

The highlights

Recently, researchers have discovered a **specific mental state or attribute** that resolves most problems in life—such as addictions, aggression, bullying, and other social problems



- What is this state or attribute? In essence, when people experience this state, their primary goal is to learn from other people and experiences.
- This state or attribute roughly corresponds to the quality we call humility.

The benefits of humility

When people are humble, their resilience, relationships, and reputation all improve. In contrast to some misconceptions, humility often coincides with a sense of conviction, passion, and curiosity rather than a low self-esteem or a meek personality.

Resilience

If humble, criticisms and challenges feel like opportunities to learn & not as threats. Negative emotions abate swiftly.

Relationships

People assess the humility of other individuals to decide who to trust. So humble people are trusted, facilitating relationships.

Reputation

Humble people are less defensive and more informed, enhancing their credibility.

Initial attempts to foster humility



Here are some practices that foster humility. If you want to foster humility in other people, such as your children or staff, perhaps apply these practices yourself first. These activities will enable you to role model humility and inspire other people to follow.



- Identify occasions in the future in which you may be able to acknowledge some of your limitations or faults to other people.
- About once a month, deliberately engage in an activity that elicits modest levels of anxiety or stress, such as speaking in public.
- Over time, gradually increase the number of people—such as colleagues or friends—from whom you occasionally seek advice.
- Occasionally, express genuine rather than feigned compliments to people, especially people who differ appreciably from you
- Whenever you express a suggestion, attempt to highlight at least one drawback of this proposal.

Limitations of these practices



These practices are not sufficient to sustain humility—or to generate the benefits of humility—in stressful and challenging circumstances. That is, these practices alone will not instill in people the profound motivation to learn from other individuals and experiences

Practices that foster humility sustainably



Here is a limited sample of practices that, when repeated over time, can gradually entrench humility. These practices can boost resilience, relationships, and reputation considerably and enduringly.

- Again, perhaps apply these practices yourself first before you inspire other people.
- Later sections will extend these practices & present evidence to validate these activities.

Enduring activities

When individuals perceive their future as vivid and certain—as well as feel their values and interests in ten years will be like their values and interests now—they feel motivated to learn from other people and experiences. They show humility. To foster this state

- identify activities, interests, or goals you naturally pursue—and then convert these pursuits into a very ambitious, and perhaps unattainable, aspiration,
- imagine yourself in some future roles that are compatible with this aspiration,
- record some practice or activity that you would like to complete every week or so for decades ahead and improves your capacity to secure these roles in the future.

For example, your aspiration might be to help disadvantaged people use AI more efficiently. Every week, you could read about more efficient methods to use AI.

Practices that foster humility sustainably continued

To develop humility, individuals need to enhance their resilience—their tendency to recover in response to distressing or upsetting events, such as failures or criticisms. Otherwise, they will seem defensive rather than humble. These activities help foster this resilience.



Here are some practices that foster resilience. Later, we will discuss why these practices may be more powerful than many people realise.



- Whenever you feel distressed, attempt to smile, at least briefly. You could try to remember a joke that tends to elicit some laughter.
- Whenever you feel stressed, imagine your romantic partner—or a fictional partner in the future—touching you gently to comfort you.
- After some failure, generate as many ideas as possible—even vague or unrealistic possibilities—on how you could prevent a similar problem in the future. You can use AI to complete this task.
- Perceive feedback, failures, and similar challenges as opportunities to derive lessons you could impart to other people.
- Close your eyes. Repeat to yourself, about five times, a statement like the following:

Whenever I feel distressed or upset, I will say to myself—or to someone else—"Let me think about this matter for a while, and I am confident I will think of a solution later"...

Advantages that humble children and adolescents enjoy



When children develop significant humility, they experience many benefits, as extensive research has shown. Here are some examples.

- They tend to experience mental **wellbeing**—such as satisfaction with life, positive emotions, a feeling of purpose, and a sense of thriving (Chukwudebe et al., 2025) ☐
- They tend to attract and to maintain **friendships** as well as resolve conflicts and communicate honestly and openly (Jongman-Sereno et al., 2025) ☐
- They tend to **think more critically** as well as logically and are not susceptible to misinformation or defensive behaviour (Fabio & Suriano, 2025) ☐
- They tend to feel **motivated to learn** and are thus receptive to feedback, advice, and novel technologies (Porter et al., 2020) and diverse perspectives, ☐
- They are less susceptible to the personal problems that coincide with narcissism, such as social media addiction (Nguyen et al., 2025), gambling, or other dangers, ☐
- They are less susceptible to the social problems that coincide with narcissism, such as bullying and aggression (Schunck et al., 2025). ☐

Please tick which of these benefits of humility you value. Tick all that apply.





Matters to consider

Record some of the strategies you may have attempted to foster these benefits in the past—such as approaches you tried to enhance the wellbeing of your children.

- .
- .
- .
- .
- .

We believe you might be able to replace most of these strategies and approaches with merely one program—radical humility—saving you a lot of time & effort



Did you know



Many parents feel their children are already humble enough. However, these children may be humble in many settings—but not necessarily when they feel stressed or upset. Therefore, these children do not experience all the benefits of humility.

How do humble parents benefit their children?



How do you feel humble parents may benefit their children? Please identify two to three possible reasons.

- .
- .
- .
- .



Here some possible answers.

- Children tend to regard humble parents as role models and thus develop humility themselves (Peng et al., 2020),
- Children tend to trust humble parents (Davis et al., 2010)—and thus, for example, will disclose their problems & embrace advice,
- Humble parents are not as susceptible to misinformation and thus tend to reach suitable decisions (Koetke et al., 2022),
- Humble parents can decipher, and thus accommodate, the needs and emotions of their children better (Lehmann et al., 2025).

Did you know

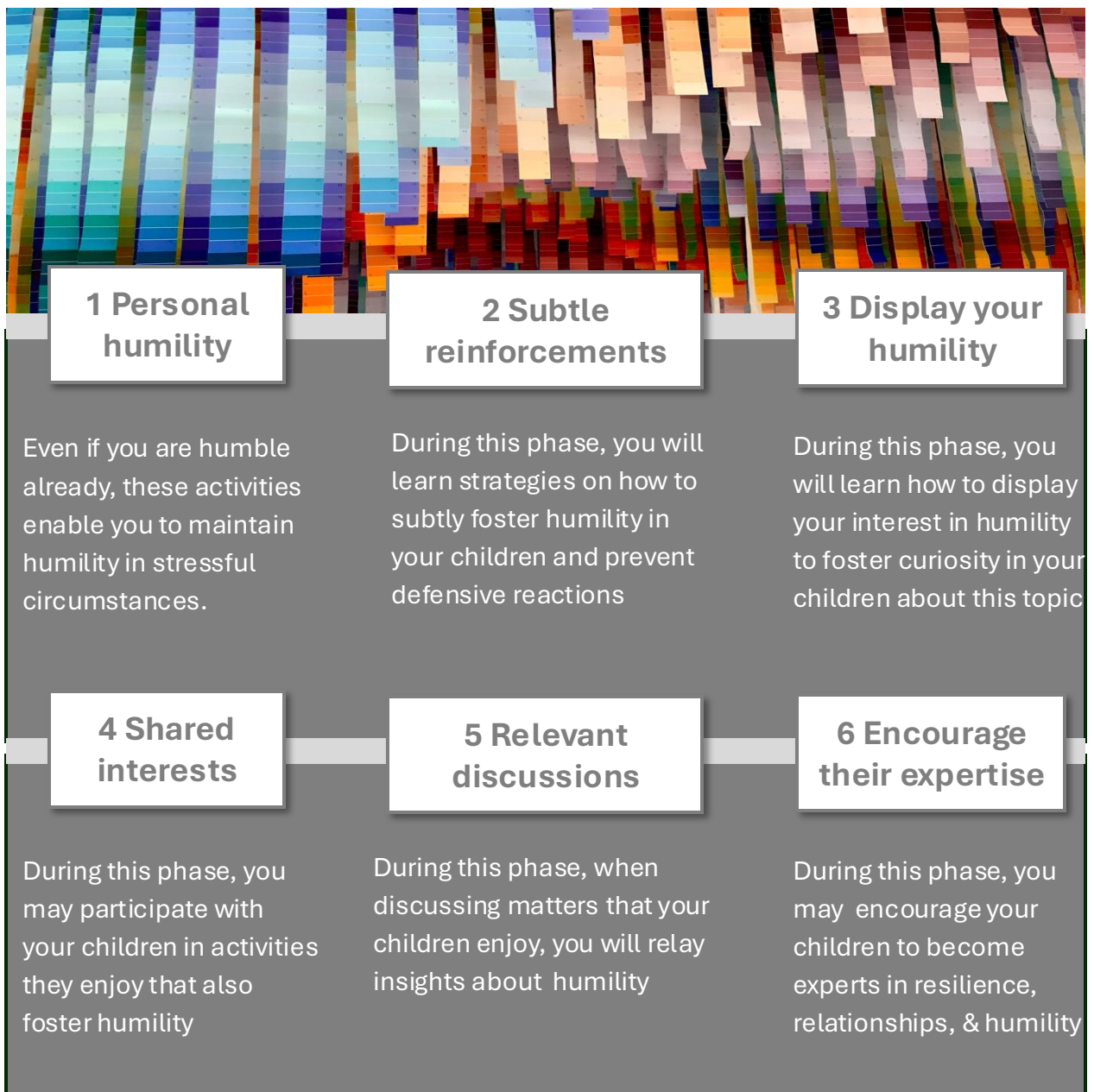


Humble people tend to be more resilient during challenging times. For example, they tend to be more composed during exams (Huynh et al., 2023).

Overview

To embrace humble parenting—an approach that fosters humility and thus enhances wellbeing and development in you and your children—parents often complete six phases.

