



CHAPTER TWO

How Resilient Are You?

Michael and Mary were born in the same place in the same year: Kauai, 1955. Kauai is a tropical island of mountains, rain forest, and pristine beaches located at the northwest end of the Hawaiian chain. The name itself conjures up images of idyllic childhoods spent fishing, hiking, and swimming. And so it probably was for many of the children born there in the mid-1950s, but not for Michael and Mary.

Michael, a premature baby, spent his first three weeks of life in a hospital ward, separated from his teenage mother. His father was absent with the military until Michael was two. By his eighth birthday Michael had three younger siblings, his parents were divorced, and his mother had left Kauai, breaking all ties with her family. Mary was born into poverty, the daughter of an unskilled farm laborer and a mentally ill mother. Mary's life between the ages of five and ten was one of repeated physical and emotional abuse, punctuated by her mother's several hospitalizations for mental illness.

Two children with the odds against them. And yet by their eighteenth birthdays, Michael and Mary were popular and successful at school, possessed solid moral values, and were very optimistic about their futures. How did these two children emerge from the turmoil of their early lives to be so resilient?

Michael and Mary were part of an ambitious, landmark study conducted by two eminent developmental psychologists, Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith.¹ This study, to which we alluded in Chapter 1, marked the beginning of the modern era of research into the early childhood factors

that shape resilience. In 1955, 833 children were born on Kauai, and Werner and Smith tracked some 698 of them from their prenatal months to beyond their thirtieth birthdays. Their goal was to determine why some children thrive and others suffer severe deficits despite similar experiences. The data they gathered help us to understand the ingredients that comprise resilience.

Most of the children Werner and Smith followed were descendants of Southeast Asians who came to Kauai to work on the sugar and pineapple plantations. They found that one in every three children was born with the odds against them; they were “vulnerable” for many of the reasons we noted in Chapter 1—socioeconomic and family factors that were beyond their control. Their parents had not graduated high school and worked in low-paying laboring jobs. The families of these vulnerable children were particularly poor, and home life was marked by fighting and divorce. Many of the parents were alcoholic and had high rates of mental illness. For two out of three vulnerable children, their resilience was clipped, and the negative implications of this manifested themselves early on. They suffered significant learning deficits and displayed behavior problems such as hyperactivity and acting out by the time they were ten. By the time this group had turned eighteen, arrests, pregnancies, and serious mental health problems were common. The circumstances of their early childhoods had robbed them of their resilience, and they were now set on a downward trajectory that would affect their levels of achievement well into adulthood.

But there was one child in every three who developed into a confident, accomplished, connected adult like Michael and Mary. The resilience of those children was somehow preserved and enabled them to overcome the circumstances of their childhoods. In fact, most studies have shown that even among children exposed to several risk factors—like poverty, poor parenting, and genetic loading for mental illness—only half succumb. The other half thrive.

Werner and Smith found that a significant proportion of the vulnerable children went on to excel. When we examine the interviews with these children through the lens of our notion of resilience, we see that the children applied their resilience in all four ways we listed in Chapter 1. They overcame the early obstacles of poverty, ill health, and abuse, steered through the ongoing adversity of absentee parents, bounced back from the trauma of their parents’ divorces, and had enough resilience to reach out for life’s adventures and new experiences. As one of the study participants reported in a final interview, “I thank God that he gave me

the power and strength to be where I am. I just think I am thirty years young—I have so much more to do in life. . . . I can't possibly do all I want to do in sixty to seventy years."²

How Can We Impact Resilience?

The work of Werner, Smith, and others demonstrates clearly that early childhood circumstances affect a person's resilience well into adulthood. Why are these effects so longlasting? Because they shape children's belief systems and abilities, and these remain stable even as they grow into adults. In Chapter 1 we noted some of these personal characteristics, these beliefs and abilities, that lead people to be resilient. We found that resilient people are able to monitor and regulate their own emotions and monitor the emotional states of others. Like Deb, they stay focused and intent on solving problems. They can accurately distinguish between those aspects of an adversity over which they have control and those they do not. Like Robert, they rate high on self-efficacy—they believe they can master their environment and they have the confidence to take action. Resilient people, like Stacey, have strong connections to others, and they rely on those connections to help them through the tough times. And those who reach out, like Joan, see challenges as opportunities and they are willing to take risks if it means broadening their lives. Nonresilient people lack these abilities and beliefs.

