

# **An investigation into the manifestation of resilience**

**By**

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degree of Master of Commerce (Industrial Psychology) in the  
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The crest of Stellenbosch University is centered behind the text. It features a shield with a blue and red design, topped with a crown and a figure holding a staff. A banner at the bottom of the crest contains the motto "Perfata sublimiora multo sperantur".

**Research supervisor: Prof M K du Toit**

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## **Declaration**

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## ABSTRACT

Drawing from the fields of positive psychology and career psychology, this research endeavours to study the manifestation of resilience in the workforce population and the elements or attributes which contribute to resilience. More particularly, this paper examines the evident paradigm shift in the changing world of work, as well as whether the culture of the organisation has the potential to play a role in the manifestation of such resilience. The RS-25 by Wagnild and Young (1993) was used to determine levels of resilience and in-depth interviews were conducted in order to expand upon the evidence of resilience. The outcome was that many factors such as positive emotions, individual differences, learned resourcefulness, positive appraisal, positive affectivity, altruism, gender, birth order, emotional intelligence, locus of control, self-directedness, human agency, motivational forces and challenges experienced, sense of coherence and psychological stamina were identified as contributing factors to the level of resilience in an individual. The amalgamation of these factors was solely reliant on the different appraisal of situations and the perceived level of difficulty that was presented by a challenge or hardship, which differed from one person to another. It was largely recognized that resilience is a construct that is learnt and accrued from a very young age. In addition, the greater the hardships experienced, the more resilient a person could become. Moreover, organisational cultures seemed to play a particular role in preparing or enabling employees to become acclimatized or more accustomed to a harsher working world, which required more acts of resilience pertinent to growth and survival. Whether resilience is an inherited trait or learned attribute is not clear. The main aim of this study is to gain insight into the manifestation of resilience in the lived

worlds of individuals who overcame severe tribulations. An existential-phenomenological epistemology informed the in-depth interview method applied. The persons interviewed had different ideas about this problem, ranging from the viewpoint that either nature or nurture, or an interaction between the influence of the social environment and inner individual personality qualities, were contributory factors.

## OPSOMMING

Binne die vakterrein van die Positiewe Sielkunde en Loopbaansielkunde, strewende hierdie studie daarna om die manifestasie van die konstruk “veerkragtigheid” in die werksmag van naderby te ondersoek. Daar word gelet op verskeie bydraende faktore wat veerkragtigheid kan bevorder. Klem word geplaas op die paradigmatuif teweeggebring deur ‘n veranderende werkswêreld asook die kultuur binne organisasies wat die potensiaal het om in te speel op die bevordering van veerkragtigheid. Die RS-25 deur Wagnild en Young (1993) is gebruik om die vlakke van veerkragtigheid kwantitatief te bepaal. In-diepte ondersoek is gevoer met persone wie sodanig deur die kwantitatiewe metode as hoog op in veerkragtigheid geïdentifiseer is. Die doel is om insigte aangaande die manifestasie en persoonlike belewenis van die konstruk te bekom deur middel van ‘n eksistensiële –fenomenologiese benadering.

Die bevinding was dat daar verskeie persoonlikheidsfaktore bydraend was tot veerkragtigheid. Aspekte wat vanuit die teorie asook vanuit die praktiese navorsing na vore gekom het en bespreek word, sluit in: positiewe emosies, individuele verskille, vindingrykheid, positiewe selfbeoordeling, effektiwiteit, altruïsme, geslag, geboorte-orde, emosionele intelligensie, lokus van beheer, selfgerigtheid en verantwoordelikhied. Motiverende kragte, vorige uitdagings, ‘n gevoel van koherensie en sielkundige stamina is ook elemente waarna verwys word.

Hoe elkeen sy spesifieke situasie geëvalueer het, asook watter vlak van uitdaging in probleme aanvaar word, sou afhang van die kombinasie van hierdie faktore en persoonlike eienskappe soos dit afspeel in die persoonlike ontwikkeling van die individu

binne 'n bepaalde omgewingskonteks. Dit wil voorkom asof veerkragtigheid 'n eienskap is wat vanaf 'n jong ouderdom aangeleer word en dat daar 'n verband ontstaan tussen die mate van swaarkry en gevolglike versterking van hierdie konstruk. 'n Komplekse interaksie tussen persoonlikheid, ondersteunende omgewing en intensiteit van ervarings word uiteindelik geïdentifiseer as die boustone van die konstruk.

Daarbenewens sal verskeie organisasie kulture 'n bepalende rol speel in die voorbereiding of ondersteuning van werknemers om te kan aanpas by 'n veeleisender arbeidsomgewing, om sodoende, meer veerkragtigheid te kan ontwikkel vir toekomstige uitdagings by die werkplek. Of veerkragtigheid suiwer 'n aangeleerde of suiwer oorerflike eienskap is, is nie onbevange duidelik belig deur die antwoorde wat uit die onderhoude verkry is nie. Die persone waarmee onderhoude gevoer is, het verskil ten opsigte van hul siening hieromtrent. Dit wil tog voorkom dat daar 'n komplekse interaksie is ten opsigte van die rol van 'n verskeidenheid persoonlikheids- en omgewingsfaktore en dat organisasies wel kan bydra tot die skepping van 'n klimaat wat veerkragtigheid kan ontgin en bevorder. Daar word van die standpunt uitgegaan dat veerkragtigheid 'n positiewe eienskap is wat algemeen tot voordeel van die werker sowel as die organisasie sal strek, veral in 'n dinamiese, vinnig veranderende tegnologiese werksomgewing.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"It's a shame if we think we know everything. Nothing's wrong with admitting that there are still many things we don't know. New achievements and new knowledge are the direct consequences of a man stopping to wonder, and saying, 'I don't understand.' Then he begins to search, to ponder and even to dream. Without a bit of imagination man would have never learn to make fire. It is the energy of discontented men that propels the world forward."

My sincerest thank you to Liberty Life Branch Manager, Filip Brezovic: without your leadership, commitment, support and dedication, I feel my endeavour would not have been made possible.

To Regional Head, Janice Esterhuyzen, and the entire broker division team at Liberty Life Randburg, thank you for your obligation and co-operation in my desideratum. Thank you too for allowing me to dive into the deepest coves of your untold stories and for the trust you bestowed upon me herein. Without you and your veracity this thesis would not have transpired in such a prosperous fashion.

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To God Almighty for the ability, strength and motivation that surprised me at times.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to my father and mother, without whom it would not have been possible: thank you for your unfailing emotional and financial support. To my family who kept the puzzle pieces together, thank you for always being in my corner; you will never truly know how grateful I am. Gratitudes!

*"Familia est vita"*

## CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Fulfillment</b>	I
<b>Declaration</b>	II
<b>Abstract</b>	III
<b>Opsomming</b>	V
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	VII
<b>List of Figures</b>	XI
<b>List of Appendices</b>	XII
<b>CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Justification of the study	1
1.3 Objectives of the study	4
1.4 Summary	5
1.5 Composition of the study	6
<b>CHAPTER TWO: CHANGING WORLD OF WORK AND PARADIGM SHIFTS</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Paradigm shifts	7
2.2 Changing world of work	9
<b>CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1 Resilience	17
3.2 Resilience – Manifestations	26
3.3 Resilience – Effects of organisations	32
3.4 Summary	34

<b>CHAPTER FOUR: TYPES OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES, COMMITMENT AND POST-MODERNISM</b>	<b>35</b>
4.1 Different organisational cultures	35
4.2 Different types of commitment in different organisations	38
4.2.1 Control (Hierarchy)	38
4.2.2 Compete (Market)	39
4.2.3 Collaboration (Clan)	39
4.2.4 Create (Adhocracy)	40
4.3 Organisational commitment	41
4.4 Movement towards non-commitment	45
4.5 Resilience in the post-modern organisation	45
4.6 Psychological contract	53
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: METHODOLOGY THEORY AND JUSTIFICATION</b>	<b>57</b>
5.1 Methodology	57
5.2 Credibility, transferability and authenticity	59
5.3 Confirmability and dependability	62
5.4 A motivation for having chosen required method	63
5.5 Wagnild & Young Resilience Questionnaire (RS-25)	65
5.6 In-depth interviews	67
5.7 Philosophical orientation that informs the qualitative method	70
5.7.1 Phenomenological existentialism	70
5.7.2 Phenomenology	71
5.7.3 Existentialism	74
5.7.4 Phenomenological existentialism and its relationship	75
5.8 Qualitative research	76
<b>CHAPTER SIX: METHODS USED AND IDENTIFIABLE RESULTS</b>	<b>81</b>
6.1 Methods used	81

6.2	Application of methods used	82
6.3	Identified primary themes	83
	6.3.1 Positive appraisal	84
	6.3.2 Positive affectivity	86
	6.3.3 Degrees of altruism, birth order and gender differences	87
	6.3.4 Emotional intelligence	88
	6.3.5 Individual difference (personality and personality hardiness)	90
	6.3.6 Locus of control	95
	6.3.7 Self-directedness	96
	6.3.8 Human agency	96
	6.3.9 Motivational forces, goal setting, level of incidents experienced	97
	6.3.10 Sense of Coherence (S.O.C)	99
	6.3.11 Learned helplessness	101
	6.3.12 Stamina	103
6.4	Summary	104
 <b>CHAPTER SEVEN: LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION</b>		 <b>108</b>
7.1	Limitations	108
7.2	Recommendations	108
7.3	Conclusion	109
 <b>REFERENCES</b>		 <b>112</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

1.1	The Changing World of Work Perceptions Based on the Man Power Report	10
1.2	Industries' Perspective of Changing World of Work	11
1.3	Agreement about changes in workplace	13
1.4	Perceptions of the flexibility in the workforce	15

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A (RS-25 Scale)	126
Appendix B (Table of participants' scores on the RS-25 Scale)	127
Appendix C - Transcribed interviews	128
Participant 1	128
Participant 2	131
Participant 3	143
Participant 5	151
Participant 6	156
Participant 7	166
Participant 10	174
Participant 11	181
Participant 12	189
Participant 15	193
Participant 16	197
Participant 17	207
Participant 19	225
Participant 20	232
Participant 22	237
Participant 23	247
Participant 24	255
Participant 27	267
Participant 28	277

Appendix D (Illustration of confirmation of raw data [interviews] as attained by a second reader)	285
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## **CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The environment in which people work today has become increasingly volatile and stressful, where more is expected all the time, increased productivity is essential, and aspects such as hyper-competition, heightened volatility and increased uncertainty have become the set norm among *post-modern* organisations. It has been apparent to a number of researchers within the field of career psychology, as well as to countless observers, that the business world is unquestionably going through a transformation phase, especially in respect to what is, or rather what is no longer expected from the working population. All over the world organisations are changing rapidly due to stiff competition and less stable business environments. Organisations and their employees are under immense pressure simply to do more with fewer resources, especially human capital.

In the changing world of work that has so evidently begun to dominate our organisations, it can be argued that the shift has moved from the traditional organisational career paradigm, which is confined by predictable upward movement, to an emerging career facilitated by unpredictable movements and careers which are governed by more than one role, frequent changes and varied experiences. This shift into a new paradigm of work is coalesced by less job security, fewer structural job opportunities and changes in working structures and interpersonal relationship, all of which have sententious impact on the decisions, management and experiences in an individual's career. These factors elicit the dire need to change or assist people in transforming the way in which they approach uncertainty, essentially by being more resilient and durable to the change.

### **1.2 Justification of the study**

Resilience needs to be investigated and appraised because the aforementioned paradigm has shifted so vastly. Given that the working world is now in a crisis of a rapidly-changing and highly-technologically advanced world with an increasing

population and decrease of resources, people need to “adapt or die” to this change. Resilience needs to be studied in order to identify how it can be further manifested in their lives so that they may in fact make career decisions more frequently as required, take more control over their careers, despite the limited skills in this regard, and also so that they may develop those skills further. The construct of resilience should be investigated and evaluated, given that much previous research suggests that resilient individuals will cope better when forced to enter different relationships with the organisation and establish and respect diverse workforces as well as the notion of more working couples. Resilience will enable individuals to find the requirements of the present work environment less threatening and easier to adapt to and thrive upon. Moreover, organisations are able to play a more supportive role to the resilient employee and invest in employee resilience because of the frequency and intensity of changing aspects such as career plateaus, demotions, job loss or even retrenchment. This reiterates the clamorous need to find out what makes people resilient and how can it be learned and applied in a generic or global context, regardless of personal or situational variables. Resilience is essentially the answer to career survival and even prosperity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: *inter alia*, it is a commitment to the development of the skill resilience and perpetual learning thereof, which might well be the only guarantee of employment.

As per Furnham (2000), The Henley Centre, an American-based forecasting centre, made a prediction in 1998 stating that, among many other dynamics, four key points were disputable in the newly-approaching, changing world of work. Firstly, a shorter working day may be applicable as business would run 24 hours a day and shift work would be dominant. Secondly, face to face meetings would no longer be a necessity and audio-visual communication would be used. Thirdly, 25% of people would work from home and 10% of top companies would be virtual organisations. Lastly, and most prominently, careers would begin to offer little job tenure and people would be forced to make provision of periods of unemployment. Given the above predictions and the trends that have emerged thus far, it is clear that the predictions were indeed accurate.

The magnitude of this business revolution was even depicted in an advertisement as early as the mid-nineties when lay-offs were being experienced (Hall & Mirvis, a, 1995, p326):

We can't promise you how long we will be in business. We can't promise you that we won't be bought by another company. We can't promise you that there will be room for promotions. We can't promise you that your job will exist until you reach retirement age. We can't promise you that your money will be available for your pension. We can't expect your undying loyalty... And we aren't sure we want it.

It can thus be said that different working relationships are now a necessity and that the individual responsibility of careers, as well as a broader range of skills, have become trademark tools of the successful applicant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. By having to adapt to less security, performance-related pay, flexible employment scenarios and bare minimum trust between employee and employer, the working population has been forced to meet these demands by embarking on protean and boundary-less careers (later discussed) as well as continuous learning in order to stay afloat. The individuals belonging to the post-modern working force have been encouraged to be more focused on creating a bank of resources in their names, ensuring that they enable themselves to master skills and competencies to remain afloat in their talent pools.

Although this may sound relatively easy on paper, the issue then is as follows: what happens when a person loses his/her job, is demoted, sacrifices a pay-cut to keep a job or experiences vast financial strain and emotional stressors related to the anxiety of uncertainty? Most people have been said to give up, but some people managed to remain totally involved and engrossed in the betterment of their situation without fail. What is it that allows people to cast aside stress, structures and responsibility in an organisation with accelerated pace and to engage in their jobs or in amending the challenges they face, or to rebound from hardship that cripple others?

How does a child, raised in poverty in the townships, rise to become a Supreme Court judge? How does a child from humble rural roots become the Speaker of the House, or a child raised by a teen mom, in an unstable, unpredictable environment, rise to become President of a country? These are not children of privilege, these are children of resilience. There are innumerable examples of the children of immigrants, who lived and grew up in marginal conditions and who, over the years, became the engines of our economic prosperity, the pillars of our educational institutions, the creative geniuses behind our innovations and technological breakthroughs, or perhaps simply the doctor who saved the life of a child (Saltzman & Brooks, 2010).

Many people go through life and face debilitating challenges on a daily basis, challenges that present change, conjectures and vacillation in every aspect of their lives. People experience many emotions, dilemmas and contradiction, not only in a work-life role, but in a life-work role. There have, and always will be, influences and conundrums that will be created in one sphere according to which the effects are felt in another sphere. Sometimes interjections of this nature are completely environmentally induced and this creates a situation in which people are presented with an option: fight or flight? Those people who choose flight are the individuals who crumble in the face of adversity when stressors get too high. However, those that choose to fight, they do so in order to make something better of the situation and to endure the stressors with which they are presented in order to emerge better and stronger. These are the people who ultimately possess, foster and utilize resilience.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The aim of this research is to identify what makes people resilient and how those people use their resilience to succeed rather than to fail. In this research project, resilient people will be selected by means of a questionnaire in order to determine if they are, in fact, resilient; thereafter unstructured interviews will give further insight and shed light on what it is that makes these people resilient and how they use that ability for betterment in the face of adversity. Fundamentally, this research should hope to empower people and organisations to adopt a more positive outlook according to the

changing scenario and impress upon individuals the impact such an outlook can have on the dynamism of their futures.

#### **1.4 Summary**

Ultimately, it is imperative to note that the core element that necessitates the research that was conducted implies that there is a definite paradigm shift in the world of work and the environments in which people are working today. More and more is required of all employees with the access to fewer resources and expendable energy and this results in key psychological capital such as resilience needing to be nurtured, fostered and harnessed from all angles of work and life towards ultimate survival. Work is central to one's life: it gives a sense of purpose and identity as well as providing an income to meet one's material needs. Work is one of the main ways people relate to one another. It is both an individual responsibility and a social activity, frequently involving collaboration in a team. Work renders dignity and fulfilment. But it can also be a source of exploitation and frustration. For families and communities, the availability of decent work is a foundation for stability and social advancement. The world of work is enormously diverse. Yet one of the unifying elements of the experience of women and men from all over the world is the simple reality of working for a living. One of the first pieces of information people are interested in when meeting strangers is what it is that they actually do to earn a living. It provides a shared point of reference around which people get to know one other.

In the 1980s organisations focused on quality. It was about doing the best for clients and providing quality products and services. The 1990s moved to the era of speed. Workers were asked to do more, faster. Faster would be possible if organisations were not in constant change, and change would be a fact of life in the 21st century. Very conservative industries, such as banking and phone companies, merged and changed, which could often leave professionals struggling to remember the name of their employer. Research cited in this thesis shows that the secret for individuals to deal with constant speed and change was essentially, knowing who they are, their natural talents, what they desired, how to connect with the new changes and, above all, being able to

deal effectively with those changes and to survive and thrive the paradigm shift. Hence the reason for an intuitive research about the capability of dealing with change – resilience, and the motive for research that is performed at a humanistic level, which facilitates an understanding and perceptive appreciation for the emotions, thoughts, actions, behaviours and feelings that are associated with resilience.

### **1.5 Composition of the study**

The composition of this thesis is as follows: Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research problem, focusing on the relevance of resilience, the relevance of investigating organisational factors, such as the changing world of work and the associated paradigm shifts that are potentially related to the fostering of resilience and also provides an overview of the value and objectives of the research in light of this changing world of work. In addition, Chapter 2 identifies the situational variables being investigated in this research, as touched on in Chapter 1, and their current effect. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth literature review on resilience and its counterparts being investigated in this research: namely, resilience, its manifestations and the effects it has on organisations. Chapter 4 focuses on the additional attributes that have been identified as predictors or facilitators of resilience in the organisational context, such as commitment, different types of commitment and different organisational cultures. Chapter 5 focuses on research methodology and theory (utilized in this study) and the justification thereof, describing the research design(s) and the emphasis on qualitative research. Chapter 6 reports on the results of the qualitative research data and the findings in terms of the in-depth questionnaires as well as the research measures, research procedures and qualitative data analysis techniques used. Chapter 7 looks at the summary and closure of the abovementioned results and the final chapter, Chapter 8, looks at the limitations, recommendations and conclusions of the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: CHANGING WORLD OF WORK AND PARADIGM SHIFTS**

### **2.1 Paradigm shifts**

The main objective of this investigation is to outline how resilience is manifested within an individual and how that manifestation of resilience in turn affects the organisation - how resilience becomes apparent in the workplace in today's turbulent working environment. In this chapter the changing world in which we live and how it has altered in respect of behaviour in organisations will be discussed, with special reference to the personal qualities required from workers to adjust to a fast changing, highly technologically-driven environment. Also this chapter will address the aforementioned theoretical issues of resilience, where it may stem from, how it is situated in different workplace cultures and commitment in this era.

This chapter will not only comprise of the theoretical overview regarding the construct of resilience but will also outline all the contributing factors of resilience in order for one to better understand where it stems from, who or how one possess resilience, whether it can be learned and, if so, how this might be achieved. In this day and age, as will be indicated in the literature review, it is pivotal that all individuals harness resilience in order to survive in the tumultuous business environment that dictates seventy-five percent of every individual's life and the majority of his/her waking hours.

Resilience, now more so than ever, has become one of the most useful and undeniably important tools an employee can utilize to function effectively in today's modern world of work. It has been argued that today's working environment seems to demand more and more of people's daily resources, time, energy and investment of such resources for no guarantee of a return on that investment. Today's world of work is unrecognizable from the workplace of only a few years ago. Employers and employees have embraced revolutionary communications advances, the introduction of flexible working arrangements, greater diversity in the workplace and significant restructuring of working arrangements through outsourcing and off-shoring. With the previously-mentioned aspects of increased competition, heightened sensitivity of information, advancements

of technology and boundaryless careers, it seems as if the working environment has most certainly been an advocate of uncertainty and constant change (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006).

A recent report issued by *ManPower* in Milwaukee, based on research conducted in 2006 using the employment population numbers, illustrated the current expectations and realities of the working world. The report advocated that by 2016, 81% of employees did not expect to work beyond the age of 65, but a majority of employers wanted them to do so (52%). Moreover, a clear majority of employers expected to measure their staff on productivity (68%) and for those staff to develop more skills (72%) but only a minority of employees believed this would be the case (22% and 49% respectively). The report also made reference to the fact that the vast majority of employers thought that IT (Information Technology) would have had a greater impact on work (84%), compared with less than half of workers (43%), and that home-working would not significantly increase because of lack of demand from employers and employees (25% and 15% respectively). It was noted that workers wanted to work flexibly (63%) and employers recognized this as a significant benefit in terms of retention (84%). Having said that, however, employers believed that more men would stay at home to bring up the family (41%) and that women would continue to break through the glass ceiling, playing an increasingly important role in management (83%).

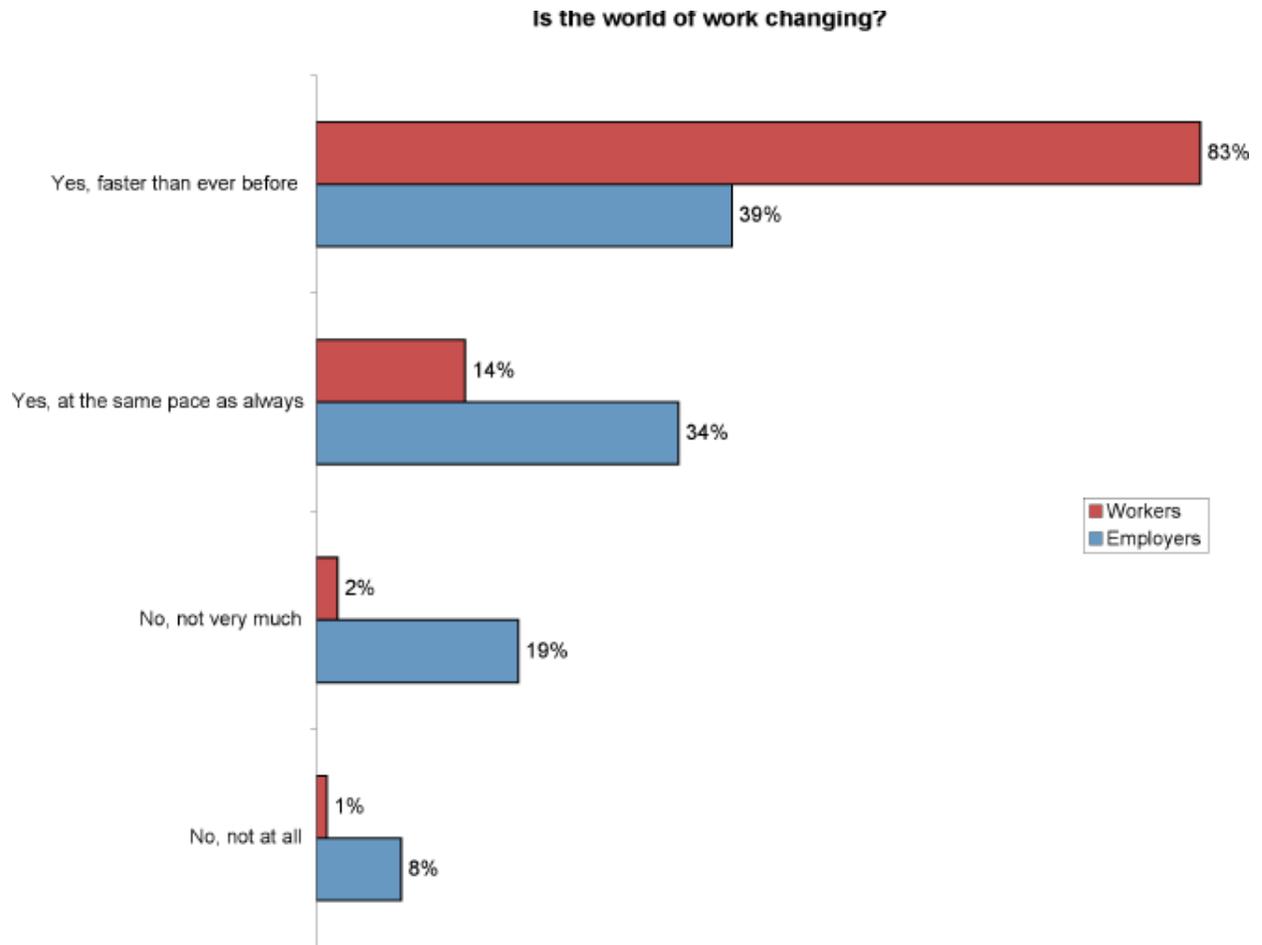
In order to fully demonstrate the effects and perceptions surrounding the changing worlds of work, the following can be considered as a guideline to the magnitudes of the future illustrated changes as well as how employees and employers expect to receive such change. *Manpower* furthermore recognizes that the world of work is changing so much so that organisations today face a range of people issues: identifying the skills they need to succeed in the future; developing the right recruitment and retention programs at every level of an organisation; identifying the training needs of a workforce; looking outside a traditional labour pool to consider a truly diverse workforce, including older workers and those from overseas; managing downsizing and considering how best to outsource or off-shore their operation. What also seems to be instrumental in

these uncertain changes is the notion of changing demographics (an ageing population and a declining birth-rate) which means that the workforce is shrinking and will continue to do so, making it hard to find people with the right skills and even harder to develop a larger talent pool.

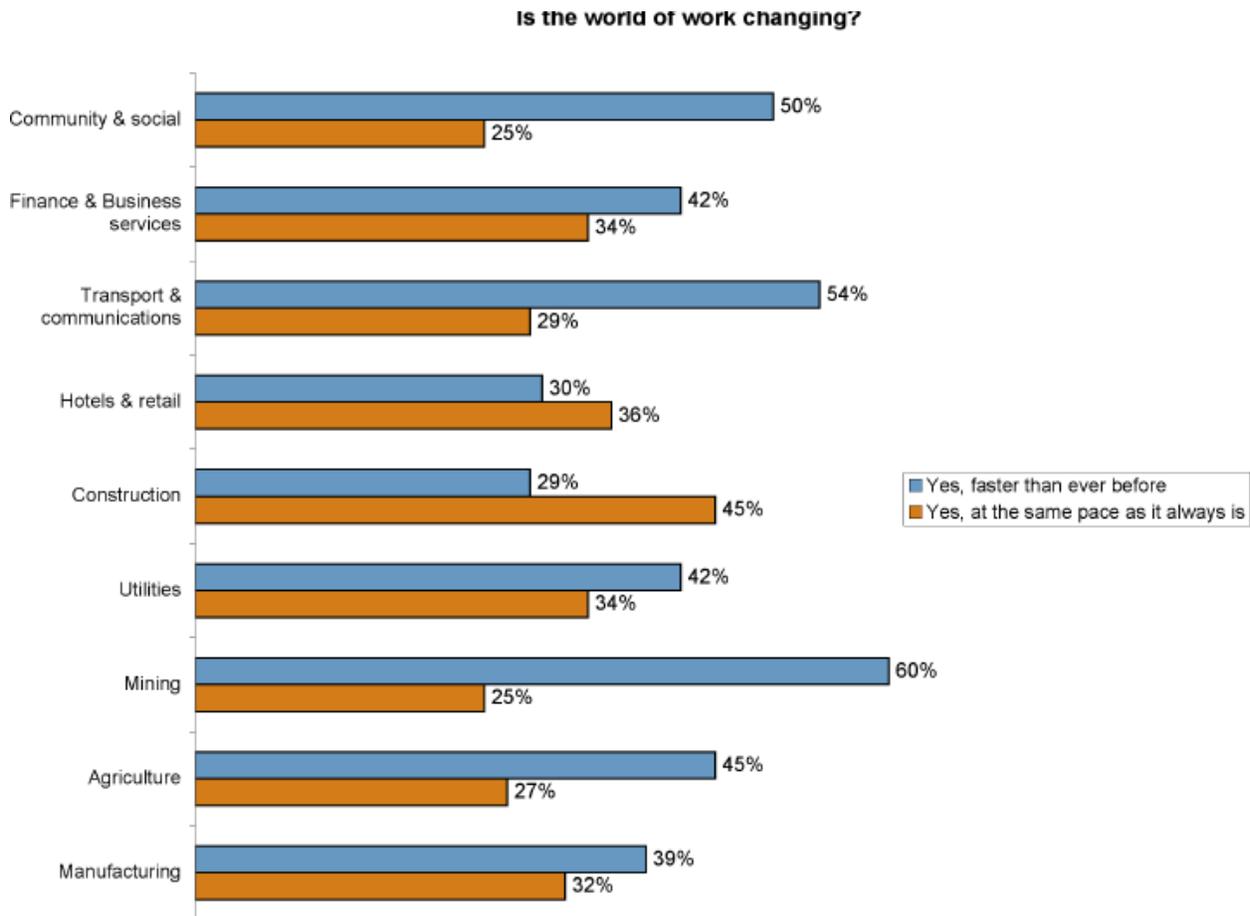
However, for those people with the right skills or those willing to re-skill, the opportunities are many and varied. This not only makes reference to the hard skill to which we can relate in terms of training and development but also (and more importantly in this research) the development of soft skills and psychological resources. Flexibility and skills development will be at the heart of the workplace of the future. Employers need people who have the right skills and a workforce that is flexible to compete in the global economy. Workers also want more flexibility – the opportunities to work the hours that best suit them and their other interests or needs – for example, in bringing up a family.