- Even if you complete only a subset of these activities, you and your children will benefit
- You will learn most of the key insights during the first two phases.



What is humility: a brief definition

Complete these words to ascertain a helpful definition of humility

Humble people...



- acknowledge, explore, and embrace their limitations and shortcomings,
- appreciate other people and perspectives,
- integrate these insights with their existing beliefs, values, and tendencies.

...because they are motivated to learn from other people and experiences

Before we explore these three features of humility in more detail, we will demonstrate some of the benefits of humility

What do you feel are the benefits of humility?



Complete one or more of the following exercises:



- Recall an occasion in which you acted with humility—such as a time you decided not to demonstrate your knowledge or refer to a recent achievement. How did you feel about yourself afterwards?
- Identify one or more people who you admire who you also perceive as humble. What do you like about these people?
- Identify some arrogant people you do not like. Why do you dislike these people.

From these exercises, list some of the benefits of humility from your perspective



Established benefits of humility

The following table outlines the benefits of humility that researchers have uncovered.

- Which one to three discoveries surprised you the most?
- Which one to three discoveries do you feel may be interesting to other people?
- Imagine a conversation in which you convey one of these discoveries to someone else (Mendonça et al., 2023).

Performance

Generally, people who tend to be humble—and, for example, acknowledge their limitations, question their assumptions, consider diverse perspectives, and do not perceive themselves or their community as inherently superior—perform better on many tasks. For example, these individuals

- receive higher grades at university (Wong & Wong, 2021), partly because they are more receptive to feedback,
- differentiate strong arguments from tenuous arguments better (Leary et al., 2017)—and are not as inclined to ascribe problems in society to secret deals or other conspiracies (Bertin, 2024)
- develop more extensive general knowledge (Krumrei-Mancuso et al., 2020),
- are more prudent, diminishing the likelihood of bankruptcy (Dixon et al., 2025).

Resilience and wellbeing

Typically, people who exhibit the hallmarks of humility—such as acknowledge their limitations, embrace other perspectives, and strive to develop rather than seem defensive or feel special—tend to experience greater wellbeing. For example, these individuals

- experience a greater sense of autonomy, mastery, growth, positive relationships, sense of purpose, and self-acceptance (Ross & Wright, 2023; see also Wright et al., 2018),
- enjoy greater satisfaction with life and more pleasant emotions (e.g., Scharbert et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2025),
- cope better and exhibit resilience in response to initial failures (Porter et al., 2020), unfavourable feedback (Wong & Wong, 2021), personal conflicts (Peetz & Grossmann, 2021), or other adversities (e.g., Zhang et al., 2025).

Relationships

Typically, people who exhibit humility—such as acknowledge their limitations, embrace other perspectives, and strive to develop rather than seem very defensive, competitive, or conceited—are more likely to establish and to maintain trusting and supportive relationships (Peters et al., 2011). For example, these individuals

- are more generous, charitable, empathic, grateful, and willing to assist other individuals (Krumrei-Mancuso, 2017; Zhang et al., 2025)—even after controlling personality (Exline & Hill, 2012),
- establish more satisfying romantic relationships—relationships in which their partner feels satisfied too (Zeigler-Hill et al., 2024).



Integrity

Individuals who are narcissistic are more likely to engage in academic misconduct, such as cheat or plagiarise. This relationship can partly be explained by a sense of entitlement (Curtis et al., 2022).

Leadership

When leaders are humble rather than narcissistic or conceited, they tend to enhance the performance of their teams or organisation and are more likely to be perceived as effective (Lynch & Benson, 2024). For example

- the organisations they lead perform better on the share market than expected (Petrenko et al., 2019),
- the teams they lead tend to collaborate more effectively (Ou et al., 2018; Owens & Hekman, 2016) as well as support customers more proactively and effectively (Peng et al., 2023),
- these teams also adapt effectively and proactively to accommodate recent changes and innovations in the sector (Chaudhary et al., 2025),
- the individuals they lead feel more supported and satisfied with their jobs (Krumrei-Mancuso & Rowatt, 2023).

Did you know



Individuals tend to prefer political leaders who exhibit humility, especially in circumstances in which cooperation and discussion with opposing communities are vital (Koetke & Schumann, 2025a).

Did you know



To earn a higher salary, many staff highlight their experience, their education, and the long hours they work, praise colleagues to seem likeable, or even attempt to intimidate co-workers occasionally. Interestingly, staff who utilise these strategies, called impression management, tend to earn a lower salary and receive fewer promotions (Debus et al., 2024).

Exceptions and caveats

Admittedly, the benefits of humility, and the drawbacks of narcissism, entitlement, and conceit, may not be as pronounced in all circumstances. Below are some of these caveats. To what extent do these caveats may apply to your circumstances?



In Western nations, narcissistic people tend to refrain from acts that are intended to benefit the community, such as donations to social causes. But, in some Eastern nations, in which individuals may be more inclined to define themselves by their community and relationships, narcissistic people may be more inclined to initiate these acts to pursue status in their community (An et al., 2024).

In some workplaces, most people, including leaders, embrace the importance of freedom and autonomy. These people recognise that individuals should be granted the right to express themselves and even to deviate from social norms occasionally.

In other workplaces, people are more concerned about law and order. They believe that individuals who deviate from social norms should, in general, be swiftly punished.

In workplaces that prioritise law and order, staff tend to prefer leaders who are authoritarian, dominant, and even masculine—leaders who control and restrict their staff (Chen et al., 2024). Consequently, individuals in these workplaces may, at least initially, be concerned that humble leaders will not control and restrict other people sufficiently.

Some facets of narcissism may be helpful in specific settings. For example, in US states in which narcissism is higher, obesity is not as prevalent, perhaps because narcissistic individuals are often especially concerned about their appearance (Gruda et al., 2024).

The drawbacks of humility

In the following space, list what you feel might be the drawbacks of humility. For example, you might assume that people who are humble do not feel assured and confident.

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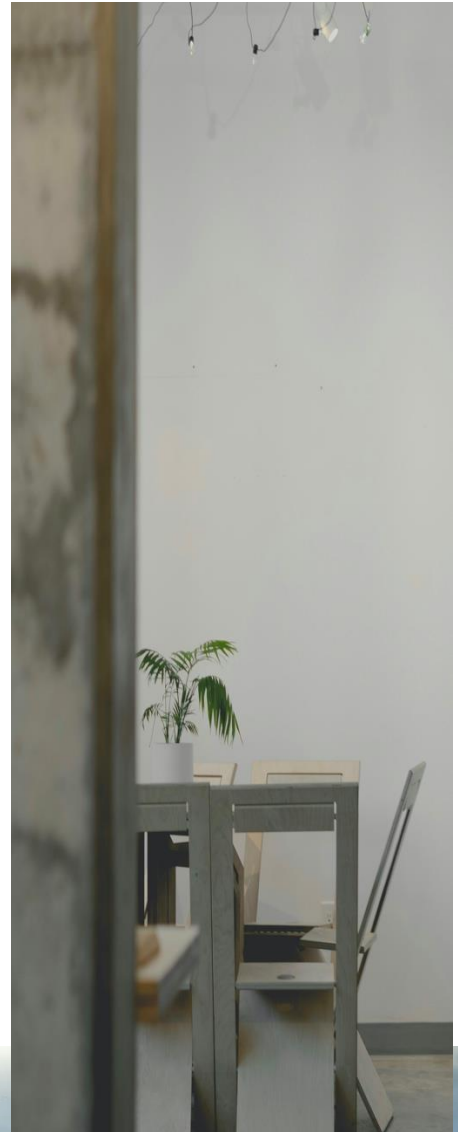
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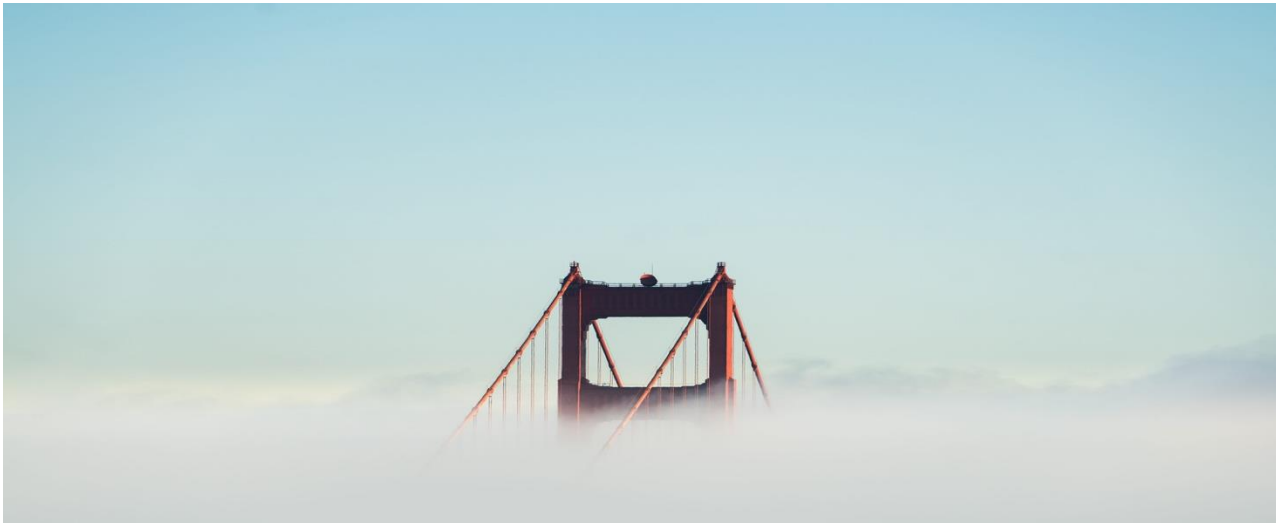
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Research has refuted some of the perceived drawbacks of humility--such as the perception that humble people are not assured and confident.