And again, this is where we, as psychologists and researchers, come in. Childhood environmental factors—poverty, divorce, mentally ill parents, to name a few—are history. They are beyond our ability to change. But beliefs can be changed and abilities can be boosted. Resilience is a nebulous concept—difficult for us to get our arms around—so how can we go about the task of making someone more resilient? Our work on the nature of resilience shows that it is comprised of seven abilities: emotion regulation, impulse control, empathy, optimism, causal analysis, self-efficacy, and reaching out. These seven concrete factors can be measured, taught, and improved.

We have developed a resilience test that measures a person's current standing on the seven abilities as well as their overall Resilience Quotient, or RQ.³ It has been completed by thousands of people in diverse job types and from all walks of life, and has proven to be highly predictive of success in the real world. For example, in our work with a large telecommunications company, we compared the RQs of front-line employees with

those of the managers who had been promoted from their ranks. The scores of the managers were significantly higher. With another client, a financial investment company, we measured the RQs of their newly hired financial consultants and tracked their performance on the number of clients and the dollar assets under their management. Those with higher RQs at the time of hiring did better on both.

The seven skills we have developed are designed to boost the seven abilities, and our research indicates that they work. We trained representatives in a customer service and sales division of a Fortune 100 company in the seven skills of resilience that we present in Part II of this book. Three months after the training they had outstripped their control group peers on each of the four most important performance ratings of their jobs. In another study we taught the seven skills to salespeople and office managers who had lower RQs than their peers. A month after they learned the skills they were outperforming those same peers by 50 percent on one performance measure and 100 percent on another. Resilience matters and it can be learned.

Remember that we promised to take you on a journey. Well, you've come to the beginning. The first step is to measure your own RQ. Once you know how strong you are on the seven factors of resilience, you'll have a better idea of which of the seven skills you need most.

Take the RQ Test

Please complete the following fifty-six-item RQ Test.* Do not spend too much time on any one item; it should take you only about ten minutes.

Please rate each item for how true it is of you, using the following scale.

- 1 = not at all true
- 2 = sometimes or somewhat true
- 3 = moderately true
- 4 = usually true
- 5 = very true of me

- 1. When trying to solve a problem, I trust my instincts and go with the first solution that occurs to me.
- 2. Even if I plan ahead for a discussion with my boss, a coworker, my spouse, or my child, I still find myself acting emotionally.
- 3. I worry about my future health.

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- ___ 4. I am good at shutting out anything that distracts me from the task at hand.
- ___ 5. If my first solution doesn't work, I am able to go back and continue trying different solutions until I find one that does work.
- ___ 6. I am curious.
- ___ 7. I am unable to harness positive emotions to help me focus on a task.
- ___ 8. I'm the kind of person who likes to try new things.
- ___ 9. I would rather do something at which I feel confident and relaxed than something that is quite challenging and difficult.
- ___ 10. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.
- ___ 11. I give in to the urge to give up when things go wrong.
- ___ 12. When a problem arises, I come up with a lot of possible solutions before trying to solve it.
- ___ 13. I can control the way I feel when adversity strikes.
- ___ 14. What other people think about me does not influence my behavior.
- ___ 15. When a problem occurs, I am aware of the first thoughts that pop into my head about it.
- ___ 16. I feel most comfortable in situations in which I am not the only one responsible.
- ___ 17. I prefer situations where I can depend on someone else's ability rather than my own.
- ___ 18. I believe that it is better to believe problems are controllable, even if that is not always true.
- ___ 19. When a problem arises, I think carefully about what caused it before attempting to solve it.
- ___ 20. I have doubts about my ability to solve problems at work or at home.
- ___ 21. I don't spend time thinking about factors that are out of my control.
- ___ 22. I enjoy doing simple routine tasks that do not change.
- ___ 23. I get carried away by my feelings.
- ___ 24. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.
- ___ 25. I am good at identifying what I am thinking and how it affects my mood.
- ___ 26. If someone does something that upsets me, I am able to wait until an appropriate time when I have calmed down to discuss it.
- ___ 27. When someone overreacts to a problem, I think it is usually because they are just in a bad mood that day.
- ___ 28. I expect that I will do well on most things.
- ___ 29. People often seek me out to help them figure out problems.
- ___ 30. I feel at a loss to understand why people react the way they do.
- ___ 31. My emotions affect my ability to focus on what I need to get done at home, school, or work.
- ___ 32. Hard work always pays off.
- ___ 33. After completing a task, I worry that it will be negatively evaluated.