## **2.2 The changing world of work**

The *Manpower* report too suggests that employers need to look beyond their traditional sources of labour to help meet skills shortages. This ultimately would include engaging with older workers, mentors, coaches, mothers returning to work and using migrant labour as this paradigm shift is highly favourable in terms of temporary work or durations of jobs and roles. The challenge faced by business is ever-present and growing. All organisations need to take urgent steps to see that they have the processes and systems in place to take account for this. The key will be to adopt these challenges as opportunities and to ensure that staff are aware of what will be required of them in the future, the ability to handle this change and to use it to the best of their abilities in ensuring a return of investment. Change no longer only focuses on what is fundamental at an organisational level but also what is elementary on an individual level.



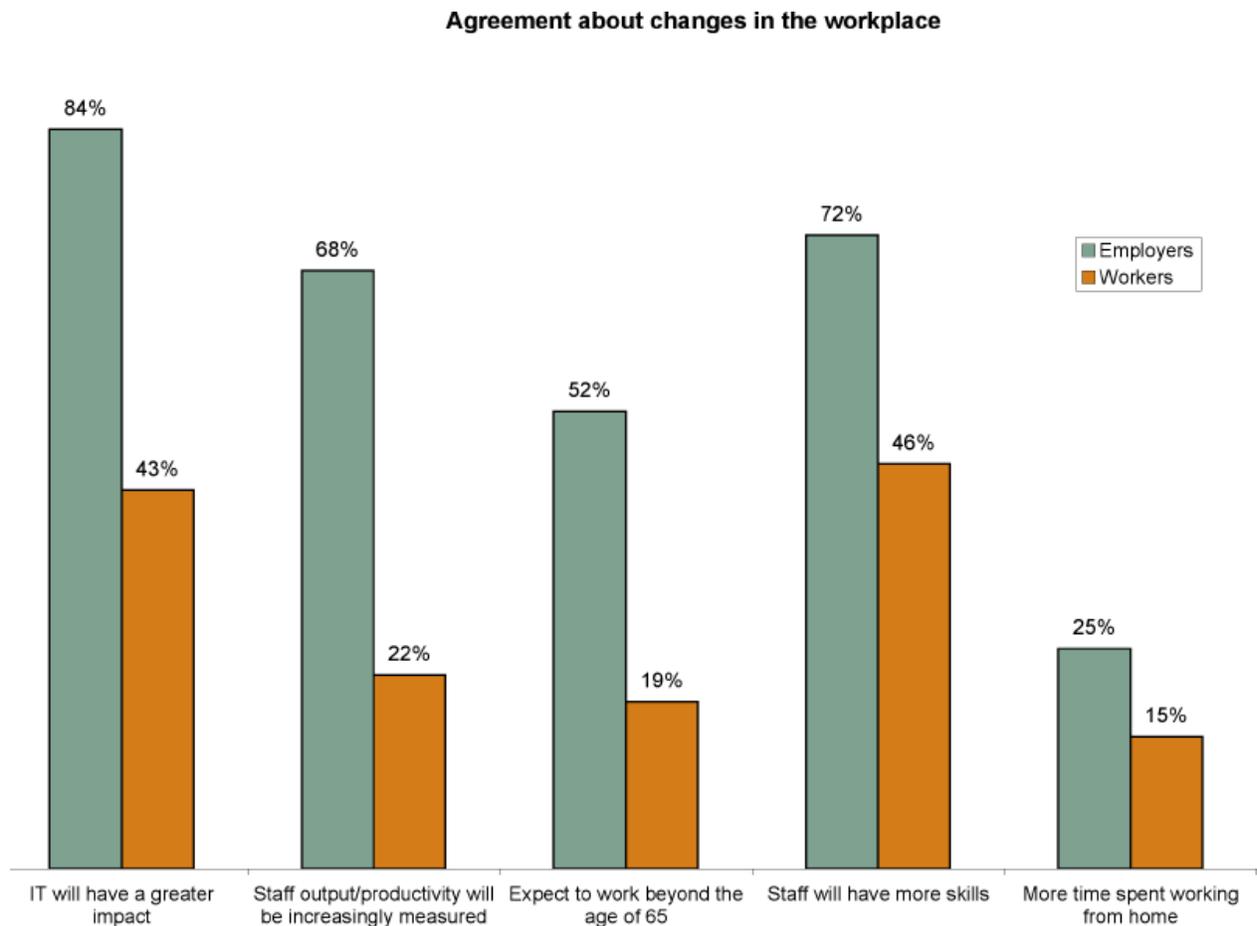
**Figure 1.1.** The Changing World of Work Perceptions Based on the *Manpower* Report



**Figure 1.2.** Industries’ Perspective of Changing World of Work.

There is a clear disparity between businesses and employees in their perceptions of how the workplace will have changed in ten years’ time and perhaps this is the cause of the problems experienced between lines of management and employees. The majority of businesses agree that the workplace of the future will be an environment more influenced by technology, where staff will work later in life, where their workers will be increasingly measured on their output/productivity and that workers will have developed more skills, which as mentioned previously, makes crisp and unambiguous references to soft skills such as resilience. However, in contrast, less than half of employees agree that any of these changes will affect how they do their job in ten years’ time. Employers

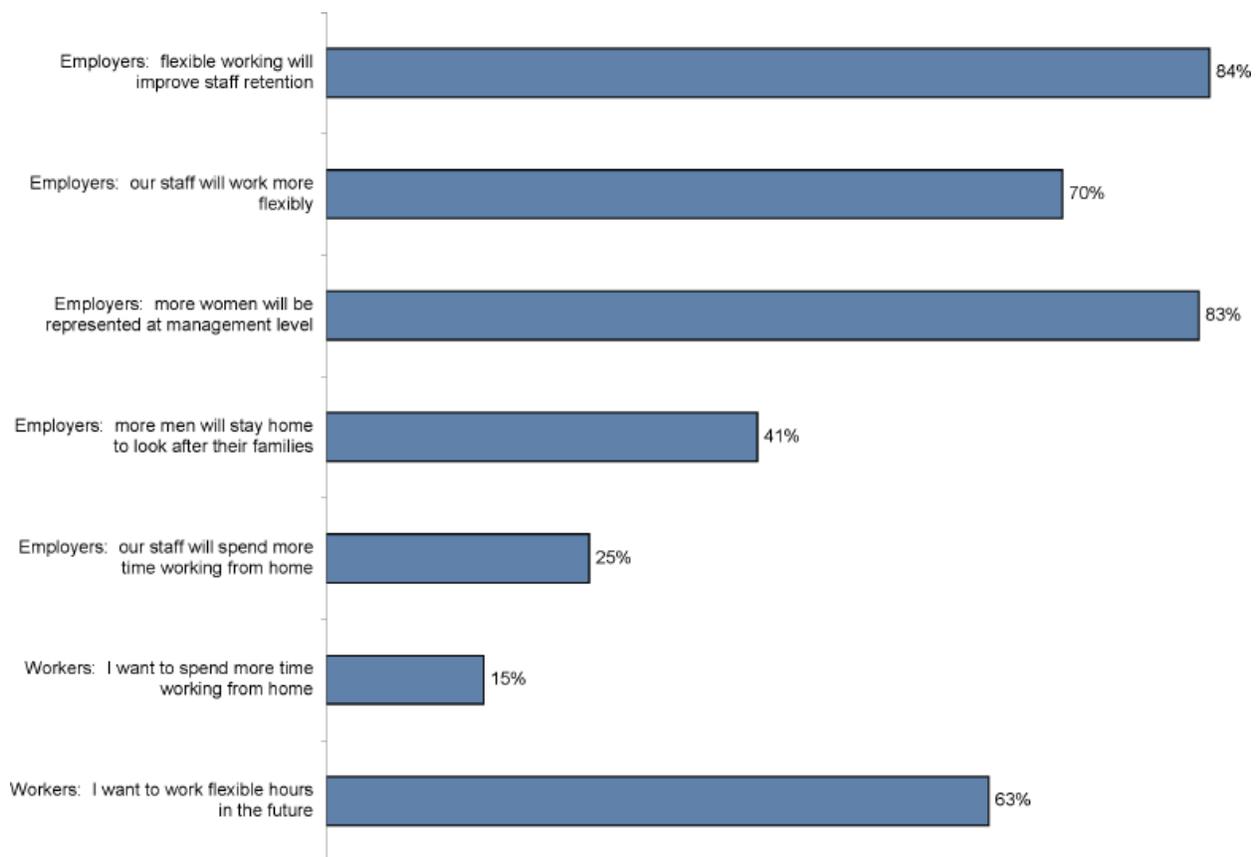
see output/productivity as a clear concern for the future. Over two thirds (68%) of businesses agree that in ten years' time their staff will increasingly be measured on this. Workers, on the other hand, do not recognize this as so important - less than one quarter (22%) of employees believes this will be the case. Businesses need to set clear goals, objectives and direction to make it clear to workers that productivity is the key, while employers should not lose sight of the fact that aspects such as job satisfaction, commitment and positive working environments are what enable high productivity in employees. The majority of businesses believe that IT will have a greater impact upon how they operate in ten years' time (84%). However, only half of workers feel IT will impact on how they will work (43%). Employees identify skills development as the most likely change to the way in which they will work in the future (49%); however, this sentiment falls significantly short of the view of businesses (72%). The impact of an ageing population looks set to create problems. In light of this statement, one ought to consider whether the ideals of coping and thriving in this changing work of work with rapid advances are potentially detrimental in this regard. There is a notable difference between employers and workers concerning the future age of the workplace: more than half of businesses (52%) agree that they will want staff to work beyond the age of 65 – but just 19% of employees say they will do this.



**Figure 1.3.** Change is the workplace

Agreements about changes in the workplace suggest that labour market flexibility will enable businesses to compete effectively in the global marketplace. In a changing work environment, employers must also recognize that workers want more control of how and when they work. On this note, it should be mentioned that many studies relating to control and autonomy in the employee's job role and responsibilities have actually resulted in less stress and higher productivity (Brummelhuis, Van der Lippe, Kluwer & Flap, 2008). This can cover such areas as variable hours, part-time working, home-working, job-sharing or working compressed working weeks.

Adopting flexible working practices is of significant benefit in attracting and managing a more resilient workforce. Businesses believe that a flexible approach to work will be a major driver in improving staff retention (84%) and that the majority believe their workers will work more flexibly in 2016 (70%). At the same time, 63% of employees want to make use of flexible working hours in the future. Interestingly, neither employers nor workers expect a marked increase in home working: 25% of employers believe their staff will spend more time working from home and 15% of workers believe they will do likewise. Employers recognize that there is a shift in the role men and women will play in the workforce. It is important to note here that this particular statement is of significant effect, given that many of the resilient individuals over a multitude of studies were, in fact, the single parents of the organisations. The future workplace looks set to be one where women play a greater role than today – 83% of businesses believe women will be more represented at management level in 10 years' time. And at the same time, men will increasingly take on a role in bringing up a family, with 41% of employers believing more men will choose to stay at home to do this. This leads to the question regarding gender and individual differences when identifying where resilience has stemmed from.



**Figure 1.4.** Perceptions of the flexibility in the workforce.

This figure suggest that the workplace of 10 years' time will have changed noticeably. IT will play a greater role; generally the workforce will be older; people will have developed more skills; there will be an increased focus on productivity; flexibility will increasingly be the norm; women will hold more management positions and men will play a larger role in raising children. Yet at the same time there are a number of discrepancies between the views of employers and workers, and the expectations each has. Nowhere is this clearer than when considering at what age people will stop working: older workers have a wealth of experience and, whilst more employers expect those over the age of 65 will still be working, very few workers want to do so when they reach that point. Flexibility will be at the heart of the workplace of the future – a flexible

approach about how an employer manages its workforce to meet the challenges of a competitive marketplace, and the need to recognize the desires of employees to have more control over how and when they work, will be required. A very real deliverable is for employers to address the skills shortage by taking a flexible approach – looking beyond their traditional labour pool or providing flexible working practices that allow mothers to work part-time. It will be important for workers to understand the challenges businesses will face but also for employers to recognize the needs of employees as well. The challenge for employers and employees is how to anticipate the issues and opportunities which the changing world of work presents. It is not enough to ignore these or pay lip service to them – they must be planned and proactive steps need to be taken to ensure that the needs of all parties can be convinced where possible.

## CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1 Resilience

Much emphasis has been placed on the ability for people to “bounce back”, flourish and cope in the face of adversity, as well as on flexibility in the face of change. But what does one really mean by that? In order to understand the construct that enables people to survive and thrive better, one must explore the meaning of the construct. Resilience, as per Liebenberg & Ungar (2008) can extensively be described as (in the context of exposure to significant adversity) the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity, individually and collectively, to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways. This can be in light of both the organisational culture and the culture from which one stems. Essentially, resilience is the ability to thrive in the face of adversity (Kanigel, 2010). Larry Mallak (1997), a Professor of Industrial Engineering at Western Michigan University, who studies and teaches organisational management, argues that resilience is more than just coping; that's keeping your head above water. Being resilient means being able to walk out of the water.

In addition, career resilience can be explained as the ability to adapt constructively to changing circumstances. It encompasses welcoming job and organisational change, looking forward to working with new and different people, having self-confidence and being willing to take risks. Career resilience originates from the concepts of hardiness, self-efficacy and achievement motivation (London, 1993). The level of stress an individual is likely to experience and the degree of its adverse effects, such as psychological strain and other stressors in an organisation, is largely dependent on how he/she deals with the situation and, in effect, copes with it. The way in which people cope with these challenges affects their psychological, physical and social wellbeing, and resilience plays a monumental role in the efforts one makes to manage stressful situations and to appraise it as challenges, rather than harmful stressors.

Resilience emerged strongly in the organisational context in the late 1990s with the release of Paul C. Stoltz's 1997 book, *Adversity Quotient: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities*, which was a direct emanation in light of psychologist and author Daniel Coleman's concept of emotional intelligence. Stoltz, a corporate consultant, theorizes that a person's success in the world is based largely on his ability to cope with adversity. According to his research, people with a high "adversity quotient", make more money, are more innovative, and are better problem solvers than those less adept at handling misfortune. Stoltz often makes reference to one having an adversity quotient (AQ) similar to an emotional intelligence quotient (EQ) and argues that more people in an organisation with a high resilience or high AQ would result in an organisation with more resilient attributes as a whole.

Some might argue that it sounds like the latest in pop psychology or the next chapter of a *self-help* book, but social scientists have long been intrigued by that which enables some people to thrive in the face of adversity, while others crumple under the pressure. In the 1950s, psychologist Richard S. Lazarus began developing the "Transactional Model of Stress", based on the idea that a person's reaction to a difficult predicament is determined in large part by how they appraise the situation and whether they feel confident in facing it. One may again argue further and say that resilience has a simple genetic component to it, but according to Kanigel (2010), so far no one has found a gene that either helps or hinders its development. Experts agree that for the most part it's a learned trait, based on people's life experiences and specialization. It can be debated that one's home experiences and the age old question of nature versus nurture must have a generous impact on the way in which people are able to learn as well as to adapt.

Richard H. Price (2000), an organisational psychologist at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and Psychology Department goes so far as to affirm that people build resilience through encounters with what he terms "just-manageable" difficulties. Price also alleges that people can be overwhelmed when faced with impossible adversity and that it does not improve their resilience. However, if they are

confronted with a set of challenging experiences over time that are “just manageable”, they can build a set of coping skills.

Siebert, author of the book *The Survivor Personality: Why Some People Are Stronger, Smarter and More Skillful at handling Life's Difficulties ... And How You Can Be, Too* (1996), agrees, likening these life experiences to the incremental stress exercises that law enforcement and military training organisations use to build physical and emotional endurance in recruits. As a paratrooper, Siebert explains how he learned firstly to fall and roll into a pile of sand, then to jump off a raised platform, and finally, to leap from a 34-foot tower before he was ready to leap out of a plane. Siebert claims that each time he overcame an obstacle, he gained a sense of confidence and mastery. People who are able to learn from ever-greater challenges like these are more likely to become resilient than those who are coddled or those who face enormous obstacles right from the get-go (Kanigel, 2010).

Most of what's now known about resilience is taken from a forty year longitudinal study of native Hawaiians that began in 1954 and which was conducted by researchers Emmy E. Werner, from the University of California at Davis, and Ruth S. Smith, a clinical psychologist working on the island of Kauai. Together the two followed nearly 700 subjects from birth through middle age. Many of them grew up in families battered by poverty, alcoholism, domestic violence, disease, and mental illness. One would confer that those who came from the most troubled homes would grow up to have significant problems—and many of them did. But what was interesting is that at least one in ten managed to develop into competent and autonomous young adults who worked well, played well, loved well, and expected well (Werner & Smith, 1989). Perry (2006) adds that resilience can be built upon from as early as childhood, where children learn by being exposed to more distress and tolerate more traumas which, as a result, build up a higher adaption and stress-response mechanism.

Werner and Smith (1989) identify four qualities that many of the successful survivors shared: an active approach to problem solving; a tendency to perceive their experiences, even traumatic ones, in a positive light; an ability to gain positive attention

from others and a strong reliance on faith that encouraged them to maintain a positive outlook. The researchers also state that what might have played a pivotal role in the development of these children was the social support; the most resilient subjects all had close relationships with a caring adult—if not a parent then a neighbour, friend, or relative—or strong ties to a social group.

In the mid-'70s through the mid-'80s, psychologists Salvatore Maddi and Suzanne Kobasa, from the University of Chicago, helped refine the understanding of resilience with a 12-year study of 450 Illinois Bell Telephone managers going through the trauma of industry deregulation. An annual psychological and medical test was done on the employees for six years before the disintegration of the telephone company and the same employees were followed for an additional six years thereafter. According to results published by Maddi and Kobasa (1983), two-thirds of the group fell apart and had suffered from heart attacks, depression, anxiety, alcoholism or divorce. The remaining third not only survived but actually thrived. Maddi and Kobasa (1983) also found that the subjects that were successful shared three qualities now known in the field as the three Cs of hardiness: a commitment to what they were doing, an enthusiasm for challenge, and a sense of control over their lives. These were people who struggled to have an influence, but rather than being passive, had kept learning from their experiences, whether positive or negative (Maddi & Kobasa, 1983).

What is more, is that in a follow-up study, Maddi and Khoshaba (2005) found that the hardest telephone company employees had all experienced disorderly childhoods marked by divorce, frequent moves, illness or death in the family, and were exposed to other stresses, but they had been identified by their families as the ones to succeed and accepted their fate. They were taught to believe they could do better and they did. Resilience has a deep-rooted relationship with faith (conviction) and belief, as well as with hope, to the extent that without hope, resilience is not possible. The notion of “I will succeed” no longer exists if hope fails.

Siebert (1996) has also looked extensively into what he calls “the survivor personality.” In 30 years of research on Vietnam survivors, Holocaust survivors, gunshot victims, parents who lost children and others who have been desolate to significant traumas, he

found that the most successful survivors tended to have curious, playful, adaptive personality traits. Other common attributes included persistence, optimism, flexibility, and self-confidence. Consequently Siebert (1996) found that people who scored high on tests of resilience or hardiness had other attributes employers appreciate. In addition, Maddi and Khoshaba (2005) found that they became sick less often and use fewer health benefits than less-hardy colleagues.

Kanigel (2010) also observes that resilient employees tend to be less prone to burnout, stress, and other pitfalls of the workaday world. One may suspect that resilience in itself is a learned trait that stems from one's very own personal experiences. Notice that each of the actions or behaviours above were learned, or chosen. The resilience these people have developed or had to develop was not some genetic gift or spontaneous phenomenon: they had taken active roles in creating the experience of the life they were living, and the level of resilience they had developed (Siebert, 1996). Siebert further illustrates that resilient people are flexible and action oriented, they have variety, they are creative; they find internal joy and, above all, they have, as have already been indicated, faith and belief.

Resilient people share three traits: acceptance of reality, a deep belief that life is meaningful and an uncanny ability to improvise (Coutu, 2002). The ability to make do with what life has handed you, or improvise, is undoubtedly what characterizes resilience and resilient people. French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss (1966) labelled this skill "bricolage" and psychologists have followed suit. Coutu additionally notes that, intriguingly, the roots of the word are closely tied to the concept of resilience, which literally means to "bounce back". "Bricolage" in the contemporary sense can be defined as a kind of inventiveness, an ability to improvise a solution to a problem without proper or obvious tools or materials. In addition, *Bricoleurs* are always tinkering, always creating and always using innovative practices to solve problems. They make the most of what they have, putting objects to unfamiliar uses. Coutu explains that in the concentration camps, for example, resilient inmates knew to pocket pieces of string or wire whenever they found them. The string or wire might later become useful—to fix a

pair of shoes, perhaps, which in freezing conditions might make the difference between life and death.

Karl E. Weick (1993), a professor of organisational behaviour at the University Of Michigan Business School in Ann Arbor, and one of the most respected thinkers on organisational psychology, maintains that there is good evidence that when people are put under pressure, they regress to their most habituated ways of responding. Weick & Sutcliffe (2007) have also verbalized that what we do not expect under life-threatening pressure, is creativity; in other words, the rules and regulations that make some companies appear less creative may actually make them more resilient in times of real turbulence. Essentially, in an organisational climate, dictated by many stressors, disorder and complete chaos, people instinctively revert to what gave them structure initially and again create order from that.

Resilience is the notion of positive adaptation when faced with significant adversity or environmental threats. This definition implies that significant threats or severe adversity are present and that the individual or organisation copes positively with those threats (Saltzman & Brooks 2010). The research that has been done on resilience has shown that being more resilient, as opposed to less resilient, leads to beneficial and constructive consequences for both individuals and organisations. This, in turn, is why many organisations have adopted strategies to equip their employees with coping mechanisms, rather than training them on any other competency in the hope that they become more resilient as individuals. Ultimately those individuals collectively create a resilient organisation. According to Saltzman and Brooks (2010), there are three main facets of organisational resilience: firstly, paying attention to and mitigating the effects of the external environmental factors, secondly, the investing in organisational capabilities and lastly, the recognition of achievements.

Saltzman and Brooks (2010), emphasize that the key internal aspects, from within an organisation, which keep employees' resilience afloat in an organisation are clear and compelling leadership, engaged employees (co-workers) and quality work processes. Externally Saltzman and Brooks accentuate that aspects such as attractive offerings,

service orientation and customers that are brand advocates are what fuels resilience for the organisation as an entirety. Robertson (2010) alleges that there are resilient personality characteristics and that one cannot simply say that someone is resilient or not, but rather that their resilience is dictated by the situation and the demands thereof, as well as one's underlying personality that equips one to deal with those demands in a demanding situation. Robertson's concept of the five characteristics is as follows:

Confidence: having feelings of competence, effectiveness in coping with stressful situations and strong self-esteem. The frequency with which individuals experience positive and negative emotions is also key. Adaptability and Flexibility; adapting to changing situations beyond our control. In many situations resilience involves coping well with change and recovering from its impact. Purposefulness: having a clear sense of purpose, values, drive and direction helps individuals to persist and achieve in the face of setbacks. Social support: being able to build good relationships with others and to get support from them can help overcome adversity.

Furthermore, studies by one of the key figures in positive psychology, Barbara Fredrickson (2001), have illustrated that positive emotional experiences broaden one's thought/action repertoire and build their psychological resources, so that they are able to cope better with adversity in the future. Robertson (2010) further pronounces that tough, negative experiences ("what doesn't kill me makes me stronger") also help to build resilience – but only if they do not go on unrelentingly, are interspersed with periods of respite and have a clear and worthwhile purpose. Being resilient is not just about coping and being stoical; resilience provides a basis for succeeding and even thriving – rather than merely enduring - difficult times. Although resilience can be built through day to-day experiences, some more systematic support can make a big difference. Robertson also indicated how the topics of resilience have come to assert that resilience itself is not necessarily a simple trait or behaviour that is encompassed by an individual; it is rather the interaction between the individual and the situation or circumstances that elicits the need to be resilient.

Resilience, as a construct of positive psychological capital on the PsyCap inventory, has shown to be a positive resource for enhancing employee positive work behaviour. As Wright, Cropanzano and Bonett (2007) as well as Luthans, Youssef and Avolio (2007) have stipulated, individuals have been given the opportunity to learn ways in which to enhance their positive work behaviour through PsyCap interventions. Furthermore, Avolio and Luthans (2006) confirm that, although this behaviour related construct is readily open and malleable to change and development, state-like positive capabilities are still more stable than purely momentary states. Given that resilience has been proven to be such a readily available trait to learn, some may argue that it makes much business and psychological sense, individually and collectively, to harness and foster this construct in order to build a workforce that can complement or, alternatively, conquer the demands of the post-modern working environment.

Empirical evidence has furthermore supported the concept that positive states and state-like constructs, such as resilience, have a positive relationship and impact on organisational behaviours and outcomes (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Resilience allows not only for reactive recovery, but also for proactive learning and growth through conquering challenges. Stated differently, resilience may incorporate both negative setbacks and positive - but potentially overwhelming - events. Resilience allows self-directing motivating mechanisms and processes to foster job performance and positive work-related attitudes. Resilience recognises the need to take both proactive and reactive measures in the face of adversity. Reactively, resilience uniquely recognises the potential that setbacks, traumas and even positive - but overwhelming events - can have a destructive impact even on the most hopeful and optimistic individuals as they endeavour to move towards emotional stability.

The capacity for resilience promotes the recognition and acknowledgement of such impact, allowing the affected individual the time, energy and resource investment to recover, rebound and return to an equilibrium point. Proactively, resilience also allows the use of setbacks as springboards or opportunities beyond that equilibrium point (Bonanno, 2004; Luthans, 2002; Luthans, Vogelgesang & Lester, 2006; Reivich & Shatte, 2002; Ryff & Singer, 2003; Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; Tedeschi, Park &

Calhoun, 1998, Youssef & Luthans, 2005). Finally, resilience is measurable and has been shown, by various authors, to be applicable and statistically related to enhanced performance in the workplace (Coutu, 2002; Harland, Harrison, Jones & Reiter-Palmon, 2005; Luthans, Avolio, Walumbwa & Li, 2005; Luthans *et al.* 2006; Waite & Richardson, 2004; Worline, Dutton, Frost, Kanov, Lilius & Maitlis, 2002; Zunz, 1998), hence the calling for a deeper and more coherent understanding and conceptualization of where this construct stems from and how to channel it constructively.

Through the resilience capacity, individuals search for and find meaning despite circumstances that do not lend themselves to planning, preparation, rationalization or logical interpretation (Coutu, 2002). This enables the broadening of one's spectrum of problem-solving skills, adaptive mechanisms and thought-action repertoires, while building inventories and buffers of intellectual, social, physical and, most importantly, psychological resources, critical for upward spirals of performance, adaptation and well-being, in the face of hardships (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). Lastly, to emphasise the extent to which significant research in the domain of resilience as a construct can be to the success of individuals as well as to organisations, Youssef and Luthans (2007) conducted a study which exemplifies that resilience is, in fact, positively related to organisational commitment, job satisfaction and work happiness.

Ultimately, it can be argued that resilience is present in all individuals and that it takes an extremely stressful incident or experience to awaken the use of such a trait, or that, alternatively, it needs to be engineered from the innumerable degree of potential that humans have, and is then fostered in a learned behaviour. Many people have an uncanny ability to recover from the most severe trauma and distress, particularly if they have the benefit of general basic human needs satisfied and have received strong social support. However, it is the way in which people adapt and learn to use those resources, applied skills, and learned behaviours to overcome obstacles that ensure the route to success and happiness, both inside an organisation and inside themselves as individuals. Resilience is largely influenced by the meaning people have in their lives, the connectivity they have with people, the nature of the interpersonal relationships they

possess, the moral purpose and the sheer optimism, future-mindedness and hope that drive them to want more and not accept failure or defeat.

### **3.2 Resilience – manifestations**

Resilience, from the Latin *resilire* (to recoil or leap back), is a general concept related to positive adaptation in the context of challenge. In the physical sciences and engineering, resilience typically refers to the capacity to withstand stress or strain without breaking, or to recover original form, like a spring or rubber band. In the science of human development, resilience has broad and diverse meanings, including recovery from traumatic experiences, overcoming disadvantage to succeed in life and withstanding stress to function well in the tasks of life (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006).

Essentially, resilience refers to patterns of positive adaptation or development manifested in the context of adverse experiences. While people have been fascinated with stories of resilience for thousands of years, judging from the many ancient tales of individuals who triumph over adversity, the scientific study of resilience only began in the 1960s and 1970s, as previously mentioned. Nonetheless, great strides have been made in the first four decades of research and it is clear that early childhood is an important window of time for understanding and promoting resilience. It is during these years that previous research suggests resilience was manifested in an individual, based on the life experiences from as early as that age. The roots of competence are established and many of the most important protective systems for human development emerge (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006). Some children develop resilience through natural processes, while other children need help (the learned aspect of resilience). These early years have proclaimed to hold great promise for interventions to prevent and reduce risk, boost resources, promote competence and build a strong foundation for future development, not only through life, but in the working world as well.

Moreover, it can be said that the manifestations of resilience have a tendency of natural occurrence and that understanding naturally-occurring resilience provides important clues for policies and practices designed to promote healthier development in children

who are threatened by adversity or disadvantage and which evidently becomes apparent as they take on heavier and more challenging aspects in life, such as the world of work. It is also necessary to learn how to foster positive change in respect of the contributing factors of resilience which might explain how the odds of favourable development could be improved. Prevention and intervention studies are required to test the ideas emanating from resilience research, to learn the best goals, methods and developmental timing for interventions, and also to learn which approaches work best for whom, all of which once again points to the origins of resilience and how it is manifested in individuals.

