



## **Crafting the Resilient Life Course Design**

Life is challenging and yet we each seek a life of strength and of meaning, of joy and of fulfillment—a life in which every day counts. To craft this rich life, we must choose to grow, to enact practices and attitudes that enable us to increase capacity, positivity, connection, and health—even when under strain. Through the science of resilience and the study of happiness, we build a foundation together for wholeness and well-being in times of stress, loss, and sudden change. We learn to move through those challenging times into a happier, healthier, more serene life, and we learn to use these same skills to create a life of growth and exploration—one in which we flourish no matter what.

**Crafting the Resilient Life** provides an introduction to the basic scientific concepts, principles, tools, and concepts of resilience offered from the fields of Positive Psychology and Mind-Body Medicine. Through interactive online modules including webinars and personal and group coaching, as well as two residential intensives, this program contributes to the overall well-being of participants in the sphere of their own lives and provides tools and skills that can be applied professionally.

Throughout this three-month course, we explore the research and practice that provides a foundation for increasing resilience, supported by Kripalu's long-standing tradition of creating an environment of safety and care in order that we each may grow and explore at our own pace. We learn to

- Discover strengths and how to apply them to crisis or daily stress
- Increase serenity and authenticity through mindfulness practice
- Apply happiness boosts to elevate vitality and meaning
- Cultivate healthy relationships, especially while facing loss or strain
- Explore crisis moments as opportunities for authentic, sustaining growth
- Enhance positive emotions and thoughts, while navigating negative ones with greater ease
- Develop grounded optimism and increased self-efficacy
- Apply habits and rituals that enable us to sustain transformation throughout our lifetime.

## Hours

This certificate program includes 28 contact hours through two residential intensives, regular online pre-recorded video lectures, and a final project. The course also includes regular peer group sessions, live Q&A sessions with Dr. Sirois, and self-directed study, including homework and reading assignments. We suggest that you allocate 2–4 hours a week towards the program.

## Who Should Take This Course

This program is designed for anyone seeking to bolster resilience within their own lives and/or to apply fundamental resilience techniques to their practices as social workers, psychologists, coaches, allied-health professionals, managers, yoga teachers, and educators.

## **Student Expectations**

Participants are expected to participate fully in all elements of this course.

Two 3-day residential immersions, three months of online learning, bi-weekly faculty conference calls, study-group conversation, and application practice with a suggested schedule of bi-weekly calls with study group partners. Homework is offered as reflection questions and exercises for each week of online learning and students are asked to complete a final project articulating their life vision and grounded, practical next steps for supporting that vision.

## **Costs**

Tuition for the Crafting the Resilient Life program totals \$974 (includes a technology fee of \$75; excludes the cost of room & meals). Please call Kripalu for accommodation options and pricing, or visit [Kripalu.org/resilientlife](https://Kripalu.org/resilientlife).

## **Continuing Education Credits (CEC)**

This program is eligible for Registered Dietitians, Nursing, and Social Work CE credits. Please see website for more details.

## Module Design

Our first module, *Diving In*, consists of information gathering and an introduction to the online forum for our subsequent classes. Students are requested to draft a 1–2 page story of a time in the past when they were resilient and bring this to the immersion.

Modules 3, 4, and 5, *Fundamental Tools/Practices*, *Deepening Wisdom*, and *Sustaining Change*, respectively, total 12 weeks of online learning. Each week includes 20–30 minutes of online pre-recorded videos with homework reflection questions or exercises offered following each video. Participants can expect homework questions and practice exercises to range from 1–4 hours per week. The homework reflection question is a chance for students to reflect upon the presented material. Using a journal-style approach, students are encouraged to write a short commentary on how the content material relates to their life and to answer the specific question offered. In some weeks, students are also encouraged to practice a particular exercise or tool and comment on that practice. In this way the material is translated from the academic or scientific realms into practical application. Reflection papers are submitted online in the forum area for our class to be shared with the small study groups.

## Residential Immersion Design

*Change is Possible* is our first 3-day immersion at Kripalu. During the immersion, participants experience 14 hours of class time with free time available for yoga and meditation practice and movement. Nutritious meals are available throughout the day. Specific components of the immersion include lecture, experiential exercises, self-reflection and meditation, large- and small-group discussion, and fun. Small study groups are formed on the second day with the purpose of helping you learn, apply what you have learned, and for support, accountability, and feedback.

