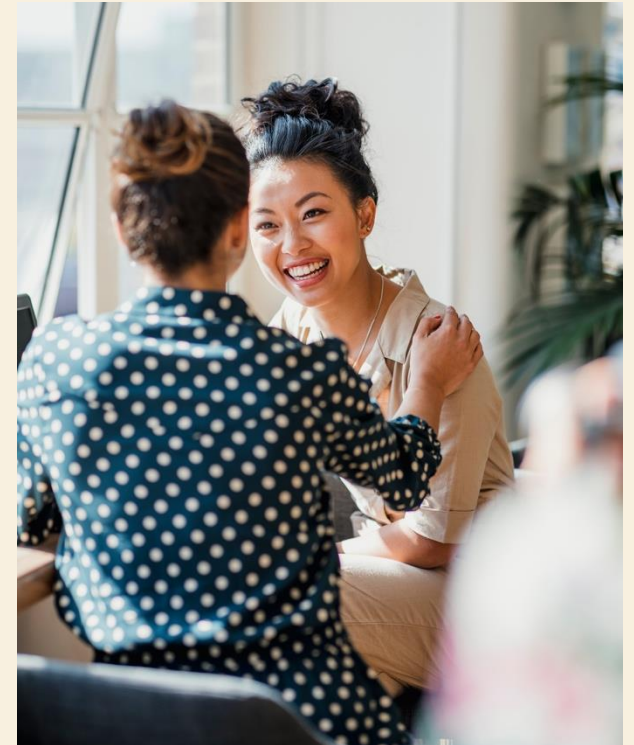
Let's Clear Something Up

- Resilience does NOT mean white-knuckling your way through it
- It does NOT mean expecting people to absorb more without support
- It is NOT a personality trait you either have or don't
- It is NOT only an individual responsibility



What Resilience Actually Is

- **Resilience = skills, tools, and environment to keep showing up through hard times**
- "Best you can" isn't 100% every day
 - Some days your best is 25% & that still counts
- **Three layers of resilience:**
 - Individual
 - Team
 - Workplace
- All three matter



Two Levels of Resilience

- **Individual:** how each person manages stress and recovers
- **Team / Collective:** how the group supports each other and shares the load
 - Creates an environment where recovery is possible
- Individual focus alone won't build team resilience
- Individuals can't be resilient in an environment that isn't



Chat Prompt

“What does resilience mean in your workplace right now? Is it a word that energises you or exhausts you?”



Part 2

What's Depleting Your Team's Resilience

The CSS Reality

- **Resource constraints are real**
 - Funding pressures, staffing shortages, no easy fixes
- **The cycle:**
 - Someone goes on leave, and work moves to someone else
 - That person burns out, and the cycle continues
- **This is structural, not personal failure**



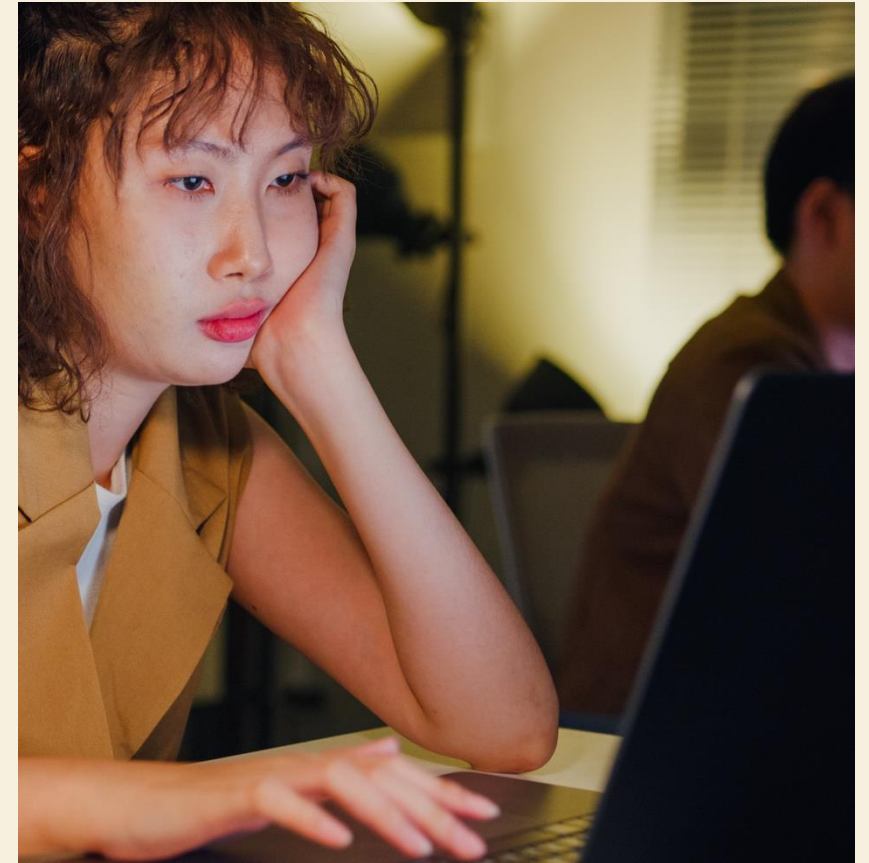
The Knowledge Gap That Isn't a Knowledge Gap