- ___ 34. If someone is sad, angry, or embarrassed, I have a good idea what he or she may be thinking.
- ___ 35. I don't like new challenges.
- ___ 36. I don't plan ahead in my job, schoolwork, or finances.
- ___ 37. If a colleague is upset, I have a pretty good idea why.
- ___ 38. I prefer doing things spontaneously rather than planning ahead, even if it means it doesn't turn out as well.
- ___ 39. I believe most problems are caused by circumstances beyond my control.
- ___ 40. I look at challenges as a way to learn and improve myself.
- ___ 41. I've been told I misinterpret events and situations.
- ___ 42. If someone is upset with me, I listen to what they have to say before reacting.
- ___ 43. When asked to think about my future, I find it hard to imagine myself as a success.
- ___ 44. I've been told that I jump to conclusions when problems arise.
- ___ 45. I am uncomfortable when meeting new people.
- ___ 46. It is easy for me to get "lost" in a book or a movie.
- ___ 47. I believe the old adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."
- ___ 48. In most situations, I believe I'm good at identifying the true causes of problems.
- ___ 49. I believe I have good coping skills and that I respond well to most challenges.
- ___ 50. My significant other and/or close friends tell me that I don't understand them.
- ___ 51. I am most comfortable in my established routines.
- ___ 52. I think it's important to solve problems as quickly as possible, even if that means sacrificing a full understanding of the problem.
- ___ 53. When faced with a difficult situation, I am confident that it will go well.
- ___ 54. My colleagues and friends tell me I don't listen to what they say.
- ___ 55. If I decide I want something, I go out and buy it right away.
- ___ 56. When I discuss a "hot" topic with a colleague or family member, I am able to keep my emotions in check.

Emotion Regulation and Resilience

Emotion Regulation is the ability to stay calm under pressure. Resilient people use a well-developed set of skills that help them to control their emotions, attention, and behavior. Self-regulation is important for forming intimate relationships, succeeding at work, and maintaining physical health. People who have difficulty regulating their emotions often emotionally exhaust their partners at home and are difficult to work with. Re-

Emotion Regulation

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 13 _____
 Item 25 _____
 Item 26 _____
 Item 56 _____
 Positive Total _____

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 2 _____
 Item 7 _____
 Item 23 _____
 Item 31 _____
 Negative Total _____

Positive Total minus Negative Total = _____ This is your Emotional Regulation score.

Above Average: A score higher than 13
 Average: A score between 6 and 13, inclusive
 Below Average: A score lower than 6

search shows that people who lack the ability to regulate their emotions have a hard time building and maintaining friendships. There are probably many reasons why this is so, the most basic of which is that negativity is a turnoff. People don't like to spend time with people who are angry, sullen, or anxious. Not only is it a drain, but emotions are contagious. The more you associate with the angry, sullen, and anxious, the more angry, sullen, and anxious you become.

Of course, not every emotion needs to be repaired or controlled. We don't believe that all anger, sadness, anxiety, and guilt should be minimized, managed, or stifled. To the contrary, the expression of emotions, negative and positive, is healthy and constructive; indeed, proper emotional expression is a part of being resilient. But just as life's luster is dulled if we keep our emotions under total wraps, so does being a slave to your emotions interfere with your resilience and drain it from those around you.

Some people are prone to experience greater amounts of anxiety, sadness, and anger than others and have a harder time regaining control once they are upset. They are more likely to get stuck in their anger, sadness, or anxiety and are less effective at coping with adversity and solving problems. And they find it nearly impossible to reach out to others and new experiences when they are being held captive by their emotions.