Masten and Gewirtz (2006) profess that in order to study resilience; one must define and operationalize it. This has proven to be challenging for several key reasons. Firstly, resilience refers to a variety of phenomena, such as recovery after the loss of a parent, normalization of behaviour after a child has been adopted from an institution, school success among children growing up in poverty or in dangerous neighbourhoods and mental health in the children of mentally-ill parents. Secondly, resilience is an inferential construct that involves human judgments about desirable and undesirable outcomes as well as definitions of threat or risk and a clear definition of the criteria for “doing OK in life”. In addition, the standards and measures of adversity or risk confronting the individual should be completely comprehensible in order to establish the manifestation.

A child who develops well may be viewed as being adaptive or competent, but not necessarily as manifesting resilience, unless some explicit or implicit threshold of risk or adversity has been met. It is also clear that there are multiple criteria according to which success in life may be judged; adaptation (good or bad) is inherently multidimensional and multifaceted in nature. Thus, it is not surprising that definitions and measures have varied, greatly complicating comparisons across studies and the task of building a coherent body of knowledge about resilience in development (and hence the justification not only for the study but also for the vast array of definitions on resilience). Thirdly, many processes at multiple levels of analysis are likely to be involved in human resilience. To understand resilience, one must understand the complex adaptation and

development of living systems in context over time, from “neurons to neighbourhoods” and beyond. Nonetheless, findings from the first generation of resilience research have been remarkably consistent, suggesting the influence of powerful but common adaptive processes.

In light of specifics of the manifestations and stemming of resilience, Masten and Gewirtz (2006) explain that there is exciting convergence in developmental research on competence, resilience, behavioural and emotional problems, brain development and prevention science, all of which underscore the importance of early childhood for building protections into human development at multiple levels, within the child (individual), the family, the community (organisations) and their interactions. Problems in learning and self-control often begin in the pre-school years and are related to the quality of available parenting. Effective preventive intervention programs during infancy and pre-school years support parenting in multiple ways and provide enriched learning environments for children with the result that these children have proved to be more functional in resilience in their adult years, given the sound foundation. Early success in school – related to effective care, positive home-school connections and effective classroom practices – appears to be a key segue to resilience, particularly for very disadvantaged children. Systems of care that focus on building competence and strengths in young children and their families, along with reducing risk and addressing problems at an early age, are yielding promising successes as well as more competent social functioning and coping-mechanisms later in life.

Masten and Gewirtz (2006) also make reference to the ideal of neurobiology of resilience and how this notion is beginning to emerge. Indeed, new insights into brain development and plasticity (malleability), the way in which stress interacts with development, and the interplay of genes and experience in shaping development, promise to revolutionize the science of resilience and prevention. Essentially, an attempt at an explanation into the manifestation and cultivation of resilience can be motivated by research which indicates that, during the early childhood years, it is important for children to have a good quality of care and opportunities for learning,

adequate nutrition and community support for families in order to facilitate positive development of cognitive, social and self-regulation skills.

Young children with healthy attachment relationships and good internal adaptive resources are very likely to get off to a good start in life, well equipped with the human and social capital for success as they enter work and society. Such children typically manifest resilience in the face of adversity, as long as their fundamental protective skills and relationships continue to operate and develop. The greatest threats to young children occur when key protective systems for human development are harmed or disrupted. Ultimately resilience is manifested in early childhood: it is particularly important that children have the protections afforded by attachment bonds with competent and loving caregivers, the stimulation and nutrition required for healthy brain development, opportunities to learn and to experience the pleasure of mastering new skills and the limit-setting or structure needed to develop self-control in order to thrive as a resilient adult in life.

On the other hand, if one had to retract from the biological or developmental side of resilience by means of life stages and ages, the ideals or concepts that are considered or found to be instrumental in manifesting and fostering resilience can be determined by two factors: according to Bernard (1995), social competence and autonomy are key in affecting where or how resilience is manifested, especially later in life. Social competence includes qualities such as responsiveness, especially the ability to elicit positive responses from others; flexibility, including the ability to move between different cultures; empathy; communication skills and a sense of humour. Problem-solving skills encompass the ability to plan, to be resourceful in seeking help from others and to think critically, creatively, and reflectively. In the development of a critical consciousness, a reflective awareness of the structures of oppression (be it from an alcoholic parent, an insensitive school or a racist society) and creating strategies for overcoming them, has been instrumental.

Autonomy is having a sense of one's own identity, an ability to act independently and to exert some control over one's environment, including a sense of task mastery, internal

locus of control and self-efficacy. The development of resistance (refusing to accept negative messages about oneself), and of detachment (distancing oneself from dysfunction), serves as a powerful protector of autonomy. Lastly, resilience is manifested by exhibiting a sense of purpose and a belief in a bright future, including goal direction, educational aspirations, achievement motivation, persistence, hopefulness, optimism and spiritual connectedness.

Understanding what influences the ideology of the organisational cultural of these studies is vital for effective results. Understanding the cultural differences that erupt can certainly assist management, organisations as well as employees themselves, especially in adjustment to the changes which have occurred and the more recent changes in the future within organisations. Organisational commitment and resiliency in recent years have become important concepts in research as these aspects are key elements in defining employee's behaviour at work and engineering that behaviour to a constructive use, especially in troubled times of uncertainty and despair. These elements clearly reflect the extent to which employees identify with their organisation and feel committed on the grounds of common goals, as well as the extent to which an employee has the gumption to continue to survive and even to thrive in unstable and insecure times and bounce back, sometimes stronger than before (resilience).

A notable finding from a study conducted by Fredrickson and Tugade (2004) is that the experience of positive emotions appeared to aid resilient individuals in achieving accelerated cardiovascular recovery from negative emotional arousal, compared with those with less resilience who experienced relatively less positive emotions. This not only indicates the necessity of helping individuals to learn a more resilient trait or competency, enabling them to survive amidst adversity and become stronger individuals, but collectively it creates a more resilient work force. This shows the velocity with which such research of resilience can enable organisations to build a more resilient and hence psychological and physiologically healthier workforce - which has strong ties with increased organisational well-being. This, in turn, can lead to lower levels of workplace dysfunctions, such as absenteeism and amplified turnover, as well as increased levels of production and may foster general employee well-being.

The broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998, 2001) predicts that positive emotions are useful in several ways. The present research expanded this theory into the realm of coping, suggesting that positive emotions guide present coping behaviour. By examining psychological resilience from subjective, cognitive, and physiological angles, the present investigation provides greater insight into the reasons why resilient individuals are able to cope effectively with stressful experiences, whereas others facing similar conditions do not fare as well. Resilient individuals may experience the benefits that positive emotions have on negative emotion regulation. As proposed by the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001), experiences of positive emotions during times of stress, prompt individuals to pursue novel and creative thoughts and actions. Thus, through exploration and experimentation, in time they may be able to build an arsenal of effective coping (resilience strategies) that help buffer (psychologically and physiologically) against negative emotional life experiences that ultimately promote a favourable organisational culture. Acquisitions that may arise to identify exactly what resilience is in the working community, and how and what people perceive resilience to be, especially within the confines of the different types of cultures that dictate today's post-modern working environment.

Essentially the aim of the research is to identify exactly what resilience is, or means to, different people and where they think it stems from and ultimately to indicate the importance of possessing such ability. Moreover, another objective that necessitated such exploration of resilience is to ascertain if people working in these different organisations experience the constructs of resilience and commitment in any type of organisation and to what extent these constructs were experienced. Lastly, this research also makes reference to establishing what people feel makes a person resilient and if resilience is something that can be fostered within themselves through learned or chosen adaption and behaviour or if it is something with which one is born. Essentially, it answers the nature versus nurture question with regards to the construct of resilience.

### 3.3 Resilience and its effects of organisations

Organisations today are affronted by the reality of resilience and are essentially expected to “adapt or die”. Resilience enables people to make this decision a favourable one and to use the challenge and impulse to create more vitality from it. This is the positive psychological construct that is imperative to creating a plethora of coping mechanisms and skills, designed to help people move forward, regardless of the situation or the problems. What enables people to build these skills? How do people use their experiences to prevail over a problem? More importantly, how do people affect their organisation or, in turn, how are they influenced by the cultures of the organisations in which they work, especially in today’s business environment with its volatile and ephemeral nature?

In a study conducted by Cameron, Ungar and Liebenberg (2007), the authors examine one of the precursors of positive development: attachment. Attachment and the positive growth it portends for populations of children under stress underpins positive developmental outcomes, now termed “resilience.” Resilience in this regard may be understood as a process of adaptation to adversity that is scaffolded by environmental, cultural, social, psychologic, and physiologic processes. In this research the authors focus on two methodologically-different approaches to studying attachments that contribute to resilient functioning at two different phases of development (toddlerhood and adolescence). The authors examine the cultural differences found in manifestations of resilience in different countries and cultures. Organized around this theme of attachment, the authors identify adaptive factors in resistance to risk from adverse circumstances. This research proves useful in that the authors strive to identify how the adaptation involved in attachment relations can protect against vulnerability. They then conclude with a description of the processes that might help one in understanding situational, experiential, and personal resources that intersect to protect the developing individual against assaults on normal growth and development which are influential in fostering resilience.

The concept of resilience has increasingly begun to be used in discussions of organisational efforts to address crises and disasters. These discussions revolve around the need for organisations to develop the ability to bounce back and self-correct following a crisis. A central component of the discussions concerns the impact on people individually as well as collectively (on an organisational level and on a team level). However, for issues related to human impact, resilience affects organisations in that it entails a shift from a reactive to a proactive approach for crisis management and disaster recovery (Meyer, Cogdal & James, 2011). A reactive approach to disaster recovery involves the development of plans to contain the human impact of crises and disasters that interfere with one's ability to work. A shortcoming of reactive approaches is that oftentimes they do not provide persons with a framework to use in the case of future traumatic events; they merely "band-aid" the trauma effects. A proactive approach adds to this strategy by introducing an active process to create an environment that not only minimizes the effect of crises and disasters for people, but also works to prevent these from happening.

A proactive approach is more of an empowerment model, allowing the person some sense of manageability and control: a sense of "I will get through this". Creating such an environment means that an organisation is better able to avoid substantial disruptions in business, related to employees being unable to work. Thus it can be said that resilience, or resilient individuals, affect the organisation in a sense that, unless practical suggestions that can help organisations assess and build resilience particularly as the concept applies to the people, the organisation will not thrive collectively in the face of adversity. It can be noted that key aspects such as utilizing strengths, recognizing the layered effect of crisis, addressing psychological needs, communication and pride in one's organisation can be used to build such organisational resilience.

In respect of the effects resilience has on organisations, the utilization of strengths is vital in that it builds a collectively-resilient workforce. Utilization of strengths in many circumstances is the best and least costly strategy to mitigate vulnerabilities, thereby increasing organisational resilience collectively. Furthermore, resilience has been known to affect the productivity of an organisation in that organisations that are resilient

have crisis management and business continuity plans that attend to impact of crises on all stakeholders (Meyer *et al*, 2011). Obvious stakeholders include employees, customers, stockholders and vendors, but one group that is often overlooked is the families of employees. Organisations that do not plan for the impact of a crisis on employee families may encounter difficulty implementing a crisis management plan by demanding that employees make difficult choices between the organisation and their family. These situations result in everyone losing as there are no winners. In addition, resilience effects the organisation in terms of communication in the sense that resilience enables organisations to be more effective because of the development of multidimensional communication networks. These networks are a key element in the development of organisational resilience. The old adages of knowing “who, what, where and when” are extremely important to all parties involved.

### **3.4 Summary**

Finally, as per Meyer *et al.*, (2011), the factors which arguably represent the most significant effect resilience has on an organisation are those of employee loyalty, confidence and pride in the organisation. Given that there has been some argument for a relationship between organisational commitment and resilience, employees in this situation go beyond the immediate and obvious groups, such as employees and customers, to include families of employees, vendors, stockholders, people with whom the organisation has contracted services, and so forth. Low levels of such attitudes in any of these groups spell difficulty for organisations that must activate crisis management or business-continuity plans. If any of these qualities are reduced, no matter the reason, this situation can be a single point of failure. Regardless of the sophistication of the recovery plans, if stakeholders are unwilling to participate in the process, the plans will not succeed. Monitoring these attitudes and meaningful behaviour in light of fostering resilience and the effect resilience has on the organisation, is therefore a critical issue in the building and maintenance of resilience, especially within the framework of the post-modern organisation.

## **CHAPTER 4: TYPES OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES, COMMITMENT AND POST-MODERNISM**

Within the day and age of post-modernism, Chapter 4 will outline the different types of organisations. The different types of organisational cultures, based upon the criteria outlined in the literature review, will be explained further in respect of the context and further characteristics of those identified cultures will be discussed in addition to what is currently happening in such typified organisational cultures. What is more Chapter 4 will argue how the positive psychological construct of resilience is called upon by different organisational cultures and how it is advantageous once implemented.

This chapter will also seek to explore the aspect that arises incessantly - that of commitment, and how it relates to resilience. The chapter will, furthermore, briefly discuss commitment and to a lesser degree, loyalty as a construct and the advantages/disadvantages it could have for the individual, the organisation and the relationship it has with positive psychology. This chapter will look at the opportunity cost that non-commitment or low levels of loyalty have on an organisation and what those consequences are.

### **4.1 Different organisational cultures**

Given that resilience is, arguably, largely influenced by the aspect of meaning (in that they find meaning in work with regards to the jobs they perform or meaning at work with regards to the organisation they work for) it is important to note that meaning is somewhat derived from the culture of an organisation. The decision people make when it comes to choosing an organisation that incorporates their personal goals and values in life is thus heavily influenced by their levels of resilience, what they can or cannot handle, as well as by the climate in which they work.

Organisations today seem to be faced with a challenge, and individuals that select the organisation in which they work are becoming more familiar with the challenge too. It may be identified as the challenge of organisational loyalty, trust and life-long

employment. As the generations of the past are dismissed from the world of work and the generations that take the future are introduced to the market, more and more employees are becoming confused as to what a company expects and, in turn, what they should expect from a company. The psychological contract from generation to generation is changing drastically to keep up with the dynamic post-modern era that now dominates organisational structures.

From a psychological contract perspective, the situation seems to be two-fold in that there are two very dissimilar continuums to a scale that by companies can be adopted. Firstly, there is the idea of mutual dependence, according to which organisations are offering a plethora of benefits and advantageous working strategies in order to retain the best staff and build indestructible talent pools. The second scenario seems to be an “every man for himself scenario” according to which organisations are advocating that they simply cannot, and will not, be responsible for aspects such as job security and life-long employment and that they, in turn, are quite frankly not interested in loyalty and commitment from their employees. Such organisations illustrate that they merely function as a production-line facility that encourages contractual work in the fear that any given change in the line of business (predominantly market-economic changes) will elicit change in employee structure. Either way, the intentions of both companies have been made as transparent as possible and now the decision lies with the employee: which environment is most conducive for personal survival and which organisation is likely to acquire the services which they have to offer?

The first concept of “mutual dependence” within an organisation is categorized by aspects such as knowledge building, talent retention, employee loyalty, organisational commitment, benefits, security and retiree and retrenchment programs as well as individual focus on each employee. These organisations are also fundamentally characterized by a notion that “we make a difference to our employees in order for them to make a difference in our organisation”. This relationship between organisation and employee is positively mutual, based on respect and loyalty in such a way that it generates productivity and highly-committed workers based on highly beneficial working conditions and relationships. These organisations pride themselves in seeking out the

best individuals in the field or top academic achievers in universities with ideal competencies that are aligned with the aspects of job roles and the organisational culture.

Once these employees are found they are initiated into the company and rigorously developed according to the topics which their fields incorporate as well as the organisation's culture, values, norms, attitudes and standards. Thereafter the employee is focused on being retained in that sector and in the organisation in order to grow and produce. These employees are under supervision of strict talent retention and talent management in that they are wanted in the organisation for as long as possible, given that they are constant performers. These organisations facilitate continuous, life-long learning and the creation of creativity and innovation by simulating a "make a difference" attitude in their employees.

In contrast, the "every man for himself" organisation advocates the exact opposite of the above scenario; they are essentially looking for the same levels of productivity from their employees, but they do not create the same environment. These organisations are characterized by enabling an employee to enable themselves. These organisations also pride themselves on skills creation for their employees, entrepreneurial-based development, economic and dynamic resilience and coping skills and, essentially, progressing and expanding an employee to create their own "employability". These organisations can buffer their employees for change. They promote the notion of contractual-based work and, to an extent, they seek to employee teams that are self-sufficient and self-sustaining. In this sense, on a collectivistic approach, the team is chosen by internally and externally recruiting individuals who possess a certain array of competencies conducive to the project's challenges and eventual outcome.

Everything about this type of organisation is constantly changing and the only thing that provides certainty is uncertainty. Employees are encouraged to make their own careers with their own goals which may not always be totally in line with the organisation's goals, unlike in the first scenario. The entire organisation and its culture are exemplified by synergy, and disorder is welcomed as advantageous for success. In this organisation mobility is not a lateral or even an upward movement; it campaigns for a pure sense of

mobility from the organisation itself, as individual careers are shaped by them and the experiences they carry. The career itself that this type of organisation encourages is one that is distinguished by flexibility, dealing in different contexts of organisations, future-orientated decision making, welcoming organisational changes and risk-taking behaviour that create the resilience needed for such adaptations.

## **4.2 Different types of commitment in diverse organisations**

Culture is a complex issue that essentially includes all of a group's shared values, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, artefacts and behaviours. Culture is broad — encompassing all aspects of its internal and external relationships—and culture is deep in that it guides individual actions to the extent that members are not even aware they are influenced by it. Scholars tend to agree that the root of any organisation's culture is grounded in a rich set of assumptions about the nature of the world and human relationships. For example, the underlying belief that people are selfish and only out for themselves might unwittingly influence a company's attitudes and behaviours toward outside salespeople, vendors and consultants. This is profound dogma that is largely invisible, unspoken, and unknown to an organisation's members. So is it possible to really know a company's culture? While admittedly it would be a daunting (and some might claim, impossible) task to fully account for all components of a company's culture, the dominant attributes can generally be identified. In focusing on "effective organisations", research has uncovered many critical dimensions as follows (Tharp, 2009).

### **4.2.1 Control (hierarchy)**

This dimension refers to a culture which is highly structured and to a formal place in which to work. Rules and procedures govern behaviour and leaders strive to be good coordinators and organizers who are efficiency-minded. Maintaining a smooth-running organisation is most critical particularly where normal policies are what hold the group together. Stability, performance and efficient operations are the long-term goals and success means dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low cost. In this dimension of culture management wants security and predictability, given that hierarchical

organisations share similarities with the stereotypically large, bureaucratic corporation. These are characterized by stability and control as well as internal focus and integration. They value standardization, control and a well-defined structure for authority and decision making. Effective leaders in hierarchical cultures are those who can organize, coordinate and monitor people and processes.

#### **4.2.2 Compete (market)**

In this dimension culture is dictated by a results-driven organisation focused on job completion. People are competitive and goal-oriented whilst leaders are demanding, hard-driving and productive. The emphasis is entirely on the ideal of “winning unifies the organisation”. Reputation and success are common concerns and long-term focus is on competitive action and achievement of measurable goals and targets. Success means market share and penetration whilst achieving the competitive advantage, in the sense that competitive pricing and market leadership are of great importance. These cultures value stability and control; however, instead of an inward focus they have an external orientation and they value differentiation over integration. The corporate culture is largely a highly competitive culture where performance results speak louder than process.

#### **4.2.3 Collaborate (clan)**

This dimension refers to a culture that is characterized by an open and friendly place to work and one in which people share a lot of themselves. It is like an extended family where leaders are considered to be mentors or even parental figures to employees or groups and where group loyalty and a sense of tradition are strong and highly valued. There is an emphasis on the long-term benefits of human resources development and great importance is given to group cohesion, teamwork and effective interaction and the establishment of instrumental relationships. There is a strong concern for people and organisational structure and organisation policies place a premium on teamwork, participation and consensus. Although there might be an inward focus with concern for

integration, this culture still mainly emphasizes flexibility and discretion rather than stability and control.

#### **4.2.4 Create (adhocracy)**

In this dimension, culture is typified by a more dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creative place in which to work; innovation and risk-taking are embraced by employees and leaders and commitment to experimentation and thinking differently are what unify the organisation. This culture constantly strives to be on the leading edge while the long-term emphasis is on growth and acquiring new resources. Success means gaining unique and new products or services that aid in the competitive advantage; being an industry leader is important given that individual initiative and freedom are encouraged. This culture emphasizes the values of flexibility and discretion; however, it does not share the same inward focus as other cultures; instead it is more interested in the external focus and concern for differentiation.

With the advent of the information age, a new approach developed to deal with the fast-paced and volatile business environment would be one of a newly structured culture as previously mentioned. Social, economic, and technological changes made older corporate attitudes and tactics less efficient, thus rendering a new approach to success, as it now envisioned, in terms of innovation and creativity with a future-forward posture. An entrepreneurial spirit (especially in respect of the job roles and careers types offered) reigns where profit lies in finding new opportunities to develop new products, new services and new relationships—with little expectation that these will endure.

Adhocratic organisations value flexibility, adaptability and thrive in what would have earlier been viewed as unmanageable chaos (the changing world of work). High-tech companies such as *Google* are prototypical adhocratic types of companies as *Google* is ultimately proficient in that it constantly develops innovative web tools, taking advantage of entrepreneurial software engineers and cutting-edge processes and technologies. Yet what makes even more sense in respect of the way in which *Google* has dominated

this culture is that their employees still remain their biggest assets and investment thereof is always a number one priority.

Whilst it seems apparent to most as to which cultures seem best suited to the current changing world of work, one must not lose sight of the fact that some organisations are supporters of the ‘everyman for themselves’ policy where resources and independent, entrepreneurial skills are what is available; other organisations are, however, still keen activists in the ideals of loyalty and commitment in that the psychological contract is an act of mutual reciprocity.

### **4.3 Organisational commitment**

In certain types of organisations it can be noted that the commitment is valuable and strong. This commitment experienced in an organisation illustrates an attachment to the organisation, a strong bond elicited by experiences in that organisation and behaviours of its employees that are pertinent to the organisation, due to a prominent relationship exchanged through status in which good salaries, conducive climates and good working positions are traded for continuous, productive performance. The most common form of commitment and one that is most desirable is that of affective commitment (in a mutual direction between employee and organisation). As per Gemmitti (2010), affective commitment is described as the maintenance of an attachment to a target because the subject *wants* to; it is a very emotional attachment and the target is seen as a great importance. Affective commitment has also been strongly and positively correlated with desirable workplace behaviours such as attendance, citizenship behaviour and job performance, (Meyer, Becker & Van Dick, 2006).

In terms of the employee, factors leading to organisational commitment have generally included older age, longer work tenure and higher educational level. Well-developed group leader relations and favourable work characteristics are also important in this regard. Job characteristics, such as job control and enriched quality jobs, have correlated positively with organisational commitment (Jalonen, Virtanen, Vahtera, Elovainio & Kivimäki, 2006). To reiterate, employees are attracted and retained by the

sense of belonging and care that drive these organisations and thrive on the relationship of mutuality according to which performance and commitment are rewarded by financial and non-monetary incentives.

According to Bergh and Theron (2009), organisational commitment is the degree to which the individual identifies with his/her employing organisation and its goals. An employee might not experience job satisfaction or job involvement, yet be relatively satisfied with the organisation and therefore might wish to continue working for it. In addition, Arnold, Burnes, Cooper, Patterson, Robertson and Silvester (2005) conclude that organisational commitment is in fact the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in an organisation. One could even argue that this notion portrays a direct link to the loyalty of an individual in an organisation or even a sense of loyalty to the management of the organisation.

Organisational commitment, as stated by Sheldon (1971), is defined as the attitude as well as a set of intentions which can exist when the identity of a person is linked to the organisation. Organisational commitment is furthermore believed to give rise to elements such as self-induced satisfaction and motivation, crucial for performance, regardless of the organisation. Organisational commitment can be characterised as commitment to a particular job, profession, occupation or organisation and shows a deliberate relationship between the individual's needs and the organisation's goals (Srivastava, 2005).

It has been stated that organisation commitment consists of dimensions of effectiveness and continuance. Moreover, it was found that when the perception of work empowerment increases, organisation commitment increases accordingly (Employee Relations, 2009). Wong (1998) suggests that continuance commitment has the strongest relationship with people intending to leave and that value commitment has the strongest relationship with job satisfaction, as well as a positive impact on performance. In addition the Journal of Communication Management (2008) finds that interpersonal skills are enhanced by organisational commitment and that they are most valued by organisations in respect of organisational commitment as the emotional attachment of

employee to employing organisation. (Management Decisions, 2002) institutes that organisational commitment has therefore impacted organisation and individual performance.

In light of the abovementioned elements of organisational commitment, Meyer and Allen (1991) describe these three elements of which organisational commitment comprises as affective commitment, normative commitment and continuous commitment. This approach describes commitment as a psychological situation that characterises the relationship with the organisation and is a strong deciding factor to ascertain whether that relationship will continue or be terminated. Employees with high affective commitment will chose to remain in the organisation out of their own accord - this element of commitment is largely affected by the work experience an employee has. Employees with high continuous commitment will stay with the organisation out of necessity as they view their involvement with the organisation as an accumulated investment. Lastly, employees who have high normative commitment will remain in the organisation out of a sense of duty: these employees stress their loyalty to a certain organisation in that they see it as duty to repay their employer.

Previous research shows that organisational commitment has not only been analysed with the three domains of effective, normative and continuance commitment but that it has also been correlated to many other factors that have immense influence over organisations. According to Siu (2002), organisation commitment and well-being are positively correlated to one another, which concurs with Journal of Management Development (p321, 2004) that a positive link between job satisfaction and organisation commitment was found, as well as significant association of organisational ethics with organisational commitment.

Furthermore, consistent with Management Decisions (2004), innovative and supportive cultures and considerate leadership styles have positive effects on organisational commitment; the level of education also has a slightly positive effect on commitment. Consistent with Rosete (2006), organisation value and performance management systems influence employees' commitment. Moreover, Chang & Eggleton (2007) identified that performance level of managers with high organisational commitment were

unaffected by the extent of reliance on incentive-based compensation schema. Ultimately commitment was more consistent.

The Journal of Developing Management (2003) ascertains that there is, in fact, a significant correlation between corporate culture and organisational commitment and that consequently, organisational commitment has been shown to have an influence on the financial performance of these companies. In proportion with Journal of Service Marketing (2004), organisational commitment has also had an epic influence on service quality development by content employees and, more importantly, affective commitment was found to be more important than job satisfaction in determining service quality. Lastly, studies by Chin and Lin (2009) indicate that empirical results signify a strong and positive relationship between leadership style, total quality management and organisational commitment.

Furthermore, the importance of total quality continuous improvement and teamwork are all significantly related to organisation commitment. Chou & Lang (2009) also found that the relationship between organisation commitment and turnover is significantly negative, ultimately showing that all previous research done in respect of organisation commitment indicates positive correlations with well-being (Siu, 2002), job satisfaction and ethics (Journal of Management Development, 2004) and leadership (Chin and Lin, 2009).

Meyer and Allen (1994), state that organisational commitment is a psychological state that firstly, characterizes the employee's relationships with the organisation, and secondly, has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organisation. Other researchers use similar definitions that refer to an employee's attachment, goal congruency, identification, loyalty and allegiance to his/her organisation.

Organisational commitment is important to organisations that desire to retain a strong workforce. Researchers and practitioners are ardently interested in understanding the factors that influence an individual's decision to stay or leave an organisation in the hope that research will minimise employee turnover and absenteeism as well as their adverse effects. While turnover is related to all three types of commitment, research

suggests there may be unique relationships between the three types of commitment and other work-related outcomes (e.g., absenteeism, organisational citizenship behaviours and performance). Affective commitment tends to be most highly related to these outcomes (Williams, 2004). A review of the research suggests that researchers have typically focused on organisational outcomes and correlates of commitment. However, more recently, due to the substantial emphasis on wellness programmes and employee wellness, researchers are beginning to examine more individual-level correlates of affective commitment such as stress, well-being, and work-family conflict (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). This shift in focus is relevant to the current work, as work-life programs are often instituted to affect these individual-level constructs positively (Murphy & Sauter, 2003).

#### **4.4 Movement towards non-commitment**

Dissimilarly, on the opposite side of the continuum, other organisations advocate that no commitment towards the organisation is prompted at all, but that the emphasis is rather placed on individual career. Due to the changing nature of these organisations, nothing is fixed or measureable, but they rather exhibit a continuous dynamic dance of energy that has a constant flow, continually morphing into one another. The concept of this organisation is moving further away from mechanistic creations that flourished in the age of bureaucracy towards an era where organisations are fluid, organic in structure, boundaryless and seamless organisations are construed as learning organisations where people may exhibit self-organizing capacity (Wheatley, 2006). In these organisations, skills-training is traded for commitment and, periodically performance is rewarded as a result.

Essentially these organisations sponsor enactment: the participation in the creation of our own organisational realities. Wheatley (2006) suggests that there is no objective reality and that the environment we experience is not “out there”: in fact, we create our own environments through our intentions and implementations. This type of environment/career is typified by many unique elements such as protean careers, boundaryless careers, composite careers, individual (psychological) success and

progress, continuous learning, skills acquisition, employability, resilience, confidence, motivation, self-efficacy and competency.

Protean careers can be defined as the process which the person is managing, not the organisation. It consists of all the person's varied experiences in education, training, different organisations, and so forth (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006). The protean career is shaped more by the individual than by the organisation and may be redirected from time to time to meet the needs of the person (Hall & Mirvis, 1995). Akin to the protean career is the idea of a boundaryless career which can be expressed as the self-ownership of a one's career (Peiperl & Arthur, 2000). Composite careers may also be depicted as having more than one role and/or holding more than one job where time management is of the essence. These career ideas largely advocate the management of own time and effort (Bridges, 1995). In addition, these careers are largely influenced by personal success and progress, and ideally, in order to survive in this environment, employees need to place their trust and security on process rather than on structure, on skills acquired and not on titles, and they should draw satisfaction for career-fulfilling experiences instead of climbing the corporate ladder, which is characterized by mastering a job and achieving personal goals. The career is more cyclical, 'reskilling' is required and lateral, rather than upward career moves, are becoming the order of the day (Baruch, 2004; Hall & Mirvis, 1995).