*How We Rise* is our second 3-day immersion and our closing experience for the course. Students are asked to present a final project to a small group of students: a representation of their healthy, resilient vision for their lives—one that is grounded in practical, specific next steps.

## Sample Daily Schedule

Subject to change.

3-night Program

Total Hours: 14

### Sunday

5:30–7:00 pm

7:30–9:00 pm

### Activity

Dinner

Program session

### Monday and Tuesday

6:30–8:00 am

7:00–8:30 am

9:00–11:30 am

11:30 am–1:30 pm

1:45–3:45 pm

4:15–6:15 pm

5:30–7:00 pm

7:30–9:00 pm

Kripalu Yoga Classes

Breakfast (silent dining)

Program session

Lunch

Program session

Kripalu Yoga Classes

Dinner

Program session (Tuesday only)

### Wednesday

6:30–8:00 am

7:00–8:30 am

9:00–11:00 am

11:30 am–1:30 pm

12:00 noon

Kripalu Yoga

Breakfast (silent dining)

Program session

Lunch

Checkout time

A hallmark of the Kripalu immersion experience is that students live and learn in an internationally recognized retreat atmosphere. The experience is supported by

- A natural, whole-foods meal plan, featuring vegetarian, non-vegetarian, Ayurvedic-influenced, and vegan options
- Fitness room
- Lakefront access and facilities
- Kripalu lawns, garden, and walking and hiking trails
- Comfortable relaxation and study areas
- Meditation Room
- The Kripalu Cafe and wireless lounge, with 24-hour Wi-Fi access.

## Resources

Resources for this program consist of books, academic articles, videos, and other digital content that directly support the video lectures. They are recommended (not required) for developing an understanding of resilience, its connection to happiness, and as a support for developing a concrete plan of healthful action for each student. In the courseware, the specific pages/chapters are listed for the most relevant topics of the recommended readings. Other suggested readings are offered should you be interested in diving deeper into a given topic.

The following books will be revisited often throughout the course:

1. [\*The Resilience Factor: 7 Keys to Finding Your Inner Strength and Overcoming Life's Hurdles\*](#). New York: Broadway Books. Intro and Chapter 1. Reivich, K. (2002).
2. [\*Positivity: Groundbreaking Research Reveals How to Embrace the Hidden Strength of Positive Emotions, Overcome Negativity, and Thrive\*](#). Crown Archetype. Frederickson, B. (2009).
3. [\*Being Happy: You Don't Have to Be Perfect to Lead a Richer, Happier Life\*](#). United States: McGraw-Hill. Chapters 1–4. Ben-Shahar, T. (2011).
4. [\*The How of Happiness: A New Approach to Getting the Life You Want\*](#). New York: Penguin Press. Chapters 1, 2, 5. Lyubomirsky, Sonja (2008).
5. [\*The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are\*](#). Center City: Hazelden. Pages 1–30. Brown, B. (2010).

We expect students to read the material that most calls to them. Some resources may be more fully explored than others. The student is given freedom within the recommended resources to delve into those that best suit personal and professional interests.

Course books are available in the Kripalu Shop and can be purchased online [here](#). Most articles will be hyperlinked directly from the virtual classroom. A comprehensive list of all the recommended resources for the course is listed below.

## Module 1: Diving In

1. [\*Positivity: Groundbreaking Research Reveals How to Embrace the Hidden Strength of Positive Emotions, Overcome Negativity, and Thrive\*](#). Crown Archetype. Chapters 1–6. Frederickson, B. (2009).
2. [\*When Things Fall Apart\*](#). Chodron, P. (1997). Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc.

## Module 2: On-site Residential Immersion—Change is Possible

There are no readings for this immersion.