- People who are humble, rather than narcissistic, are often more assured and confident because they are not as defensive. Their perception of themselves is thus more stable and resilient.
- Likewise, humble people are more inclined to seek, to respect, and to embrace feedback about their behaviour. This feedback helps individuals clarify both their strengths and limitations. So, humble people are often more attuned to their strengths and talents than other people.





In the following table, the left column outlines some perceived drawbacks of humility. The right column outlines the evidence that challenges these perceptions. Scan this table to determine whether this information tempers some of the apparent drawbacks of humility.

Perceived drawback	Reality
People who are narcissistic, arrogant, or entitled—rather than humble—often display unmitigated confidence and may thus impress customers and investors	<p>People who are humble can also display unmitigated confidence and demonstrate leadership at times. As leaders, these individuals tend to promote innovation in their teams. Yet, unlike their narcissistic counterparts, humble people can activate or disable these inclinations—and can thus adjust more appropriately to the circumstances (Zhang et al., 2017).</p> <p>If you feel the need to display humility and confidence simultaneously, you could display body language that manifests this confidence. For example, you could adopt a more dominant posture, with your elbows away from your chest, your legs apart, while you lean back slightly. In response, the other person may feel and behave more submissively (Tiedens & Fragale, 2003).</p>
People who are humble may not seem to be credible.	People who are humble often willing to ask questions and to seek advice. Interestingly, after people seek advice, especially about complicated matters, their credibility improves rather than deteriorates (Brooks et al., 2015).

Perceived drawback	Reality
People who are narcissistic, arrogant, or entitled—rather than humble—tend to be more confident and competent in negotiations	When negotiating, people who are narcissistic, arrogant, or entitled tend to belittle the product or service the other person is offering, expressing statements like “That product is not worthy of this price”. In contrast, people who are humble may indicate they cannot afford the product or service, expressing statements like “I cannot afford this amount at this stage”. The strategy that narcissistic, arrogant, or entitled adopt, however, tends to be less effective. The other person is more likely to experience unpleasant emotions, diminishing the likelihood of compromise (Bhattachary & Dugar, 2023).
People who are humble may not seem to be credible.	People who are humble often willing to ask questions and to seek advice. Interestingly, after people seek advice, especially about complicated matters, their credibility improves rather than deteriorates (Brooks et al., 2015).

Even if you strive to foster humility, you are welcome to pursue inspiring aspirations, but you should question your expectations. For example, you might pursue the aspiration to be a leader of a division. But, to manage your expectations, identify two or three reasons this goal may not be as feasible as you first assumed.

Did you know



People who fail to fulfill their aspirations are no more likely than people who do fulfill their aspirations to experience mental health concerns. Yet, people who fail to fulfill achievements they strongly expect are likely to experience mental health concerns (Sendroiu et al., 2021).

A brief intervention now

Thus far, we have discussed the benefits of humility—compared to narcissism, entitlement, and arrogance. But you might not feel entirely committed to this pursuit of humility until you forge some progress on this pursuit



To achieve this goal:

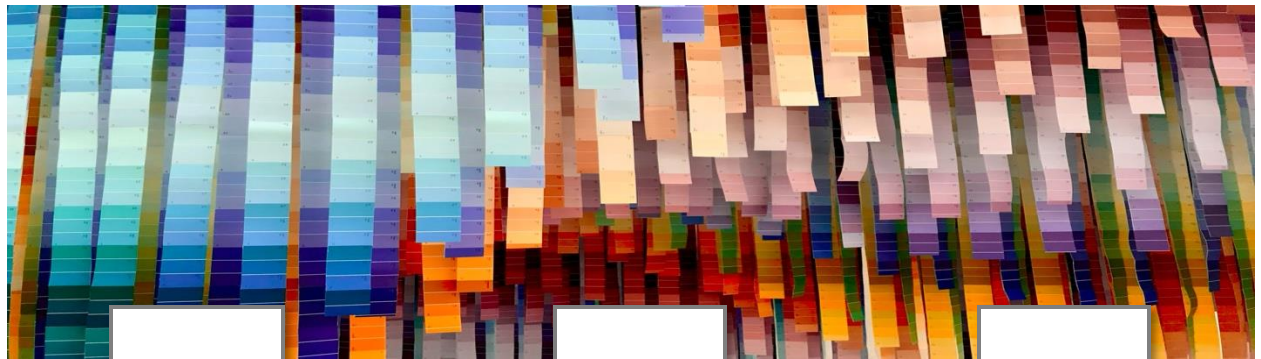


- first skim the left column in the following table, representing common strengths,
- identify between two and four strengths that you feel you have developed or demonstrated,
- for each of these strengths, consider the corresponding drawbacks or complications that appear in the right column.

Strength	Corresponding drawback or limitation
Persuasive in debates and negotiations	You may not always listen effectively or shift your opinions in response to useful information.
Leads people effectively	You feel uneasy when you cannot shape decisions
Courageously expresses opinions that people may not like	You may offend or hurt people unnecessarily—or may overlook the merits of alternative arguments.
Confident and sociable in social settings	You may not listen effectively to people who are more reserved, annoy people who feel their voice is stifled, or not reflect on your own behaviour.
Collaborates effectively with other people	You may not always feel confident reaching decisions alone.
Sympathetic and caring of other people	You may not be able to express feedback that could initially upset, but ultimately help, other people.

Strength continued	Corresponding drawback or limitation
Rationale; can use evidence and numbers to reach decisions	You may reach decisions that overlook the broader perspective
Intuitive and able to trust hunches to reach decisions	You may not be able to justify your decisions effectively. Your decisions may be biased by your own preferences.
Careful and able to identify and to prevent risks	You may overlook beneficial but uncertain opportunities
Open to novel ideas and changes	You may perceive your work as tedious and unstimulating
Intelligent and able to understand complicated or intangible ideas	You may not always be practical enough to achieve goals efficiently
Creative and able to suggest novel, helpful, and diverse ideas.	You may disregard useful but conventional practices prematurely or struggle with routines
Adaptable and flexible enough to accommodate diverse circumstances or people	You may sometimes feel inauthentic or uncertain about what you really believe
Disciplined; sacrifices pleasure now to pursue future goals	You may not appreciate your environment or situation enough.
Persistent and conscientious	You may persist on tasks too long rather than change your course of direction when necessary.
Resilient in response to criticism and optimistic about the future	You may dismiss feedback and not adapt your practices when necessary.. Or your expectations may often be unfulfilled, eliciting disappointment in you or the people who trusted you.
Relaxed and composed , seldom showing unpleasant emotions	You may not plan effectively to avoid problems. Or you may perceive your relationships as superficial rather than genuine.
Ambitious; strives to fulfill steep goals	You may not maintain and nurture your friendships and relationships—and may feel detached from other people and exhausted.
Decisive; reaches decisions swiftly	You may be impulsive and regret some choices. Your decisions may be misinformed at times.

From this information, identify some of your potential limitations. Imagine acknowledging this limitation to another person. For example...



1	2	3
You might imagine speaking to a colleague	You might imagine yourself saying “You look so comfortable in this photo. I am not so comfortable in formal settings	Form the intention to acknowledge one of these limitations in the next week or so.

When you acknowledge your limitations or shortcomings, confine these faults to specific circumstances. To illustrate, you might indicate you are unconfident in formal settings rather than say you are socially inept generally. You may even decide to exaggerate your faults humorously, such as “I’m so bad with numbers, while attempting to sleep, I need a calculator to count sheep”.

Many brief interventions later



The following table lists some other actions that could boost your humility, at least to some extent, quite rapidly. You could perhaps



- skim the following table,
- identify at least two activities that you might attempt in the future,
- for a few minutes, imagine the precise circumstances in which you might attempt these activities; then, as vividly as possible, imagine yourself undertaking each activity;
- finally, silently repeat to yourself several times your commitment to undertake these activities in specific circumstances, such as “on the first day of each month, I will deliberately engage in an activity that elicits stress”.

This activity, called an implementation intention, has been shown to significantly increase the likelihood you will fulfill one of your plans.

Activity	Illustration or justification
Search and watch videos in which credible individuals present arguments that contradict your opinions. Attempt to integrate some of their arguments with your opinions.	<p>When people attempt to consider and integrate contradictory perspectives, their capacity to solve problems creatively also improves (Bianchi et al., 2020)</p> <p>These experiences can enhance resilience, promote growth, as well as foster empathy.</p>
Occasionally, express genuine compliments to people—especially people who differ appreciably from you	<p>After individuals praise other people, they often feel more resilient (see also Grant et al., 2020).</p> <p>When people deliberately and confidently approach individuals who differ from themselves, they tend to embrace diverse perspective better.</p>