Continuous learning is vital in such an organisation because it is the process according to which one acquires knowledge, skills and abilities throughout one's career in reaction to, and in anticipation of, changing performance criteria (London & Mone, 1999). Employability is crucial in this type of organisation because in the post-modern era, security lies in the employability rather than in employment, as security has shifted from the organisation to the individuals. Employability security refers to the chance to accumulate human capital skills and reputation- that can be invested into new opportunities as they arise (Kanter, 1997). Furthermore, competency, self - efficacy, confidence and motivation all relate to the direct need to foster resilience in oneself. Individuals need to equip themselves with these attributes so that they have the correct competencies and qualities in order to pursue a meaningful career and simultaneously

be persistent and enthusiastic in the face of adversity, based on insight and the degree to which their beliefs will persist in that adversity, despite obstacles.

Lastly is resilience, arguably the most prominent and appealing aspect in this post-modern organisation. Career resilience refers to the pattern of psychological activity which consists of a motive to be strong in the face of inordinate demands, the goal-directed behaviour of coping and rebounding and of accompanying emotions and cognitions, as well as the ability to adapt to changing circumstances (Strumpfer, 2003; Fourie & Van Vuuren, 1998). Resilience serves to make employees aware of the changing environment and to help them to take control of their own careers, given that the organisation is no longer governed by traditional methods of retention and loyalty.

Ultimately, because people are challenged to move in new directions and their futures are now dependent on their abilities and reputation rather than on an organisation, organisational ethics are now replacing the elusive loyalty in organisation. McCarthy and Hall (2000) dictate that organisations can no longer feel betrayed when talented people leave them and employees cannot feel betrayed if organisations no longer need their skills. Flexibility is now an asset and an employer's needs are constantly changing; all traditional concepts are being challenged and continuous integration of people, organisations and individual and collective needs are being promoted. Although changes in these organisations are external, the challenge to the individual remains internal, in that the challenge is to remain employable and flexible to self-develop continuously and recreate mastery in one's own career. One may propose that organisations and individuals need to work towards creating a balance between the distinctive types of organisational cultures at hand in order to be more successful in the modern world of work.

In light of the above-mentioned volatility which organisations seek from individuals as employees, resilience is most certainly a term that comes to the foreground as a force that enables individuals to rebound in the face of adversity that the changing environments co-create. Resilience is one attribute that will adequately aid in accurately addressing hardships, challenges, anxiety and misfortune that may come about as a result of the post-modern era of work. Although resilience is useful in this endeavour,

one must not lose sight of the fact that it is actually utilized as a coping mechanism for aspects such as retrenchment, retirement and demotion which, in fact, need to be managed *whilst* being resilient. Resilience is simply the psychological tool used to overcome adversity but action still needs to be taken to rectify the problem. Resilience is merely the driving force and the motivation to do so.

#### **4.5 Resilience within the post-modern organisation**

In an attempt to further indicate the implications in different organisational cultures, especially in respect of driving forces and the motivation to overcome diversity, resilience can be further defined by Masten and Reed (2002) as the maintenance of positive adjustment under challenging conditions. Resilience in post-modern organisations fosters the previously-mentioned notion of managing the act that has triggered the resilient reaction as well as nurturing the resilient behaviour itself (simply by ensuring oneself that the situation will improve, one needs to act on improving one's situation proactively).

Furthermore, Cameron, Dutton and Quinn (2003) suggest that the dynamics which create or retain (cognitive, emotional, relational or structural) in a form sufficiently flexible, storable, convertible and malleable, give rise to resilience and allow subjects to advert maladaptive tendencies and positively cope with the unexpected. Resilient individuals are likely to cope better with the unexpected due to the fact that they absorb strain and stress and persevere. As has already been indicated, resilience, from a developmental perspective, as per Cameron et al. (2003), does not merely emerge in response to specific interruptions or jolts, but develops over time from continually handling risks, stress and strain. Also, positively adjusting in the face of challenging conditions is thought to add both to the current strength of the individual and the strength of the future of the individual, in that resilience is the continuing ability to implement both internal and external resources successfully to resolve issues. This can be used significantly by individuals who are faced with adversity, as they are able to use such resources to rebound and create a more desirable situation.

Resilience is relative, emerging and changing in transaction with specific circumstances and challenges; resilience demonstrated in one situation may not be sustained over time or be transferred to other circumstances or challenges (Staudinger, Marsiske & Baltes, 1993). However, in keeping with Egeland, Carlson and Sroufe (1993) as well as with Wildavsky (1988), competence in one period is thought to make an individual more broadly-adapted to the environment and prepared for competence in the next period. Individuals do not only survive and cope by positively adjusting to challenges but in the process of addressing those challenges, people are capable of strengthening their capabilities to make future amendments. Furthermore, in accordance with Masten and Reed (2002), resilience occurs when an individual has sufficient amounts of quality resources in order to develop competence as well as resilience. More importantly, resilience is more likely to occur when an individual's mastery motivation system is mobilized and he/she has an experience that allows him/her to encounter successes and build self-efficacy that motivates them to succeed in future endeavours.

Thus, in sum, as per Cameron *et al.* (2003), processors that promote competence, enhance human, social and material assets (such as learning capabilities) and reduce risk or stressors, increase the likelihood of positive adjustments because they can enhance people's capabilities to register and handle complexities and increase motivation and persistence in handling challenges. Evidence suggests that resilience from ordinary factors, which manifest in non-traditional ways, promotes competence, restores efficacy and facilitates growth.

In light of the above review, regarding resilience as an important factor for survival and the different brands of organisations, it is interesting to note the standpoints which some companies have chosen to expand on. In a study on the impact of career growth on organisational commitment, conducted by McElroy, Morrow, Weng and Liu (2005), it was found that if the organisation reinforces skill acquisition [through their reward system], employees react by expressing higher levels of commitment and that promoting and rewarding skill acquisition results in greater "bang for the buck" in terms of commitment.

However, when the evident decrease of loyalty in organisations was taken into consideration, McElroy *et al.* (2005) signify that the psychological contract is a mental schema that an individual carries around in his head concerning the relationship they believes exists between his contributions to his employer and what he is induced to contribute, is sometimes called the contributions inducement contract. If people induced less - and the company offers them less - in order to have that ratio be regarded as fair, people are probably going to contribute less and be less committed. The psychological contract is probably being broken on both sides. People break it by jumping ship or putting less effort into their work. And organisations break it by downsizing, layoffs or across-the-board pay freezes. This no doubt presents a dilemma for organisations seeking to keep with the times and employees who need a stable sense of financial income.

In an additional study based on the Deloitte group, by McElroy *et al.* (2005), findings suggests that developing one's professional abilities allows an employee to identify with the goals and values of the organisation, but employees see these abilities as transferable -- thus, not a cost to leave -- and unlikely to influence the employee's emotional attachment. They also therefore see an organisation's willingness to develop employees as a normal business activity, resulting in no sense of obligation to reciprocate, which explains the lack of relationship with normative commitment. As mentioned before, employees are now focused on taking skills and knowledge from the company once their term of employment is terminated, rather than holding onto a false sense of loyalty. Evidently career growth should be considered by managers seeking to build a committed workforce; however, the question is still deep-rooted in whether managers and organisations even desire a committed workforce.

Companies have made reference to the fact that it may be especially useful in that many commitment-enhancing strategies have been directed at newcomers rather than at longer-term employees. Career growth may be an enticing and constructive way for organisations to sustain or possibly re-establish organisational commitment after difficult periods in an organisation's history (for example, layoffs, restructuring). However even these companies view this act as challenging and for those companies that are still

enduring difficult times and which need to make cuts, McElroy *et al.* (2005) suggest there are two ways they can mitigate the organisational commitment damage (should this be the appeal of the organisation, either long term or short term commitment-based):

Firstly, a logical explanation for the cuts should be provided. If one person's salary is to be cut, he might be angry, but if everybody's salaries got cut in order to keep everyone employed due to the economic times, then it is not really the fault of the organisation. It is something else in the outside world that is causing this and so people are less likely to detract from the organisation in terms of their feelings about it. Secondly, an effort should be made to be transparent in the cutting process. If it is done in a very visible means where people understand how those decisions are being made, they are going to be more likely to perceive that they are fair. But if it is done more covertly, then there is a lot more room for guesswork on whether one is being treated fairly or not. In all entirety this makes much sense in that resilience now plays a part: one can choose to overcome and rebound from the cut in salary, one can make arrangements to cope, be it financial, social or psychological mechanisms in order to emerge with the experience that builds resilience.

It is of great consequence to comprehend that when an organisation faces cutting processes, downsizing and is forced to retrench, the natural response to retrenchment is generally one of shock and even anger which will inevitably turn into feelings of uncertainty. Reich, Zautra and Hall (2010) note that this is normally when our 'caveman' instincts take-over: we adopt an 'adapt or die' attitude and our default mind-set kicks into survival mode. However, while in survival mode there is little doubt that logical, sound long-term decisions begin to elude us. While retrenchment is an anxious time, many people later experience it as the kick-start they needed to start thinking seriously about what it is that they really wanted from their working life, and how to achieve realistically-set goals and immediate needs.

It is important to aide-memoir that most solutions look great on paper, but how viable are they in terms of practical application? Attributable to the above, it is dangerous to

assume that all members of an organisation are ready for the new challenges presented by changes. Retrenchment has a monumental impact on human capital and the reputation of a company itself, as both retrenched employees and the remaining stock both experience a sense of abandonment, loss of self-esteem and insecurity which continues to impact a workplace, even once the calm has restored. That is why it should be managed, ideally utilizing resilience for the members and the organisation in order to minimize psychosocial damage. Yet again, reinforcing the theme of the research of this paper and the ever-growing magnitude and significance of a construct, such as resilience, is most certainly on the rise. The capacity and capability resilience has, if used on a personal and organisational level, to improve not only people's quality of life but also the health of the culture of the organisation. As a myriad of previous PsyCap studies have shown, the importance of a healthy organisational culture and the psychological health of all employees is vital to sustain growth in an organisation and it is unquestionably a learned trait that is giving people and organisations the competitive advantage, not only at work but from every aspect. Reiteration on one's ability to bounce back and thrive in the face of adversity again lends itself to the importance of not only understanding the prominence of this positive psychological construct, but also to understand what enables people to inculcate such an appraisal and reaction into their lives with regards to the challenges they face in the new post-modern era.

Resilience as a positive psychological strength is explained by virtue of the fact that resilience theory and research is largely drawn from clinical psychology's work with adolescent children who have succeeded despite great adversity (Masten, 2001; Masten & Reed, 2002). Resilience is often characterized by positive coping and adaptation in the face of significant adversity or risk (Masten & Reed, 2002). As adapted to the workplace, resiliency has been defined as the "positive psychological capacity to rebound, to 'bounce back' from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure or even positive change, progress and increased responsibility" (Luthans, 2002a, p. 702). Therefore, resilience can be characterized by coping responses in terms of one's behaviour and actions, not only to adverse events, but also to extreme positive events as well. As with hope, to date research on resilience has been mainly limited to clinical and positive

psychology. However, similar to the focus on hope, preliminary research has begun to examine the impact of resiliency in the workplace. For example, a significant relationship was found between the resiliency of Chinese factory workers undergoing significant change and transformation and their supervisory rated performance (Luthans *et al.*, 2005). Resiliency has also been found to be related to work attitudes of satisfaction, happiness, and commitment (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

#### **4.6 The psychological contract**

In light of the above elucidation about the concept of resilience and how it is very strongly related to job satisfaction, commitment and happiness, paired with the changing world of work and how volatile company practices have become, one should consider the changes that this would imply for the psychological contract. It is this notion that provides for a revision of the psychological contract between workers. For organisations to change, people must change. For leaders to help people change they do not need to understand change, they need to understand people. Understanding people is not the strength of most managers, given that most managerial leaders have been educated in the technical and non-personal aspects of organisational life. Leaders need some help with the personal repercussions of their decisions because those repercussions affect the way people work in the new environment. Enter the psychological contract; when contracts exist, expectations exist. Levinson (1966) points out that unlike legal contracts in which the expectations are defined, in psychological contracts the expectations are unspoken and antedate the formation of the contract.

In the working environment there are expectant behaviours and attitudes of persons in the roles of employer and employee even before they meet each other. A lack of shared definition does not make them any less binding. Expectations are only part of the relevant qualities of the psychological contract; however, the other components make it a more powerful tool. Sadly, in the psychological contracts, especially in the post-modern era, the question is, "Who needs who?" The only tolerable long term answer that will enable a mutually-effective relationship is that we need each other. Everyone

needs to know upon what and upon whom they can depend. Thus, this part of the psychological contract profoundly affects loyalty and the commitment previously touched on.

Given that the psychological contract deals firmly with psychological distance in the sense that it deals with the human need and challenge of intimacy, people need to feel close enough to others so that we can effectively manage stress, share necessary information and gain some personal sustenance from our work and hence move towards resilience as well as commitment in an organisation. At the same time there, needs to be enough distance so that we do not become distracted because we feel invaded. Psychological contracts are dynamic because they change without formal acknowledgment and - herein lies the most significant aspect of such constructs to the changing world of work that is currently asking so much more from employees. Because people at work expect different things of themselves and others concerning their careers, it is important to note that the psychological contract itself does not just change over time: change itself modifies the contract (Morrison, 2011).

Change profoundly affects relationships; it may completely disrupt them. Furthermore, during times of change, new expectations are built and reinforced. The way change is handled creates new, or reinforces, expectations for future change. Change affects people's expectations about stability and security given that change with its instability can leave people feeling insecure and in danger. Psychological contracts (especially in respect of the changing world of work) are a way of organizing our social life at work. Certainly, some of the important issues for people at work have changed since Levinson (1966) did his original study, but it is impressive that the fundamentals he described are still very relevant.

Change can be predictable; the predictability comes from how things changed in the past, which allows one to pick out patterns in transitions. Psychological contracts about how change is managed provide some of that predictability. Psychological contracts which infuse stability and predictability into continuous change are not easy to develop,

despite ever-present exhortations to accept change as the only constant. It can be very difficult to change a psychological contract because so much is hidden. This is a major part of what makes it difficult to change cultures, purely because change causes conflict and it creates new relationships between functions and people. To accept change may be too threatening to the individuals' feelings of equilibrium, they deny the contract has changed and hold on to the old way. People generically look for clues to see if there really are new expectations and, if so, what they are. Some of the main human problems, in terms of change, are dealing with ambiguity and confusion and this is solely because of resistance. However, it is futile in favour of significant change which alters the contract (Morrison, 2011).

When leaders are intimidated by personal change their behaviours communicate far more than their verbalizations of what the new psychological contracts are supposed to be. It is at this point that employees will no longer be invested in solving the organisation's problems, nor will they commit to the organisation's goals and vision, no matter how enticing a leader makes them. Psychological distance is thus increased, a factor which has adverse consequences for loyalty. While you do find loyalty towards organisations, it is stronger towards people. When loyalty is betrayed, people don't blame the organisation as often as they blame individuals or groups in it and place more personal emphasis on the relationships developed with people rather than with the abstraction called the company. This in turn is how resilience builds and, contrastingly, breaks the resilience in an organisation or team.

Ultimately, as the idea of psychological contracts has become more popular to some schools, others have seen it as a device for manipulating people rather than as a tool for understanding human interactions. The central principle regarding the psychological contract in this research is to explain how it may very well be possible that this "device" will not work because the new contracts will be created by behavioural patterns, not by clever words. Perhaps organisations are rather using this tool to define what the new expectations really are; in fact, companies no longer offer longevity as was offered the

generations before us; instead, as an alternative, they may be offering authenticity in their needs and offering skill accumulation.

Leaders do not declare the new psychological contracts after consultation with an expert in human resources; they reveal their side of the contracts through their actions. They contribute to healthier psychological contracts by acting in ways consistent with their pronouncements, essentially authentic leadership.

It must be noted that in this regard, with emphasis on resilience in this changing world of work, omnipotence is the opposite of dependency, and while no leader or consultant is omnipotent, grandiose fantasies about manipulating interpersonal relationships from afar are ever-tempting for the interpersonally-vulnerable. Many leaders feel vulnerable because there is an emotional component to their work and dealing with resilience may be considered as a further complication in their roles. Getting people to change is not particularly difficult. The challenge is getting a lot of people to change together and in (generally) the same way. Old expectations get in the way. How things were done in the past is no longer good enough. There are shifts in the qualities of relationships. Dependency and power relationships change. There are shifts in what is private or shared. Cynics appear and talk about "just more window dressing" (Morrison, 2011).

The uncertainty and fear means that everyone has to rebuild trust. Predictability and understanding help trust to develop, and psychological contracts add to both. The concept of the psychological contract helps with understanding, more than it does with prediction. It is a particularly good structure to use when things have gone awry, especially in the post-modern working environment where change provokes emotions and is a central piece of an organisation's main task especially when dealing with the ability to face the adversity that change brings – resilience.

## CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY, THEORY AND JUSTIFICATION

### 5.1 Methodology

This chapter will discuss the theory underlying and informing the methods applied in this study. Special due is given to existential-phenomenological psychology which underpins the theoretical basis upon which qualitative research is conducted. Moreover, this chapter will also justify why the qualitative stance was adopted in explicating resilience as a unique construct. The value of an in-depth dialogue as a technique to unfold experiential content is given due credence whilst the necessity of utilizing quantitative measuring instrument to identify resilience will also be explained. The use of the instrument, the Resilience Scale -25, its reliability and validity will also be illustrated and discussed. In the study the researcher adopted a mixed approach - qualitative and quantitative techniques were applied in order to elucidate the construct under investigation effectively.

The design of this research study comprised an empirical study which utilized primary data by means of applying both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitatively, a questionnaire was used to collect the data to indicate by means of scales and items if people possessed resilience as per the defined construct. Qualitatively, in-depth, unstructured interviews were used to form the qualitative interpretation. This was conducted via personal dialogue with 19 participants from diverse working backgrounds and various rankings or positions within a single organisation.

The study thus employed the questionnaires to measure the poor amount resilience as per the construct, whilst the interviews continued to provide deep-rooted insight into the nature of resilience and how people experienced the construct. This concept of research essentially made for a more comprehensive investigation of the construct at hand. A limitation of the study was that the time spent on the interviews may ultimately have been slightly compendiary, enough to render considerable results as opposed to what results could have been denoted had more time been spent with the participants in follow-up interviews.

Convenience or purposive sampling used in the study, purely based on the fact that the 19 questionnaires answered would dictate that 19 interviews be conducted so as to make for a better elucidation of the construct ( $N=19$ ) and because the 19 people who participated were people that are resilient and/or had already demonstrated resilient behaviour. In respect of such sampling it was imperative to use people who actually possessed the trait because it allowed the researcher to identify what the commonalities were in resilient people and also to establish an accurate definition of the construct as per participant understanding and potential areas from which it might have stemmed.

With regards to data collection methods, the two data collection methods of questionnaires and in-depth unstructured interviews were utilized in order to tease out the required information from the participants. The questionnaire that was used, in order to identify people who were highest on resilience, how resilient they were, or claimed, to be and how much resilience they had experienced in the face of adversity, was Wagnild and Young's (1993) Resilience Scale, (RS-25), a 25-item psychological resilience scale. The scale measured the resilience of the participants. Previous results support the internal consistency reliability and concurrent validity of the Resilience Scale as an instrument to measure resilience from a quantitative point of view (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved). The questionnaire comprises of 25 items - measured on a Likert-type scale of 1-7, 1 being "strongly agree" and 7 being "strongly disagree". The scale is based on scientific evidence and can be used on a wide range of ages. The 25-item RS has been used for 20 years with solid reliability and validity data and boasts very good psychometric properties. The internal consistency reliability is very good for the scale as the alpha is .97 (Wagnild & Young, 1993).

The data analyses, with regards to the responses to the structured close-ended questions of the questionnaire, were rated in numbers. The numbers of responses for each alternative were analyzed within the limitations of the scale (what depicts resilience and what does not) and then compared to the feedback of the in-depth unstructured interviews. The unstructured interviews were recorded by means of a recorder and then transcribed into text. Once the text was transcribed, the transcribed text was analyzed and inferences were made by means of translating the recorded data

into psychological terms (language) and understanding. Once that had taken place, the essential aspects or situational structure were formed in order to identify commonalities, underlying generalizations and important or prominent information that was then extracted and interpreted for use in the discussion and evaluation.

## **5.2 Creditability, transferability and authenticity**

Most fundamentally, any observed "fact" has already been interpreted at least in the sense that meaning has been assigned to an empirical observation. Description, explanation, prediction and the assessment of causes and consequences of social phenomena cannot be achieved in the absence of evaluation and interpretation. To understand is to interpret. Most disciplines in the social sciences have long recognized the interplay between context, culture and tradition, our senses and our understanding. Strangely, these factors are generally considered only in terms of the people whom we study. Sometimes we recognize the importance of context in the interpretation of empirical data when we discuss the research process in abstract terms, but we tend to fail to take into consideration contextual elements when we elaborate a research question or present our substantive research results. Yet it is not only those we study who are stuck in a subjectively-constructed reality within which meaning is elaborated; we researchers, as we attribute meaning to empirical phenomena, are equally stuck in our own subjectivity (Weber, 1947). Having said this, there certainly exists a reality independent of our understanding thereof; in order to conceive and understand any phenomenon, we must capture "external" reality through observation, that is, translate bits of information from an objectively-unknowable reality into subjectively interpreted and context-bound, yet knowable, realities. Weber (1986), suggest that this position implies a controversy: on the one hand, we are unable to access an objective and universal understanding of empirical phenomena but, on the other, we wish to evaluate the quality of incommensurable truth-claims. What quality guidelines can we adopt for the empirical social and political science research process that acknowledges the subjective and interpretative nature of our endeavours while, concurrently, we attempt to convey findings that are both empirically rigorous and credible?

Quality considerations in empirical research tend to be addressed by the concepts "validity" and "reliability," especially in the areas of psychometrics and econometrics. We will critically examine some possibilities of these concepts, while concurrently realizing that we cannot simply transpose these two concepts from one theoretical basis to another. Phenomenology and existentialism are characterized by many derivations. In different parts of the world different interpretations were accorded to these movements. The main ideas were, however, retained and those ideas influenced many of the qualitative methods used in research today. The reader must not see this as an "either – or" issue but as tools that can serve different purposes.

Credibility was obtained through protracted commitment until data was saturated and the necessary information had been unearthed. Persistent observation throughout the interview process occurred in order to explore deeper and potentially to infer on aspects such as body language. Throughout the study the concept of credibility was initiated through or highlighted by the integrity of the data rendered and the process of thorough preparation and comprehensive checks with the participants of the study (people were asked if the recorded and interpreted information was a good elucidation of what they portrayed) was used in such a manner that dependability and truthful results were discussed in the thesis. Member checks were conducted to affirm authenticity in this regard. The transcripts and analyzed texts, in terms of constructs that were identified, were communicated back to the participants interviewed and participants were then requested to indicate the extent to which their stories and explanations had been correctly described and interpreted by way of their views, experiences and situations.

Transferability was identified as there was mention of a model that could have been inferred from the results by means of an intervention (to be elaborated on in the recommendations to this study). It can be argued that there is sufficient and generate noteworthy information yielded from this study that may, in fact, be used to develop interventions programs and modelling techniques. This was done by ensuring that thorough or clear descriptions were provided within the context and hence this was

made readily adaptable to other contexts for similar use. The researcher assessed whether the information gained through this study did in fact confirm existing theory (of which it did) and whether it added to the theory or that the information subtracted by the research was considered transferable to other contexts in the business world.

Moustakis (1994) mentions that in qualitative research, the method of reflection that occurs throughout the phenomenological approach provides a logical, systematic and coherent resource for carrying out the analysis and synthesis needed to arrive at essential descriptions of experience. In order to discover or to find what it is that one is trying to research, one must conduct a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation. Discovering a significant problem or question that will hold the wondering gaze and passionate commitment of the researcher is the essential opening of the heuristic process within this qualitative study (Moustakis, 1994). What is more, in order to design research of such an explorative nature, the research study will reveal the meanings and essences of a particular human experience in an accurate, comprehensive and vivid way and accordingly it is essential that the question be stated in simple, clear and concrete terms. The way in which the researcher poses the question will determine which fundamental events and activities will bear on the problem. It is within the cycle of discovery and commitment that authenticity can be affirmed. It creates a search to discover, to clarify and to understand crucial dimensions of knowledge and experience.

Dependability and confirmability of the findings is directly linked to the interviewing data generated, as this data is depended upon accurate, empathic listening, being open to oneself and to the co-researcher, being flexible and free to vary procedures to respond to what is required in the flow of dialogue, and being skillful in creating a climate that encourages the participants to respond comfortably, accurately, comprehensively and honestly in elucidating the phenomenon (Moustakis, 1994). Ultimately, confirmability consists of a bracketing of one's theory (theories) and prejudices so as to be more truthful and credible. Weber (1986) mentions that one cannot and should not be

unaffected by what is said unless, of course, the researcher is either not listening or is simply denying what is being felt under the false and smug cloak of scientific objectivity. On the contrary, it is only in relating to the other, as one to another, that interviewing is really possible – when the interviewer and the participant are both caught up in the phenomenon being discussed.

### **5.3 Confirmability and dependability**

Furthermore, what has been known to increase aspects of dependability, authenticity and confirmability of research within the social sciences are typologies which are a function of sorting and categorizing. Knowledge and meaning of all kind are produced, understood and communicated through categories, in this case constructs or characteristics that were identified. In connection with the association between categorization and knowledge, it is obvious that it is not things or events themselves that produce categories but, firstly, the interpretation of the salient features of the things or events, secondly, pre-existing interpretations that set conditions and limitations for subsequent interpretations of certain features of things and events and thirdly, the ability and power to impose the meaning embedded in these interpretations over other, alternative interpretations (Weber, 1944). Categorizations are a function of how meaning is constructed and thus related to socio-cultural norms, values, customs, ideology, practices, etc. Therefore, the influence needs to be understood less as a bias (is something that needs to be "controlled" or eliminated in order to get to the truth) in an effort to sort and categorize empirical phenomena, but rather as a framework of knowledge and reference from which empirical observations can be classified and, accordingly, understood and communicated. Herein, similarly, lies the opportunity to create credibility through transferability in terms of using such a framework, created by the knowledge derived from categorizations which can then be applied in other scenarios such as interventions.

The quality of the data collection process in qualitative methods can be divided conceptually into the quality of the instrument or other method of data collection, and

the quality of the data obtained from the instrument. The tape-recorded transcriptions, together with other relevant material, will become the basic source of data. Carefully re-read and then transcribed in psychological language, it will form the situational structure. The final step on heuristic presentation and handling of data is the development of a creative synthesis of the experience. Especially in qualitative research within the social sciences, researchers have demonstrated that people are often inconsistent: their behaviours seem inconsistent with stated attitudes or values, behaviours seem inconsistent with other behaviours whilst attitudes and values seem inconsistent with each other, and so forth (Weber, 1977). When one speaks of internal consistency in people's narratives during in-depth interviews, it must be understood that in this study the idea was not to create consistency where none exists but instead to identify apparent inconsistencies that indicate yet unexamined or misinterpreted aspects relating to our research theme – resilience, which aids in the justification for this method of research.

#### **5.4 A motivation for having chosen a required method**

The appropriateness of data, as well as the appropriateness of selection of collection and analytical procedures, is demonstrated in at least four ways when it comes to qualitative research. According to Weber (1944), these four ways are authority studies, prior empirical studies, theory and logical argument. The justification of this study makes notable use of three of these methods: prior empirical studies, theory and logical argument. Prior empirical studies indicate that it is obviously almost impossible to conduct research within an established area without comparing and contrasting it with the empirical work of prior studies. To insert their study into the landscape of prior research in a particular area, authors cite empirical studies in order to either align or distance themselves with regard to paradigms, theories, approaches or procedures. Such as in this research study, much of the literature is derivative of the prior studies done in the niche area. As already discussed, the theoretical framework recommends and excludes to a great extent not only what will count as relevant data, but also the way in which data is to be analysed and interpreted.

While a theory imposes a priori limits to what can be studied and how, it also allows for a more coherent way to conceive of, conduct and communicate research findings (Weber, 1944). It should be noted that using such theories was done so in order to create a ground work in terms of allowing the phenomena to unfold rather than to established preconceived notions to participants. Lastly, selecting and strategically presenting prior empirical research and theories are only one way in which logical argument justifies some research decisions over others. Comparing and contrasting, summarizing and synthesizing are also activities that help justify data selection and analysis (Weber, 1944). Neither data nor categories speak for themselves but must be explained and justified as is done in terms of constructs in this research study. It is within this ideology that the researcher finds fascination with qualitative research and its dynamism and cogency to attain such a humanistic view on a construct already so captivating.

Naturally, the focus of the research was directed in communication and emphasized the influence of the intensity and the interpretation of the world as a lived experience. Phenomenological existentialism, according to Misiak and Sexton (1973), can be described as the phenomenological method of a systematic observation or recording, analysis and description of the experiences of a conscious individual in a given situation or context. The phenomena were identified through revealing the raw experience and were then explicated as they disclosed the human consciousness of people, devoid of preconceptions from the researcher.

Unstructured interviews were used to acquire the participants' frame of reference and to gain a sense of how participants construe the construct founded on their perceptions and experiences, based on the construct which enabled more detail to be given to the data found in the questionnaire as well as to provide specificity in different aspects of the construct.