## Module 3: Fundamental Tools/Practices

- Week 1
  1. [\*“Posttraumatic growth: Conceptual foundations and empirical evidence.”\*](#) *Psychological Inquiry*, Pages 15, 1–18. Tedeschi, R. G., & Calhoun, L. G. (2004).
  2. [\*“Post-Traumatic Stress’s Surprisingly Positive Flip Side,”\*](#) *The New York Times*. Rendon, Jim (2012, March).
  3. [\*The Resilience Factor\*](#), New York: Broadway Books. Intro and Chapter 1. Reivich, K. (2002).
- Week 2
  1. [\*“Genomic Counter-Stress Changes Induced by the Relaxation Response.”\*](#) *PLoS ONE* 3(7): e2576. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0002576 Dusek, JA, Otu, HH, Wohlueter, AL, Bhasin, M, Zerbini, LF, et al. (2008).
  2. [\*“The Morality of Meditation,”\*](#) *The New York Times*. DeSteno, D. (2013, July).
  3. [\*Full Catastrophe Living\*](#). Introduction, Chapters 1, 2. Kabat-Zinn, J. (2005). New York: Bantam Dell.
  4. [\*Quiet Mind: A Beginner’s Guide to Meditation\*](#). Salzberg, S. (2008) Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc.
  5. [\*The Relaxation Response\*](#). Benson, H, MD., (2000). New York: Harpertorch
- Week 3
  1. [\*Positivity: Groundbreaking Research Reveals How to Embrace the Hidden Strength of Positive Emotions, Overcome Negativity, and Thrive\*](#). Crown Archetype. Frederickson, B.(2009).
  2. [\*The Habits of Supremely Happy People\*](#), The Huffington Post. Bratskeir, K. (2013, September).
  3. [\*The Resilience Factor\*](#), New York: Broadway Books. Chapters 2–6. Reivich, K. (2002).
  4. [\*The Gifts of Imperfection\*](#). Center City: Hazelden. Pages 1–30. Brown, B. (2010).
- Week 4
  1. [\*The How of Happiness: A New Approach to Getting the Life You Want\*](#). New York: Penguin Press. Chapters 1, 2, 5. Lyubomirsky, Sonja (2008).
  2. [\*“What Happy People Do Differently.”\*](#) *Psychology Today*. Biswas-Diener, R., Kashdan, T. (2013). Retrievable at <http://bit.ly/1dipWA5>.
  3. [\*“Developing Resonant Leaders Through Emotional Intelligence, Vision and Coaching.”\*](#) *Organizational Dynamics* (2013) 42, 17–24. Boyatzis, R.E., Smith, M.L., Van Oosten, E., Woolford, L. (2013). Retrievable from
  4. [\*The Blessing of a Broken Heart\*](#). New Milford: The Toby Press. Mandell, S. (2009).

#### Module 4: Deepening Wisdom

- Week 5
  1. [\*Authentic Happiness\*](#). New York: The Free Press. Chapters 8 and 9. Seligman, M. (2002).
  2. [\*The How of Happiness: A New Approach to Getting the Life You Want\*](#). New York: Penguin Press. Chapter 6. Lyubomirsky, Sonja (2008).
- Week 6
  1. [\*The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are\*](#). Center City: Hazelden. Pages 55–63. Brown, B. (2010). Available at
  2. [\*Being Happy\*](#). United States: McGraw-Hill. Chapters 1–4. Ben-Shahar, T. (2011).
- Week 7
  1. [\*The How of Happiness: A New Approach to Getting the Life You Want\*](#). New York: Penguin Press. Chapters 4 and 5. Lyubomirsky, Sonja (2008).
  2. [\*Being Happy\*](#). United States: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 3. Ben-Shahar, T. (2011).
- Week 8
  1. [\*Being Happy\*](#). United States: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 9. Ben-Shahar, T. (2011).
  2. [\*You Are Not Your Brain\*](#). New York: The Penguin Group. Schwartz, J., Gladding, R. (2011).
  3. [\*The Gifts of Imperfection\*](#). Center City: Hazelden. Pages 1–30. Brown, B. (2010).

#### Module 5: Sustaining Change

- Week 9
  1. [\*The Brain that Changes Itself\*](#). New York: Penguin Group. Doidge, N. (2007).
- Week 10
  1. [\*Every Day Counts\*](#). New York: Walker Publishing Company. Sirois, M. (2006).
  2. “[\*The Health Benefits of Writing About Life Goals\*](#),” PSPB, Vol. 27 No. 7, July 2001 798–807. King, L.A. (2001)
- Week 11
  1. [\*Choose the Life You Want: 101 Ways to Create Your Own Road to Happiness\*](#) Ben-Shahar, T. (2012) New York.
  2. [\*Essay on Practice\*](#), Graham M. (1953). *This essay aired circa 1953.*
- Week 12

There are no readings for this week.

#### Module 6: On-site Residential Immersion—How We Rise

There are no readings for this immersion.