Consider Beth, a manager in a telecommunications company. As a child, Beth was emotionally volatile and remembers feeling powerless to shift her mood once it took hold. Her mercurial style didn't soften as

she grew to adulthood. As Beth candidly describes, the emotional roller coaster she rides undermines her effectiveness as a parent. "I have two teenage daughters, and I know they are reluctant to talk with me about their problems. I know they worry that I won't be able to handle my own emotional reactions and that instead of helping them to sort through what they are feeling, I'll get lost in what I am feeling. I try to show them that I can stay calm and listen to them, but the truth is, I really struggle with it. My emotionality has gotten in the way of being a good mother."

If Beth's story sounds familiar, emotion regulation is probably an ability you need to develop. But how do you go about regulating your emotions? There are a variety of effective techniques for calming yourself down when angry, for lifting your mood when sad, and for quieting anxiety, many of which we further discuss in Chapter 9. Of the many techniques for regulating emotions, we have found most effective those strategies that work to alter your beliefs about adversity—the actual thoughts you have when problems arise and that are the source of your emotions.

If you feel that you need to work on your emotion regulation, you'll find Skills 1 and 6 particularly useful. Learning your ABCs will enable you to detect the belief that produces your counterproductive emotion, while Calming and Focusing will provide you with the means to invoke the relaxation response you need to begin reining in those emotions.

Impulse Control	
<p>Add your scores on the following items:</p> <p>Item 4 _____</p> <p>Item 15 _____</p> <p>Item 42 _____</p> <p>Item 47 _____</p> <p>Positive Total _____</p>	<p>Add your scores on the following items:</p> <p>Item 11 _____</p> <p>Item 36 _____</p> <p>Item 38 _____</p> <p>Item 55 _____</p> <p>Negative Total _____</p>
<p>Positive Total minus Negative Total = _____ This is your Impulse Control score.</p>	
<p>Above Average: A score higher than 0</p> <p>Average: A score between -6 and 0, inclusive</p> <p>Below Average: A score lower than -6</p>	

Impulse Control and Resilience

Dan Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*, performed a fascinating study in the 1970s.⁴ Young children, around seven years old, were brought one by one into a small room where another researcher was waiting. The researcher explained to each child that he had to leave for a few minutes, but before he did, he wanted to offer the child a marshmallow. The child could eat the marshmallow now, the researcher explained. But if the child held off on eating it and waited until the researcher returned, he'd give the child a second one. Ten years later Goleman tracked the children who had participated in the experiment; who were by now high school seniors. Those children who could control their impulses, who could delay the gratification of one marshmallow to get two, were doing significantly better socially and academically.

It's lack of impulse control that's getting Louis, a thirty-five-year-old college professor, into trouble. He is liked by most of his colleagues—they see him as fun and lively—but he is also the punch line of a great many jokes. He blurts out inappropriate comments in faculty meetings, giving voice to each thought as he thinks them. He's quick to apologize but equally quick to re-offend. He drinks too much socially, he overeats, and some colleagues have wondered about some of his relationships with students. Louis is too much id, not enough superego, which means that time and time again his hedonistic desires win out over his rational mind. His typical pattern is to get excited about a new project, throw himself into it full steam ahead, but then suddenly lose interest and drop the project altogether. As Louis puts it, "I'm like a twelve-year-old boy. I'm impulsive in my personal life and I'm impulsive professionally. I have a hard time controlling my emotions and a harder time telling myself no. I get all hyped up about something and go after it full throttle but I can't sustain my interest."

It makes intuitive sense that emotion regulation and impulse control are closely related, and our analyses bear this out—people who are strong on the RQ factor of impulse control also tend to be high on emotion regulation. We believe the connection in these areas exists because they tap into similar belief systems in us. So if your impulse control is low, you will accept your first impulsive belief about the situation as true and act accordingly. Often this produces negative consequences that can hamper your resilience. As with emotion regulation, the first key skill for impulse control is Learning Your ABCs, which we introduce in the next section. ABC tracks how our thoughts determine our emotions and behavior. Having mastered ABC, you can move to Avoiding Thinking Traps, which will

Optimism

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 18 _____
 Item 27 _____
 Item 32 _____
 Item 53 _____
 Positive Total _____

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 3 _____
 Item 33 _____
 Item 39 _____
 Item 43 _____
 Negative Total _____

Positive Total minus Negative Total = _____ This is your Optimism score.