Through interviewing, the data generated depended upon accurate, emphatic listening, being open to oneself and honest, being flexible and free to show a discrepancy in procedures in order to respond or adapt questions to what was required in the flow of dialogue. Ideally this method of research enabled the researcher to create a climate that

encouraged the participant to respond comfortably, accurately, comprehensively and honestly in order to articulate the construct. It is a requirement of hermeneutics that the researcher must remain a committed listener throughout the entire interview so that the most accurate personal depictions can be portrayed.

Formally, justification for the methods of phenomenological existentialism and interpretive approaches were so that a holistic, insider approach could be taken in order to encompass the complexity and rich diversity of a multitude of different people that were interviewed, in addition to their feeling and emotions that constitute their experiences and hence their perceptions of the construct at hand. The most important part of this research was that the research and results are a clear and unobtrusive indication of what the individuals in the purposive sample recognize resilience to be.

Essentially the researcher firmly believes that in order to truly comprehend what is being felt by another or to find the essence of why, how and what, one must rely on the elucidation and the engagement of a participant within communication, both verbal and non-verbal. Facts, data and statistics can give so much of an interpretation but, in light of what was needed for this study to be fulfilled, the question remained how one would ever know the unspoken truth of human beings unless such a truth was explicitly asked?

### **5.5 Wagnild & Young Resilience questionnaire (RS-25)**

The Resilience Scale™ (RS™) (Appendix A) is a proven tool, based on sound scientific research. It has been used successfully for twenty years by thousands of researchers all over the world (Wagnild & Young, 1993). Other instruments, claiming to measure something they call "resilience," are available but these are based on some definition or theory of resilience or another. In many cases, the author decided what resilience was and then wrote a scale to measure it. Unlike these other scales, the Resilience Scale is based purely upon scientific research. The authors, doctorally-prepared researchers, conducted actual interviews with people. They found out how these real people responded to genuine adversity. From these interviews came the construct that they called "Resilience," for lack of any other word that describes it so well. They created the

Resilience Scale from their research results to measure this construct and this is why it is able to provide the most accurate measurement of this important psychological factor.

The RS has been used with age groups as young as early teens (13 and 14 years old) as well as the very old (greater than 100 years old) and has been translated into more than 15 languages with several translations in process. To mention a few the RS is available in Albanian, Hong Kong Chinese, Czech, Dutch, Finnish, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese (Brazil and Portugal), Russian, Slovakian, Spanish, Swedish, and Tamil with more translations being made available on an on-going basis (Wagnild & Young, 1993).

The RS is a 25-item instrument with an additional item, the 26<sup>th</sup>, which is optional. Having said this, it must be noted that it is a concurrent validity question for researchers to correlate with the sum of the preceding 25 items. Moreover, the RS has been associated with health-promoting behaviours and self-management of illness in prior studies. More importantly, the RS measures the five core characteristics of resilience (meaningful life, perseverance, self-reliance, equanimity and existential aloneness). Individuals who have a reason to get up in the morning believe they are capable, and have a drive to keep going, may be more likely to self-manage illness well. This means that a moderate to moderately high score using the RS may indicate better self-management potential (Wagnild & Young, 1993).

Using the RS, the data from thousands of respondents strongly suggest that as one ages, scores on the RS increase. In a recent study of 1,061 individuals, the average RS scores for those younger than 30 were about 133 and for those older than 60, the RS scores averaged 143. For each 10-year age group, the score increased by 2-3 points. A score on the low-end for the 25-item RS is 130 or lower and a high-end score will be 161 or higher.

Finally, an article which had reviewed 12 completed studies that had used the Resilience Scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993) found that, or identified, the Resilience Scale scores, sample descriptions and tested relationships between the Resilience Scale and

study variables which were selected for inclusion. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .72 to .94 supporting the internal consistency reliability of the Resilience Scale. Hypothesized relationships between the Resilience Scale and study variables (for example forgiveness, stress, anxiety or health-promoting activities) were supported, strengthening the evidence for construct validity of the Resilience Scale. In the studies reported here, the Resilience Scale has been used with a variety of individuals of different ages, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds and thus boasts sufficient credibility. The Resilience Scale has performed as a reliable and valid tool to measure resilience and has been used with a wide range of study populations, thus making it totally applicable in the South African context.

With regards to the review of the literature on resilience, only one identifiable resource is available to measure resilience with published psychometrics - the Resilience Scale (RS) (Wagnild & Young, 1993), although there are other possible instruments (Block & Kremen, 1996; Hurtes, in press; Jew, Green & Kroger, 1999). The RS is a 25-item self-report questionnaire and the items reflect five resilience themes that the instrument's authors derived from reviewing related literature, then validated via interviews. The authors intended for the instrument to be applicable to other populations, including males and younger people (Wagnild & Young). All the RS items are positively-worded and responses are on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (agree) to 7 (disagree). Concurrent validity has been supported by significant correlations between RS scores and measures of morale, life satisfaction and depression (Wagnild & Young).

## **5.6 In-depth interviews**

In-depth interviews are a common data collection method in a range of disciplines. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research method that uses open-ended questions to uncover information on a topic of interest and allows interviewees to express opinions and ideas in their own words (Webber & Byrd, 2010). Various terms are used to refer to this research method, including *qualitative interviews*, *intensive interviews*, and *semi-standardized* or *semi-structured interviews*. This concept of research focuses on in-depth interviews that take place face-to-face between an individual researcher and

his/her interview respondent (variably referred to as an *interviewee*, *respondent*, *informant*, or *participant*).

Typically, prior to conducting the interviews, an interview guide (sometimes referred to as an interview schedule or instrument) that includes potential questions, topics of interest or some combination of these help focus the interview without locking the interviewer into a fixed set of questions in a rigid order and with specific wording (Appendix A). This flexible approach allows interviewee responses to guide the interaction and aids in keeping the interview on track in light of the topic of interest of the interview. The use of follow-up questions, often referred to as *probes*, is also common in this research approach, and aids in confirming what participants had previously made reference to. The primary goal of using an interview guide is to balance the systematic collection of data with the flexibility needed to tap respondents' understandings. The amount of pre-structuring - although this was effectively avoided throughout the majority of the interviews, can vary, depending on a number of factors, including the comfort or experience of the researcher, the extent of the researcher's familiarity with the culture of those interviewed, the degree to which the topic is understudied and the complexity of social processes involved (Maxwell, 2005).

It must be noted that the choice of such a method denotes that a researcher rarely begins research projects to test pre-formulated hypotheses (explicit statements regarding the nature or direction of relationships between variables) (Schutt, 2009); but instead, they typically develop a research question or set of related research objectives geared toward *discovering* what people think and feel, how they account for their experiences and actions and what opportunities and obstacles they face. In-depth interviews, especially with regards to this research on resilience have enabled the researcher to explore complex topics and allow for ideas to emerge that have not been predetermined by the researcher (Berg, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Esterberg, 2002; Warren & Karner, 2005). In this research, conducting interviews face-to-face allowed for recording expressive or emotive nonverbal responses that were definitely instrumental in indicating the importance of particular questions or topics to respondents. Seeing

people's reactions also had an influence on the researcher to probe further or to ask additional questions as this is where most of the complexity had proven to be situated.

With this type of in-depth semi-structured interview, the researcher was able to ascertain the participants' point of view on why they do what they do whilst, at the same time, capturing the ways respondents described and explained their decisions, actions, and interactions with others. Collecting data in this way most certainly made it possible to examine and interpret the motivations behind respondents' actions and to identify the various constraints they face. By understanding and contrasting respondents' motivations and explanations for their behaviour, the researcher was able to understand the meanings of the social phenomena under study which was significantly beneficial to the stance of phenomenological existentialism. Essentially, face-to-face in-depth interviews offer a way to explore people's lives and the contexts in which they make decisions and yield "thick descriptions" of social life (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

Interviewing people in depth undoubtedly revealed contradictions and ambivalences concerning how they viewed options for work and family especially with regards to how instrumental the construct at hand (resilience) was within those related opinions. In-depth interviews were particularly well-suited to get at emotional experience and response from the participants in this study, given that observations alone may not necessarily capture everything that a researcher wants to know. Combining observation with in-depth interviews allowed the researcher to access perspectives other than their own and to better understand others' points of view (Esterberg, 2002).

In-depth interviews were certainly beneficial in this study as they were also used as a tool to explore sensitive topics in a complex and nuanced way. The interview in the study addressed the sensitive topic of personal intimacy, which is often overlooked in studies of families, relationships and work, despite how central this personal aspect is to relationship happiness and personal well-being.

In-depth interviews can contribute to generate theory and to develop new conceptual models (that is, distinctive ways of understanding or explaining social phenomena). For example, the data may well be used for the formulation of resilience interventions at a

later stage. Moreover, in-depth interviews were used to capture attitudes and actions not adequately understood with the structured questions that would be present should the study have used survey research. Intensive interviewing uncovered details about the lives of these participants that surely would not be evident or identifiable from surveys alone, including differences related to work hours, occupational socialization, work schemas and happiness with work-life balance.

Finally, data collected through in-depth interviewing has helped refine measures used in this quantitative study and it is very possible that the results the interviews have rendered in this study could be used to develop a set of structured interview questions, according to which multiple regression methods could be used to identify factors predicting a range of orientations toward resilience thereafter. Together, this body of research provided insights on the intersection of work and family that would potentially have been left undiscovered by other methods.

## **5.7 Philosophical orientation that informs the qualitative method**

### **5.7.1 Phenomenological existentialism**

The research was underpinned by existential philosophy in that the research information was collected and analysed in acknowledgement of the ideals of human existence and the way in which individual emotions, actions, responsibilities and thoughts subjectively rendered meaning and purpose to life. Existentialism promotes respect for an unbiased approach towards the subjective experience of the individual in the context of their existence, as meaning giving human beings, which was crucial in this study in order to establish how people subjectively viewed resilience.

It is of the utmost importance that the information generated here, by the interviews in this research, was untouched by any previous preconceived opinion or ideal and information that stems from these participants is in its most unrefined and authentic state in order for results to be authentic yet also transferable. Previous definitions, generalizations, prejudices, opinions and theories were bracketed by the researcher, with the intention to understand others (the participants) in their world intuitively and without bias, thus rendering truthful and credible information. Ultimately, given the

picture that has been painted by the extensive literature review to follow, which illustrates challenges posed by the working worlds today, this research proved to be of the utmost necessity in order to have established what can be done in the future to create a more humane working environment and to assist the greater population in becoming more resilient.

### **5.7.2 Phenomenology**

As per Natanson (1962) the logic of phenomenology is one bound to the immediacy of all experience insofar as phenomena are understood as givens in their immediate and irreducible, presentative force. Most simply the method is after the formal qualities of the concrete reality which human beings recognize as their experience, but from here means the essential immanent in the particular: the truth of the given. Essentially, if the term 'logic' is understood in its philosophic sense as a grounding discipline for all reflection, then phenomenology as a logic treats the genesis and development of phenomena from their most primordial roots in pre-reflective consciousness to their most reflectively-sophisticated exemplification in science.

Phenomenology, with regards to this research on resilience, was an effort at improving the understanding of people and the world by means of careful description of experience, especially experiences that reflect resilience. On the surface, this seems little more than naturalistic observation and introspection, but if examined a little more closely, one can see that the basic assumptions are quite different from those of the mainstream experimentally-oriented human sciences. In using phenomenological methods in this research, the attempt was made to describe phenomena without reducing those phenomena to supposedly objective non-phenomena. Instead of appealing to objectivity for validation, we appeal instead to inter-subjective agreement.

Phenomenology begins with phenomena, essentially appearances: that which we experience or that which is given as such. It doesn't prejudge an experience as to its qualifications to be an experience. Instead, by taking up a phenomenological attitude, researchers let the experience unveil itself. The most basic kind of phenomenology is

the description of a particular phenomenon such as a momentary happening, a thing or even a person, that is, something full of its uniqueness (Boeree. 2000). As per Spiegelberg (1964) there are three fundamental steps in ensuring that the results rendered from this qualitative approach are of the most credible and reliable standard. This research primarily made use of intuiting the experience or recalled the phenomenon when conducting the interviews and required the research to "hold" it in your awareness, or live in it, be involved in it, dwell in it or on it whilst interpreting the data, as well as attentively listening throughout the interviews.

This method of research also allowed the researcher to analyse the information rendered effectively in order to examine the phenomenon. This resulted in the researcher constantly scrutinizing the pieces and parts, in the spatial sense, the episodes and sequences, in the temporal sense, the qualities and dimensions of the phenomenon, the settings, environments, surroundings, the prerequisites and consequences in time, the perspectives approaches one can take, the cores or foci and fringes or horizons, the appearing and disappearing of the phenomena and, finally, the clarity of the phenomenon. This deems most effective to the nature of resilience as a studied construct as it allowed the researcher to investigate these many aspects both in their outward forms (objects, actions, others) as well as in their inward forms (thoughts, images, feelings). What is most prominent with the way in which this research had unfolded, is that the researcher was able to write down a participant's description (as if the reader had never had the experience and then also guiding participants through the researcher's intuiting and analysing).

Justification as to what may have made these three steps so difficult is the fact that the researcher's attitude must be maintained as the researcher performs the intuiting, analysing and the describing of the process. Firstly, phenomenological research requires the researcher to have a certain respect for the phenomenon as well as to take care that the researcher is intuiting it fully, from all possible "angles," physically and mentally, and leaving nothing out of the analysis that belongs there (Spiegelberg, 1964). In addition, what was said is that the genuine will to know calls for the spirit of generosity rather than for that of economy.

Included in this "generosity" is a respect for both public and private events, the "objective" and the "subjective." A basic point in phenomenology is called intentionality, which refers to the mutuality of the subject and the object in experience (Boeree, 2000). All phenomena involve both an intending act and an intended object in which the study has (as per tradition) emphasized the value of the object-pole and denigrated that of the subject-pole (Boeree, 2000). In fact, this study has gone so far as to dismiss even the object-pole if it doesn't correspond to some physical entity but, to gain in light of what Spiegelberg has advocated, even merely private phenomena are facts which we have no business to ignore. A science which refuses to take account of it as such is guilty of suppressing evidence and will end with a truncated universe.

However, having said this, one must also be on guard against including details in one's descriptions that do not belong there. This is the function of bracketing, where one should put aside all one's biases one might have about the phenomenon. When holding a prejudice against a person, one will see what one expects to see, rather than what is there. The same applies to phenomena in general. This study was done in such a way that the researcher approached the phenomenon unprejudiced by theories, hypotheses, metaphysical assumptions, religious beliefs or even common-sense conceptions. Ultimately, bracketing means suspending judgment about the "true nature" or "ultimate reality" of the experience, even if it exists or not (Boeree, 2000).

Although the description of individual phenomena in this study is interesting in its own right and involved people or cultures, it did, in fact, come to a point where the researcher wanted to mention something about the class of which the phenomenon was a part. In phenomenology, researchers talk about seeking the essence or structure of something; essentially the essence of resilience and what makes people resilient. With phenomenology, the world regains some of its solidity, the mind is again permitted a reality of its own and a rather paranoid scepticism is replaced with a more generous, and ultimately more satisfying, curiosity. By returning to the things themselves or to the lived world we stand a better chance at developing a true understanding of our human existence (Husserl 1965, 1970).

### 5.7.3 Existentialism

Existentialism in the broader sense is a 20th century philosophy that is centred upon the analysis of existence and of the way humans find themselves living in the world. The notion is that humans exist first and then each individual spends a lifetime changing his essence or nature. In simpler terms, existentialism is a philosophy concerned with finding self and the meaning of life through free will, choice and personal responsibility. The belief is that people are searching to find out who and what they are throughout life as they make choices based on their experiences, beliefs and outlook. Personal choices become unique without the necessity of an objective form of truth. An existentialist believes that a person should be free to choose and be responsible even without the imposition of laws, ethnic rules or traditions (Niles, 2002).

Existentialism used in this research was done so by taking into consideration the underlying concepts that impact the results of such methodology such as human free will. Human nature is characterized through life choices and a person is best when struggling against their individual nature for instance, fighting for one's life. Decisions are not without stress and consequences and there are things that are not rational: personal responsibility and discipline is crucial while society is unnatural. Its traditional religious and secular rules are arbitrary whilst worldly desire is futile. There is a wide variety of philosophical, religious and political ideologies that make up existentialism, so there is no universal agreement in an arbitrary set of ideals and beliefs. Politics vary, but each seeks the most individual freedom for people within a society to live an authentic life.

Each ideal basically agrees that human life is in no way complete and fully satisfying because of suffering and losses that occur when considering the lack of perfection, power, and control one has over their life. Even though each ideal does agree that life is not optimally satisfying, it nonetheless has meaning. It could be preferential to note here that existentialists do not believe that "life" has intrinsic meaning - but rather that "life" is given meaning through authentic choices – that is, living true to oneself. Existentialism is the search and journey for true self and true personal meaning in life (Niles, 2002).

Most importantly, in this study it is the arbitrary act that existentialism finds most objectionable—that is, when someone or society tries to impose or demand that their beliefs, values or rules be faithfully accepted and obeyed. This research is anchored in existentialism because it affirms that this concept destroys individualism and makes an individual become whatever the people in power desire. Individuals are dehumanized and reduced to being an object. Existentialism then stresses that an individual's judgment is the determining factor for what is to be believed, rather than by arbitrary religious or secular world values.

Despite the various and often conflicting views held by many existentialist philosophers, there are several main concepts of existentialism that are universally recognized and which have in turn governed this study, such as the fact that sentient beings, especially humans, have free will and are responsible for the consequences of their decisions. Having said that, extremely few, if any, decisions are void of negative consequence: even when part of a group, each person acts and decides as an individual, and is accountable as such. Ultimately, the world is indifferent towards humanity. Throughout this study a huge emphasis was placed on the focus of the individual. Existentialism is a philosophy of the individual and his struggle through life — a focus on the subjective life that we all actually live, rather than a search for objective truths external to us (Niles, 2002).

#### **5.7.4 Phenomenological existentialism and its relationship**

Phenomenology is a research technique that involves the careful description of aspects of human life as they are lived while existentialism, deriving its insights from phenomenology, is the philosophical attitude that views human life from the inside rather than pretending to understand it from an outside, "objective" point-of-view (Niles, 2002). Phenomenological existentialism, as a philosophy or a psychology, is not a tightly-defined system by any means, yet its adherents are relatively easily identified by their emphasis on the importance of individuals and their freedom to participate in their own creation. It is a psychology that emphasizes one's creative processes far more than one's adherence to laws, be they human, natural, or divine (Niles, 2002).

The relationship between phenomenology and existentialism is a close one. Phenomenology shares several of the same ideas as its sibling, and the line between the two is often unclear. Phenomenology is a philosophical model that was made to be free of presupposition. The idea is to study and describe objects and events from the position of the experience, rather than to make claims about some objective reality. Anything that is not immediately conscious is to be excluded. Rather than deductive or empirical methods, phenomenological existentialism prefers methods of relying on the information gathered by the senses and to bracket scientific and metaphysical knowledge or beliefs in order to study phenomena more accurately.

While the rest of philosophy often focuses on how things are and how we are able or unable to perceive the truth in the world, phenomenology counts that our perceptions and internal experience are what matters. Existentialism mirrors this idea in its description of human nature. Psychologists, sociologists and philosophers alike have searched for so-called “truths” about human nature. Existentialism holds that there are no (or at least few) universal truths about human nature — the individual is what is important, and the individual is free to make his or her life in any way imaginable (Niles, 2002). Together, existentialism and phenomenology move the focus away from facts about the world towards facts about the individual self. For phenomenology, that means changing the way we view metaphysics and epistemological claims. For existentialism, it generates a normative ethic on how to live a worthwhile life.

## **5.8 Qualitative research**

There is a wide range of approaches to qualitative research. Atkinson, Delamont & Hammersley (1998), for example, outline seven different approaches used in British educational research deriving from symbolic interactionism, anthropology, sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology, qualitative evaluation, neo-Marxist ethnography and feminism. In addition, a number of terms are often used interchangeably, such as 'ethnography', 'case study', 'qualitative research' though each, in fact, has its own particular meaning. In effect, however, the qualitative approach to this research was characterized by four main elements which escort the research to a full justification of

qualitative study, namely, a focus on natural settings, an interest in meanings, perspectives and understandings, an emphasis on process and a concern with inductive analysis and grounded theory.

In qualitative research, the research is based on an underlying philosophical assumption about the knowledge of the world and how that knowledge can be obtained. Thus, the research is governed by an interpretive research approach as the information that is accessed was by no means predefined by dependent and independent variables, but rather the focus was on the complexity of human sense making and occurred naturally as the situation emerged and was recorded (Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994). Attempts to understand the phenomena was then achieved by understanding the meanings people had assigned to such complexities (Boland, 1991; Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991) and revealed during in-depth interviews.

In respect of a focus on natural setting, this research, in light of qualitative researchers being interested in life as it is lived in real situations, had a number of implications. This research did not set up artificial experiments; the process rather examined the natural event or events that had occurred. By interviewing and questioning the behaviours, regards and actions, such as career transition or any other circumstances, leading up to an event in which they felt made them resilient.

Because few to no assumptions were made in advance of the study, since things are there to be found out, the researcher had no idea what they were beforehand. In the true focus of qualitative studies, openness of mind was the approach adopted through the methods and the researcher did not take things for granted in trying to 'make the familiar strange'. Given that this is not easy to do, one must remember that things are so familiar to oneself that it becomes impossible to single out events that occur in the classroom as things that have occurred, even when they happen right in front of you.... it takes a tremendous effort of will and imagination to stop seeing the things that are conventionally "there" to be seen.

Situations in the research are deemed to be important because they influence behaviour and people often behave differently in different circumstances. Thus, in light of the justification of qualitative research use, the context cannot and was not taken as a given, but rather as a set of parameters with which individuals interact. Because social life is complex in its range and variability, and operates at different levels, it is important to consider the underlying assumptions that qualitative research is able to realize and make sense of. It has many layers of meaning (Berger, 1966) and the researcher has the ability to discover the innermost meanings which numbers and statistics may not prevail. Qualitative research enables researchers to gain access to deeper levels, while the researcher needs to develop a certain rapport with the subjects of the study, and to win trust which was a key success factor in obtaining the necessary results. An interest in meanings, perspectives and understanding in terms of the qualitative research requires the qualitative researcher seeks to discover the meanings that participants attach to their behaviour, how they interpret situations, and what their perspectives are on particular issues (Pratt, 2006).

In terms of utilizing the data as such, the RS-25 scale indicated that 25 to 100 points indicated a low level of resilience, 116 to 145 indicated a moderate level and 161 to 175 indicated a high level of resilience. Of the candidates assessed, 19 of the highest scoring people were used to participate.

Research methods employed have been sensitive to the perspectives of all participants. In addition, the methods have picked up the interaction between perspectives and situation in order to ascertain how they bear on each other in true, qualitative style. Moreover, researchers therefore work to obtain 'inside' knowledge of the social life under study which is not possible to identify or familiarize oneself with when the nature of the study is quantitative. If one is to understand people's outlooks and experiences, one must be close to individuals and to groups, live with them from day to day, look out at the world through their viewpoints, see them in various situations and in various moods, appreciate the inconsistencies, ambiguities and contradictions in their behaviour, explore their interests, understand their relationships among themselves and with other groups. The very nature of the construct resilience requires the researcher to

unfold such situations and understand the material surrounding it in order to answer the set research objectives and aims.

The researcher attempts to appreciate the culture of groups as well as to capture the meanings that permeate the culture as understood by the participants. These meanings can become extremely recondite to outside observers. Groups might have their own language and use of language, and also engage in highly symbolic non-verbal activity, such as in the organisational culture of a company. Again, to reiterate, this type of deep lunge into underlying assumptions, artefacts and hidden meanings are more amendable to exploration by means of qualitative measures and methods.

What is more, with regards to the construct of resilience and the justification of the qualitative stances to measure the construct is the fact that specialist terminology is not the only clue. Subjects might use the same language as the researcher but mean different things by it. For example, participant understandings of a support structure had shown to vary among different people. The words still have to be interpreted. In essence, the researcher aims for shared meanings, when one feels part of the culture and can interpret words and gestures as they unfold (Wax, 1971), which again stresses the emphasis on meaning as perceived within a particular context.

An emphasis on process is vital and a keen characteristic of qualitative research. This research further justified the qualitative course of action in that there is a focus on how things happen, how they develop on becoming. Everyday life is an ever-changing picture; there is no settled state (Pratt, 2006). Action is a continuous process of meaning attribution, which is always emerging, in a state of flux and subject to change. Typical subjects for enquiry in a study as such may be how a group culture forms and develops, how particular people perceive and perform a certain construct (resilience) or even how transitions are managed.

However, it must be mentioned that quantitative and qualitative methods can work well together. In this study for example, quantitative methods can show, how much of a construct each person possesses on a numerical level and, also with regards to the

feelings and behaviours dealt with they can demonstrate how generally and frequently it occurred. Qualitative methods can reveal in fine detail just how change occurred in behaviours, age groups, activities, negotiations and decisions. Equally, quantitative and qualitative methods can be a useful check on each other. For example, in this study quantitative techniques were used to identify who, among the population, were resilient and who would have a myriad of experience to share.

Lastly, to ensure sufficient justification of the choice of qualitative methodology, it must be noted that not all qualitative researchers are concerned to test theory in this way. In this case, some would argue that the aim is to understand the quality of social life. In pursuit of this, richly-detailed material and results may be produced. This has been termed 'thick description' (Pratt, 2006), which goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It can be said that this research presents detail, context, and emotion and uncovers the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another. Thick description in this study evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience and establishes the significance of an experience or the sequence of events for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions and meanings of interacting individuals are heard (Denzin, 1989). Ultimately, this study, which exploits the concept of thick description, contains new ideas or concepts that cast new light on the activity of under study, and which might help one understand similar activity elsewhere.

## CHAPTER 6: METHODS USED AND IDENTIFIED RESULTS

Chapter 6 addresses the application of the method and the results attained. This chapter looks into the data collection techniques and the various research methods as discussed in the research methodology. The methods or steps in order to tease out the information on resilience will be provided by interviews that will hopefully provide detail of people's experiences of resilience, how they were able to move ahead, what they envisioned resilience to be, the hardships they faced and the methods used to get out of the rut. People's emotions, thoughts, perceptions, experiences, morals, ideals, actions and reactions will be investigated and studied meticulously in order to establish where this construct stems from, how it is harnessed or how it is learnt, what sort of setbacks people must endure to be deemed resilient and how it feels to "walk out of the water".

### 6.1 Methods used

In terms of utilizing the data as such, the RS-25 scale indicated that 25 to 100 points indicated a low level of resilience, 116 to 145 indicated a moderate level and 161 to 175 indicated a high level of resilience. Of the 28 participants who participated, 19 of the highest-scoring people were used to participate.

Data analysis frequently occurs in several stages through this selected method of research and thus, once interviews have been conducted, managing and organizing data is a critical first step in analysis (Mouton, 2001). All files (electronic, tape, paper) are labeled and interviews are transcribed. What was found is that, at the beginning stages of interviewing, it was valuable to make detailed notes after each interview, or write memos or field notes that reflected additional information and insights that arose from the actual interview. For example, the overall assessment of each respondent's situation might be described and themes might be drawn from an overall sample. It was also of the researcher's experience that it was useful to describe how reflective or introspective the participant was regarding interview questions, as this would have indicated just how deep a participant had dived into their experiences for purposes of explaining resilience. These interviews, primary themes and patterns that seemed

evident have been documented in a memo or field note (more to be discussed in Chapter 6). However, throughout the duration of the interviews, only brief notes identifying any key issues that arose in the interview were made as it is likely that similar accounts and experiences had transpired in multiple interviews.

Transcription was completed after all interviews were conducted or during the process of data collection. The final stage of data analysis, in this case, occurred during the writing stage in which themes were revisited and revised as the analysis became refined when writing the results of the research. During analysis, it was found that positive and negative assessments of the same social phenomena by the same participant were in fact interpreted and thus made it imperative to unpack contradictions, ambivalence and structural constraints faced by people. Given that researchers should accurately portray the perceptions, feelings, and experiences of respondents, it is also the case that a critical analysis of all available information may not always have matched with participants' views of their situation. In the end, this analysis in this study relies on the researcher's interpretation of the interview data as well as the associated behaviour observations.

## **6.2 Application of the methods used**

The methods used in this research, as previously discussed in the above chapter, had firmly been in favour of the qualitative approach and thus the application of methods of research with regards to this method were focused on the individual experience. This research method was applied, given the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of identifying themes or patterns as well as qualitative data, reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings in what people had said about resilience as a construct and life experience. In terms of utilizing the data as such, the RS-25 scale indicated that 25 to 100 points indicated a low level of resilience, 116 to 145 indicated a moderate level and 161 to 175 indicated a high level of resilience. Of the 28 candidates assessed, 19 of the highest scoring people were used to participate. The scores of the participants in this research study all fell within the

ranges of moderate to high levels of resilience, with scoring values from 134 to 175. (See Appendix B for the scores of the participants who were interviewed).

The process of qualitative content analysis began during the early stages of data collection as this was what enabled the researcher to move back and forth between concept development and data collection in establishing different themes and patterns. This also helps in directing the subsequent data collection toward sources that are more useful for addressing the research questions. Qualitative content analysis proved to be a valuable alternative to more traditional quantitative content analysis in the case of this study, predominantly because the research was done whilst working in an interpretive paradigm. The goal here is to identify important themes or categories within the body of resilience, and to provide a rich description of the social reality created by those themes or categories that surround resilience as they are lived out by certain individuals in a particular setting. In this study the above is achieved through careful data preparation and interpretation, since the results of qualitative content analysis can support the development of new theories and models, as well as validating existing theories and providing thick descriptions of particular settings or phenomena.

### **6.3 Identified primary themes**

Among the themes discovered within the research there were a number of themes that were very obvious and thus well explained, but there were also a few themes that were uncovered by further probing. In this chapter, the author would like to identify a few themes that were based on what the participants had deduced from their own experiences. The themes identified were self-efficacy, positive appraisal, positive affectivity, degree of altruism, birth order and gender differences, emotional intelligence, individual differences (personality and hardiness), locus of control, self-directedness, human agency, motivational forces, goal setting and level of incidences experienced, sense of coherence, learned resourcefulness and stamina.