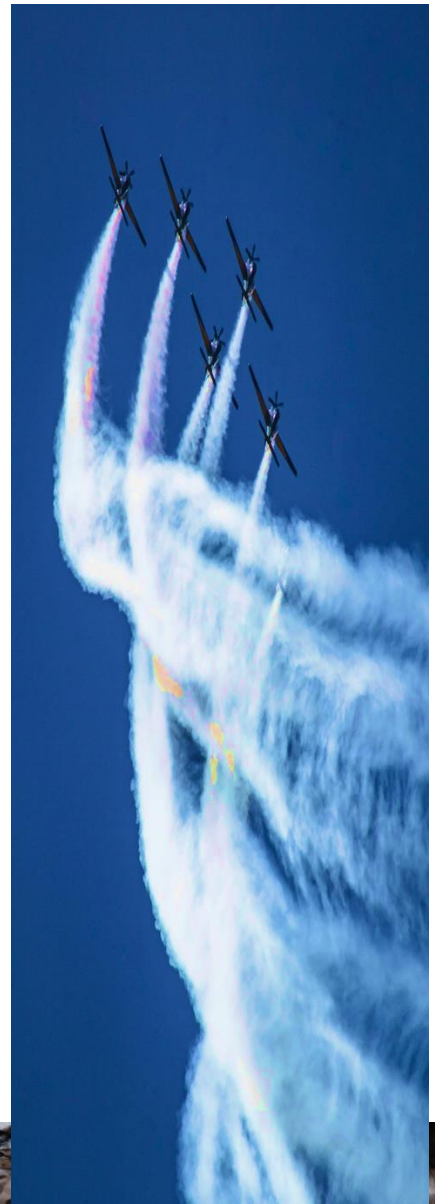
Activity continued	Illustration or justification
Over time, gradually increase the number of people—such as colleagues, mentors, friends, or relatives—from whom you occasionally seek advice.	<p>That is, gradually develop a list of people from whom you can seek advice. Then, formulate a plan on how often you will seek this advice.</p> <p>Ask questions about topics in which your knowledge is limited.</p> <p>When people honestly acknowledge what they do not know about a topic, they may subsequently learn more effectively (Mendonça et al., 2023).</p>
If you disagree with someone during a meeting or conversation and feel emotional about this matter, ask a question to seek more information rather than attempt to counter their argument.	<p>Similarly, when you disagree with an argument, identify opportunities to express your opinion at least two days afterwards rather than during the discussion.</p> <p>Interestingly, people who speak infrequently, but thoughtfully, during meetings often seem more credible as well (Brykman & Raver, 2021).</p>
Whenever you express a suggestion, highlight at least one drawback of this proposal.	
Google “youtube simon moss humble meditation”. Listen to this video, called humble meditation.	<p>This YouTube video presents a meditation that lasts a bit over 20 minutes. The exercise, called humble meditation, introduces a range of peaceful exercises that also promote both mindfulness and humility. You can listen to this YouTube video often—as well as just listen to parts.</p> <p>Mindfulness may foster humility. For example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• mindfulness helps individuals modify their thought patterns—and thus may enhance the impact and benefits of the various exercises (Wang et al., 2023).• mindfulness fosters respect towards diverse individuals, diminishing prejudice and discrimination (Lueke & Gibson, 2016).

The benefits of awe

Feelings of awe or wonder elicits a sense of humility (Stellar et al., 2018) and continuity (Pan & Jiang, 2022) as well as similar consequences (Zhang et al., 2025). Awe can also diminish rumination and thus may dampen feelings of depression (Bogaert et al., 2024.) Several reasons can explain why awe fosters humility:

- when people experience a sense of awe, their attention shifts from daily trivialities to magnificent possibilities.
- Individuals who feel awe become aware of possibilities that transcend their understanding, demonstrating their ignorance and fostering humility (Krumrei Mancuso et al., 2024),
- even reflections about sacred, divine, miraculous, or blessed experiences also promotes this humility for similar reasons (Krumrei Mancuso et al., 2024).

Furthermore, when a team of individuals experience this awe together, they are more likely to feel a sense of camaraderie with one another (Jaussi & Dionne, 2003) .



In the following space, record some opportunities in which you may be able to experience awe. For example, you could

Examples of awe

- watch people complete awesome feats, like juggling while completing the Rubik’s cube—often on the reddit site “nextfuckinglevel”,
- observe footage of majestic landscapes, huge canyons, or outer space on YouTube,
- reminisce about times in which you felt awe and amazement,
- visit a remarkable landmark, such as a mountain view.
- watch an eclipse, fireworks, or aurora,
- observe the night sky in a remote location,
- watch the performance of exemplary magicians; these experiences have also been shown to foster curiosity (Subbotsky et al., 2010)—a key feature of humility and determinant of resilience in stressful circumstances (Kaczmarek et al., 2024).
- read facts that depict the colossal magnitude of some natural or scientific features, as illustrated in the list below.

Then, every week, or at least as often as you, attempt to experience a moment of awe and wonder. While experiencing these feelings,, reflect upon your goals.



Bensford law: In many datasets—such as the house prices, electricity bills, and lengths of rivers—about 30% of numbers begin with a 1, 17% begin with a 2, and progressively fewer numbers begin with higher digits.



52! exceeds the number of atoms in this galaxy.

One drop of water contains about 1.67 sextillion molecules, in which sextillion is 1 followed by 21 0s, like the number of observable stars.



The Great Wall of China is longer than is the distance from England to NZ.

In small workgroups, identify some opportunities in which the team may be able to experience awe together. For example, they could

Examples of awe

- watch people complete awesome feats, like juggling while completing the Rubik’s cube—often on the reddit site “nextfuckinglevel”,
- observe footage of majestic landscapes, huge canyons, or outer space on YouTube,
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- read facts that depict the colossal magnitude of some natural or scientific features, as illustrated in the list below.

Then, during the session, as well as perhaps several times a year, the team should attempt to experience a moment of awe and wonder together. After these moments, members could discuss changes to the vision or practices of this team.



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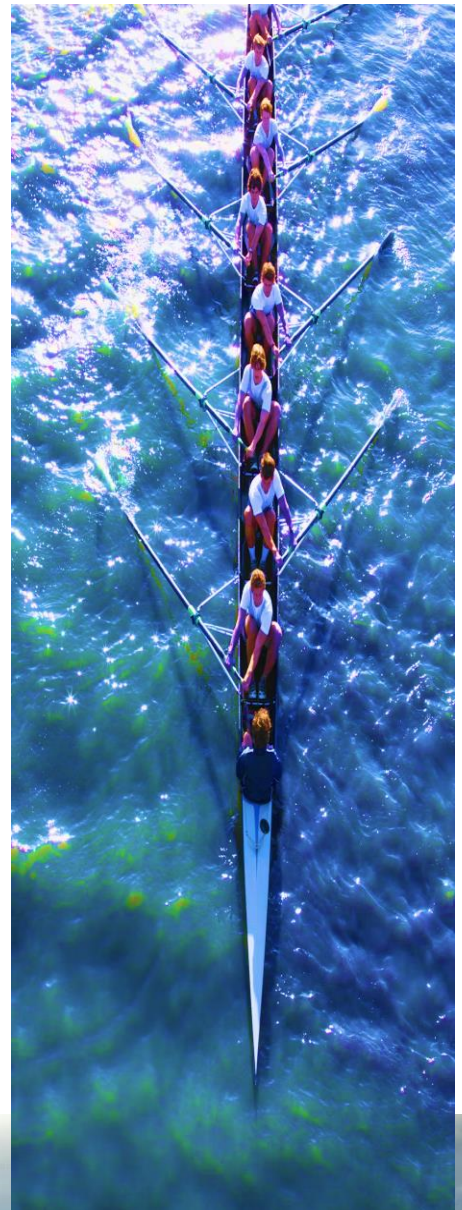
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Stability & continuity

Before you continue to foster humility, you should recognise and then overcome one of the key obstacles to this state. Specifically, in recent years, individuals have become increasingly unsure about their future. Their future seems hazy, uncertain, and unstable, exacerbated by rapid changes in technology, COVID-19, the threat of war, generative AI, and other events. In these circumstances,

- people are not as inclined to sacrifice their pleasure now to benefit their future,
- therefore, rather than attempt to develop skills that could be useful in future years, people want to feel good about themselves now,
- and, so, individuals overestimate their capabilities, diminishing their humility.

Fortunately, some practices have been shown to foster a sense of stability or continuity in a dynamic and uncertain world, overcoming these problems and promoting humility.



First, identify a vivid, significant moment or event you experienced in your past that is still relevant to who you are today—a moment and event that benefited your life and you remember often. To illustrate



- perhaps you received some advice or discovered some information that shaped your life,
- perhaps you achieved some important goal or met a significant person.

Relive this event in your mind, as vividly as possible, for a few minutes. After this exercise, people can imagine the future better (Biondolillo et al., 2023).



Second, imagine and then record an enjoyable or rewarding task you may be completing at work in two years—such as presenting an inspiring speech or assisting a child. Write about this event in some detail, such as who is nearby, the location of this event, the emotions you are experiencing, the activities that preceded or succeeded this event, and so forth. This exercise, called episodic future thinking, often increases the degree to which people are willing to sacrifice their pleasure now to benefit their future (Biondolillo et al., 2023).

Third, identify one or more activities that could benefit your health, relationships, or environment—activities that, until now, you have not undertaken frequently enough. Examples may include



- eating fruit during breakfast each morning,
- flossing teeth twice a day,
- calling a lonely relative every month,
- stretching every day, and so forth.

Record at least one of these activities here. To complete these activities, you may need to motivate yourself and resist other temptations. Such activities have been shown to enhance your capacity to resist temptations in other facets of your life as well (de Ridder et al., 2020).

Fourth, identify activities, interests, or goals you naturally pursue—and then convert these pursuits into an extremely ambitious, and perhaps unattainable, aspiration. To illustrate



- if you like photography, you could set the goal to publicise a social or environmental problem that many people overlook,
- if you like to cook, for example, perhaps set the aspiration to design a menu that is designed to prevent diabetes,
- if you like technology and travel, you could set the goal to visit every nation in Asia and teach disadvantaged people how to develop apps,
- if you like to speak other languages, you could set the goal to become a translator in a language that few people speak,
- if you like gardening, may be set the goal to create a permaculture farm that supports the local community and biodiversity.

Record one or two ambitious, if not unattainable, aspirations here. These aspirations have been shown to foster a sense of stability.

Fifth, imagine yourself in a future role that is compatible with one of these aspirations. Consider which of your skills, qualities, networks, or opportunities you could utilise and enhance to pursue this role. Then, record some practice or activity that both improves your capability to secure this role in the future and could be completed every week or so for decades ahead. Here are some examples:



- twice a week, you might trial an AI tool that is relevant to your field,
- every week, you may seek advice from a different person,
- every week, you might read about a development in your industry,
- every fortnight, you might learn a new recipe or song on the guitar.

