



# Maximizing Energy

## 25 Ways To Build Inner Strength

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# Inner Strength: An Introduction

Are you a resilient person?

Are you brimming with inner strength?

While some people seemingly bounce back quickly from setbacks or failures, others find it a much more difficult prospect. So, when life comes along like a wrecking ball are you quick at picking up the mess to adapt to your circumstances? Or are you bowled over, left with very little confidence in your ability to bounce back and deal with challenges.

If you fall under the latter umbrella, you don't need to worry about it. There are practical ways to build mental resilience and it's something that you can learn through practice and consistency. It takes hard work and it takes discipline, but you can build your inner strength too.

When unexpected situations crop up that is when your resilience is most tested. Those challenges are opportunities to fine-tune your resilience and overcome these issues with your inner strength. It's important to strengthen yourself in the good times so that when those bad times roll around you are prepared for any eventuality.

Resilience is a term commonly used in the mental health realm, but they didn't invent the term. In fact, the word is one we have borrowed. In engineering, resilience is used to describe a substance's ability to bounce back. Just as objects, substances, and materials are capable of bouncing back, so are you. In your case, it's mental resilience that you need, mental resilience, and inner strength. You could say they are essentially the same thing.

As defined by The American Psychological Association

(<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>), mental resilience is described as: "The process of adapting well in the face of adversity...". Mental toughness is a similar concept, only this term

is used to describe the staying strong portion of dealing with adversity. Mental toughness is your ability to maintain focus despite difficulties. Challenge and adversity? You laugh in their face, they are nothing more than an opportunity to you!

You have the confidence to see what's possible rather than viewing these things as threats. For me, inner strength is equally tied to resilience and mental toughness, it's part of both.

You cannot be mentally tough without resilience, but you could be a resilient person and lack mental toughness. The best way to describe this would be saying that resilience or inner strength is a mountain and to climb that mountain you need strategies. One strategy would be to use your mental toughness to overcome the most challenging bits of the climb.

They work together. With resilience, you survive. With mental toughness, you prosper. Inner strength is like the bridge that brings them together.

# The 4 Themes Of Inner Strength

If you **want** to build your inner strength, then you **can**, and we have a lot of ideas on how best you can do that.

Whether you want to focus on inner strength, resilience, or mental toughness, there are five themes our techniques revolve around.

1. Attention/Anxiety Control
2. Positive Thinking
3. Commitment
4. Confidence

## Techniques To Build Inner Strength

You need self-awareness and commitment in equal measure, before we get into the variety of techniques to build your inner strength, let's touch on the four traits associated with mental toughness. You may have one or two of these traits, but if you want to succeed then you need all four.

### Control

Control is the extent that you feel in control of your emotions, sense of purpose, and life overall. This component could be likened to your self-esteem.

If you're low on the scale of control or self-esteem, then you might believe everything is happening *to* you while you are without any influence or control over the outcome.

## **Positive Thinking**

Positive Thinking fuels your drive and adaptability. If you're low on this scale, then you see everything as a threat and you avoid it to avoid the risk of failure.

## **Commitment**

Commitment is the extend of your reliability, focus, and determination. If you're low on the scale, then it suggests you struggle to set goals, you likely struggle to prioritize and thus struggle to achieve.

With commitment and control combined, you see the resilience aspect of mental toughness. You need the strength to bounce back and you need good habits to keep on your path.

## **Confidence**

Finally, confidence. It's how much you believe in your capability and productivity. Think of it as self-belief, as well as a belief that you are capable of influencing others. If you're low on this scale, then you are rattled in the face of setbacks because you don't believe you're capable of influencing others.

As you embark on your inner strength journey, I would like you to think about the four points above and how they work with the suggestions below. Once you've worked through the 25 ways below to build up your inner strength, you can work out which ones are best for you and create some of your own too.

# 25 Ways To Build Inner Strength

While some people seem to naturally develop inner strength, the rest of us don't! It isn't something that you are born with, it is something that you have to develop. The more struggle you face, the more inner strength you are likely to build.