### 6.3.1 Positive appraisal (salutogenesis)

According to Cilliers & Kossuth (2002), the salutogenic paradigm is the focus of the origin of health and wellness, the location and development of personal and social resources and the adaptive tendencies which relate to an individual's disposition, hence allowing an individual to select appropriate strategies to deal with confronting stressors. On that note, the salutogenic personality profile with regards to the participants in this study may be observed on a cognitive level where an individual shows the ability to view stimuli from the environment in a positive and constructive manner and to use information towards effective decision making (thus making them resilient). An affective level, where an individual may demonstrate functions of self-awareness, confidence, self-fulfillment, views stimuli as meaningful and feels committed towards life in a mature manner (again making them resilient). On a conative level, where an individual portrays an internal motivation, he/she perceives stimuli as a challenge that directs his/her energy to cope, solve problems and achieve results (which again reflects resilient behavior). Lastly, on a level which transmits with interpersonal characteristics, according to which an individual exhibits a capacity to form meaningful relationships with others at work.

The omnipresence of stressors in terms of heterostasis is a constant state of disorder, and pressure to increase entropy as the prototypical characteristic of the living organism (Strumpfer, 1990). Three states of stress were revealed throughout this study, making substantial contributions to evoking resilient behaviour, namely, catastrophic, according to which results from disasters occur and affects entire regions or populations, secondly, acute stress whereby the consequence of crises or stressful events which affect individuals or populations necessitates immediate response and lastly, endemic stress, which may be described as a condition of continuous and manifold changes, demands, threats or deprivations, frequently small in scale and embedded in daily events (Strumpfer, 1990).

Everyone experiences stress to some degree and it was found, throughout this study and the research which summed up the literature review, that stress is the contributing

factor to provoking a resilient response or reaction in individuals. Generalised resistance resource such as those resources used to cope with pathogens and stressors cause people to resort to a sink or swim, fight or flight mode of response, so to speak, and thus people fall between the two poles of total illness or total wellness. Stressors have salutary consequences, that is, are not inherently bad, given that the consequences depend on the response of the person. If stress is managed well, stressors may remain neutral or even be health-enhancing. However, if managed poorly, stress would inevitably result and hence a way for reduced functioning and effective response opens up.

In this study it was found that many people's resilience was based largely on how they had appraised situations. Those who appraised situations positively, with optimistic outlooks were more likely not only to handle the situation better but also to reap more reward from the experience of the situation, hence preparing them for more and similar challenges that may occur in the future. Affective dispositions and personality variables that reflect individual's tendency to experience emotion across situations can dictate the positive outcome of that situation. Previous research suggests that certain people are predisposed to experience, not only anxiety but other negative emotional states as well, including fear, hostility, scorn and disgust when they appraise situations negatively (Spector 2002). Conversely, individuals in this study who had demonstrated a high level of positive affectivity had, in fact, developed an optimistic view of the world and a more positive approach to most situations rather than a negative view of the world through their life experiences that could have resulted in a tendency to interpret the world as threatening.

It must also be mentioned by Spector (2002), that those high in positive appraisal are more able to hold a job and that individuals who choose to view situations negatively are more likely to perceive job stressors, experience anxiety and other negative emotions and strains. It was illustrated by him that the study, as these individuals were also the very same people who tended to perceive or experience more conflict with others, organisational constraints, workload, role ambiguity, role conflict and injustice. Positive appraisal of situations also seems to have aided in positive reinforcement in

that this seemed to have the effect where many individuals in the study had experienced a situation that needed to be viewed in a positive light (such as sales production challenges) and once given an incentive they were able to push harder and perform better, thus increasing the amount of resilience harnessed through positive appraisal of the challenge. Positive appraisal also appeared to be instrumental in enhancing the positive relation between job stressors and strains, showing that the individuals who were more inclined to appraise the situation positively were more likely to be less sensitive to threatening stressors and respond more strongly to them.

### **6.3.2 Positive affectivity**

The way in which a person acts and the extent to which he/she demonstrate enthusiasm, energy and pleasurable engagement affects the way in which a person will deal with many challenges throughout their lives. Although this seems to be a broad and pervasive personality type that appears significant in determining cognitive-affective reactions to stress, the fact is that negative expectation and negative thinking in various situations are considered to be patterns linked to other types of pessimistic attribution patterns (Wofford & Daly, 1997). It was found that positive thinking-patterns and positive self-concepts, paired with strong positive emotional responses, result in intense and enduring physiological arousal in a positive manner such as engagement, which helps individuals enable the construct of resilience within themselves, allowing them to cope better in trying times and hardships. Moreover it was found that, in correspondence with previous research done on affectivity by Wofford and Daly, individuals that are low on negative affectivity and consequently high in positive affectivity are less likely to experience distress and dissatisfaction and, whilst these individuals may be more introspective, they do not tend to dwell on their failures and shortcoming or the negative side of the world.

People with a tendency towards negative affectivity have less favourable self-view and are more dissatisfied with themselves and their lives. Thus, for purposes of this study, it can be said that it was clear that individuals who did not dwell on their failures or were satisfied with themselves and their actions (people who were high on positive affectivity)

were more likely to be resilient in nature, as these people have literally used comments such as “deal with it and move on” or “you cry, you get angry and you get over it and move on”. People high on positive affectivity in this study were identifiably the individuals who demonstrated resilience as positive affectivity was apparent in all their experiences and their methods for coping and dealing with challenges.

It is interesting to note that, as per Wofford and Daly (1997), individuals that are high on negative affectivity differ from individuals high on positive affectivity in terms of their cognitive-affective schemas in the sense that high negative affectivity individuals’ neural networks have a higher number of negative affect units associated with conceptual units where more numerous and stronger connections occur between these units. People who experience these “negative affect units” within their system of neurons, are biologically less resilient than those who do not, which seemingly could argue in favour of resilience being biologically-determined or an inherent trait.

### **6.3.3 Degree of altruism, birth order and gender differences**

The degree of altruism, in this study, seemed to be very apparent especially from a parental or maternal/paternalistic perspective. Many participants mentioned that they are, or had to be, emotionally resilient on a daily basis in order to be strong for their offspring, as well as be fit enough to fend for them financially. Most participants in this study were parents or parents-to-be and felt that having to look after another individual and having to provide for them is what gave them a sense of challenge to work harder every day in order to put food on the table but also to set a good example and become a pillar of strength in their community. For example, a handful of participants spoke of divorce and how they had to be resilient through that time as that was when their children were most vulnerable and thus most likely to be affected by the situation. These participants had also mentioned how they were willing to do almost anything to provide for their children, give them a better life and encourage them in a functional and optimal environment and so they fight or fought every day against difficulties and hardships so that their children would benefit.

This ideal of resilience, due to altruism, was even stronger in those parents who had been the divorcee as well as more apparent in mothers that were now “single mothers” and had to take on dual roles of financial income provider as well as the maternal role. This, by observation, had increased the participants’ resilience in their ability to handle more pressures, cope with more challenges and respond more effectively to the future changes and uncertainties that had then lay ahead. That it was evident that the more tough life made the situations, the harder the response or reaction was in order to come out on top, especially when there were offspring involved.

Lastly, with regards to birth rank or order, it was largely and predominantly demonstrated that the oldest child in the family had exhibited more resilience than participants born in the middle or last born. It was found that individuals who were oldest almost had to “set a trend” or “lead the way” when hardships had struck the family unit. Many participants talk about illness, death or divorce of parents and how they as the oldest sibling had to begin to carry all kinds of burdens such as financial and emotional strain as well as other tasks such as chores that had built them up to deal better with all of those spheres as adults. Whilst this may well be because they had become used to dealing with such responsibilities, it could also largely be due to the fact that because they had dealt with it at such an early age, it seemed trivial when other thought it was taxing. It seemed that the harder and earlier the challenges had presented themselves, the easier and more fluid they were dealt with as time passed on. The more the challenges came along, the easier it became to solve the problem and cope, survive and thrive.

#### **6.3.4 Emotional intelligence**

Emotional intelligence (EI) can be reported as the adaptive perception of emotions, the use of emotions to enhance cognition, understanding of emotions, and regulation of emotions may contribute to mental and physical health in various ways (Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar & Rooke, 2007). It has been said that individuals with a high EI may prevent development of maladaptive emotional states associated with mood and anxiety disorders, as well as possess a typically more positive mood and be

better able to repair mood after a negative mood induction (links to positive appraisal). Moreover, according to Hansen, Gardner, and Stough (2007), EI is related to better mental health and is linked with aspects of better psychosocial functioning (intrapersonal factors and interpersonal factors). Whilst, conversely, individuals on lower EI scores tend to exert a lack of awareness of emotional processes as well as impulse control problems.

In light of this study, it can be said that results found that individuals high on emotional intelligence were more able to utilize their capabilities in coping and resilience. Broadly speaking, EI is a set of conceptually-related psychological processes involving the processing of emotion and emotion-related information (Schutte et al., 2007) and these psychological processes include the perception and expression of emotion, the integration of emotion with thoughts, understanding emotion and the appropriate regulation and management of emotion. Whilst there are many fragmented aspects of EI, the most common aspects that pertain to the participants in this study, as well as the construct of resilience, is that of self-awareness, self-confidence and self-acceptance which proved to be fundamental to the development of EI in terms of the fostering and harnessing resilience in different situations. Through increased self-awareness, participants seemed more able to 'detach' themselves cognitively from negative experiences or detrimental effects of hardships and deal better with the emotions they experience from environmental events and challenges, especially unwanted change. Due to the role emotions play in the manner in which individuals appraise and respond to potentially-threatening events or situations such as change, attention is turning to the concept of EI as a moderating variable in the stress process.

Thus, in light of such a statement it is apparent that the abilities to identify one's own feeling and emotional states as well as the ability to express such states (emotional recognition and expression), the ability to identify other's emotions and manifest responses (emotional understanding), the extent to which emotions and emotional knowledge is incorporated into decision-making and problem-solving (emotional reasoning), including the capacity to manage positive and negative emotions in oneself and others (emotional management) and, lastly, the capacity to control strong emotional

states when necessary (emotional control) are all pivotal in defining the amount and accessibility of resilience in an individual. Not only was this apparent in the nature of the experiences divulged, but it was also found by the way in which people communicated experience and the connotations attached to them. Ultimately, it can be said that resilience was found to be strongly connected to the construct of emotional intelligence.

### **6.3.5 Individual difference (personality and personality hardiness)**

The aspect of personality difference is arguably the most important and prevalent theme throughout this entire study. Personality, according to Strumper (1990), is explained in terms of hardiness in light of resilience and thus is a global personality construct that moderates stress-health relationships. Personality hardiness consists of three components, namely, commitment according to which an individual exhibits a belief in truth, importance and value of who they are and what they are doing, as well as a tendency to involve themselves actively in many situations in life (for example, work, family, friendship), secondly, control, whereby an individual demonstrates a tendency to believe and act as if they can influence events in their life (similar to internal locus of control) and, lastly, challenge, whereby an individual can cope with change, because instability is the norm in life, one's ability to adapt to change as it presents opportunities for personal growth and development becomes significant. With regards to these three concepts of commitment, control and challenge, many of the participants were able to relate to resilience on at least one of these levels.

Belief, faith and support structures fall heavily on the concept of commitment in terms of belief in truth, importance and value of what they are and what they are doing as well as a tendency to involve themselves actively in many situations in life (for example, work, family, friendship). Most participants agreed or mentioned that they not only had faith in a being or the universal concept, but that they had faith in themselves and what they did in life, in their values, belief systems and faith that things "would turn out to be ok in the end". These people also tended to be strongly involved in social circles from gym memberships to book clubs and church. These participants also held constant that they had a firm support structure in terms of good friends, family or simple shoulders to cry

on, people who had experienced equal amounts of hardships or pain and thus to whom they could relate of an empathetic level. In this study, 18 of the 19 participants confirmed that having a solid support structure at all times was, in fact, the key to resilience and, in some cases, participants almost went so far as to say that if it were not for family and friends that they would not have survived the hardships.

Control in terms of individual ability to demonstrate a tendency to believe and act as if they can influence events in their life (similar to internal locus of control) is largely a determinant of resilience. Most participants said that taking responsibility for their actions and using their abilities to “make the most of a situation” was key in fostering their resilience in their own personal experience and, even more so, being able to access that same resilience later based on previous experience where that resilience had to be harnessed. On a more positive note, in terms of influencing one’s actions, individuals who demonstrated high levels of resilience were more proactive in their approach to influencing events in their own lives as well as believing that they were able to do so out of their own ability, and not attributing such success or failure to external forces but rather to their ability and capability.

Lastly, in respect of to challenge, all participants who were considered high on resilience seemed to be the individuals who proved to cope with change the best and were equipped to deal with adversity and instability. These participants showed the ability to adapt to change as and when it presented opportunities for personal growth and development. Resilient participants actually believed that change was invigorating and that they actually found change to be a constructive challenge and preferred a change-typified environment to that of a routine structure. Change seemed to be instrumental in enhancing the frequency and levels of resilience practiced.

Individual differences acted through a variety of mechanisms (such as the previously-mentioned theme of an individual’s perception or appraisal mechanism) throughout the research and suggested that people vary in how they view the world, which sequentially varied the magnitude or capacity of resilience they possessed and/or could draw from in an experience. Naturally, some participants were more likely than others to perceive a

given situation, such as job restructuring or role-remodelling as a job stressor rather than an opportunity for growth or development. As per Spector (2002), the stressor-creation mechanism suggests that people are not randomly assigned to job stressors, but through their own direct and indirect actions they create environments in which they find themselves. This can happen through selection in a sense that selection would occur if people, by their own intention, or because of their characteristics, are placed into situations that are more or less stressful. This was apparent in the study, given that people who had demonstrated higher levels of resilience or who had touched on situations that had required large amounts of resilience, were those individuals who directed their actions in a constructive manner in order to self-create demiurgic and productive environments.

In addition to and in light of the above statement, the construct or personality domains of the Big 5 can be touched on briefly in that the "big five" are broad categories of personality traits. While there is a significant body of literature supporting this five-factor model of personality, researchers do not always agree on the exact labels for each dimension. However, these five categories are usually described as follows: Extraversion: This trait includes characteristics such as excitability, sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness and high amounts of emotional expressiveness. Agreeableness: This personality dimension includes attributes such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection and other prosocial behaviours. Conscientiousness: Common features of this dimension include high levels of thoughtfulness, with good impulse control and goal-directed behaviours. Those high in conscientiousness tend to be organized and mindful of details. Neuroticism: Individuals high in this trait tend to experience emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, irritability and sadness. Lastly, Openness: This trait features characteristics such as imagination and insight, and those high in this trait also tend to have a broad range of interests (McCrae & Costa, 1997)

It is important to note that each of the five personality factors represents a range between two extremes: such as Openness to experience (inventive/curious versus consistent/cautious): appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and variety of experience. Conscientiousness (efficient/organized versus easy-

going/careless): a tendency to show self-discipline, act dutifully, and aim for achievement; planned rather than spontaneous behaviour. Extraversion (outgoing/energetic versus solitary/reserved): experiencing energy, positive emotions, surgency and the tendency to seek stimulation in the company of others. Agreeableness (friendly/compassionate versus cold/unkind): a tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others. Lastly, Neuroticism (sensitive/nervous versus secure/confident): a tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily, such as anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

In a study by Friberg, Barlaug, Martinussen, Rosenvinge and Hjemdal (2006) it was found that the Big Five had differentiated between well-adjusted and more vulnerable personality profiles and that all resilience factors were positively correlated with the well-adjusted personality profile. Strength in resilience was most associated with aspects such as emotional stability, social competence, extroversion and agreeableness, as well as social skills and conscientiousness. Interestingly this result was common in this study too, as the individuals who had demonstrated high levels of resilience were also the same individuals who claimed to be or have the most amounts of extroversion, conscientiousness and social competence. Thus it can be deduced that the resilience in an individual may be characterized by a “stronger” or hardier personality profile, as they are less likely to be vulnerable to stressful situations. Moreover, people who scored high on resilience claimed to be extroverts and were also more able to access a firm social support system in order to have people to rely on in times of need. The study had also shown that extroverts were the people more able and not only likely to move on from bad experience but, more importantly, to take the lessons learned in such experiences and learn from them vitally.

The emotion-threshold mechanism suggests that some individuals are more emotionally reactive to the environment than others and will tend to experience negative emotions more frequently, such as strain sensitivity. This illustrates how individuals vary in their tendencies to experience or exhibit strain, either in response to job stressors or to emotions. Individuals in this study who were high in social competence, emotional

intelligence and extroverts were the individuals who had, in fact, faced more challenges and had been through a larger number of incidents that required resilient behaviour. Taken together, these mechanisms of personality and resilience suggest a complex interplay of individual's abilities and of their tendencies, with the job environment and with people both reacting to and causing stressors.

Lastly, what was also interesting was that the personality variable that has the strongest link to resilience and wellbeing is that of the Type A personality characteristics. For purposes of clarity it must be noted that there are two forms of Type A: achievement striving and impatience; in this regard, we are referring to the achievement striving form. Relations to achievement-striving include role ambiguity, role conflict and workload, as well as characteristics that can be bracketed as competitive and time-urgent, and such individuals have a high need for control. This related to the situations that were highlighted by the participants and how they felt that had they not been time-urgent, competitive, abrasive and achievement focused, they would not be where they are today and would not have been able to strive and achieve what they have today in the face of the adversity. Some participants even used statements such as "no one hangs around for nice guys" and that "you gotta scratch your own back to get places". Thus, being slightly selfish, competitive, driven or however else one would choose to describe Type A personality characteristic, is key determinant in how far you will go to achieve your goals and thus how much resilience you have in the face of setbacks and obstacles towards those goals. Ultimately, it can be argued that more resilient people are people who have a high need for achievement and also are characterized by Type A personality traits.

Linking personality to both the employee and the organisation, resilience is arguably characterized by effective employee wellbeing, as that leads directly to organisational wellbeing (Spector, 1997). Attribution style (in terms of attributes, traits and qualities) is instrumental in how people conduct their activities and thus respond to certain stressors. This is also fittingly connected to the aspect of a person's enduring confidence in his/her own capacities as well as confidence in and commitment to his/her

social environment, which is perceived as being characterised by a meaningful and predictable order and by a reliably and just distribution of rewards (Spector, 1997).

People with a positive attribution style in terms of how they approached different situations and challenges presented were the individuals who showed the highest amounts of resilience. The outcomes of successful past experience of coping comprises mastery and self-appreciation (opposite is anomie and alienation) and thus aids in an individual's ability not only to deal with the attached consequences effectively, but also better prepares them for future challenges. Finally it can be confirmed, through observation and deduction by way of summarizing, that personality characteristics, in terms of attribution style, traits and emotions greatly affect the level of resilience an individual possess and is able to harness at any given required time.

### **6.3.6 Locus of control**

Locus of control with regards to the importance of this study is essentially concerned with beliefs about personal control of rewards and punishments. According to Spector (1997), people will either feel they have control (internals) or feel that control resides outside themselves in fate, luck or powerful others (externals). Internals are less likely to interpret situations as stressors or unachievable because lack of control acts to enhance the power of stressors, producing greater levels of emotional response. Resilient people can be described as having an internal locus of control because most participants who possessed the construct resilience denoted that they had almost always taken matters into their own hands and also subsequently accepted responsibility and accountability for either success or failure. Resilient people may be deemed as internals, given that it was observed that resilient participants also mentioned that they had very strong beliefs within themselves and had accepted that it was them and only them who were able to change their situations for the better (this is dependent on the person and how they appraise a stressor).

Moreover, a situation that is seen as controllable will have less potential of eliciting negative emotions than a situation that is seen as uncontrollable. Externals are far more likely to perceive situations as stressors and hence, perhaps not be as resilient as

internals in the same situation as they do not see how it is possible to cope. Locus of control is also associated with emotions, with externals reporting more anger, anxiety, depression and frustration at work (Rothmann, 2003). Externals are also likely, and from participants in the study it was illustrated that, job dissatisfaction, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and experienced feelings of reduced personal accomplishment were very apparent which aided in diminishing the ability to foster resilience in themselves and corresponding situations. Thus it can be said that in order to be resilient, individuals should focus on establishing and developing an internal locus of control.

### **6.3.7 Self-directedness**

An estimated 70 percent of adult learning is self-directed learning (Cross 1981). Self-directed learning has been described as a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, to diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify resources for learning, select and implement learning strategies and evaluate learning outcomes (Knowles, 1975). This, in respect of this study, is viewed in light of self-directed learning in terms of resilience and the ability to learn how to be resilient in a situation. As well as the ability to apply those same resources to similar situations and challenges, each time learning something new about how things could have been done better or how alternate solutions may have rendered superior results. It can be deduced from the in-depth interviews that individuals who practice self-directedness throughout all their experiences in life and in their various challenges are more likely not only to be resilient individuals, but increase their levels of resilience as well as their coping mechanism and “bounce-back” schemas in order to prosper better and thrive.

### **6.3.8 Human agency**

Human agency can, for purposes of this study, be explained as the capacity for a human being to make certain choices in life and impose them on the world which is usually (by observation throughout this study) in contrast to natural forces and are causes that involve only unthinking, deterministic processes. It can be said that human

agency, through social cognitive theory, accords a central role to cognitive, vicarious, self-reflective and self-regulatory processes (Bandura, 1989). Essentially, human agency suggests that we as human beings do make decisions and enact them on the world within a domain of free thought and free will as well as associations with the fact that thought is undetermined. In view of this research on resilience, the human agency that is identified here is that the choices people make in life and the way in which they enact them upon the world is indicative of the amount of resilience they possess and use in situations.

Resilient participants in this study had been identified as “not afraid to stand up for what they believe in”, “always swimming upstream” and “standing their ground”. This being said, it may be inferred as making decisions in life that may potentially be in contrast to natural forces, but are necessary in order to survive and thrive in such a world. One participant even said that “you do what needs to be done in order to see results, even if you step on a few toes along the way”. Ergo, it can be reasoned that individuals who possess human agency and are able to make certain choices and impose them on the world, are the individuals who are more likely to be resilient and fight harder to survive and strive in uncertain times.

### **6.3.9 Motivational forces, goal setting, and levels of incidences experienced**

It was quite simply found that the more emphasis people had placed on goals and the importance of the consequences and outcomes surrounding those goals, the more likely they were to be resilient. Participants who had a strong will, tied with a future outcome, were very resilient not only in their past experiences but had also said that these past experiences had taught them about the amount of resilience and “fight” it would take for them to achieve their next goal. It was also observed that the participants who had demonstrated resilience seemed to have “set the bar higher” in each challenge or situation. These resilient individuals had, and do, constantly expect more from themselves (in line with a high need for achievement and type A personality variables) and discuss how it is that constant self-expectancy which pushes them to do better each time, reach higher goals and achieve bigger targets.

Moreover, with regards to motivational forces, it was pragmatic that the individuals who were “fighting” or “surviving” the hardest in this fast-paced modern world were doing so in pursuit of a greater cause or bigger picture, so to speak, and that was very profoundly predisposed by the future-orientatedness of the situation, especially with regards to children. Resilient individuals almost always had a future outlook in terms of a long-run eventually, where they had made plans or mapped out a certain picture of what was ideal to them and what they needed to strive for. In terms of parents, they demonstrated resilience for their children such that participants would make statements such as “I need to work hard through this job now to get a better promotion or salary to send my child to private school” or “I am resilient in my job for my child, when she is grown up I don’t need to be resilient anymore”. Regardless of what is at stake for resilient individuals, be it family and children, or achievement/success, focused career and life goals, it is the motivational forces and goal setting that drives the resilience in an individual when there are obstacles along the way. Thus, it can be said that resilient individuals are certainly high on motivation and drive and have fundamental goals and outcomes in mind in order to be successful.

Lastly with regards to levels of incidences experienced, many participants said that the level of resilience they carry or possess today is largely and almost entirely attributable to experiences they had had in the past that had forced them out of their comfort zones and made them pull on the resources in order to survive. Most participants said that had they not had such “harsh” or “hard” experiences previous to their current standing, they would not be able to take on the most modern world of work, nor would they be able to be as resilient as they had been throughout the later stages of their lives. It can thus be argued that the more hardships and challenges people go through in life at developmental stage, the more they are able to learn from it and grow. People who have been through change before, had better handle it as it comes around again and it actually begins to shape the person to deal more competently with uncertainty in his life which ultimately makes him resilient.

### 6.3.10 Sense of coherence

Sense of coherence (SOC) can be explained as the global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive and enduring, though dynamic, feeling of confidence that stimuli deriving from the internal and external environments are structured, predictable and explainable, that resources are available to meet the demands posed by these stimuli and finally that the demands are challenges worthy of investment and engagement (Rothman, Jackson & Kruger, 2003). There are three dimensions within SOC which explains how people engage in challenges, namely: comprehensibility, which refers to the extent to which the person perceives the stimuli both within and without as clear, ordered, structured and consistent information, and on the basis of which he/she can expect that these stimuli will in the future be orderable, explicable and predictable (perceptions make cognitive sense such as the stimuli on an internal and an external level is seen as comprehensible, structured, predictable and explainable): manageability, which refers to the extent to which the person perceives the events in his/her life as experiences that are bearable, can be coped with, or challenges that can be met (seeing events as manageable): meaningfulness, which is the extent to which the person feels that life makes sense emotionally. Problems/demands of living are experienced as welcome challenges, motivates one to invest energy, where events make sense on an emotional as well as a cognitive level (Strumpfer, 1990; Rothman *et al.*, 2003).

The most promising aspect this theme had in this study is that this SOC seems to develop over time, provided that resources that allow repeated experiences are present, and that there is a balance between stimuli-overload and stimuli-underload and that the outcome can be influenced. Because there is a repetition of experience, the resources used and a balance in manageability within the situation, it can be argued that this ties in exceptionally closely with resilience in that resilient people will find balance and use past experiences to address future situations and thrive. Thus it can be deduced that resilient individuals possess a high SOC.

SOC visibly protects individuals from developing low professional efficacy because it seemed to be evident that individuals with high resilience levels, and hence high SOC levels, definitely experienced less exhaustion and thus were more inclined to strive on in the face of adversity. Given that the stimuli from the environment are perceived by the individual as cognitively understandable, under control of both the individual and legitimate others and as motivationally relevant, the individual is more able to function at optimal levels (Strumpfer, 2003).

The participants in this study who resembled high levels of resilience were the participants who were able to develop SOC by giving information in a stable and a consistent, structured and understandable manner. They were individuals who understood their roles they had taken on in life and work and were equipped with the necessary skills and resources to ensure a balance between stimuli overload and underload in that they felt challenged by their experiences, but not totally overwhelmed. Although this concept does differ across personality, needs, resources and experiences, the participation in such a challenge is what had increased feelings of ownership in the face of adversity and change and therefore contributed to feelings of meaningfulness once outcomes had transpired. This further added to already-resilient people's resilience, as there was an observed increase in autonomy in each new challenge participants faced. They seemed to be more encouraged to challenge the status quo and take initiative the next time round, hence also confirming the hypothesis that the more challenges and hardships experienced, the easier it is to cope when it happens again.

In this study there seemed to be four apparent sub-themes which could better fortify the concept on resilience in terms of SOC. Four spheres essential in maintaining a strong SOC, as portrayed by participants in this study are firstly, their own feelings, secondly, their immediate interpersonal relations, thirdly, their major sphere of activity (that is, work) and finally, their existential issues of death, failures, conflict and isolation in life, as most participants mention at least one of the above when relating to their experience. In light of this inference, participants with stronger SOC have a readiness and willingness to exploit the resources they have at their potential disposal and adapt them

to however their environment might change. SOC and work and the changing nature thereof, then deduces that these participants (or people high in resilience) are thus high in S.O.C and will make more cognitive sense of the workplace. In principle, these people perceive workplace stimulation as clear, ordered, structured and predictable and perceive their work as bearable challenges that they can meet, whilst making emotional and motivational sense of work demands as welcome challenges worthy of energy investment.

In this study, it seems interesting and imperative to mention Strumpfer's Generalized Resistance Resources (GRR) (Strumpfer, 2003) that facilitate effective tension management in any situation or demand and which is used to make sense of stressors that present themselves in this rapidly-changing world of work. Resilient individuals most certainly possess the ability and the capacity to make use of these types of resources, for example, physical and biochemical GRRs will result in an individual having immune-suppressors or potentiators, artefactual-material GRRs will result in the ability to create wealth that can buy products, services, power and status, cognitive GRRs will result in the accumulation and use of knowledge-intelligence, skills and knowledge, emotional GRR of ego identity will allow individuals the capacity and use of emotions, emotional cues and understanding of themselves and other's emotions, coping strategies that enable an individual to devise plans of action to overcome adversity, interpersonal-relations GRRs that facilitate an individual's ability to foster social support and, lastly, macro-social-cultural GRRs that allow an individual to harness and employ aspects such as religion, cultural norms, social structures and values and beliefs. By comprehending all of the above resources, it is extraordinarily perceptible how much S.O.C ties in with resilience and that ultimately resilient people will have, and have shown to have, a high sense of coherence.

### **6.3.11 Learned resourcefulness**

Learned resourcefulness is essentially the polar opposite of learned helplessness and the reason why this concept was of interest to observe, because of the number of participants, and researchers for that matter, who considered resilience to be a learned

trait. Learned resourcefulness is the belief of people that they can deal effectively with manageable levels of stress, which also includes skills and self-control behaviours (all very apparent in resilience as discussed with beliefs and personality). Learned resourcefulness, pertaining to this study, can be viewed in light of how individuals differ in the extent to which they are willing and able to self-regulate internal responses that interfere with the smooth execution of target behaviour, that is, self-regulation or self-control of internal experiences. These regulations and control mechanisms are what was said to be key in helping individuals remain resilient in times of trouble.