Please record one to three of these activities here. These sustainable activities also foster a sense of stability in life.

Finally, over time, you should develop resources and materials you could use in the future to secure these fulfilling roles as well as thrive in these roles. Here are some examples:



- you might accumulate some responses to emails that may be useful if you are granted these roles,
- you may even accumulate recommendations you would like to express to this future image of yourself.

Perhaps record in this space other possible examples of resources and materials you could develop and accrue. Besides humility, these exercises tend to evoke positive emotions, such as enthusiasm (Mao & Li, 2024).

Did you know



If people feel a sense of continuity—a sense their values, goals, and life in ten years will overlap with their values, goals, and life now—they are more likely to feel authentic and perceive their life as meaningful (Hong et al., 2024). This sense of meaning enhances their wellbeing and happiness (He et al., 2023).



The facilitator should then collate these practices and activities—and instruct the team to

- sort these practices and activities into clusters,
- identify which of these clusters may be relevant to the organisation,
- formulate a few objectives or actions the team could pursue in the future that enable members to complete the sustainable practices and activities at work.



Finally, over time, you should develop resources and materials you could use in the future to secure these fulfilling roles as well as thrive in these roles. Here are some examples:

- you might accumulate some responses to emails that may be useful if you are granted these roles,
- you may even accumulate recommendations you would like to express to this future image of yourself.

Perhaps record in this space other possible examples of resources and materials you could develop and accrue. Besides humility, these exercises tend to evoke positive emotions, such as enthusiasm (Mao & Li, 2024).

Did you know



If people feel a sense of continuity—a sense their values, goals, and life in ten years will overlap with their values, goals, and life now—they are more likely to feel authentic and perceive their life as meaningful (Hong et al., 2024). This sense of meaning enhances their wellbeing and happiness (He et al., 2023).

Practices that cultivate a growth mindset

Did you know



Some people believe that human intelligence, character, and many other qualities are modifiable—and can be improved after suitable guidance, practice, and effort—called a growth mindset. When people adopt this belief, they are more receptive to feedback or challenges, because they perceive these insights as opportunities to grow, and thus tend to be humble (Porter & Schumann, 2018).



Some people, however, assume that human intelligence, character, and many other qualities are fixed because these attributes primarily depend on our biology, such as our brain and genes. However

- research on neuroplasticity shows that brain circuits can change fundamentally and that specific exercises, such as mindfulness (Babiy et al., 2025), may even accelerate these changes,
- indeed, the brain is like a muscle that grows with practice,
- research on epigenetics shows that meditation and other activities can activate or deactivate some harmful genes; so, genes may not constrain us to the degree that many people often assume.

Strategies and practices that facilitate change

Often, people attempt to improve their qualities, such as their motivation or skills, unsuccessfully—and thus assume that many human qualities cannot be modified. Usually, however, these individuals are unaware of recent discoveries about the strategies and practices that facilitate and sustain these changes. To overcome this problem, read the following suggestion and identify 5 opportunities to apply this approach.



- Consider the precise circumstances in which you plan to change a behaviour, such as act more confidently. Imagine the time, location, surroundings, or even the emotions you are experiencing



- For 3 minutes, simulate this change in your behaviour. You could, for example, speak confidently in front of a mirror.



- Repeat to yourself, at least five times, something like “Whenever this circumstance arises, I will complete this action”.



- Imagine the joy and pride you might feel if you implement this change.

- Observe your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours—such as your posture or mannerisms—for a minute or so. Then, identify a few obstacles or impediments that could impede your plan. After people observe their feelings, thoughts, and behaviours, they can identify the main obstacles more effectively (Kreibich et al., 2020).



- Finally, decide how you might respond to address each obstacle.
- This exercise integrates two effective techniques, called mental contrasting & implementation intentions—and enables you to change your behaviour or personality seamlessly and effortlessly.

Did you know



When people remember times in which they were granted a sense of power or authority, they tend to think more effectively and flexibly during job interviews (Lammers et al., 2013). So, intellectual capacity is modifiable.

Did you know



Researchers have developed many interventions that can change the personality of people significantly and sustainably (Roberts et al., 2017; Stieger et al., 2020). These interventions often entail implementation intentions.

Other practices to help you change sustainably

Below are some other strategies that help people change sustainably. Imagine how you could apply each strategy to introduce some change in your behaviour (see Michie, 2008).

Strategy	How you could apply this strategy
Ask someone to remind you about this change, initially daily, but then gradually less frequently over time	
If possible, initiate this change with someone else so you can motivate and reward one another	
Arrange items, such as reminder notes, to help you remember and maintain the change. Remove distractions	
To boost motivation, set target ranges—such as the goal to read 6 to 10 books a month rather than 8 books a month.	
Act as s role-model who could inspire other people to initiate this change; discuss the benefits of this change	
If you relapse, complete an activity that reinforces your sense of progress—such as learn a relevant skill. But be kind to yourself if you relapse; self-compassion fosters the inclination to change (e.g., Breines and Chen, 2012)	



Past circumstances that facilitated change

To identify other strategies that can help you change sustainably and thus to cultivate a growth mindset



- identify either a person you know who seems to have change fundamentally and sustainably—or a time you changed a fundamental attribute fundamentally and sustainably,



- Identify events, practices, or other circumstances that may have enabled this person or you to change

Practices that foster resilience to feedback



In response to feedback, failures, setbacks, or other challenges, some people experience powerful emotions—and are unable to moderate or temper these feelings. So, to prevent these emotions, they dismiss their flaws or failings, manifesting as narcissism or conceit. In contrast, if people feel they can moderate or temper unpleasant emotions, they are more willing to embrace challenges or feedback (e.g., Soto et al., 2024). To achieve this goal



- skim the following lists of strategies you can use to regulate unpleasant feelings in response to various challenges,
- identify five strategies that differ most from your usual approaches—and then practice one of these strategies each week—an approach that significantly improves wellbeing and resilience (Heintzelman et al., 2023),
- in the future, if you experience unpleasant feelings in response to challenges, revisit this list and apply one of the strategies.

Physical Activity	Illustration or justification
Whenever you feel distressed or upset, attempt to smile, at least briefly. You may, for example, remember a joke that tends to elicit some laughter.	When exposed to stressful environments, people who smile—either deliberately or inadvertently—are not as likely to show the signs of stress. They do not, for example, exhibit a pronounced increase in their heart rate but report a more positive mood in stressful environments (Kraft & Pressman, 2012). Presumably, when individuals smile, they tend to experience the feelings they associate with this facial expression, at least momentarily.
Attempt some activity that evokes mild pain.	You could exercise or stretch more vigorously than usual. Or you could position an ice pack next to your skin. Mild feelings of pain can limit the rumination and worry when disappointed or dejected (Harmon-Jones et al., 2019).

Physical Activity continued	Illustration or justification
After some disappointment or failure, write about this event on some paper and then, literally, enclose this paper in an envelope.	For example, you might write about your actions, the consequences of this action, and the insights you gained. This exercise has been shown to alleviate unpleasant feelings and emotions (Li et al., 2010).
Watch a poignant or inspiring movie—like Slumdog Millionaire, Dead Poet’s Society, the Shawshank Redemption, Forrest Gump, The Pursuit of Happiness, Gran Torino, Saving Private Ryan, Hotel Rwanda, Million Dollar Baby, 12 Years a Slave, or even Up.	While watching this film, identify some of the qualities you admired in the protagonists that you may like to develop in the future. After watching these movies, people often become more resilient and motivated to become a better person and to assist other individuals (Ott et al., 2021).
<p>At least once a week, participate in sport or exercise in which you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• participate in sport or exercise with friends or family,• participate in sport or exercise in which you refine a skill,• participate in sport or exercise outside in which you also can choose the intensive yourself.	<p>Sport or exercise tends to enhance wellbeing but not in all circumstances (White et al., 2024). That is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• when people listen to groovy music while exercising—music in which they feel the urge to synchronise their body with the beat—they are more likely to experience positive emotions (Suwabe et al., 2021); brain regions that resist temptations are activated (Fukuie et al., 2023),• exercise or sport outside, surrounded by nature, is especially like to elicit positive emotions, such as vitality (Thompson Coon et al., 2011),• exercise that instils a sense of competence or consolidates relationships may foster satisfaction with life (Zhang et al., 2022),• exercise in which people choose the level of intensity is more likely to elicit positive emotions (e.g., Callaghan et al., 2011).





Social activities that foster resilience

Like physical activities, particular social activities can also promote resilience. For example, after reserved individuals force themselves to socialise, their mood tends to improve.

Social activity	Illustration or justification
<p>Gradually develop the capacity to improve the feelings of people who seem upset or distressed—and practice these skills. For example, you may learn how to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• normalise these emotions, expressing comments like “I think your feelings are understandable in these circumstances”,• express confidence they will feel better soon, with comments like “I do know that distress about these events tends to subside naturally over time (Kagan, 2006; Rosenzweig, 2016)—called the psychological immune system—so hopefully you will feel stronger soon”.	<p>When people attempt to improve the emotions of someone who seems upset or distressed, their own emotions tend to improve and their satisfaction with life increases (Jurkiewicz & Oveis 2024). People feel better about themselves after they assist other individuals as well as feel better about their relationships.</p>

Did you know



Kindness can improve resilience. People who behave generously and kindly experience greater resilience and optimism as well as limited levels of anxiety and loneliness (Cash et al., 2032; Curry et al., 2018).