Above Average: A score higher than 6

Average: A score between -2 and 6, inclusive

Below Average: A score lower than -2

guide you to detect the impulsive beliefs you commonly entertain and how they work to derail your resiliency. And once you get to Challenging Beliefs, you'll be able to boost your impulse control and generate more accurate thoughts that will lead to better emotion regulation and result in more resilient behavior.

Optimism and Resilience

"Oh, yes, the game was to just find something about everything to be glad about—not matter what 'twas," rejoined Pollyanna earnestly. "And we began right then—on the crutches."

"I can't see anythin' ter be glad about—gettin' a pair of crutches when you wanted a doll!" . . .

"Goosey! Why, just be glad because you don't need 'em!"

—ELEANOR H. PORTER, POLLYANNA'

Resilient people are optimistic. They believe that things can change for the better. They have hope for the future and believe that they control the direction of their lives. Compared to pessimists, optimists are physically healthier, are less likely to suffer depression, do better in school, are more productive at work, and win more in sports. These are facts borne out by hundreds of well-controlled studies.

Optimism, of course, means that we see our futures as relatively bright. Optimism implies that we believe we have the ability to handle the adversities that will inevitably arise in the future. And, of course, this reflects

our sense of self-efficacy, our faith in our ability to solve our own problems and master our world, which is another important ability in resilience.

Our research shows that optimism and self-efficacy often go hand in hand. Optimism is a boon if it is linked with true self-efficacy because optimism motivates you to search for solutions and to keep working hard to improve your situation. It's worth noting that people who harbor unbri-dled optimism, of the Pollyanna variety, may not derive any advantage at all. In fact, unrealistic optimism may lead people to ignore real threats for which they need to prepare. A Pollyanna optimist, if diagnosed with a se-rious illness, might say to herself, "Oh, this is no big deal. My condition isn't serious. I'll be fine," which will make it unlikely that she will do the things she needs to do to improve her chances of recovery. The key to re-silience and success, then, is to have realistic optimism coupled with self-efficacy. And as we shall see, self-efficacy is a result of successful problem solving, which in turn can be significantly enhanced using Challenging Be-liefs and Putting It in Perspective—two skills that enable us to gain mas-tery over those elements of our world that are in our control.

Causal Analysis

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 12 _____
 Item 19 _____
 Item 21 _____
 Item 48 _____
 Positive Total _____

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 1 _____
 Item 41 _____
 Item 44 _____
 Item 52 _____
 Negative Total _____

Positive Total minus Negative Total = _____ This is your Causal Analysis score.

Above Average: A score higher than 8
 Average: A score between 0 and 8, inclusive
 Below Average: A score lower than 0

Causal Analysis and Resilience

Causal analysis is a term we use to refer to people's ability to accurately identify the causes of their problems. If we're unable to assess the causes of our problems accurately, then we are doomed to make the same mis-takes over and over again.

Our mentor, Martin Seligman, and his colleagues identified a thinking

style that's particularly important to causal analysis: explanatory style.⁶ It's the habitual way you explain the good and bad things that happen to you. Everyone's explanatory style can be coded on three dimensions: personal ("me-not me"), permanent ("always-not always"), and pervasive ("everything-not everything") ways of thinking. A "Me, Always, Everything" person automatically, reflexively believes that she caused the problem (me), that it is lasting and unchangeable (always), and that it will undermine all aspects of her life (everything). Here are two "Me, Always, Everything" beliefs:

1. "My son is doing poorly at school *because I don't spend enough time making sure he does his homework. I'm a bad mother.*"
2. "I didn't get the promotion *because I am too timid and just don't have good people skills.*"

When problems arise, a "Not Me, Not Always, Not Everything" person believes that other people or circumstances caused the problem (not me), that it is fleeting and changeable (not always), and that it will not affect much of her life (not everything). Such a person interprets the same situations very differently from the "Me, Always, Everything" person:

1. "My son is doing poorly at school *because he has not been studying lately.*"
2. "I didn't get the promotion *because they don't understand how much I have to offer.*"

Explanatory style plays such an important role in resilience that we will take the issue up again in the next chapter. In Chapter 7, "Challenging Beliefs," we'll give you a chance to map your own explanatory style and guide you through a process to get outside the thinking-style rut that your explanatory style represents.