It's in those challenges that we see what we're made of and seeing it up close and personal is the best way to keep pushing to develop. With that in mind, if you want to build up your inner strength, here are 25 ways to do it.

## 1. Skills

Building skills is an important part of building inner strength because skill-building helps build a sense of competency and mastery. Both of these can be leveraged during difficult times, which will only boost your self-esteem and self-belief in your ability to overcome.

Which skills? Well, that's up to you! What do you believe would benefit you most? Is it working on active listening skills or perhaps your short-term memory? Think about skills that would aid you daily and also come in handy during adversity.

## 2. Goals

It's one thing to set goals, it's quite another to pursue those goals and achieve them. Goal setting is an important part of the inner strength development process. Setting, creating an action plan with steps to achieve them and then going out to do it is important. Your goals can be small or big, they can be career-focused or related to your physical health. Ultimately, your goals are up to you, but the very act of setting goals and pursuing them is important for inner strength.

## 3. Controls

Or to be more accurate controlled... exposure. Think of a situation that leaves you feeling anxious because that's what this revolves around. Controlled exposure to this



anxiety-inducing event can help you overcome your fears and foster inner strength. This is especially true if it involves goal setting *and* skill-building.

For example, if you are fearful of public speaking, then you can develop the skill through controlled exposure. You can start a public speaking exercise in front of an audience of one or two close friends and build the audience until that fear is long gone. It builds self-esteem, autonomy, resilience, and inner strength.

#### **4. Build Connections**

Your social ties and connections can help you increase your inner strength. In that, having healthy relationships means that you have people to rely on. When you are faced with a difficult time you can reach out to people who will listen to you and hear your problems.

They offer support, they offer help, and they offer hope. Those connections, especially in the darkest of times, help you access that well of inner strength you have been building. They're like the wind beneath your wings, they help you take off but it's your inner strength that keeps you going.

#### **5. Change of Mindset**

The events that happen around you are not within your sphere of control. You cannot change the fact that rain is forecasted for the day you planned a barbecue. You cannot stop a pandemic from derailing your summer vacation. There is no way for you to impact the outcome of a game.

There are challenges that will always be outside of your sphere of control. However, the thing you do control in all of these situations is you. It's time to change your mindset and recognize that you control your response to these events.

You can bring that barbecue inside or hang an assortment of umbrellas over your yard and let people get a little wet. You can plan a new summer vacation that allows you to explore your local area and just make the next summer vacation even better. You can accept that as frustrating as it is, it is only a game and there's always another.

The point is, we are often guilty of making mountains out of molehills and that is down to mindset. A crisis, no matter how large, is not insurmountable.

## **6. Accept Change**

As sure as the sun will rise, you can guarantee that life will bring the winds of change. Change is one of life's only certainties. You may encounter a single change that creates a ripple effect that changes everything, whether it makes a goal impossible or it's no longer realistic.

Sometimes, the most important thing you can do is accept that nothing can be done, you cannot change it, you simply have to focus on what you can control and how you move forward from here.

## **7. Moving Forward**

Long-term goals are important. It's vital that you have a big-picture you're chasing. It's just as important, though, that those goals are realistic. You should always use the SMART method to set goals and build action plans because that will keep you honest.

Having said that, any big-picture goal can be broken down into as many milestone goals as you like. One big goal is broken down into a bunch of small wins on your journey. Always move forward!

## **8. Decisive Action**

You can't keep shying away from your problems or from things that stress you out. You can't hope they will disappear if you close your eyes long enough. You have to take decisive action whenever you possibly can. It won't go away unless you take steps to make it go away and that's why you need decisive action.

## **9. Self-Discovery**

Sometimes, the most difficult experiences of our lives are where we experience the most personal growth. A friend of mine lost her husband several years ago. They had young children, the baby was just a few months old. They were young, healthy, and

happy, but a freak accident changed their lives forever. What struck me was the growth that my friend went through as she eased into her new normal of being a widow and a single mom of three little kids.