Helpful images or sensations

Mental images can also enhance resilience. For example, if you imagine your romantic partner—or a fictional partner in the future—touching you gently to comfort you, your stress abates; and you feel more courage to attempt challenging tasks (Jakubiak & Feeney, 2016)

Mental image	Illustration or justification
<p>If worried about an impending event—such as an exam—visualise yourself in this circumstance, but from the perspective of an impartial observer. Imagine you are another person, watching this event unfold. Maintain this image for several minutes. As you maintain this image, label the emotions this person might be experiencing. And consider why this person might be experiencing these emotions.</p>	<p>When people imagine a stressful or distressing event from the perspective of someone else (Kross & Ayduk, 2008)—or consider why they may be experiencing some emotion (Kross et al., 2005)—they experience a sense of distance from this event; the event feels remote and not as immediate. Because the event does not seem as quite as threatening, the intensity of unpleasant emotions, such as anxiety, dissipates (Vieira et al., 2024)</p> <p>Perhaps for the same reason, when people describe the sensations or emotions in their body, called affect labelling, the intensity of these feelings subsides (Tabibnia et al., 2008).</p>
<p>Close your eyes. Repeat to yourself, about five times, a statement like...</p> <p>When I receive distressing information or feel stressed, I will say to myself—or to someone else—"Let me think about this matter for a while, and I am confident I will think of a solution later</p> <p>Then, imagine yourself, as vividly as possible, expressing these words in response to a particular stressful event.</p>	<p>After completing this exercise, called an implementation intention, you will, naturally and seamlessly, calm yourself, rather than react impulsively to distressing or upsetting events. This delay may contain your emotions (Gallo et al., 2009), demonstrate composure, and grant you enough time to experience an intuition on how you should proceed.</p>

Mental image	Illustration or justification
<p>Close your eyes and imagine your life in the future. Visualise a perfect life—a life in which you have worked hard and have realised all your key goals. You can also write about these images.</p>	<p>This exercise, called best possible selves, significantly improves wellbeing and resilience (for a review, see Loveday et al., 2018).</p>
<p>Read some literature, or watch a video such as this presentation, that reveals how stress can enhance resilience, development, and performance. The belief that stress is helpful magnifies these benefits (e.g., Crum et al., 2013, 2017). For example, when stressed,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• people direct their attention to vital information rather than distractions,• people can maintain effort and persistence, especially if they perceive this stress as a challenge,• people gradually develop resilience• people can respond more rapidly to unexpected events. <p>After reading or watching material about this topic, attempt to remember a time in which you thrived while stressed, such as answered questions effectively during a stressful job interview. Close your eyes and imagine this situation as vividly as possible. Or imagine yourself thriving during a stressful event in the future.</p>	<p>After people learn that stress can be helpful—and then visualise a circumstance in which stress was helpful—they are more likely to adopt the belief that stress can improve wellbeing, development, and performance (Williams & Ginty, 2024). This belief enhances the capacity of people to thrive during stressful circumstances (Crum et al., 2013, 2017).</p>



To promote resilience, speak to yourself supportively

Talk to yourself supportively— like how a supportive friend might encourage and assist you. For example, when deciding how to resolve a problem or respond to a failure, you might say to yourself



- “You do not have to follow anyone but can choose your own way”,
- “To decide how I will respond, I will consider my values, feelings, and what is really important to me”,

Dialogue that reminds people of their right to choose actions that resonate with their values instils a sense of autonomy—a feeling that improves wellbeing and increases the likelihood that life seems meaningful (Sheldon et al., 2021).

Speak to yourself	Illustration or justification
Consider the benefits of unpleasant events you experience—such as failures or criticisms, called reappraisal or reframing. However, before you attempt this activity, first immerse yourself in a short activity that can improve your emotions—such as watch a funny video.	<p>For example, suppose you failed to secure a job or pass an exam. You might consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• insights or lessons you learned from this experience—such as how to prevent this problem in the future,• how this event may shift and clarify your future goals,• desirable attributes you demonstrated, such as resilience despite the disappointment• desirable attributes you gained, such as empathy,• relationships you consolidated, such as the support that a friend demonstrated, <p>If you practice this skill—and even record times in which you felt upset but then reframed the event—wellbeing tends to improve (Kam et al. 2024). This skill is especially helpful if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• you cannot readily change or modify the consequences of this event and, therefore, can only change your thoughts about this event (Kam et al. 2024),• before you reframe your thoughts, you distract yourself for a couple of minutes to diminish the intensity of your emotions (Kam et al. 2024; Sheppes & Meiran, 2007).• your thoughts mainly revolve around how this event could benefit your future (Vlasenko et al., 2024).

Speak to yourself continued	Illustration or justification
Whenever you experience more stress than usual, speak to yourself compassionately.	<p>Consider the kind and empathic words you would express to a distressed child. Then direct similar word to yourself. For example, you may express words like</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “you really have experienced a tough week”,• “everybody commits mistakes; you do not need to be upset by mistakes”. <p>When individuals practice this exercise, they gradually associate stress with feelings of support and comfort. So, their stress dissipates rapidly. Consequently, the combination of stress and self-compassion tends to improve resilience over time (Park et al., 2024).</p>





Journals of helpful thoughts

Some journals of helpful thoughts—such as a record of the people and activities in your life that tend to improve your wellbeing or emotions—can be helpful. Even when merely aware of individuals and activities that evoke pleasant feelings, people are more likely to feel happy and content (van der Kaap-Deeder et al., 2023).

A record of successful challenges

Maintain a record of times in which you completed a stressful task well. Immediately before you need to complete similar tasks, visualise this previous success as vividly as possible.



After people recall a time in which they successfully completed a stressful task, such as spoke in public, they perform this activity more effectively in the future. They also experience less stress, as gauged by measures of cortisol in the blood (Pezdeklow & Salima, 2011). Autobiographical memories thus affect the physiological processes and behaviour of individuals.

Journal entries	Illustration or justification
Maintain a record of some enjoyable or rewarding events and changes you are likely to experience in the next few months.	<p>If people anticipate that, later, they will experience positive emotions, they are also more likely to be resilient now. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in one study, if participants assumed they will later watch a funny rather than unfunny cartoon, they experienced more positive emotions while preparing to present a speech (Monfort, Stroup, & Waugh, 2014)• indeed, anticipating a positive event later was more effective than experiencing a positive event several minutes earlier.

Journal entries continued	Illustration or justification
Maintain a record of a moment in which you felt true to yourself—such as reached a decision or initiated some behaviour that felt authentic. Alternatively, record activities you could undertake in the future to feel more authentic.	<p>After people recall moments in which they felt authentic—or actually feel more authentic—they are more likely to experience positive emotions as well as a sense of meaning, purpose, and thriving in life (Guenther et al., 2024). To experience this authenticity, you could</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• skim the following list of examples that illustrate authentic behaviours,• recall and record a time in which you felt authentic in the past—and reminisce about this moment for a few minutes,• or visualise yourself behaving more authentically in the future.



Possible examples of authentic behaviours



- I admitted a problem I was experiencing to a friend.



- I no longer acted like I knew what I was doing.



- I expressed an opinion that differed from the attitudes of friends.

- I chose a job or hobby that felt meaningful and not merely lucrative.

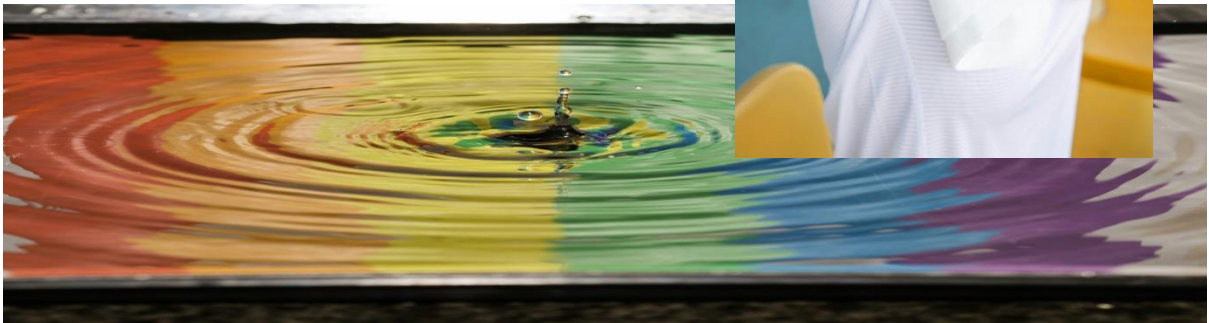
- When attending an event, I wore clothes that felt natural to me.

- I expressed my concerns about a decision that I felt was unjust.

Helpful goals and plans

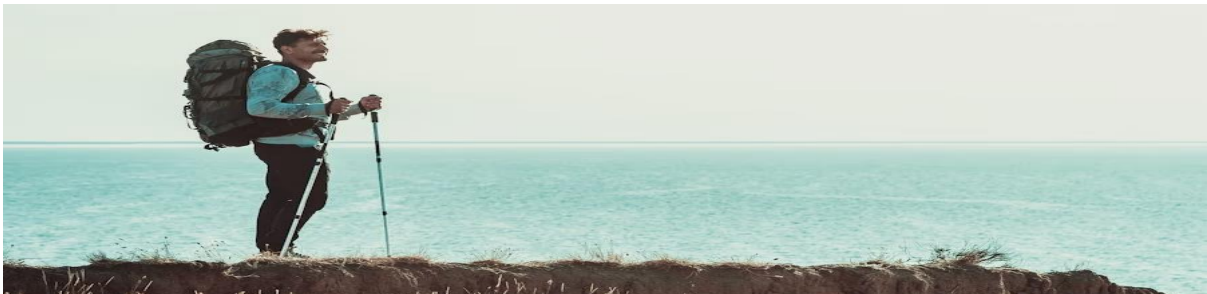
The goals you set and how you plan your days, weeks, or months may also shape your resilience. For example, if you feel If you feel you may be worrying or ruminating a lot, attempt to defer your concerns to a specific time later in the week.