We've witnessed firsthand how explanatory style can profoundly affect performance. Kathy and Len are a middle-aged married couple we met when they were students in an evening class we cotaught on abnormal psychology. We were impressed by Len and Kathy's insightful questions and the tough but respectful way in which they challenged some of the theories we presented. Prior to the first exam, we predicted that they would both score among the highest in the class. To our surprise, Kathy got a B and Len scored in the C range. When they came to talk to us about the exam, it became apparent that they had different agendas.

Kathy was clearly more upset than Len although she got the better grade, and this made sense given their explanations. For Kathy, she got a

B because, as she put it, "I'm not smart enough for psychology." Len, in contrast, said, "I think I got a C because I'm having a hard time figuring out the best way to prepare for the exams." Kathy's "Me, Always, Everything" style led her to become discouraged, whereas Len's style drove him to look for solutions.

It's easy to see how explanatory style affects our causal analysis. Those people who ruminate about the "always-everything" causes of their problems cannot see a way to change their situation. They become helpless and hopeless. People who focus on the "not always-not everything" causes are galvanized and capable of generating solutions that they can put into action. But the most resilient people are those who have cognitive flexibility and can identify all the significant causes of the adversities they face, without being trapped in any specific explanatory style. They are realists in that they do not ignore the factors that are permanent and pervasive. They also don't reflexively blame others for their mistakes in order to preserve their self-esteem or absolve themselves of guilt. Nor do they waste their valuable reserves of resilience ruminating about events or circumstances outside their control. They channel their problem-solving resources into the factors they can control, and, through incremental change, they begin to overcome, steer through, bounce back, and reach out. Like someone who feels the need to improve his impulse control and optimism, if you need to improve your causal analysis, then Challenging Beliefs probably will be the skill that helps you the most.

Empathy

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 10 _____
 Item 34 _____
 Item 37 _____
 Item 46 _____
 Positive Total _____

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 24 _____
 Item 30 _____
 Item 50 _____
 Item 54 _____
 Negative Total _____

Positive Total minus Negative Total = _____ This is your Empathy score.

Above Average: A score higher than 12
 Average: A score between 3 and 12, inclusive
 Below Average: A score lower than 3

Empathy and Resilience

Your empathy score represents how well you're able to read other people's cues to their psychological and emotional states. Some of us are adept at interpreting what psychologists call the nonverbals of others—their facial expressions, their tone of voice, their body language—and determining what people are thinking and feeling. Others have not developed these skills and therefore are unable to place themselves in the other person's shoes, estimating what the person must feel and predicting what he or she is likely to do. This inability to read nonverbal cues can be costly in business, where progression through the ranks often requires networking skills, and for managers, whose job it is to understand how best to motivate their employees. It also can be costly in personal relationships, where people need to feel understood and valued. People low in empathy, even well-intentioned ones, tend to repeat the same old nonresilient patterns of behavior, and they're known to "bulldoze" others' emotions and desires. But your empathy score can be improved.

In Part Two of this book you will learn to use Learning Your ABCs and Detecting Icebergs to understand what motivates you as you navigate your way through the world. These same skills can be applied to how you deal with others—to better understand why the person you manage procrastinates on important projects, why your teenage son has become withdrawn and somber, and to better connect with the people you love.

Self-efficacy	
<p>Add your scores on the following items:</p> <p>Item 5 _____</p> <p>Item 28 _____</p> <p>Item 29 _____</p> <p>Item 49 _____</p> <p>Positive Total _____</p>	<p>Add your scores on the following items:</p> <p>Item 9 _____</p> <p>Item 17 _____</p> <p>Item 20 _____</p> <p>Item 22 _____</p> <p>Negative Total _____</p>
<p>Positive Total minus Negative Total = _____ This is your Self-efficacy score.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Above Average: A score higher than 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Average: A score between 6 and 10, inclusive</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Below Average: A score lower than 6</p>	

Self-efficacy and Resilience

Self-efficacy is our sense that we are effective in the world. It represents our beliefs that we can solve the problems we are likely to experience and our faith in our ability to succeed. We've already devoted a lot of time to the discussion of self-efficacy, so let's show you how it is used in a real-life situation. At work, people who have faith in their ability to solve problems emerge as leaders, while those who aren't confident about their efficacy find themselves lost in the crowd. They unintentionally broadcast their self-doubt, and their colleagues listen—and learn to seek the counsel of others.