She said that she feels like a completely different person, that she likes herself more now because she was forced to rediscover who she is without her husband. She likes herself more now, but she is still desperately sad that her husband would never get to see this version of her. That's heavy.

Just because difficult situations tend to produce the most personal growth, does not mean you have to wait for difficult situations to begin the process. Managing difficult situations will increase your self-esteem, boost your self-worth, you'll gain self-confidence, and most importantly, you will learn an awful lot about yourself.

I certainly hope you don't have to lose someone to go on a journey of self-discovery, but the point is that even in the most awful moments of your life, you can find the inner strength to get you through it *and* come out on top.

## **10. Self-View**

Confidence matters, in fact, it matters as much as inner strength because without confidence you might not feel strong enough to bounce back. So, work on nurturing a positive self-view that will help you believe in your ability to solve problems and trust in your own instincts.

## **11. Perspective**

When the going gets tough, you have to keep things in perspective. No matter how bad things are, they could probably be worse. So, do your best to avoid the impulse to blow it all out of proportion. A big part of building inner strength and cultivating resilience is maintaining your long-term perspective even when short-term events challenge that idea.

## **12. Hope**

If you maintain focus on negative situations then you are going to trap yourself in fear. If you go down this path, then you are much less likely to come up with a solution to solve your problem or situation.

So, as tough as it might be, there's wisdom in keeping a hopeful outlook. You can use a visualization technique for this and imagine a positive outcome rather than always believing the worst will happen.

### **13. Visualization**

It isn't enough to touch on the subject of visualization, it's important enough that it deserves its own point. Visualization isn't just for imagining your future success, it's also a great way to relieve anxiety, manage stress, overcome performance anxiety, and deal with overwhelming situations.

Close your eyes and fall into a deep breathing exercise. Now imagine a similar situation that resulted in your success. Imagine the feelings, the scents, the people who surrounded you, visualize that success in detail. Now imagine yourself succeeding the same way but in your current circumstances.

### **14. Self-Care**

Self-care is one of the most important things you can do for yourself because self-care touches almost every aspect of your life. Self-care protects both your mental and physical health, but it is also an excellent caretaking technique to ensure you can handle difficult situations or times of adversity.

By taking care of yourself, you are automatically paying more attention to your emotions and needs. You are also choosing activities that relax and bring you joy. It's a win in every column.

What you deem as self-care is entirely up to you, we all view it differently. For me, it's probably reading a great book and a glass of red wine standing by to help me through. For you, it could be jumping out of a plane and then climbing the nearest mountain.

You need to define what self-care looks like to you, what it means to you, and how you can best serve yourself.

### **15. Future-Proofing**

Life won't always go how we hope or even as we planned, which is why we should plan for setbacks. When you run into setbacks you need time to recenter and focus up.

You can't control all of the external events going on around you, but you can control how you react and respond, and how you move forward. It's always wise to create a plan to follow in case everything goes wrong. Walk through life forearmed with a backup plan.

### **16. Stress Management**

If there is one thing that influences every aspect of your life, then it's stress. Stress hormones mess with your head, they play with your mood, disrupt your emotions, and it can even have physical effects.

You may have noticed that when you are extremely stressed out you have a difficult time getting to (or staying) asleep. This is true whether you are dealing with positive or negative stress. While acute stress has its benefits, when you creep into chronic stress territory, then you have to actively manage it.

Consider body scanning, progressive muscle relaxation, meditation, and yoga for stress management. If you have paid time off, be sure you take it!

### **17. Rest Well**

We briefly touched on it under stress management, but sleep is important enough to have its own point. Sleep is a vital part of your everyday functioning. The better your sleep, the better you are at being decisive when forced to make a decision on the spot. What counts as a sufficient amount of sleep? Well, we're all different, but the general rule of thumb is between seven and nine hours. You might need more if you

lead a particularly stressful life or often engage in high-stress activities, whether they are mental or physical.