- That is, if you feel inundated with worries, first record a few vague ideas on how you could address this problem. Next, choose to defer these worries to a specific time, later in the week like 7 pm to 8 pm on Thursday evening.
- When people confine their worries to a specific time of the week, they are not as likely to worry excessively (McGowan & Behar, 2013).
- Conversely, if people attempt to suppress rumination, these worries often return, usually more intensely than before.



Helpful plans	Illustration or justification
After some failure or disappointment, generate as many ideas—even vague or unrealistic possibilities—on how you could prevent a similar problem in the future as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attempt to generate these possibilities as rapidly as possible—such as 20 possibilities in 2 minutes—without judging the feasibility of these solutions (Litchfield, 2009).• After people choose to think or to read very rapidly, their mood improves significantly (Pronin, Jacobs, & Wegner, 2008).

Helpful plans continued	Illustration or justification
Perceive feedback, failures, and similar challenges as opportunities to derive lessons you could impart to other people (Carlson & Fishbach, 2024).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set yourself the goal to identify 10 lessons from such feedback or similar challenges.• Identify opportunities in which you may be able to impart these lessons to someone else—especially to someone who has experienced some challenges.
If you feel you failed to complete a task well, uncover opportunities to attempt this task again.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After individuals fail on some task, they tend to underestimate the pleasure they will experience if they perform well on the task later (Sjåstad et al., 2020). They also often perform better on this task than anticipated.
Write a couple of paragraphs about who you really are—your true character—in some detail	<p>For example, you could write about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• anything that you are passionate about, including passions you seldom express,• how you would like the world to be in 10 years or aspirations you could achieve then,• a couple of your strengths or talents that could help you achieve these aspirations,• any progress you may have forged on these aspirations. <p>After people describe their true character in detail, they are more likely to perceive their life as meaningful (Schlegel et al., 2011). And, after individuals contemplate their values and strengths, called self-affirmation, they can withstand stress better (Creswell et al., 2005).</p>



Articles or videos that promote resilience

Consider the Three Marks teaching—three principles that emanate from Buddhism. First, all life circumstances are transitory or impermanent. Second, every person is interconnected with everything else and thus cannot control their circumstances entirely. Third, unpleasant events are thus unavoidable. After people are exposed to these principles, they recover more rapidly after adverse or unpleasant events (Klein et al., 2024). To illustrate, when people experience anxiety,



- they could first remind themselves that such emotions—and the events that elicited these emotions—are impermanent and will inevitably dissipate but not necessarily in a predictable fashion,
- second, individuals could remember that all facets of their life are interconnected with everything else—and hence they cannot readily control their experiences and feelings; they do not need to feel ashamed of these emotions.
- third, they could remember these unpleasant emotions are natural and perhaps inevitable in these circumstances.

Similarly, before presenting a speech, individuals could

- remember the impermanence of this setting—the possibility, for example, they may be criticised one moment and praised the next moment,
- they could then remember that everything is interconnected and, for example, the judgments of other people depend on many idiosyncratic thoughts or memories and cannot be controlled.
- finally, they could remember that some unfavourable evaluations are inevitable; they should not strive to prevent these criticisms.

If you practice the strategies that foster resilience often, your capacity to temper unpleasant emotions improves. You develop the belief that emotions are modifiable (Smith et al., 2018). Interestingly

- this belief tends to promote wellbeing over time (Zhang et al., 2023),
- individuals who recognise that emotions are modifiable are more likely to reframe unpleasant events, rather than gravitate to alcohol or other destructive activities, to enhance their mood (Kim et al., 2024).

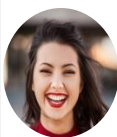
Practices that foster meaning in life

After people experience this sense of meaning, they are more likely to exhibit humility. To illustrate, after individuals contemplate the meaningful relationship in their life, they are more receptive to information that challenges their beliefs: a hallmark of humility (Van Tongeren et al., 2014).



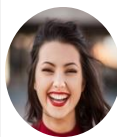
Activities to adapt and to undertake

Therefore, each week or so, individuals could undertake an activity that has been shown to foster this sense of meaning—such as activities that consolidate relationships. For evidence, see tinyurl.com/tn9vpdvs. Adapt the following examples to suit your needs.



Attempt to identify the common theme to most the problems you are experiencing in life

Example: Many of my problems stem from feeling inundated with too many duties and responsibilities



Develop a plan on how you could help two of the most important and significant people in your life achieve their goals.

Example: I could attend a training program with my father—who is otherwise reluctant to develop his skills

Further activities that reinforce a sense of meaning in life



Identify a task you could complete in the next few months that might benefit society in the future, even after you die

Example: I could write a manual on some of the best ideas and initiatives this organisation has implemented



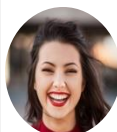
Consider how you could improve your relationships with two individuals in one of your teams or communities

Example: I could tell one of my colleagues how I admire his innovations. I could also share some information I received.



Contemplate how you can spend more time with people who are always supportive rather than judgmental

Example: Each week, I could telephone one of my three most trusted friends and listen to their concerns.



Recall an illuminating or informative conversation with a person from your past who you really liked and valued

Other considerations: I could also record the insights I learned from the people I most valued in the past



Disclose to at least two friends or relatives a problem you are experiencing

Other considerations: I could divulge the unpleasant emotions I am feeling because of this problem, and seek advice on how to resolve this matter



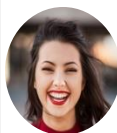
Transcribe the goals you want to achieve in the next month—and then adjust these objectives so the achievement of one goal may facilitate other goals as well

Example: I need to learn about AI and write an essay on counselling. So, perhaps I should write an essay on how AI can be useful to counsellors.



Each morning, complete three short challenging tasks—tasks that demand effort and concentration

Example: On most mornings, I will read an article as rapidly as possible, complete an errand I had been avoiding, and perform 10 press-ups



Consider how something you value—such as a relationship or role—might not have unfolded had some other event not transpired

Example: If I had not been retrenched, I would have never met my best friend or been promoted to team leader.

- Write about a typical day in your life 10 years from now,
- Imagine a movie about your life—such as the main scenes or narrative of this movie.

The Joy Express

If people can experience greater levels of joy within short periods of time, they do not feel as rushed for several reasons:

- After people experience joy or similar feelings, they can sustain effort longer and are thus more productive (Tice et al., 2007).
- People often feel the need to experience positive emotions. If they can elicit these emotions swiftly, they can fulfill this goal more rapidly & thus feel they have saved time.



As scholars have revealed (e.g., Perlow et al., 2025), people are more likely to experience significant joy within short periods if



- they diversify the activities they undertake (for one reason, see Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2012),
- they share at least a third of these activities with another person,
- these activities are not passive but demand either physical movement or concentration—such as learning a skill.

To help you achieve this goal, you could

- use the following table to identify a diversity of activities you could attempt,
- write each activity on a piece of paper,
- every few days, randomly choose one of these activities.



Suggestion	Examples
Consider how to vary your daily activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you walk, vary the time or location, so you can observe a range of views, from sunrise to stars.• When preparing or ordering meals, consider options you have never tried before.• When driving to cafes or other spots, consider suburbs you have seldom, if ever, visited before.
Consider how to vary the art—such as music or TV—you enjoy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to unfamiliar music artists or styles—perhaps with a friend.• Follow unfamiliar podcasts or even listen to categories of podcasts you have not heard before.• Watch genres of TV shows, videos, or movies that are unfamiliar to you.• Attend public lectures, concerts, theatre, galleries, festivals, markets, or other events that diverge from your usual habits
Consider the knowledge or skills you may like to develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watch videos, read books, or attend classes on a skill you could acquire—such as cooking or speaking another language.
Consider diverse physical activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vary your exercise routine continually—such as the duration, location, intensity, or technique.• Try a range of skills or sports, either alone or with other people.

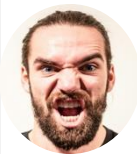
Relevance of this phase

Some children and adolescents are always receptive to the advice of their parents. If their parents suggest that humility is beneficial, their children will listen.

Some children and perhaps most adolescents are not always receptive to this advice. If their parents suggest that humility is beneficial, their children may respond defensively.



Children who listen: If your children usually embrace your advice, this phase may not be as relevant to you. Perhaps only skim these materials.

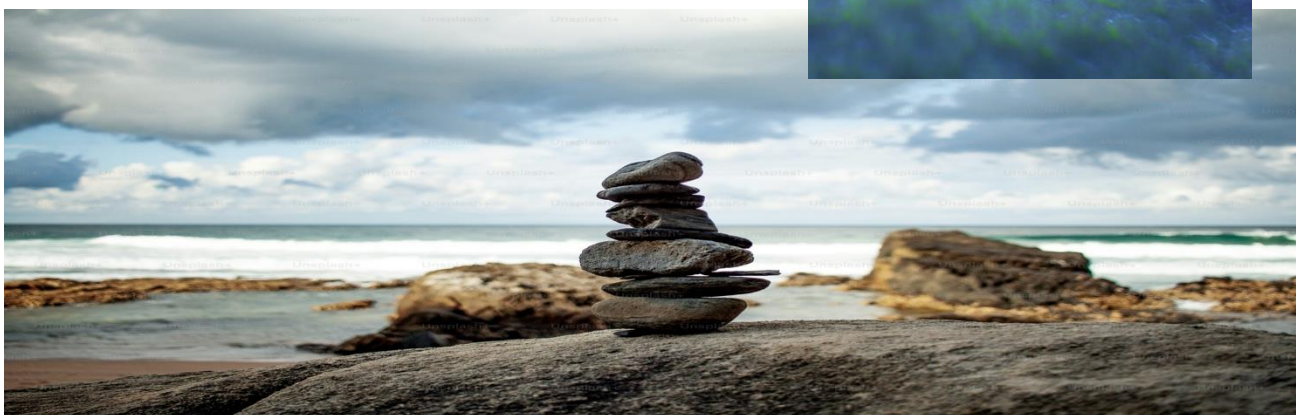


Children who do not always listen: This phase is especially useful to children who sometimes appear defensive or conceited: very common in adolescents

Incidental rewards

Usually, if people receive some reward in response to a specific behaviour or action, they are more likely to repeat this behaviour or action in the future. So, if defensive people receive a reward after they exhibit the hallmarks of humility, they may be more likely to demonstrate humility in the future. Here are some hallmarks of humility that should be rewarded:

- Humble people acknowledge moments in which they feel anxious or dejected
- Humble people deliberately attempt an unfamiliar or challenging activity to develop themselves
- Humble people do not pretend to be certain or sure, but rather concede they do not know something
- Humble people concede a mistake they have committed or a limitation in their capabilities
- Humble people participate in workshops or other events to address a shortcoming
- Humble people acknowledge the benefits of ideologies or perspectives they do not usually adopt
- Humble people express praise, gratitude, or empathy to people from other communities



However, to reward these hallmarks of humility, you need to address two challenges. First, you need to decide how to reward these individuals. That is, you need to know which rewards defensive, conceited, or even narcissistic individuals tend to value. The following table outlines the rewards these individuals are likely to value.

