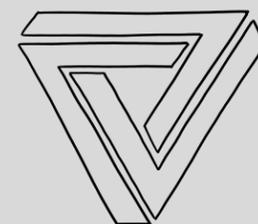




SUPER
-POWER8

THE POWER
OF
RESILIENCE



Resilience is the ability to quickly recover after a setback and to **come back stronger**.

When someone is confronted with new knowledge that conflicts or disrupts their existing beliefs, they are likely to resist it. This is because **it creates cognitive dissonance** (the difference between beliefs and actions).

However, under the right conditions, the uncomfortable feeling and the experience of having your beliefs or current knowledge knocked down **can be a motivator for learning more**.

Not too long ago, the world was believed to be flat. Intelligent women were classified as witches that should be burnt at the stake. And, it was accepted that fellow humans could be bought and sold as slaves. Thankfully, these are no longer social norms!

But how did those norms shift? There are a **few key ingredients** needed in order to understand and successfully effect change – starting with the important act of getting your head around the cognitive, cultural, and social conditions that both exist and allow for change to happen.

Resilience is one of the key ingredients, as exploration into social conditions can result in some very challenging discoveries about beliefs that you, and other people, hold.



Although, when push comes to shove, **knowledge does not necessarily translate into action.**

This is so important to know when making change – **a verbal commitment does not mean change will happen.** Likewise, translating information does not necessarily result in cognitive change. What's even more confusing is that **people often don't even realize that they are saying and doing totally different things.**

In the 1950s, Leon Festinger had a hypothesis that humans have an **innate desire to maintain a harmonious cognitive state**, so he set up an experiment to test how people would react to an uncomfortable cognitive experience.

He found that we are unpredictable, trick ourselves constantly, and have a cognitive glitch that encourages us to **shift our opinions** when we encounter an uncomfortable situation.

Cognitive dissonance explains why so many people say they care about environmental or social issues, but **don't do anything about it.**

Perhaps one of the major issues with sustainability is that it represents a 'dilemma' which systems theorists like Russell Ackoff define as "**a problem that cannot be solved within the current worldview.**" People opt out of confronting things that are too cognitively complex for them to understand.

These narratives of fear, morality, and destruction often make **people feel helpless** and overwhelmed by the issue, resulting in denial or avoidance.



Really, **sustainability is an aspiration**. It is an undertaking to do good in the present so that future generations don't end up having a worse (or non-existent) quality of life than we have today.

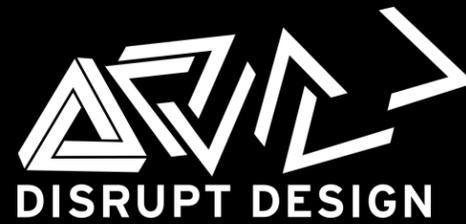
So, what we actually need is a **new way of thinking**. The sustainability dilemma comes in part from the historic framing of its problems, as well as its potential solutions.

As Socrates said, "The secret of change is to **focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new**." This is why the power of resilience is so mighty – we build the ability to see beyond the now and help design the future.

HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

1. Iteratively build tenacity through perseverance.
2. Challenge yourself to constantly improve.
3. Pick ideas and projects that resonate with you, but that also challenge you.
4. Don't be afraid to fail – embrace it as a strength builder.
5. Stay positive, active, and curious, seeing every experience as learning in action.





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