Self-regulation in this regard can be explained by means of evaluation and action in a situation. Participants evaluated the changes they had described in their interviews as desirable or threatening: if threatening, whether anything can be done about it can resemble to a somewhat large degree the amount of resilience they possess. It was mentioned earlier above how positive appraisal of situation was linked to high levels of resilience. Constructive action/coping in a situation is an example of how resilience can minimise negative effect of internal/external changes.

It was found that participants who were high in learned resourcefulness were people who decided to pursue goals, despite a stressor and anxiety and to employ various skills to minimise the effect of the anxiety on performance. These people also made use of statements about self-control and about orientation towards the task which identified with resilient aspects. As the theme was further investigated, it was indispensable to note that learn that individuals high on learned resourcefulness judge themselves more efficacious in dealing with emotional and task demands. What is more is that these individuals are also more likely to continue with self-regulation as per observation in the interviews based on past experiences had articulated. The rationale of the of such an appeal was because prior research, by Strumper (1990), indicated that individuals high on resourcefulness use more self-control methods during a stressful encounter than individuals low on learned resourcefulness, and that it had in fact provided a basis for further learning which was indicative of resilience as a trait.

### **6.3.12 Stamina**

The last theme within the results section is a theme that filtrates into the majority of other themes already discussed and that is stamina. Stamina can be referred to as the physical or moral strength to resist or withstand hardship, disease and fatigue, essentially the endurance and capacity for growth, personal insight, life perspective, likelihood of functional breakdown and general competence (Strumpfer, 1990). The very essence of resilience is the stamina through the challenges. This is especially noted, as witnessed and observed in the life experiences that were revealed and disclosed, that each resilient participant had mentioned at least one of the above mentioned concepts in relation to their experiences as well as their causative emotions and consequences. The ability to fight, withstand, endure and resist all aspects in life that are uncertain and challenging whilst being strong, insightful, relentless, competent and energetic in the face of that adversity, almost goes as far as to sum up what makes a resilient person and what types of behaviours, attitudes, actions and intentions are needed in order to survive and thrive.

## 6.4 Summary

The most prominent aspects or themes that were identified among the 19 participants were discussed in the results above but, in terms of interpretation on a psychological basis, what can be inferred is that there are a number of vital contributory factors to the level of resilience people possess throughout their lives. What stood out on a broad spectrum – and which elicited not only much thought from the researcher’s side but also reported introspection from the participants - was the ideal of social support. Resilience was found to be stimulated by social support in that the strength of one’s resilience levels and the ability for individuals to continue in the face of adversity was largely affected by the notion of social support. Social support is most certainly an important component when looking to foster resilience in individuals and is undoubtedly an aspect that is initiated from early ages in order for people to be, and to remain, resilient throughout life.

Moreover, what was discovered during the research was the significant effect that positive emotions had on participants in respect of the way in which they would appraise situations and, as a result, the way in which these emotions dictated how they would view their situations. It was found that the more positively a situation was perceived, the better the level of resilience to that was demonstrated. Positive emotions and positivity in itself proved to be extremely important when individuals were utilizing resiliency and was imperative for the fostering of resilience in the future on both an individual as well as on an organisational level. In line with positivity, gratitude and appreciation seemed to be very evident among employees: it seemed that the harder people had worked for something, the more they appreciated the outcome and that the more that was at stake for the participant, the more appreciation they had since they had used their failures as learned curves. This in itself relates very closely to the ideal of proactivity and “making things happen” for oneself in addition to the notion of future-mindedness and positivity.

Essentially resilience needed to be investigated and appraised because of how vastly the working environment’s paradigm had shifted. Given that the working world is now in a crisis of a rapidly-changing and highly technologically-advanced world with an

increasing population and decrease of resources, people need to “adapt or die” to this change. Resilience needed to be studied in order to identify how it could further be manifested in one’s life so that one might, in fact, make career decisions more frequently as required, take more control over their careers despite the limited skills in this regard, and also further develop those skills. Examining the construct of resilience was warranted, given that research on the construct of resilience suggested that resilient individuals will cope better when forced to enter different relationships with the organisation, and to establish and respect diverse workforces and the notion of more working couples. By way of explanation, when people are forced to deal with different people in a multitude of situations, the easier it becomes to deal with a variety of diverse variables across situations.

This research and other contributing topics demonstrate how resilience enables individuals to find the requirements of the present work environment less threatening and easier to adapt to and thrive upon. Organisations are able to play a more supportive role to the resilient employee and invest in employee resilience because of the frequency and intensity of changing aspects such as career plateaus, demotions, job loss or even retrenchment. Resilience, as per the results of this study, is essentially the answer to career survival and even prosperity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: *inter alia*, commitment to the development of the skill resilience and perpetual learning thereof, which might well be the only guarantee of employment.

This reiterates the clamorous need to find out what makes people resilient and how it can be learned and applied in a generic or global context, regardless of personal or situational variables. Resilience seems to stem directly as a result of an individual being forced out of his comfort zone, being faced with a difficulty that has consequences of epic proportions for his career, income, family and loved ones, or even something more positive, such as a need for achievement or drive and motivation. Challenges and the accepting of such challenges throughout life is what makes these people resilient and how they use that ability (positive affectivity, social support, positive appraisal, social learning and goal-directed behaviour) for betterment in the face of adversity in every situation. Deeply, this research hopes to empower people and organisations to adopt a

more positive outlook of the changing scenario and impress upon individuals the impact such an outlook could have on the dynamism of their futures. The research conducted appears to indicate that, in fact, what makes people resilient is their own personal hardship which differs from person to person and hence also differs in terms of what requires resilience as well as what is deemed as difficult to different people. This again reiterates the emphasis on individual characteristics and personality differences as well as situational variables which are influenced from as early as childhood.

Ultimately, based on the results of this research, it can be argued that an inert resilience is potentially in all individuals and that it takes an extremely stressful incident or experience to awaken the use of such a trait: alternatively it needs to be engineered from the immeasurable degree of potential that humans have and which is fostered in a learned behaviour. Moreover, the specific challenge that generates a resilient reaction is never on the same level for every person; people will appraise different situations/stressors with varying degrees of intensity of stress or a stressor. Many people have that uncanny ability to recover from the most severe trauma and distress, particularly if they had the benefit of general basic human needs satisfied and had received strong social support.

Resilience emerged as influenced largely by the meaning people have in their lives, by the connectivity they have with people, by the nature of the interpersonal relationships they possess, by their moral purpose and their sheer optimism, by future-mindedness and by the hope that drives them to want more and not accept failure or defeat. This was extremely apparent in the experiences that participants spoke about when relating to incidences that require resilience. Given that resilience is, arguably, influenced largely by the aspect of meaning, in that they find meaning in work with regards to the jobs they perform or meaning at work in respect of the organisation they work for, it is important to note that meaning is somewhat derived from the culture of an organisation. The decision which people make when it comes to choosing an organisation incorporates their personal goals and values in life. What they can or cannot handle, as

well as the climate in which they work and the problems that will inevitably confront them, will continuously call upon their ability to adjust, to return or to “bounce back”.

With regards to the culture and commitment aspect that was examined in this research, it was found that because organisations today seem to be faced with a challenge, and individuals that select the organisation in which they work are becoming more familiar with the challenge too, aspects such as loyalty and commitment are extremely debatable with regards to resilience and the dynamism of the post-modern era. The notion from the organisation at hand seemed to be more along the lines of an “every man for himself” organisation, perhaps because it was a sales environment, enabling an employee to enable himself. The organisation prides itself on skills creation for its employees, entrepreneurial-based development, economic and dynamic resilience and coping skills and, essentially, progressing and expanding an employee to create his own “employability”. Thus it can be said that such an environment is more conducive to the fostering and triggering of resilience as the organisations can buffer its employees against change. The organisation generates this resilience by promoting the notion of contractual-based work and, to an extent, organisations seek to employ teams that are self-sufficient and self-sustaining. In this sense, on a collectivistic approach, the team is chosen by internally and externally recruiting individuals who possess a certain array of competencies conducive to the project’s challenges and eventual outcome. Throughout the research there were no defining statements, attitudes or advances that made any reference to commitment being affected by resilience or vice versa.

In an attempt to further indicate the implications in organisational cultures, especially with regards to driving forces and the motivation to overcome diversity, resilience can be explained by the fact that participants, in the face of change throughout the organisation, maintained a state of positive adjustment under challenging conditions. Resilience in post-modern organisations thus fosters the previously mentioned notion of managing the act that has triggered the resilient reaction as well as nurturing the resilient behaviour itself (by simply ensuring oneself that the situation will improve, one needs to act on improving one’s situation proactively).

## **CHAPTER 7: LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 Limitations**

The research conducted yielded extremely promising results and makes much room for future research on the uses of this construct especially in respect of positive psychology and career psychology initiatives. Having said this, it must be noted that there were a few limitations that should be factored into future research in order to build on these findings. Firstly, the sample size was too small with regards to the demographic variables from the viewpoint that all participants were in sales and all participants were from the same organisation. Secondly, there was no authentic comparison in respect of the different types of organisations and this is certainly something that can be assessed further. Lastly, the amount of time spent with the participants, although sufficient enough to yield results, could potentially have been too limited and further investigations should consider a more comprehensive and intensive approach, such as field studies or even longer periods of interviews and observations.

### **7.2 Recommendations**

Often solutions look great on paper, but how viable are they in terms of practical application? It is unwise to take for granted that all members of an organisation are ready for the new challenges presented by changes. Aspects such as strategic change, or even retrenchment, have a monumental impact on human capital and the reputation of a company in itself. Both retrenched employees and the remaining stock that experience the structure changes also experience a sense of abandonment, loss of self-esteem and insecurity which continues to impact a workplace, even once the calm has been restored. Ultimately this is why it should be managed, ideally utilizing resilience for the members and the organisation in order to minimize psychosocial damage. This again reinforces the theme of the research of this paper that the ever-growing magnitude and significance of a construct such as resilience is most certainly on the rise. The capacity and capability resilience has to improve not only people's quality of life but also the health of the culture of the organisation if used on a personal and organisational level, is monumental. The importance of a healthy organisational culture

and the psychological health of all employees is vital to sustain growth in an organisation; it is unquestionably a learned trait that is giving people and organisations the competitive advantage, not only at work, but from every aspect.

It is exceedingly evident that resilience has an impact on the frame of mind and abilities of not only the individuals, but also of the organisation as a collective unit. Having said this, it can be proposed that such results are used in order to develop interventions that enhance and enable employees to access their resiliency and utilize it both at work and in a social context. What can be suggested in addition is that competency modelling and competency-based interviews and questionnaires probe and recruit individuals who possess the ability to be resilient and those who show attributes of positivity and acceptance of challenges and uncertainty. Reiteration of the ability of a person to bounce back and to thrive in the face of adversity underscores the importance of not only understanding the prominence of this positive psychological construct, but also to understand what enables people to inculcate such an appraisal and reaction in their lives in respect of the challenges they face.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

Organisations today are confronted by this aspect of resilience and are essentially expected to adjust to the demands of a dynamic, technological era. Resilience enables people to make this decision a favourable one and to use the challenge and impulse to engage in it with more vitality. This is the positive psychological construct that is imperative in the creation of a plethora of coping mechanisms and skills, designed to help people move forward, regardless of the situation or the problems encountered. What enables people to build these skills? How do people use their experiences to resolve a problem? More importantly, how do people affect their organisation or, in turn, how are they influenced by the cultures of the organisations in which they work, especially in today's business environment with its volatile and ephemeral nature?

Resilience is relative, emerging and changing in transaction with specific circumstances, transitions and challenges; it is influenced also by diverse personality characteristics. Resilience demonstrated in one situation may not be sustained over time or be

transferred to other circumstances or challenges, but competence in one period is thought to make an individual more broadly-adapted to the environment and prepared for competence in the next period and so the tolerance (resilience) develops. Individuals do not only survive and cope by adjusting positively to challenges, but in the process of addressing those challenges, people are also capable of strengthening their capabilities to make future amendments.

Ultimately, this research has been able to identify on a generic and personal level, what exactly resilience is or what it means to different people and where they think it stems from. In the face of multiple adversities, these people survived and achieved success. All these experiences would have served as extenuating circumstances for failure, but these people still managed to realize success in the highly competitive business world. People who are resilient manage to do so through courage and determination in order to attain the success they had always visualized for themselves and for their loved ones. People who are resilient show an extremely robust determination to succeed against all odds. They have a vision about a better future, about their dreams and what truly makes them happy. These people know exactly what they want and what they desire for themselves and their loved ones.

They focus powerfully on their present - the here and now - to do what they do well so that they will be able to prosper. Even if the now is tough, uncomfortable and even at times unbearable, they believe in a better tomorrow, in being a step closer to what they truly want. They are driven towards, and by, success. They are achievement-inspired, they set their own goals; they quantify their success and they celebrate their achievements, no matter how big or small - each step counts and provides reward. They are assiduous individuals. They are genuine about themselves and their situation and are matter of fact people who have moved on from their past. Their hardships and failures are understood as learning events and their successes as milestones in a continuous self-development process. They recognize and comprehend the contributions of those who helped them along their way and they will actively search for mentors and coaches to assist them further along their path towards self-fulfilment and self-actualization. In sum, continuous research is recommended in order to gain further

insight into this phenomenon, knowledge that would reequip individuals with skills in order to assist them to function optimally in a post-modern world.

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**Appendix A (See attached PDF file *Appendix A\_RS\_25*)****RS-25 Scale Questionnaire**

Please read the following statements. To the right of each you will find seven numbers, ranging from "1" (Strongly Disagree) on the left to "7" (Strongly Agree) on the right. Circle the number which best indicates your feelings about that statement. For example, if you strongly disagree with a statement, circle "1". If you are neutral, circle "4", and if you strongly agree, circle "7", etc.

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
1. When I make plans, I follow through with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I usually manage one way or another.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I am able to depend on myself more than anyone else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Keeping interested in things is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I can be on my own if I have to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I feel proud that I have accomplished things in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I usually take things in stride.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I am friends with myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I feel that I can handle many things at a time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I am determined.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I seldom wonder what the point of it all is.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I take things one day at a time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I have self-discipline.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I keep interested in things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I can usually find something to laugh about.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. My belief in myself gets me through hard times.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. In an emergency, I'm someone people can generally rely on.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Sometimes I make myself do things whether I want to or not.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. My life has meaning.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I do not dwell on things that I can't do anything about.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. When I'm in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I have enough energy to do what I have to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. It's okay if there are people who don't like me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I am resilient.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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**Appendix B****Participants Scores on the RS-25**

<b>Participant number</b>	<b>Score on the RS-25</b>
1	169
2	157
3	167
5	158
6	149
7	164
10	134
11	162
12	147
15	160
16	175
17	167
19	145
20	164
22	166
23	155
24	147
27	163
28	159

## Appendix C

### Transcribed interviews

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 1 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand about the construct or the word resilience?	To me I think it means having to face hardships and coming up tops all the time.
Alright and can you explain to me where you had to do that in your life, any experiences you can think of?	I think every day experiences that I come through, some of them require me to be resilient, whether it's work or personal. In our relationships, especially at the moment because me and my husband are not getting along very well – but I think I have to ignore how he reacts towards me and be positive all the time.
OK, can you maybe elaborate or explain a bit more about how you have to be resilient in that way?	Especially when he says things that are hateful to me I can choose to be negative and choose those things he says to affect me, but I choose not to, I choose to ignore them and just carry on with what I need to do.
Alright, can you explain ANY other situations or experiences where you had to be resilient?	Work, brokers that I service, it's very frustrating and my work functions requires me to get business from them. Most of them lie and say there's no business while they ARE writing business for other companies. So, I have to be positive and go there every day while I face them every day and still keep a positive attitude with regards to me asking for business and not get affected by their rejection or maybe the lies that they are telling.
Is there any other experience that you can think of that you maybe even as far back as Primary school or High school or maybe if you attended a University or College, anything that you had to face there where you had to be resilient?	Nothing in particular comes to mind. But I would say that after the death of my Mom – I was 14 years old – and me being the eldest sibling, I had to make sure that my younger siblings are happy and try to comfort them, so I didn't really mourn my Mom's death because I had to look after my younger siblings. So I would say that that particular incident required me to be resilient.
OK and how did you get through that kind of time?	Just keeping busy, and putting other people's needs before mine and not concentrating on me but on everyone else around me.
What sort of resources did you use? What things were important to you during that time to be resilient?	I think my religion pulled me through. I'm a staunch Christian so praying and meditating, reading the Bible and what God says, that's what pulled me through.
OK, and how important do you think it is to have a belief – in resilience – do you think it's important?	To believe in resilience or a belief?
To have A belief, In anything, in God in....	I think it's very important because I don't think if I

	had to put everything that I have to face daily on my own shoulders I wouldn't cope with it, but knowing that there is somebody out there that is interested in me and wants the best out of me – maybe pushes me towards resilience – because if I don't have that hope then I might actually give up.
And was coping with these hardships part of resilience for you? How would you say you were forced to cope with all these different situations? What is it that made you want to get through the situation?	I think wanting to be successful all the time and wanting to see good results all the time would be one of the factors that push me to be resilient and make sure I keep a positive attitude all the time. Negativity just drags you down.
Alright, you mentioned just now that at the time you and your husband are not seeing 'eye-to-eye' how do you plan to get through that? How are you going to be resilient in this situation?	Well, his issues are different because he's just left his job recently so he feels a bit frustrated that he doesn't have an income and he's taking out those frustrations on me, so I'm choosing to ignore him and just concentrate on what I have to do – to preparing for the baby, and being excited about that and trying to ignore his negativity., and trying to look forward to this new life that we are about to receive. So, that's what keeps me going.
With regards to the positive, like you say, looking forward to the baby and knowing that he is going to get a job and keeping your focus on the positive things, how much do you think being positive is important in resilience?	It's very important because if you've got nothing good to look forward to – what's the use of living – so being positive is very important because I have to look at the good that can come in the future and not worry about we are experiencing right now.
Alright, and is it the same as in the experience of your Mom passing and this job?	They are quite similar, I wouldn't say they are equal, but it's the same because when I lost my Mom I was very upset – why did I lose her – but I just had to keep going for my younger siblings because they were too young and didn't understand what was happening and I was the oldest so I had to show them the light that our grieving will pass and that they will grow up .... And...
OK, and with regards to resilience, do you think it is some-thing that you learn because of the challenges that you face or do you think it's something that your parents gave you or you are born with?	I think you learn it, because if you don't experience problems you don't know how resilient you are until you have them, so experiences that you go through make you a resilient person.
Alright, so would I be correct in saying that everything that you have been through makes you as resilient as you are now?	Ja.
Item No. 11 on the resilience scale says "I seldom wonder what the point of it all is" you said strongly disagree on that, would you like to explain that? Obviously your statement is that you DON'T often	Gosh, I don't know..... just read it to me again.

wonder what the point of it all is.	
“I seldom wonder what the point of it all is” ... so you are saying you DON'T often think that. So is that part of your resilience?	Ja, ja, I find reason and meaning in everything I do, irrespective of whether the next person might think I'm mad or not. I try to find meaning and reason of why every-thing is happening, even when I lose something, I will justify why I lost it and then something better will come up.
OK, and how important is it to think like that when it comes to resilience?	I think it's very important because if you don't find meaning in things that happen to your life what's the use of living.
Alright, so am I correct in saying that in order to be resilient you must have meaning for the things that you do?	Ja.
Item No. 22 “I do not dwell on things that I can't do anything about” you marked No.4 which is very neutral, it falls in between agree and disagree, so how do you feel about that?	OK, it means it depends where my mind is, sometimes I would follow things that I can't change and worry about them but sometimes it's easier just to say OK I can't do anything about it so let's move on, what's next?
Alright, in terms of moving on or as you say you can't do anything about it – how important is it to change or adapt to a situation in being resilient? Is that important for you, has that helped you?	It is important because I believe that if a situation happens and you can't change it, you have to be resilient and move on to the next thing that perhaps you can do a change on that – unlike dwelling on something that you cannot change.
OK, and what happens when things don't get better, what happens if brokers don't write you business – what happens if your husband keeps saying hurtful things – when all these things keep knocking you down – then what, how are you resilient then?	My faith keeps me going, I converse what God says in his words so that I would say I do get those moments where I feel hopeless and thinking that situations won't change, but my faith brings me up again to think positively about the future and thinking that he will change or that the brokers will change and give me business. I found that once I'm positive and in a good space, then I attract good things in my life. Let's say if the brokers weren't writing then they will start writing and a little business will start pouring in and that will lift me up even more, so by me changing my mood or how I act towards what they are dishing out to me actually makes me attract the things to my life, so ...
Alright and how do you think all of these challenges that you have had to face, and even the ones you are facing now, how do you think that helps you in work?	Hmmm, good question (giggle) well I think they helping me personally to find out what type of a person am I, how strong am I really and it's stretching if I can face challenges or not. If my mind is in a good space or not.
You mentioned that it helps you to find out what kind of person you are, what kind of personality characteristics do you think resilient people have, or what personality characteristics make you	I think being strong, being emotionally independent and being able to communicate – like depending on yourself, not having to have a 3 <sup>rd</sup> party to assure you or re-assure you of your

resilient?	emotions and your being.
Alright, and is there any other experience you can think of that you can tell me some more about?	With regards to resilience?
Yes	I can't think of any. I think I came here unprepared. No.
And is there anything that you would like to add in terms of the experiences you have already mentioned, about your Mom, about your husband, about work, anything more you can tell me there about resilience?	No I think I've told you all I can.
OK, thank you very much for your time.	Alright.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 2 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand by resilience or what resilience may mean to you?	As a person, surviving through the hard times – staying strong – basically, being able to overcome difficult experiences and carry on – you don't fall apart.
Alright, and can you chat with me about a couple of experiences like that which you have been through in your life.	(Giggle) you need an entire book! I don't know where to begin, but, wow, work related, personal?
Whatever you are happy to discuss, whatever springs to mind first or maybe if felt one of those domains you experience the most, or the hardest thing which required more resilience – whichever you feel comfortable talking about. Anything that springs to mind, it's entirely up to you.	Wow, do you want to save your battery while I think? Um, I was homeless once, many years ago, in 1997 – I was homeless, no job nowhere to sleep – nothing. I managed to pick myself up, sort my life out, educate myself and get into the corporate world and here I am today. I did my CFP exams 3 weeks ago.
How do you feel that you demonstrated resilience or how were you able to demonstrate resilience then?	I could have given up – I could have stayed on the streets – I could have stood on a street corner and made easy money and I could have gone crawling back to my parents and ask them to take care of me, I could have done all of that but I suppose it was pride, part of it, um, and the idea of giving up on myself wasn't an option because my life was not destined to live on the street.
Alright, and in the whole interim of when things weren't looking good and you were homeless and on the streets how did you – what did you do to pick yourself up, how did you grab motivation in that kind of time?	OK, um, I shared this one room in a squatting place with 4 girls and a guy and just being there, the first day that I was there I was like, this is not going to work this is not going to happen, so I started looking for work, any kind of work at all. My first job that I got within 3 days of being in that situation, was as a Door-to-door sales rep for

	<p>children’s books and kitchen knives, and you had to walk like 40Km per day selling for things 10% commission for a R20.00 product, it was just traumatic! But, it was something and it helped me pay my first rent and move into my own place and I started from there.</p>
<p>Alright, and is there any other experience that you would like to touch on where you were resembling resilience?</p>	<p>I survived a divorce, which was chaotic – but it’s OK, I’m friends with my Ex-husband now and I don’t hold grudges, it’s in the past. It’s happened.</p>
<p>Could you tell me more about that, how you showed resilience there?</p>	<p>Well, I could have fallen apart; you get divorced and don’t know where to begin or how to identify yourself as just YOU and not part of something else. It’s always easier when you’re married or attached to that person and that’s how you are identified, that’s what your whole world revolves around – well mine did – trying to make this stupid marriage work and just not wanting to be an embarrassment to my family and not wanting to give up on the marriage and it was hard, but in the end I decided it would be best not to be a part of it any more.</p>
<p>Alright, and in deciding that it was over and you needed to embark on another phase in your life, how were you resilient then, what kind of characteristics or resources did you pull in to be resilient, you know, not open up a tub of ice-cream and cry for the remainder of your life?</p>	<p>(giggle) Well, I did cry, I cried for like probably a week. I cried buckets! Then I got over it. It’s time to move on – get over it. There is no point in wallowing in self-pity endlessly, I had re-invented myself previously and yeah – I could re-invent myself again, so I did.</p>
<p>OK and what helped you to re-invent yourself?</p>	<p>I don’t know Jess (giggle) I suppose I’m just stubborn like that and I know what my ideal life is supposed to be, I know what – where I’m supposed to be, I have an idea of how my life is supposed to be and senseless suffering is not part of it, so any time I get into such situations like that for whatever reasons, I just cannot give up and sometimes It’s easier to take the fight to the other people if you feel that they are trying to push you in a direction you don’t want to go in – just stand up for yourself – say I’m not going to do this, this is what I need to get done now – whether you like it or not is not my problem, this is about my future. I think..... I’m not sure how to answer your question.... (giggle)</p>
<p>Alright, on that note, how do you feel personality characteristics wise, what do you think you have in your personality – what kind of aspects will attribute?</p>	<p>I’m stubborn, I’m aggressive – but stubborn in a good way – I do negotiate – it’s not just bull-headed misguided notions – I do negotiate with people about things and I do try to get them to see my point of view before I give up on trying to</p>

	<p>change their opinions or change their positions on things. I'm aggressive, I know what I want and I want to go get it and I do try hard to do that. Overcoming obstacles for me is not an issue in terms of .... The culture in this country is horrible, and there are a lot of things you need to overcome besides just struggling to survive as a person, the race issue is still a problem and it hovers everywhere.</p> <p>As much as you try to get around it – you can choose to buckle and be an “uncle Tom” kind of person and still get walked over or stand up for your rights and fight for what’s yours. So I do that and I try to do it diplomatically and not upset anybody in the process. Um, school, I went to a very good school, so no there’s,,,, it’s not that I have an ignorant background or anything that would limit my options, I did have a very good foundation which I could work from so it did help going forward, so if did get into a situation I can look at options around it and not just think this is my destiny and cave in. Um, what else, my upbringing – my sisters – there’s 5 girls, no boys in our family, so ja, that had something to do with it, you had to fight for everything you had and sibling rivalry was a big thing – my parents drove that a lot ..... ja. What else could possibly contribute to my ..... How confidential is this interview?</p>
<p>Extremely, I am the only person who hears it and after I have transcribed it, it gets stored away.</p>	<p>Ok, It’s hard cos you are my Boss’s sister-in-law.</p>
<p>Not to be thought of in this interview – what is said in this interview will NOT go back to Filip in any way whatsoever, and even if it were, it refers to your number, so if he ‘accidentally’ picked up a tape in any way, which is impossible because it gets stored, he wouldn’t know who you are anyway. Do you know what I mean, so it’s by in a process of elimination and stages that gets as confidential as is possible so.</p>	<p>Ok, I’ve done things in my life – just to avoid giving up on myself and yes, I’ve made a lot of strange mistakes along the way and had to face them.... And the only person who could fix them was me...because if I hadn’t fixed them or changed them I would be stuck in horrible situations my whole life. So ja, I think I’m resilient.</p>
<p>In terms of being stuck in a horrible situation, regardless of what experience it could be what – is there anything specific that you can think of – that made you as hardy as you are now – to be, you know what, I don’t like this and need to get out of it. What specifics can we talk about there?</p>	<p>Before I got married I lived with this guy – we were sort of married, but not quite – and he had issues that I didn’t understand, I found out about 2 years after I left him that he had been into drugs and smoking rocks and things, and he lost everything, it was traumatic, he lost his job with the EU – it was a joke – how drugs mess up people’s lives, but in personal interactions with him – once he went on this drug bender nonsense – he got violent, and</p>

	<p>he did it just once and I left, the way he threw me down a flight of stairs at the apartment building where we lived and dragged me back up a couple of stairs by my hair and kicked me all the way down the stairs again, then drag me back up – and this happened like for a couple of hours before the Police got there because the neighbours called them, and I just left. My whole life revolved around him at that time – I wasn’t working, I was a.... well I was sort of working again cos I had stopped and became a happy housewife because he promised me the world and I thought ‘oh thank God I don’t have to work ... (Giggle) and that was going to be a happy time. Then things fell apart and I thought ‘what am I going to do, cos all I knew was get up in the morning, iron his shirt – line up his clothes for work, do his breakfast – clean the house, watch TV all day – decide what meals to cook, based on what was showing on BBC food channel. Make some meals, cook something different every day. My whole world revolved around just keeping him happy. Then he just lost his mind. I was traumatized, I was too young to understand any of this drug crap and thought what the fuck happened to him! And then I just couldn’t do it. But, I saw it coming though, I saw him starting to change and get really weird – moody – stressed – no appetite. I shouted... “I slave over a hot fucking stove all day and you can’t eat”! I thought he fell in love with somebody else somewhere and started preparing for my exit strategy. I went and got a job at the Edgars in Balfour Park and started working there on weekends and that drove him nuts which made things even worse because he’d go off on his binges and wouldn’t speak to me for days and I’d just ignore him and carry on and ... I look here, I need to save money and get out because now I’m stuck in this situation where this man is volatile and I don’t know what’s going to happen – so by the time it did blow up and he did finally get physical with me – I was ready to go, and I just left. I cried for a week (giggle) I didn’t know what I was going to do without him because I loved him, that’s a stupid emotion – why do we call it love?</p>
<p>Would you then say that part of being resilient is being able to make a plan in any situation?</p>	<p>That’s right, I can make a plan in any situation, I can. I have friends who have been through similar situations with me and there is no amount of</p>