Rewards that conceited individuals often value	Examples
Admiration	You may say “People really admire you when you acknowledge your limitations”
Public recognition	In a public forum, you may state “I really like how Robert sometimes admits when he is not sure”
Leadership roles	You may say “Because you are aware of your bondaries and limitations, I think you deserve more leadership responsibilites”.
Introductions to the elite	You may say, “I think the president of this association would really value your sensitivity to multiple perspectives. I know someone who could introduce you to her”.

Note: These rewards should be genuine. People who are defensive or narcissistic may be sensitive to patronising or feigned praise.

Of course, you can reward the hallmarks of humility only if these individuals actually exhibit the hallmarks of humility. So, how can encourage this behaviour? That is, how can you encourage defensive or even conceited narcissistic people to demonstrate humility. In essence, you need to contrive circumstances in which individuals feel almost compelled to act with humility. The following list illustrates how you can compel people to act with humility.



Setting in which people feel compelled to act with humility



Ask questions with the word “ever”, such as “Have you ever felt a bit down?”, “Have you ever committed a mistake at work?”, or “Have you ever felt empathy towards these individuals?”



Ask questions with the word “any”, such as “Have you attempted to address any limitations in your skills?”, “Have you identified any good traits in this person you do not like?”, or “Are you grateful to anyone in this organisation?”



Contrive a circumstance in which these individuals need to show respect towards someone who they would usually dismiss. For example, you might invite someone from a diverse community to speak at an event.

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So, now you know the rewards that defensive and even narcissistic individuals value and the circumstances that may compel these individuals to show the semblances of humility. Therefore, in the future, you should

- occasionally, ask these individuals the questions that tend to elicit these hallmarks of humility, such as “Have you attempted to address any limitations in your skills”,
- reward these responses immediately, “People really admire you when you acknowledge your limitations”,
- then gradually, over time, raise these expectations, so that you reward only humility that seems voluntary or substantial.

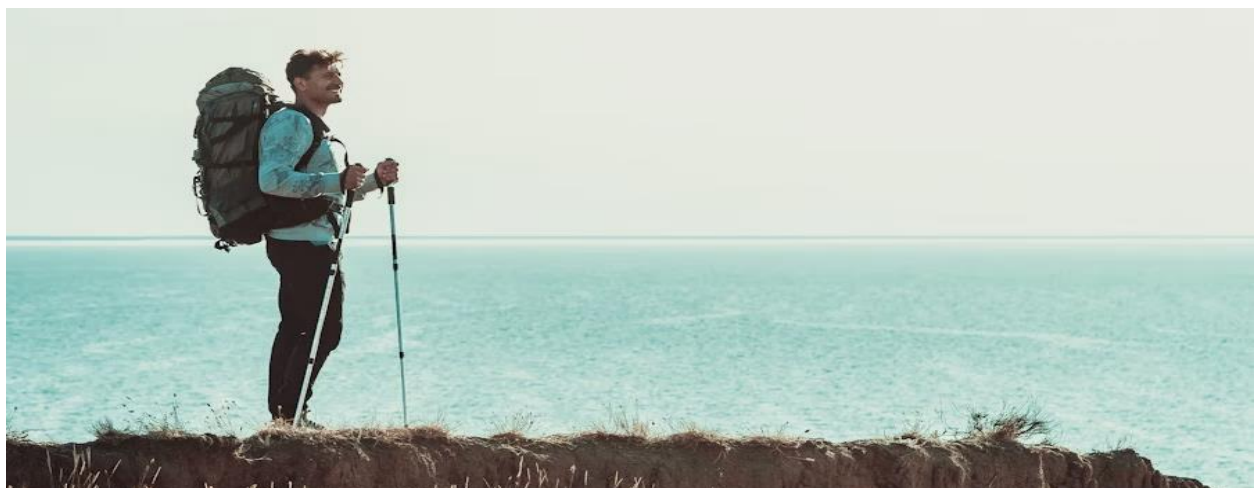
Practice first

This exercise may be challenging. So perhaps first ask the questions that are designed to elicit humility to yourself and then answer these questions. The questions, then, will feel more familiar over time.

Vicarious disapproval

Rather than reward acts that epitomise humility, you could also disapprove behaviours or inclinations that exemplify conceit or impede humility. For example, in the following table, the first column delineates some acts that you could disapprove. The second column illustrates some comments you could express to display your disapproval.

Acts that you could disapprove	How to disapprove these acts
A person who seems conceited and also shuns unfamiliar settings or circumstances	You could say “I think this person is afraid to commit mistakes or experience uncertainty. They are obviously not courageous enough to challenge themselves and to broaden their wisdom” (Fletcher, et al., 2020; Schiffrin & Liss, 2017)”.
A person who often flaunts expensive items, such as a luxury car	You could pose something like, “I think he needs to compensate for something; perhaps he does not feel he can earn respect from his opinions, his arguments, or his capacity to understand and to accommodate other people” (DeCelles & Norton, 2016).



Alternatively, to imply that you, or even other people, disapprove of behaviours that epitomise conceit, maybe label these behaviours disparagingly. To achieve this goal, you could express one or more of the statements that appear in the following table.



- I am wary of people who exhibit **grandiose** narcissism—and always seek attention and boast about their achievements.
- I do not respect people who display **vulnerable** narcissism—and always blame other individuals when they fail to achieve their goals.
- I am very concerned about people who demonstrate **malignant** narcissism—in which they feel the urge to harm the individuals who question their behaviour.
- I am wary of people who exhibit **communal** narcissism—and always inflate their contributions to the community but do not really care.
- I do not respect people who display **self-righteous** narcissism—and depict other individuals as immoral and believe only their actions are right and proper.
- I do not like people who demonstrate **neglectful** narcissism—and seem oblivious to the needs and concerns of other people.
- I am concerned about people who adopt a **fixed mindset**—and underestimate the capacity of other individuals to grow and to improve over time.

To learn these statements...

- walk into one room—perhaps in your house or workplace,
- in this room, attempt to memorise the first statement, at least roughly,
- then, walk to the next room of this house, workplace, or other location and memorise the second statement, and so forth.

You may need to repeat this exercise several times. Whenever you want to recall one of these statements, imagine yourself in the corresponding room; these images, called a memory palace, may help you retrieve these statements.

Display your humility

Overview of this phase

During this phase, you will expose your children to objects or actions—such as relevant articles, personal journals, or observable behaviours—that demonstrate your interest in humility.

Goal of this phase

Your goal is to increase the extent to which humility is familiar to your children. Your children may thus become more curious about this topic and perhaps more receptive to future discussions about humility.

Did you know



When some object or action seems familiar, people tend to judge this object or action more favourably (e.g., Winkielman & Cacioppo, 2001).



Activity 1: Choose which objects or actions to display. Possible objects or actions to display may be



- pages from these handbooks or articles about humility,
- written exercises you have completed to foster humility,

Or you could display behaviours that you learned tend to foster humility such as

- concede a drawback of each recommendation you suggest to someone else,
- after you fail on some activity, attempt this task again until you improve,
- if stressed, initiate some activity that evokes mild pain, such as unpleasant exercise
- listen to the humble meditation audio before you sleep.



Activity 2: Consider opportunities to display these objects or actions
For example, you may



- position these objects in a common room, such as a kitchen
- refer to information you have learned when speaking to a friend.

Note: To prevent defensive reactions, do not explicitly refer to these objects or actions yet.



Participate in shared interests

Overview of this phase

During this phase, identify some activities that you and your children can undertake together. During these activities, embed some practice that you learned can foster humility. Here are some examples that you could adapt.



Disclose to your family a problem you are experiencing and seek advice from your children



Deliberately engage in an activity together that elicits modest levels of anxiety or stress but also some pride or excitement



Ask your children who they feel they know who has changed fundamentally over time.



Embed humility into discussions

Overview of this phase

During this phase, identify topics you and your children like to discuss. Then, uncover opportunities to embed insights you have learned about humility into these discussions. Here are some examples



Suppose your children like to mock people who never fulfill their promises

How to embed humility. Discuss how you learned about implementation intentions—in which people imagine the precise circumstances in which they want to initiate some change. Highlight how this strategy may enable people to change fundamentally.



Suppose your children like to talk about topics that revolve around bravery

How to embed humility. Discuss the strategies you learned about that enhance resilience—and could explain how some people can be brave



Suppose your children like to discuss one of their hobbies or interests

How to embed humility. You might be able to suggest how they could translate this hobby or interest into an ambitious aspiration—an aspiration that can instil a sense of