It isn't just sleep that matters. You should take breaks as often as possible. Use your time off wisely to engage in activities you love, visit family and friends, and... rest! We simply do not treat our bodies with enough respect.

We feed them poorly, starve them of decent rest, and then we wonder why we get sick, feel tired, or ache as though we never closed our eyes. Your body can do incredible work, but you have to treat it well in order for it to do so. Rest is a key part of that, but since we're talking about treating your body well, now would be a good time to encourage you to hydrate, eat healthily, and exercise as often as possible.

As far as exercise goes... you can choose activities that you enjoy doing. You're more likely to follow through if it doesn't feel like a chore.

## **18. Get Emotional**

Sometimes we experience massive emotions and the thing about emotions is that they aren't always accurate. Your emotional reaction is always valid, you have the right to work through them in your own way and time, but know they aren't always right.

If you feel sad or angry and there are tears pricking the corners of your eye, then let those tears fall. It's okay. It doesn't matter if you reflect on it and realize you didn't need to cry because you didn't need to be sad or angry. That doesn't matter because you honored those emotions appropriately at that moment.

Our emotions help us stay healthy because they give us an insight into what's going on inside of us. You feel mad and sad, then let yourself work through that. I'm the type of person that has big initial reactions, but I hold them back to process them before I form a response to someone or a situation.

That's an improvement because I used to just let them all out and then I'd have to deal with the consequences of that reaction which was often... wrong. It's the processing part that matters because as long as you process those emotions, you will

get to the root of whether they are accurate or not, and how you move forward from now on.

## 19. Senses

Self-awareness has an important role to play in building inner strength. It's a helpful factor for most things if we're being honest, but it is particularly helpful for exercising your senses. Sensory perception is a helpful tool to improve your personal ability to perceive emotions.

When you exercise your senses, one at a time, you are training them. Close your eyes for a moment and focus on one of your senses. Give your hearing a full minute of focus and tap into only what it tells you.

Repeat this process for all of your senses. It might not seem much, but you're using your senses as a self-awareness exercise, and self-awareness is crucial to building inner strength. Big gains for such an easy task.

## 20. Planning

Daily life is bogged down by responsibility. There are errands and appointments, obligations, and activities, and it can be exhausting. That's why it's so important that you plan well. Time management is a skill everyone wishes they were better at, but you can get good at it.

The key is scheduling *everything*, which includes personal time. That's right! If you sit down and plan your week, you have to plan your breaks and escapes.

Not only is it the only way you're likely to enjoy a break, but you will also give yourself something to look forward to! You know your break is coming up and that feels good.

The only way to boost your inner strength is to look after yourself well so that you build your inner strength reservoir. That means planning so that you can use your time effectively and have plenty of time for rest and relaxation.

## 21. Environment

Some things do a body good. What does you good? What people do you good? What hobbies do you good? What foods and activities do you good? Some people drag you down, while others pull you up. You should focus on the latter. Hopefully, you know enough of those people to surround yourself with a supportive environment.

The point is your environment matters and you should do your best to fill yours with positive people who make you feel good, not toxic people who tear you down. The same goes for the content you consume, whether it's articles, music, or television.

Take stock of what you have in your life and how it influences your environment.

I think at this point, it's important to note that you don't have to cut off grumpy friends or delete numbers of people who make you sad sometimes. There is a massive difference between people who support you but need support back when dealing with their own difficult times and toxic people who enjoy your rough patches.

I trust that you are wise enough to discern between these two types of people and act accordingly. If there is someone who does drag you down, but you're not sure what their intentions are, maybe ask a mutual acquaintance for their input.

## 22. Creativity

If you are one of those people who is convinced you are not a creative person, let me tell you this... it doesn't matter! You might not be particularly creative, but you can still enjoy creative tasks. Creativity is less a skill and more an attitude. Creative people are usually open-minded, ready to embrace new ideas and try new things.