- CSS workers know mental health as well as any sector
- **The gap isn't knowledge; it's application**
 - Turn trauma-informed practice toward your own team
- What clients get from you (non-judgment, patience, space to recover), colleagues need too
- **Protective factors, not soft skills:**
 - Clear expectations
 - Checking in
 - Giving people space to recover



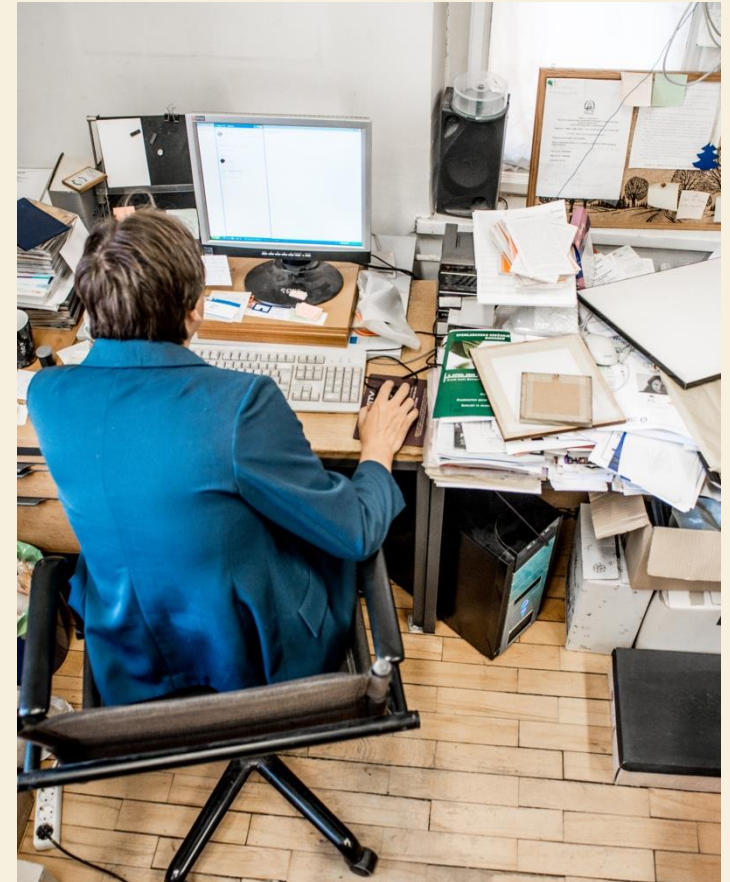
Signs Your Team's Resilience is Low

- Increased absences or people going on leave
- Work redistributed without acknowledgment
- Decreased morale: more complaints, less collaboration
- People not asking for help when clearly struggling
- Everyone says "fine" but nothing feels fine