Lynn and Greg work in the same department of a Fortune 500 telecommunications company. They are both new to the company and have had similar education and similar training. After being in their positions for six months, two different career trajectories have emerged. Greg has had small successes, but none of them convinced him that he was equal to the job. He still doesn't believe he can complete the project work expected of him. On the other hand, Lynn's small successes have added to her confidence. With each victory, she grows in her knowledge that she has genuine talents and skills that she can use to control her work environment. The difference lies in how Lynn and Greg respond to normal work challenges. Lynn's self-confidence and belief that she could solve problems enabled her to negotiate the inevitable complications that arise at work. Greg, in contrast, was passive in response to similar challenges. He felt incapable of generating solutions and ill-equipped to carry out solutions offered by others. As a consequence of her resilience, Lynn has

Reaching Out

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 6 _____
 Item 8 _____
 Item 14 _____
 Item 40 _____
 Positive Total _____

Add your scores on the following items:

Item 16 _____
 Item 35 _____
 Item 45 _____
 Item 51 _____
 Negative Total _____

Positive Total minus Negative Total = _____ This is your Reaching Out score.

Above Average: A score higher than 9
 Average: A score between 4 and 9, inclusive
 Below Average: A score lower than 4

caught management's eye. She has been asked to take on more responsibility and has been offered the opportunity to participate in an advanced training seminar, which, although not billed as such, is known as a special training for those being put on the fast track.

Lynn's resilience places her on a positive career trajectory, whereas Greg's self-doubt and ineffectiveness actually serve to increase the difficulties he will encounter. In Part II we will teach you skills for building your confidence and improving your efficacy—Avoiding Thinking Traps, to head off your assumptions about the causes of your problems, and Challenging Beliefs, to become more accurate in your problem solving. When you use these skills, you'll do better at work and in your relationships, and with those improvements in your life will come a newfound confidence and sense of self-efficacy.

Reaching Out and Resilience

We've shared with you six abilities that enable a person to be resilient in the face of adversity. But as we've seen, resilience is not just about overcoming, steering through, and bouncing back from adversity. Resilience also enables us to enhance the positive aspects of life. Resilience is the source of our ability to reach out, and a surprising number of people can't do it. Why are some people afraid of reaching out? For some people, it's because they learned early in life that embarrassment was to be avoided at all costs. Better to remain in one's shell, even if it means a life of mediocrity, than to expose oneself to public failure and ridicule. For others, as we shall see in Chapter 8, this reflects the tendency to overestimate the likelihood of future adversity. And as we shall see in Chapter 5, people often overvalue sins of commission and underplay sins of omission. That is, failure due to an action is falsely considered more detrimental to success than the failure to act.

The reaching out of other people is compromised by their fear of plumbing the true limits of their ability. People with this thinking style, known as self-handicapping, subconsciously place limits on themselves: "If I don't try and then don't succeed I can always tell myself that I failed because I didn't really try, rather than having to face the fact that I just might not be good enough." Such people tend to overestimate the probability that failed attempts will lead to catastrophic outcomes. If you want to improve your ability to reach out, then our skills will surely help. We'll

show you how to use Detecting Icebergs to uncover the deep beliefs that may be holding you back from intimacy and from taking on new challenges. We'll show you how to use Challenging Beliefs to test out your assumptions, and we'll guide you to use Putting It in Perspective to curb your fears about reaching out. We'll introduce you to Real-time Resilience so that you can fight back against your nonresilient beliefs as they occur.

Remember: You Can Increase Your Resilience

Some people are surprised that they didn't score higher on the RQ Test. Don't be disheartened—by using the skills we describe in this book, you can significantly improve in each of these seven abilities. As you'll see in the next chapter, meaningful change is possible.