That's something you can do, isn't it? Quit criticizing yourself and start opening yourself to new things, people, and ideas. You'll find yourself interested in more creative pursuits and you will probably find it easier to find solutions for challenging situations.



There's another benefit to creativity. It provides you with an opportunity to see yourself from so many different angles.

Creativity allows you to explore the different facets of yourself, to increase your self-belief, self-esteem, and ultimately, your inner strength. Now, your only task is to determine what creative activity or hobby is the right one for you to try first. Maybe keep it simple with a coloring book or writing poetry and work from there.

### 23. I Can

I must do... I must see... I must take... you mustn't. Instead of saying you must, start saying instead that you can. If you find yourself saying words like *have to* or *must do* then you need to stop yourself and correct it. I *choose to* and *I decide I will* and then add a reason why you choose to do what you're going to do.

The point of this exercise is to remove the powerlessness we often feel at the many responsibilities we have to look after. Remove powerlessness and frame it as an active choice you make with solid reasoning behind it. This is going to help you take ownership of your life, as well as help you increase your inner strength.

### 24. Anchor

When sailors take to the sea, they use an anchor to root them in place. That anchor prevents the boat from being washed away during storms. You can use your own anchor for your emotions and thoughts.

I want you to create a beautiful situation. Visualize it in your mind and engage all of your senses to set the scene. I want you to wallow in this positive feeling and embrace it. The more intensely you feel it the better! Do you feel it?

Now it's time to establish a body signal. For example, you may choose to rub the sides of your thumbs together. This establishes a connection between this body signal and the positive feelings you created. In the future, when you use that body signal, you will be reminded of those positive feelings. That's your anchor.

## 25. Miscellaneous

These are not the only ways to help you build your inner strength. It looks different for everyone so if there's something that helps you more, focus on that! Don't be afraid to explore your own activities that will build your inner strength and resilience.

Activities like journaling, meditation, yoga, and gratitude are all excellent tools to build hope and inner strength. Many spiritual practices or relaxation techniques can be used as a multi-purpose personal development tool.

## Final Thoughts

There are plenty of factors that contribute to inner strength and resilience. One thing that studies have consistently shown is the importance of relationships, in and outside of your family ties. Encouraging, loving, and caring relationships are key to helping you build your resilience and inner strength.

There are a few factors we often associate with inner strength as well, including the ability to make plans and carry them out, a positive self-view, strong communication skills, strong problem-solving skills, and the ability to manage strong emotions.

All of those factors are factors that you have the power to influence. If you make an active decision to influence those factors, then in doing so you are taking active steps to build up your inner strength.

While any of the 25 suggestions above will help you build up your inner strength moving forward, I believe that this is one of the few cases where looking back is a positive choice. If you can look into your past and come up with a list of wins you have had as a result of your inner strength, then it can help you build your inner strength now.

It's easy to forget about all the adversity we have faced when things are good. It's harder to remember those moments when things are bad. This is why you should have a handy list posted and ready for you to review when you're in the weeds.

**I want you to think about these questions and how your answers can help you build up your inner strength moving forward.**

- What did these situations and interactions teach me about myself?
- Have I used this past experience to help someone else navigate a similar situation?
- What obstacles have I overcome in the past and how did I do it?
- What makes me feel hopeful about my future?

Inner strength brings with it a flexible mindset. As you deal with stress, maintaining your flexibility will help you experience big emotions without allowing them to take over. Flexibility will help you move forward and take action, and it will also make you more nurturing (to yourself and others).

If you want to build your inner strength for life, then your journey begins right now. There is no better time than the present to take a step forward. The more you practice the suggestions above, the more inner strength you will find.

The more adversity you experience the stronger you will grow. That isn't to say you should invite adversity, it's simply that when you experience it you need to deal with it rather than running away to hide. A lot of us tuck our heads in the sand and hope the dark clouds will pass without us taking action. The best course of action in almost every situation is to take action.

You can look for help outside of your circle too. If you're struggling with inner strength, consider reaching out to community groups, books, articles, or even a therapist.