The Resilience Threshold

- Everyone's is different, and it shifts often
- **Thresholds are shaped by:**
 - Cumulative load
 - Personal circumstances
 - Whether the environment supports recovery
- **Your job: reduce unnecessary load and increase supports**

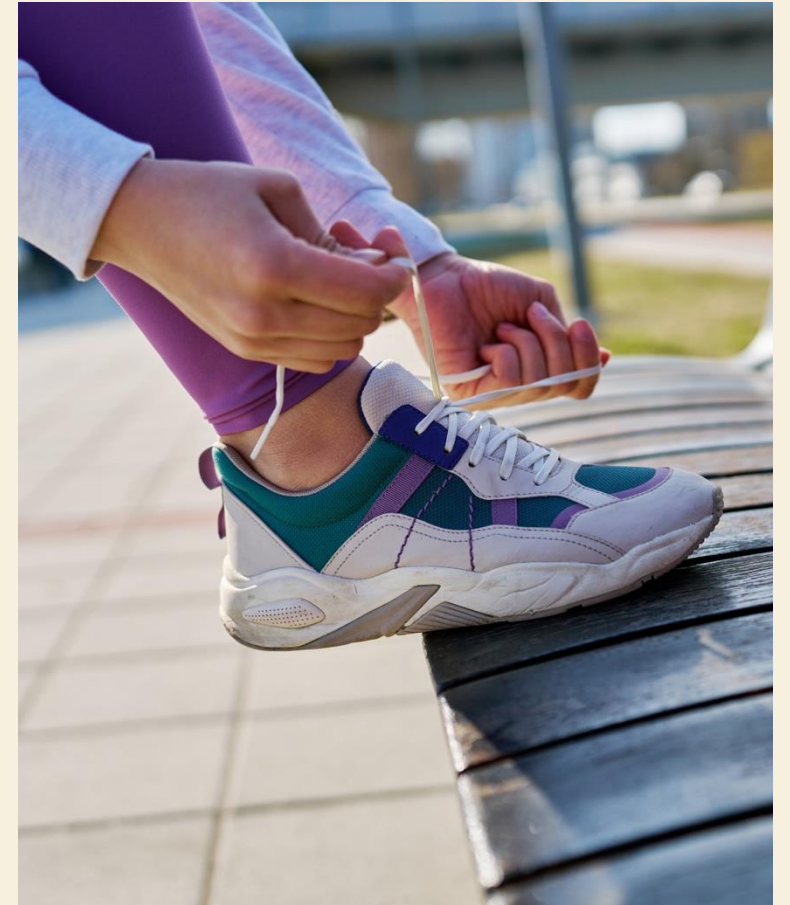


Part 3

Strategies You Can Use This Week

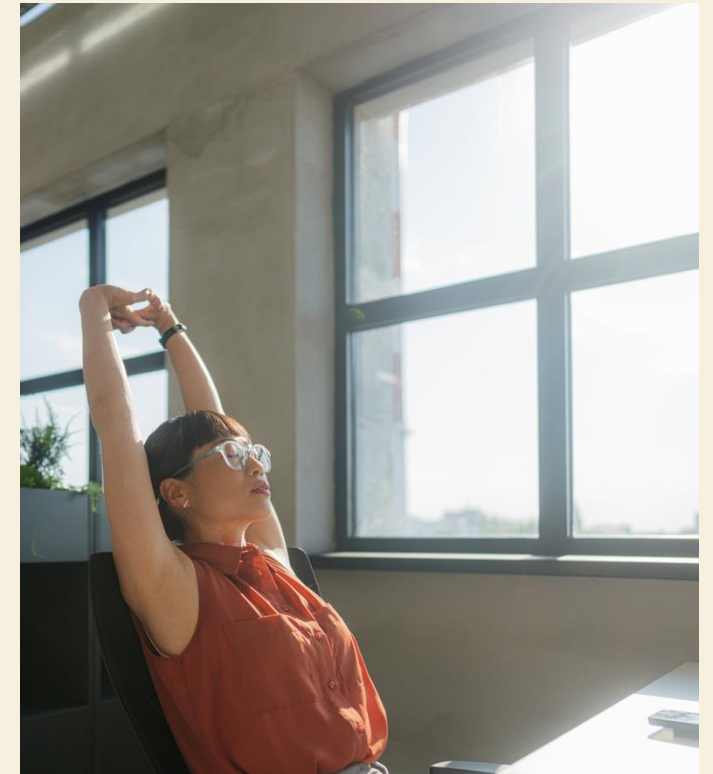
The Ground Rule for This Section

- Everything we cover is low cost or no cost
- None of it requires approval from three committees
- Some of it you can start today
- Pick one thing. Start there.