## Module Syllabus

### Module 1: Diving In

In this introductory module, students become familiar with the online classroom by visiting the orientation page and are encouraged to upload photographs and offer a brief hello. We also offer a brief video outlining the general flow of the course, the basics of participation in the online modules, the immersions, the study groups, and overall objectives for the course.

Objectives for this module include

- Meet the faculty
- Learn what to expect in the course
- Receive preparatory materials for the meeting
- Receive homework to be completed for the immersion.

### Module 2: On-site Residential Immersion—Change is Possible

This module moves the class from an online experience to a community of support, setting the stage for the group work to come. Peer groups of three to six students are created during this time, and students leave with a plan of action for a group-determined structure for the peer communications.

Objectives for this module include

- Define the connection between resilience, mindfulness, and happiness
- Ground learning in realistic optimism
- Identify the basic uses of resilience
- Define the common characteristics of resilient people
- Identify and begin to apply our signature strengths
- Differentiate common thought and feeling traps
- Introduce the genius of the “and”
- Explain the nature of grief and its relationship to happiness
- Define happiness
- Examine scientifically-proven happiness boosts
- Summarize core elements of authenticity
- List and apply the fundamental practices for sustaining positive transformation.

### Module 3: Fundamental Tools/Practices

This module encompasses learning over four weeks and offers the basic tools and practices that are crucial for increasing resilience.

Objectives for this module include

- Understanding post-traumatic growth and how to support it
- Naming the basics of mindfulness as applied directly to stressful moments
- Developing a vocabulary and practice for increasing positivity
- Examining the power of connection to bolster positive change.

### **Week 1: Growth Under Fire: Post-traumatic Growth and Learning to Fail**

In this module we explore a new arena of resilience research, that of post-traumatic growth and come to understand that we potentiate growth as we learn to fail. When times are challenging we can use those very experiences to strengthen our ability to move forward.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Define Post-Traumatic Growth and differentiate it from recovery
- Summarize five areas of PTG potential growth through adversity
- Examine the concept of “learning to fail”
- Apply concept of learning to fail to current stressor

### **Week 2: Mindfulness Matters**

All positive transformation, such as the building of greater resilience, stems from the capacity to choose wisely, to respond to life consciously as opposed to reacting to life thoughtlessly. This capacity is elevated through mindfulness. In this lecture we explore the basic tenets of mindfulness and its application to difficult moments.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Define four basic elements of mindfulness
- Summarize benefits of mindfulness relevant to high-stress experiences
- Explore fundamental practice of mindfulness breath practice
- Integrate breath practice with positive cognitions

### **Week 3: Positivity**

The quality of our thoughts and feelings has a direct impact on our ability to remain resilient. Negative cognitions and emotions create a cycle of negativity that can be disturbing, depressing, and dis-enlivening. Positive cognitions and emotions create an experience of expansion such that one feels more grounded, capable, creative, and energetic. We explore here the notion of positivity and why it is crucial to moving from difficulty to growth.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Define grounded optimism
- Explain connection between thoughts, feelings, and behavior
- Examine practice of worthiness as counteraction to self-criticism and negation
- Differentiate and be able to apply benefit-finding from fault-finding

### **Week 4: The Context of Relationship**

Connection makes a profound difference in our ability to craft a life that thrives. With healthy connection we amplify positivity, courage, and creativity—all of which are crucial for sustaining resilience.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Define two types of support: social relationships and experts
- Summarize benefits of social support when facing stress, trauma, or loss
- Apply emphasis on healthy connection to current stressor

## Module 4: Deepening Wisdom

In this module we continue the exploration of tools and practices that elevate resilience while integrating knowledge that emanates from the poetic and wisdom traditions and from our own lived experience.

Objectives for this module include

- Identify signature strengths and their connection to our highest selves
- Integrate the core elements of authenticity in daily practice
- Apply gratitude and appreciation practice to stress at work and home
- Demonstrate awareness of personal barriers to change and processes to overcome them.

### Week 5: Leading From Strengths

Every person has strengths. When we lead from our strengths, we give ourselves the opportunity to face difficult moments in such a way that we become larger than the moment, and self-esteem and efficacy grow. In this week, we explore the discovery of our unique strengths and their direct application to high stress and low stress moments.

Learning Objectives

- Explain concept of signature strengths
- Identify benefits of knowing one's own strengths
- Analyze application of strengths when under stress
- Practice application of strengths upon current stressors

### Week 6: Authenticity

We cannot be living someone else's life and thrive. Authenticity, the capacity to be true to oneself, is crucial to increasing resilience and yet it is challenging to move toward greater and greater authentic living. This module helps us understand what it truly means to be authentic and how we apply fundamental principles to our daily lives.