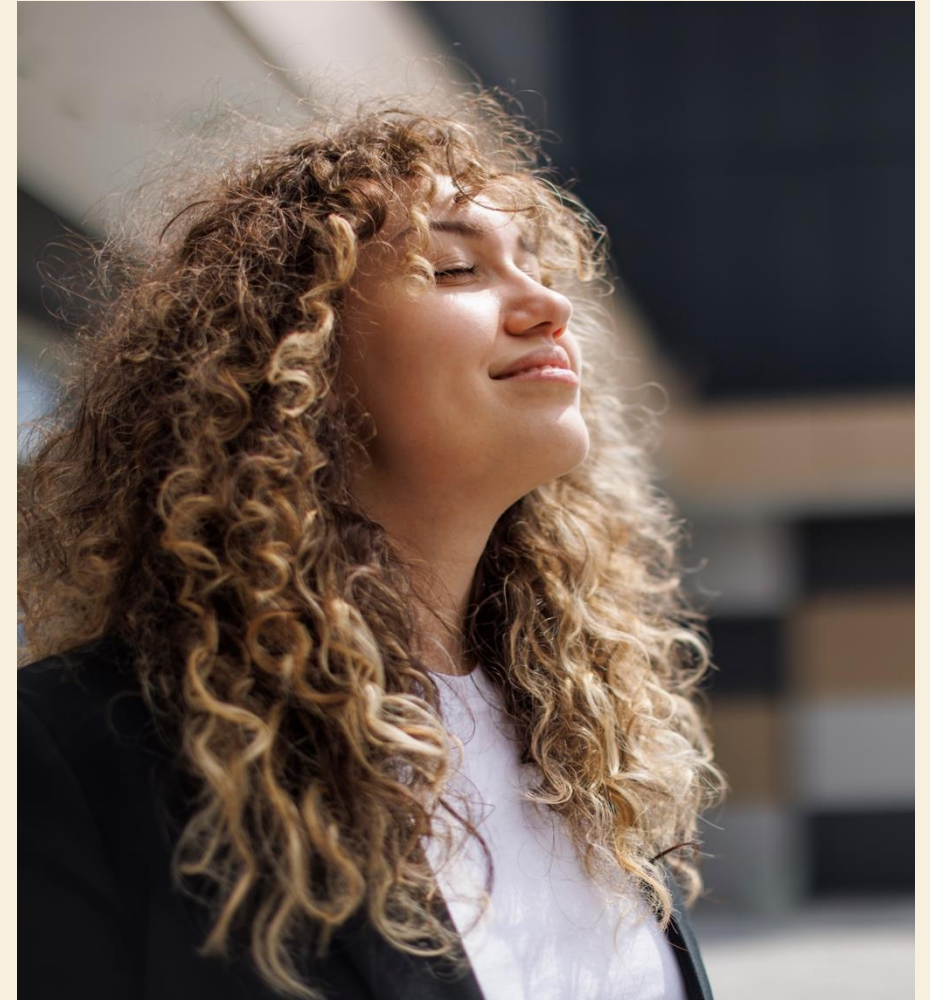
Micro-Recovery: For Anyone, Any Role

- Frequent small breaks > one long break
- The 4-step method:
 - **Recognise:** notice "I'm overwhelmed"
 - **Remove:** step away, even 30 seconds
 - **Reset:** quick technique (next slide)
 - **Return:** re-engage with renewed capacity
- Use during a shift, between calls, after a hard interaction
- Teach it to your team and make it normal



Reset Techniques

- **Physiological sigh**
- **Grounding**
- **Physical reset**
- These aren't luxuries. They complete the stress cycle so it doesn't accumulate.



Chat Prompt

“What’s one thing your team already does, even informally, to recover during a hard day?”



Team-Level Practices That Cost Nothing

- **Shift-start check-ins**
 - "One word for how you're coming in today"
- **Buddy check protocols**
 - Know who is checking on whom
- **End-of-shift debrief**
 - 5 minutes: what was hard, what helped
- **Normalise "I'm not okay today"**
 - Something people can say without consequences



For Shift Leads and Informal Leaders

- **You don't need the title of manager to support your team**
- Shift leads set the tone: your response when someone struggles matters more than any policy
- **Model the behaviour:**
 - Ask for help
 - Use reset techniques
 - Say "that was a hard one"
- Your team watches what gets rewarded and what gets ignored



Making It Stick With No Time or Money

- Pick one practice from today
- Commit for four weeks
- Tell your team what you're trying and why
- Check in at the two-week mark and adjust if needed
- **Consistency > which practice you pick**

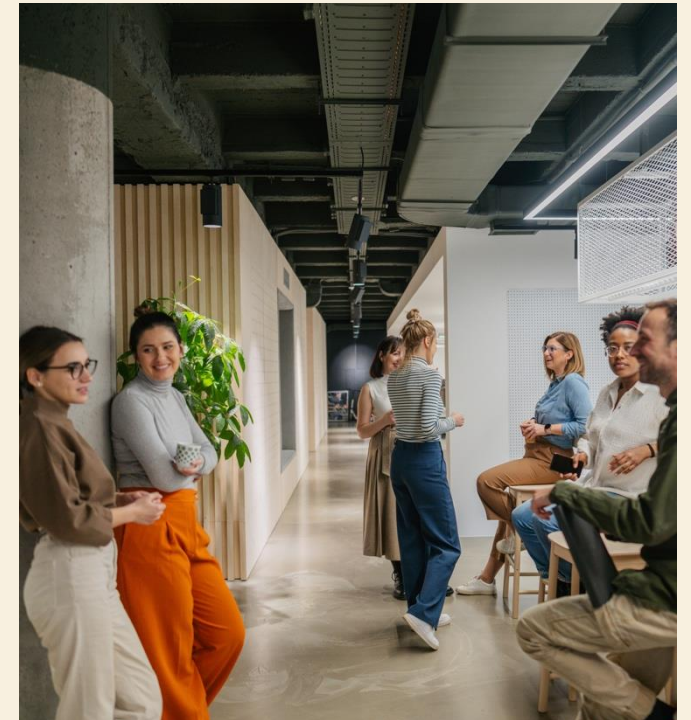


Part 4

What Leaders Can Do, Whatever Your Title

Resilience Is Not Just a Person. It's a Place.

- Individual strategies matter, but they have a ceiling
- **A resilient workplace:**
 - People feel safe to ask for help
 - Workload is distributed with intention
 - Recovery is part of the job, not a reward



What a Resilience-Supportive Environment Looks Like

- **Clear expectations**
 - People know what is theirs to carry and what isn't
- **Workload redistribution is managed**
 - Acknowledged, not silently absorbed
- **Debriefing is built in**
 - After difficult situations, not optional
- **Psychological safety**
 - People can say what's true without fear



One Thing You Can Do This Week

- **You don't have to overhaul your organisation. Pick one:**
 - Start a brief check-in ritual on your next shift
 - Have one honest conversation with a colleague
 - Use a micro-recovery technique & share it with one person
 - Ask your team what would help and actually listen



Resources

- People Working Well: www.peopleworkingwellbc.ca
- CMHA BC: cmha.bc.ca
- 988 Suicide Crisis Helpline: call or text 988
- BC Mental Health Support Line: 310-6789 (no area code needed)

Q&A

- Questions welcome in the chat or Q&A box



Thank You