Learning Objectives

- List core elements of authenticity
- Define concept of permission to be human and congruence
- Analyze authentic aspects of the self
- Correlate authentic practice with self-worth and courage

### Week 7: Another Kind of Infinity: Gratitude and Appreciation

When facing traumatic moments, experiencing loss, or managing chronic stress, it can be difficult to bring forward gratitude or a sense of appreciation. Yet to do so provides us with potent benefits, benefits that can shift our experience of life dramatically. Through this exploration, we come to understand how gratitude lifts our experience toward greater positivity and capacity.

Learning Objectives

- List benefits of gratitude and appreciation
- Explain connection between appreciation and resilience
- Demonstrate integration of gratitude in daily practice

### **Week 8: Barriers to Change**

Within each of us exists barriers that make positive transformation difficult. When facing a difficult moment these barriers can make it impossible to create helpful strategies or apply such strategies. Mental and emotional barriers are normal, the question becomes how can we acknowledge our barriers and move forward anyway? This week's lesson addresses that very question and provides a simple approach to moderating the impact of internal barriers.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Identify common cognitive and affective barriers
- Distinguish between barriers that are true and those that are false
- Explain the process by which mental barriers are reshaped

## **Module 5: Sustaining Change**

This four-week module provides participants with the process and technology of understanding how transformation happens and how it is sustained over time. Students have the opportunity to apply this knowledge directly to their current life situation and integrate both a personal vision for their lives with the practical steps that ground and support the development of that vision.

Objectives for this module include

- Define how the brain supports healthy lasting change
- Develop a personal vision for the resilient future
- Integrate practical next steps to support habit development.

### **Week 9: Our Beautiful Brains**

Our brains have an extraordinary capacity to adapt to stressors and to grow at any age. During this week, we explore the latest research on neuroplasticity and come to understand how we can use our brain's ability to form new neuronal connections to support healthy transformation.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Define neuroplasticity
- Explain process of shifting cognitions over time toward healthier cognitions
- Integrate understanding of brain science with daily habit practice

### **Week 10: Visioning: A New Normal**

In order to craft a life that is resilient and joyful, we must have a vision of that life and an understanding of how to make that vision real. This week's teaching reminds us that our lives, as they are, matter and they can be shaped to become the life we have always wanted.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Demonstrate understanding of vision and its role in shaping our lives
- Apply journaling research and practice to shape a clear personal vision
- Recall benefits to vision journaling

### **Week 11: Sustaining Change: How Successful Transformation Happens**

Most change efforts fail because change is difficult and because we do not understand how to manifest successful change over time. In order to grow, we must shape our lives each day toward that which enlivens us. To support that practice, we learn the process of sustaining transformation: a ten-step process that supports the integration of positive habits specific to strengthening resilience.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Define the technology of sustaining transformation
- Differentiate key components for personal transformation
- Assess the next best practical step
- Predict how to prime the environment and mental/emotional environment to support healthy change
- Integrate previous 10 week's lessons into practical plan for direct personal transformation

### **Week 12: The World Will Rise to Meet You**

This week provides an opportunity to explore how the larger world supports our growth. We consider the notion of synchronicity and how we might increase our faith in the world in order to experience a sense of dancing with life, as opposed to running from or fighting with it.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Recall moments in one's own life when the world provided assistance
- Expand notions of faith to include possibility of finding larger support
- Integrate previous lessons on savoring, gratitude, and appreciation in order to change perspective of largest view of life

### **Module 6: On-site Residential Immersion—How We Rise**

In our concluding immersion, we come together as a community to support both our vision and our practical steps toward creating that vision. We review key concepts relative to broadening resilience and strengthening happiness and apply the principles of sustaining transformation directly to our lives. Further, we explore the notion of paying our work forward—remembering that all positive growth is not just about us, but about whom we are and what we bring to this world. Resilience is about addressing the difficult moments, and also about crafting a life that enables us to flourish on behalf of our selves and the larger world.

#### **Objectives for this module include**

- Recall primary tenets of resilience
- Demonstrate integration of process of sustaining transformation through presentation of a final project
- Define practical next steps for growth
- Examine relevance of paying one's growth forward toward other communities/groups/individuals