	<p>encouragement that you can give another person if they just don't have it in them to change anything about their lives. The girls I lived with in that place, we have kept in touch – I love people – over the years and tracked what happened to whom and what, how and I said chick, you can get out of that situation and go on with your lives, try this or try that .... Nooo we are not as clever as you – and I'm like, it's got nothing to do with clever, it's about I don't want THIS, THIS is what I want. And they like all, yeah I want that and I'm like, well, do this and they couldn't be bothered and they haven't tried., and they are still in the same situation they were in then.</p>
<p>How important was a support structure or some form of support to you during all your times of hardships?</p>	<p>Like friends?</p>
<p>Friends, family, colleagues, would you say that they helped you to be as resilient as you are today?</p>	<p>Friends..... I come from an extremely snotty family so you don't hang out your dirty laundry to anybody – you sort your shit out and just rock up at a family meeting happy and perfect, you do not drag your drama into the family arena, it's just unheard of – you just don't do that. I come from a very big family, like shockingly big, my father had 63 step brothers and sisters or half, not step – from 12 grandmothers and my grandfather drove this whole sibling rivalry between the families or the houses of the different wives – and the different wives embedded this in all their children – so now I've got all the aunts and uncles who've got these children and everybody is in competition with everybody else so if your child ends up in some trailer park nobody wants to know about it because it will become the biggest scandal ever! So no, we don't do scandal.</p>
<p>So you friends, you would say, are were an important part Of you being resilient and helping you out of situations?</p>	<p>My friends were there for me to cry with when I needed to but not really to help me out of anything because my friends mostly depend on ME to help THEM out of things, and they have never been able to help me out of anything. They just listen and cry with me and get drunk with me – they were there for me in a moral support structure – yes. I don't have anything that I have because of a friend, everything I have I did, for me. I've never gotten a job through a friend; I've never gotten a home through a friend, its ja... that's actually a horrible realization. I need to re-evaluate my</p>

<p>Would you say then that you being resilient is because you fought for your own? You scratched your own back that sort of thing?</p>	<p>friends (giggles)</p> <p>I had to – there were silly things that happened – like you want to have the time of your life at some point and then ... OK, look at high school – I had a very nerdy life in high school, I was at a mixed school – all the white kids thought I was really cool because I was the diving captain from my 3<sup>rd</sup> year to my 6<sup>th</sup> year – I was the diving captain for all 3 years. The seniors hated me because I was a junior who had a colours blazer and all of that crap, I had this high school nonsense going on and all the black girls hated me because they started to boycott the swimming team because the whole Malcolm X thing was coming into fashion and it was just CRAP, I thought, I am the diving captain and I'm not quitting because you all think it's uncool to do white sport – that was their own problem. So, with that I wasn't very socially equipped for anything, and then I met this nice boy, he really liked me and I really liked him – boys are the evil in my world. Yes, and now I was suddenly very pregnant and the sex was terrible I don't even understand how that happens (laughing) and I knew my parents would ship me off to some village or other to go and give birth in secrecy and privacy that the rest of the tribe would never find out about – and that would end up being some Primary school teacher in some God Forsaken place, and I'd just die there and my life would be over so I decided that that just wasn't going to happen, and I went off to see a Gyne friend, who was actually a family friend, black man, (I'm a horrible child, giggle) but I had to get out of there and well, he helped me get rid of it and my life was back on track and my parents never found out, the school never found out and I never got to teach at some horrible village in the middle of nowhere.</p>
<p>How did you bounce back from that, I mean your parents never found out, your teachers never found out – clearly they could not read any emotions in .....</p>	<p>So they couldn't support me through the trauma of it all.</p> <p>It wasn't traumatic, it was practical.....it was like..... this is an obstacle I can't deal with now so it has to go. It wasn't an emotional drama thing. I think I cried about it like 10 years later, during some depressed moment, I can't remember what triggered that and that was about it, but at the time it was just practical. Getting things done, getting my life back on track. I had A level exams</p>

	<p>to deal with – I couldn't let this happen and get expelled because back then you got expelled for that.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned the word depression there; do you think that being positive or positive emotions has got something to do with resilience?</p>	<p>I think anger could drive resilience, anything can drive resilience, you don't have to be a happy clappy, penta costal somebody to survive on the planet – whatever drives you at that moment. Sometimes it is happiness that pushes me to do certain things and sometimes its fear. I was afraid of my parents, I was afraid of my teachers I was afraid of a life of obscurity in some God-forsaken place. I was afraid of a lot of things and I made a decision to get rid of that fear –so that wasn't about being happy clappy, it is about: Oh Lord .... FIX IT., before it messes up your whole life. And then I did this whole door-to-door sales job and that job came to a very quick and abrupt end when I had a meeting with a cousin of my sisters future husband – he was supposed to be the best man and I was supposed to be the maid of honour for my sister's wedding, he has avoided me his whole life since that day. So anyway, this meeting went on forever, everybody discussing how we going to this and the logistics of trying to get all the bridal party people to the practice session, to get all the dance practices done and the whole drama – you know black peoples weddings have to be dramatic – everybody has to learn the Waltz and this and that and the whole bridal party must do this Ballroom dancing sequences to no end, so ja, only after that I found out that his car had gone on show or something and he couldn't drive me home, so he walked me to the bus-stop that was closest to where we all had the meeting and while we were waiting there this clap trappy ugly blue taxi stopped – I said to him "I don't want to get into this taxi" it's like falling apart, and he was like ja, but I have to go home it's getting late just get in and stop bitching and moaning, this primo donna shit has to stop. But somewhere deep inside me I really did not want to get into that taxi; but I did. I was like fuck-it, I'm going home – so off I went. About 2km down the road this old woman and old man who were sitting in the taxi when I got in jumped off, and I was left in the taxi full of all these boys and this one girl was sitting with the driver in the front and his other little friend who were all very noisy and happy clappy and ..... Long</p>

	<p>story short, I got kidnapped, kept for a week in some old God-forsaken house, gang raped – I escaped from there through a window – through like a toilet window with the help of the gardener who was just in shock – the poor man – I saw him working in the garden and I called him – and he helped me climb through the window to get out. I left – I checked the address on the gate – checked the address on the street – went to the call box and called the police and gave them the address and they arrested everybody. The strange thing about all of that is my life didn't fall apart then either, but I quit my job, I didn't want to do that door-to-door sales crap anymore, I didn't want to have to see people and greet people every 5 minutes and kiss ass and get people to buy stupid books – I just didn't want to be all over the place because I thought everybody was looking at me and I just needed time to be by myself – I decided I wanted a job indoors.</p>
<p>Do you feel like having some time on your own was part of you being resilient, being able to re-collect, re-start?</p>	<p>Yea it was.</p>
<p>How have all these experiences that required so much of you, of resilience, of being able to stand up again, how does that make you resilient in THIS job?</p>	<p>I am the longest surviving black consultant in this building. The rest have quit, they have given up, thrown in the towel and just said they not going to take this and they didn't fight, but they don't want to do anything to change any-thing. I fight everything and the managers hate me, but I'll get over it, cos I'm not here for them, (giggle) I'm here to do my job. And yes, I make Fil cry constantly because he pushes my buttons and I push back and he doesn't like it. If I feel that he is being unfair or he is overstepping his boundaries as my boss, as my manager or mentor type of person, I call him to order. And that's something he's not used to in his life and he finds that traumatic, which he must get over, so if some day he hears this ... please understand Fil, I love you, you are a nice boy, but rules are rules and we have to function within certain spectrums. I think sometimes managers get carried away with their little kingdom and they forget that this is a corporate company, it's a democracy – it's not run like your Fathers' little company where you can do what you like, nor can you fire people whenever you feel like it, so currently Fil and I are walking down the happy</p>

	<p>road of – are we seriously going to end up discussing this with HR, because this is like constructive dismissal and I don't appreciate your whole game plan, so we are seeing an HR next week because he decided to pick on me because I irritated him (giggle) over my study leave and I irritated him over his decision to move some of my brokers to Shaloshni, I don't care that she is CJ's sister-in-law, that's not my problem, this is not about nepotism and making other peoples sisters comfort-able by abusing me, and fucking with my income potential, I'm not going to let that happen, so he wasn't amused about that so he decided to pull my personal calls off my extension, and everybody else in this entire building, in the 5 years that I've been here, has EVER had their extension pulled for what calls you make. So, wanted to give me a written warning for that which would then endanger my job because the next stupid thing I do, I'll get fired....and I refused to sign it, and he insisted I sign it, so I took it to HR and said, "I'm not signing this" and now it's going to an internal review committee to see if he is justified to give me a written warning for something that is technically a first offence. I would like it downgraded to a verbal warning. Then we can carry on fighting this little fight until next year. At least until after I come back from maternity leave – which is another thing I've decided to do. I'm 34, I've never had a child and I decided to have one this year, so having issues like finding that perfect man like George Clooney, who's also not so perfect, he's messed up all his relationships – but yes – I can't find George – I've tried, I haven't been averse to sex or anything, actually I was very happy with my sexuality after I took a gap year after the drama and after that I was fine, I got back into it and I was happy. I'm not crazy and I'm not lesbian and I'm not anti-men, but I tried. George's are just in America! It's going to be a while before he gets here. The problem is my ovaries are going to be 'vrot' by the time he gets here, so a friend of mine – I have a lot of friends in strange places – owns a sperm bank in Parktown, I called him and I said I'm bored, I want a child and I want to do it now and he said OK come down to the bank and I'm happily pregnant, I'm going to have a baby in March – that I want on</p>
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	<p>my terms – my rules – no interfering in-laws and out-laws – nobody gets to tell me how to raise my child and it’s going to be my life with this child – I like that and I’m looking forward to it. It’s very exciting. It’s been perfect, God loves me. I’ve been through a lot of things, yes I am religious, not terribly so, I’m not a fanatic but I have my religious moments.....do you need a new battery? (Giggles) .....</p>
<p>No just checking, I would hate for this conversation to be falling on deaf ears!</p>	<p>Yea, I’m doing better on my own terms, I didn’t want any children before because I didn’t find anyone that I could raise them with and now I’m basically fighting to keep my job until I can go on maternity leave because it doesn’t help me getting myself fired because of personal clashes which have nothing to do with actual work, cos there is nothing wrong with my work, this is all about personality clashes, so we push each other’s buttons cos there’s no complaints about the actual job, so yea, I suppose being resilient helps me survive this wretched job and love this place in terms of the actual idea of the job, it’s an amazing job and it’s great for someone like me with a big mouth and my love for people. The problem is just generally being discouraged from achieving what I need to is upset-ting to me and I feel I constantly have to fight for every-thing, which I don’t understand because these are things that I am entitled to – why do I have to fight for it? I don’t mean that in just I have a sense of entitlement – Mandela came out of jail – give me a BEE directors position – no I mean simple things like applying for a company bursary – I wanted to do my CFP last year and there was this story and that story and the managers kept shuffling me around ... and they were like, OK come back in a couple of days – leave the forms with me I’ll sign them ja, and then the registration period came and went and then I lost out on an entire year! I could have done this and be over with it then. So, then come January of this I was like, fuck this crap – no you are NOT going to give me this run, run, run story again – I took my papers – went to Head Office – I get then and Oh, Arvin’s on leave, he’ll be back in 2 weeks and I’m like, that’s after registration date, who’s Arvin’s boss? Johan Minnie, well Johan Minnie can sign this, and they like no, you can’t go talk to Johan without an</p>

	<p>appointment and I'm like YES I CAN! You don't know me (giggle) and I went and got it done and I got my degree this year- well diploma. It's supposed to be equivalent to a degree. But, well the NQF people can sort that out. So yea, you fight for things like that. And you wonder why, why do I have to – it's part of my basic employment – I'm allowed to apply for this bursary and it's on my head. If I fail, I'm paying the company back their money so why won't you sign this piece of paper? But then again, I'm sitting in a building with people who – there's probably 5 people in the entire building who've done their CFP – everybody else just happily goes along and now that it's going to catch up on them – because next year's promotions are based on your qualifications, it's no longer based on who's child you are, and who's relative you are, so that's going to be a problem. Tough, I've done my studies and I'm prepared for the next wave of change. Those who haven't prepared –I'm sorry it's going to be very traumatic in February next year! I'll be on maternity leave which will be fun.</p>
<p>And how important do you think adapting to change is in resilience?</p>	<p>Very, my word, (giggle) you can't function if you can't adapt. There is no resilience without adaptation, you can't do that, It's like if your car breaks down, you sit on the side of the road and cry, that's not going to help you, you know, maybe you should take your pantyhose off and change it into a fan belt – try something! You know, change, walk to the garage – call somebody – you don't have a phone, walk to the nearest garage, go for help, sitting in one spot and not changing anything or just saying If I can't drive I'm not moving you'll sleep on the side of the road for a week. So no, you do have to change. Every-thing has to change, and sometimes you have to change your friends and sometimes you need to change your job and sometimes you need to learn how to ignore people who just try to wear you down. One of our managers, Richard, gave me this horrible speech that had me in tears for two days and I'm like, Fuck him, I'm going to work on Monday and I will carry on. He told me that I'm black and Liberty will not reward my loyalty and my hard work and I can get as many degrees as I feel like and that this will not get me anywhere here and that I might as well go and apply elsewhere.... This is my BOSS telling me</p>

	<p>that, and he was our boss before Fil took over, he told me to just give up. Pointless you being at Liberty – can't you see what's going on around you? It's not gonna happen, there won't be a black manager in Broker division, it's not gonna happen! You can fight for it all you like but it's not gonna happen. It was very de-motivating – why would you tell me things like that? I was very upset about it.... I was like Fuck him. If it takes me walking on his grave to go show him 'look I am a manager in broker division now' I'll do it, and I'm staying because I'm stubborn like that. I'm not going to give up because somebody's got some warped ideas ....it's just difficult working in this department but I refuse to give up.</p> <p>I am THE most over qualified PA in the whole building – it's stupid, but this is the reign of Janice and it will not last. Nothing is forever, change is inevitable and I'll be here to see it.</p>
<p>Do you feel that the constant push down or the constant adversity related to the current environment, do you think that helps you to be more resilient or forces you rather to be more resilient? To stand up as you say to fight for what you want?</p>	<p>Yea, I fight for everything. If you give up they'll walk all over you, so I fight for everything – it's just how it is.</p>
<p>We said that in resilience – it's part of motivation – that you have to be motivated to do something but in terms of motivation, is it the fact that you faced those knock downs, so to speak, that you are motivated or are you motivated because that's your end goal, is it actually what you want, it's not just a case of being a rebel or standing up once you have been knocked down. Is that kind of resilience driven by an end goal?</p>	<p>Everything in my life is driven by the end goal. And the end goal is just NOT giving up, I can't give up on my life because somebody else said so or because somebody put an obstacle in my way or I put an obstacle in my own way and I give up...It won't happen. So it is that seeing beyond the mountain – like I need to get over this mountain to get over there – that's where I need to get to and I need to do this, I need to get that done and NO, I don't care that this person has now moved me sideways or done that or this, this is temporary and I'll still get over there, cos that's where I am going. If I didn't have that in-goal motivation I think I would probably give up easier on things.</p>
<p>Alright, and then just in closing, is there anything else you would like to add about resilience, about your experiences anything that you might have thought about that you would like to say; in the interim of the conversation?</p>	<p>No, there are things that I am not willing to discuss (giggle) so – but ja, resilience for me is about that – fighting for what you believe in, having something that drives you, you can't be resilient with no direction – that's not possible. You can't, I don't believe that. Is there such a thing as a resilient Hobo? (giggle) They have stubbornly refused to move from under that bridge for years (giggle) is that resilience? I think resilience has to do with</p>

	<p>positive moves forward and fighting for things that will make your life better and not giving in...and realizing that the world revolves around YOU, not around other people, it's not about Jessica has to make my life work for me, It's about ME, I have to make my life work for me, you know, I can't NOT pay my rent and move in with you – like – ah Jessica, now I'm having a baby and I'm living in your house and oh you have to help me – the world doesn't work that way, the world doesn't owe you anything – you have to work for everything that you get. You have to do it for yourself, there's nobody else who's going to do it and if you have no resilience of any sort within you, you won't make it through the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Varsity for example. Your parents can pay through their ass and get you into the most expensive Varsity, but if you don't have the resilience with-in you to get through your 1<sup>st</sup> year exams you won't make it anyway, and then what? It's about something that's in you it's not something – I don't know if it's something that's a learned behaviour or something that you get from your parents. I don't think it's genetic – there's hobo's of every kind (giggle) it's not genetic (giggle) I think it may have something to do with your parents if they pushed you hard enough and said don't give up on this, or if YOU watched THEM not give up – ja – I don't know. You have just triggered a very long introspective weekend.</p>
<p>Thank you very much for your time, I really appreciate it.</p>	

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 3 : ANSWERS
<p>OK, So tell me what you understand about the word Resilience?</p>	<p>Resilience is obviously the ability to be able to overcome a difficult situation , stay through it until obviously, um, it all passes by, not giving up, um, adapting to the change being resilient to whatever is good or bad, that's what I understand by resilience.</p>
<p>Alright, where do you feel in your life did you have to demonstrate resilience by that definition?</p>	<p>I had to obviously live by it here at work, initially when I started it was a very, very difficult time for the company they were restructuring – did not know what to do – how to do it, so it was a lot of being moved around, different positions, and you know , different incomes, so I had to be resilient in</p>

	<p>that because if I had to look at it externally there was so much instability, so much change, that I mean anyone would have just up and left, but I just stuck through it until we found stability we found where we were going as a company and ja, been pretty resilient ever since.</p>
<p>Alright, is there any other example or experience in your life where you can say that you had to demonstrate that resilience, other than that example?</p>	<p>I think as, I don't know, I mean I grew up very young I had to be a parent at a very young age, had to give up my studies, bring up my daughter find a job at a very young age so that brought on so much pressure onto my life that at times I wanted to just give up, wanted to let go, and just not look at the future in terms of my daughter if I work, if I don't continue my studies so that's another aspect where I've gone back to school I've stuck through it finishing my degree so I've been resilient through all of that.</p>
<p>Can you tell me a bit more about the emotions you experienced or how you felt during that time while you were raising your child and having to go to studies after being out if it for so long?</p>	<p>Frustration, um, I felt discouraged – I felt very doubtful, you know, will I really be able to make it you know. I think, I spent 4 years working before I actually decided to go back to school and pursue my degree again, so again it was just the doubts would I still be able to keep up, will I be able to study, will I be able to bring her up, and you know, balance work, school and my life, so those were the feelings. .. Frustration and all of that.</p>
<p>And what would you say got you through that?</p>	<p>I think my determination and my hard work, cos I knew where I wanted to be, you know, and no matter what, I wanted to get there – so through it all I just looked past the challenges – it's part of life, um, and I would have to overcome them one way or another and ja, that's how I made it – I think.</p>
<p>Right, and is there anything in those experiences that you would say stood out in terms of something that gave you more motivation - something that made you fight harder, or work harder?</p>	<p>Um, I think the – my hard work paid through you know, I looked at the progression I have made from where I started at work and where I am right now um, the person I am in terms of a parent from when I was initially not a parent and from where I am now, I think the motivation is growth and development and the skills and whatever I am learning through all of this, you know, I'm ... I think I am a stronger person than I was a couple of years ago and I'm a totally different person from what I was and that keeps me motivated – instead of digressing as a character and becoming worse, I'm actually growing and becoming an adult and you know, learning in the process.</p>

<p>Alright, and your age at the moment is? If you don't mind me asking?</p>	<p>I'm 25</p>
<p>And do you feel that in the next few years to come you will still grow as a person, grow to an old age, do you feel that going through these experiences at such an early age and having to deal with more have helped you to be better equipped with any future problems that might come along?</p>	<p>Yes, I think I will be better prepared than most of the people in my age group um, a lot of people face life changing crisis in their late 30's when they married, settled and have a lot of responsibilities – I had to deal with that at a very early age, so I think, ja, I'm better off and as time progresses you know, wisdom grows within a person.</p>
<p>Definitely; and what was your support system like during these times?</p>	<p>I had my Mom, I had my husband, I had family and um, not too many friends - but ja – just family you know, were there to support me with the kids, with the income, with everything, you know.</p>
<p>So do you feel that part of being resilient or the power of resilience is something that someone can possess and does a support system play a strong role in that?</p>	<p>A huge role in it because the challenges you face.... If you just give up there and then – chances are – I mean, you won't get out of any situation without resilience and without support, um, support plays a very big role because without the support I got from my Mom, financially and emotionally, you know, I don't think I would have been here today – I think I would have looked for another job and chances are I might have been frustrated there because – look at what the markets did – people were being retrenched immediately after – and Liberty is one of the companies that didn't – so I'm very happy that I was resilient, you know, through that hard time. I looked at it as I went through my hard time – and now this is my time to shine.</p>
<p>Fantastic and how do you visualize the future with the experiences that you have already been through, how do you ....</p>	<p>I think I can overcome anything, um, I embrace change now because I know what I am entitled to and know what I can demand when change comes, and what I do, what I can stand up for and what I can take, you know, I mean, I think I've built up some strengths and I've realized my weaknesses, so, being resilient really helped me identify that.</p>
<p>In the resilience scale, Item No. 15 it says "I keep interested in things" you struck in the middle of that scale as neither strongly agree or strongly disagree – how do you feel that being interested in something increases your resilience?</p>	<p>I think um, the reason I answered the question that way is because I tend to want to progress in terms of challenging things, so if something is no longer challenging to me I tend to find it boring so that's why I lose interest in it so.... And um, it's very sparse where you find a job where the challenge develops with time, you know, you find some positions which offer a stagnant sort of job role or .... Life can become stagnant at times .... I don't like that, I like things that where it's very spontaneous, very interesting, very exciting, something being very active, you know, I'm an</p>

	<p>extrovert so staying interested in something is crucial, and that thing being relevant is also crucial, so ...</p>
<p>Alright so am I correct in saying that things that are constantly changing and giving you a new type of challenge is something that definitely does help you resilience because it obviously asks for different things from you?</p>	<p>Definitely, I like to adapt to different skills - I need to learn new things, to adapt to that, so constant .... And again, knowledge, I mean (giggle) I am totally different from what I was – and who I am – the knowledge that I gained, and have now, the ability to learn the skills, I think was because of the resilience and the constant change that happened in my life.</p>
<p>And do you feel that resilience is somehow positively related in terms of thinking positive thoughts, um, things that are more hopeful, future-minded, how do you relate your experiences with those feelings that you felt?</p>	<p>Yes, I looked at it as I mean, company is going through a rough patch um, but um, obviously the outlook is profitable, they are looking at making a profit and what they had in plan, in mind for us is that we will earn more money with time, you know, I'm in an industry where you don't just start earning money from day one, you need to work for it, you need to build the relationships and you need to be resilient, so resilience does give – it's equal to reward, I think in my case and um, with my schooling and, and, my child, I mean with time I saw that I chose the correct time to go back to school - everything was now stable – I could afford it – I could manage it because I got the support system – so resilience does have its reward, at the end of the day.</p>
<p>And should your child – that you raised – in a situation where you felt it was such an early age – to be a parent – (am I correct in saying that) do you feel there is any advice you could give her – anything that you would tell her so that she would never land in the same situation where resilience was required – that you could help her – in terms of being a resilient person? What kind of advice would you give her?</p>	<p>Yes The advice I would give her is look at the longer term outlook of every situation – don't look at the short term and what is happening right now. Look at where you want to be in the next 5 years and even if you do move to another company, or be in another situation, what are the chances that wherever you wanna run to will not be worse. Look at your current situation – try and fix it – try and make the most of it – if you can't, ask for help and try and stick through it until you overcome that barrier, that challenge because once you have overcome it you have learnt . You know, you have learnt what is required to overcome such a challenge – and so that is the advice I will give her – just stick through it but also try to look for solutions and if she can't she must ask for help.</p>
<p>Alright and is there any other experience that you might have had where you feel resilience helped</p>	<p>I think right now the career I have now and obviously my parenting experience is about it for</p>

<p>you get through it – where resilience got you where you are today and to be as stable as you are today?</p>	<p>now.</p>
<p>Is there anything else you would like to mention in the form of resilience – anything you would like to share, touch on, chat about?</p>	<p>No ... no I think I've broadly touched on what is close to me and what I think is very important because people become resilient in many ways, whether there is a sickness in the home, you know.... I would have wished to be somewhere else, right now, in terms of my life, I would have hoped to maybe be an executive somewhere, you know, at another company you know, and live in a huge mansion, drive a good car, but I have to be resilient in the current position because I have to start somewhere and work my way up, so .... I think ja, those Aspects are helping me to get through... where I am ... what I'm looking at – where I wanna be.</p>
<p>Alright, and in terms of economic downturn, we spoke earlier on about how our markets were down and how it affects the workplace, should that happen again sometime between now and the next 5 years – how will your approach be towards that, with possible retrenchment or demoting that would obviously give you less of a salary bearing in mind that you have mouths to feed, bills to pay, how would you then go about it, how would resilience then play a part?</p>	<p>The same way because I've been through it and with every downturn there's an upturn, I mean, can't keep going down. There is somewhere where things need to turn up so you need to look at it where – life is a cycle – and the economy is a business cycle as well, so I look at it this way, so LISTEN wherever I want to run to, wherever I want to go – because of this – I am going to experience the exact same thing – if not worse – I like the statement “Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know” because you know what the company has in terms of values for staff and you, you know, as an employee rather stay there where you know, before you've overcome the company will overcome, and the chances are they will – that's the outlook I'd take.</p>
<p>Alright, and if we spoke hypothetically and we said that you were retrenched from wherever it is that you worked and there was no job available how would you go about maintaining resilience when everything seems to be against you?</p>	<p>Oh, I would have to look for other means of making money – you know – earning an income – starting a company – selling, so you using the skills you learnt. When ... if I was in a very difficult situation at work, to apply those skills you have learnt..... It's something that people .... When you work, you need to apply life skills to your job, and whatever you learn from work you need to apply holistically throughout your life because a challenge is a challenge, so I will basically just apply whatever I have resilience, skills or tactics I use to survive, you know, if I become retrenched.</p>
<p>Alright, so would I be correct in saying that resources that you can bank or accumulate in your life are definitely important in your life in being</p>	<p>Ja, definitely, it does because you know resilience is resilience, the only thing that changes is the situation that you are being resilient in, so um,</p>

<p>resilient, and whatever you learn in terms of resources that you can keep is something that helps in resilience?</p>	<p>sticking through it and having a determination – finding a way – making a plan – those aspects apply in every aspect, you know in your life, in overcoming whatever challenge and being resilient through it all.</p>
<p>Then, Item No. 26 “I am resilient” it’s a very blatant statement – it’s a very obvious thing – in terms of saying I am resilient – are you confident in saying “I am resilient?”</p>	<p>Ja, I haven’t given up hey, I really haven’t and um, if you do ask any manager here or any manager I’ve worked for, I’ve always gone for what I want, and I’ve never stopped. I’ve gotten what I want now purely because of resilience. Through the shuffling and restructuring my outlook was that’s where I want to end up. ... And I’m there, so I am resilient hey... anyway I think so.</p>
<p>Fantastic Item No. 7 “I usually take things in my stride” you were very neutral on that scoring a 4 between 1 and 7. Do you usually feel that you sometimes take things maybe a bit personally or do you .... How do you feel about that statement “taking things in your stride?”</p>	<p>Well, the reason why I put it there is cos I didn’t understand it.</p>
<p>Alright, fair enough, just to elaborate, to take something in your stride eg. If a remark has to be made or a statement or an action towards you that might be something that offends you and you just sort of go – oh well, let’s carry on going – do you feel you often do that – if something has to be against you – do you feel like – just keep rolling ... so to speak.</p>	<p>I take it... I challenge it and I keep rolling with the punches. So whoever then just states whatever they feel about me, I’d counter that, I’ll tell them OK if that’s how you feel, this is the reason why I am like this and this is the reason why you perceive me as this person, um, just because of that, um, a regional manager of mine – me gunning for this position that I am in now – said to me she thought I was not ready for the position and I asked her why .... She couldn’t answer it, so um, I did not take that as sort of a personal statement, but I couldn’t take it as constructive criticism because she didn’t give me the Pointers that I need to improve on, so it was just a strategic statement just to shut me up. So I told her, “Listen you just saying that to stop me in my path for going for what I want then it’s not working because you are not giving me the reasons why you say I’m not ready for this position”. So I will challenge whatever someone has to say about me, but not in a bad way – just to get feedback - as to why do you say that – especially if it’s something bad - because I’m not a bad person (giggle). I’m really very nice. There was an instance where in the Hub I was told I was cruel, you know, and I said “guys the expectations of my work is to</p>

	<p>deliver - and if you do not deliver on your part of the job I will be on top of your head. So I'm not being cruel – you know – my e-mails are just factual, you are supposed to do this – you didn't do it- Why? So if you perceive that as cruel, then you are wrong. So I don't think I take things in my stride.</p>
<p>Alright, so just with regards to what you said about feedback and hearing things like constructive criticism or Alternatively appraisal for whatever you might have done right – or wrong – how do you feel that adds to resilience? Do you think it maybe helps you to change your behaviour or demonstrate more of certain behaviour?</p>	<p>Yes, because through the time I was praised because of the job that I was doing. I was put in a position where no-one wanted to do that position but I made it work and I think my progression helped me to go where I am because they complemented me, I mean, the people that I worked for said Ahh, what a wonderful consultant I am and my level of service is excellent - so praise and recognition – just that pat on the back – does help hey, during resilient times.</p>
<p>Alright, and in terms of the criticism part or rather more on what you are doing wrong or incorrectly how were you resilient?</p>	<p>Ja, I had times when I was told I wasn't delivering and why was I not delivering, and that was the learning curve for me, where I was sat down and told... listen this is what I expect – what we expect from you – you have not Delivered, OK so what are you going to do about it? So I asked for resources, I said, listen train me, teach me how to do it, what am I supposed to do, I'm new at this so you can't expect me to be a shining star and its 2 months going into this constant restructuring, so um, that too helps with development but it also goes with you as a person, your personality – I mean if you take criticism and then you just give up – I take criticism as a way to learn – where – I mean, I ask a Broker – how am I? Am I good enough? If I'm not good enough, what do I need to do to be good enough or add value in your job, so um, they will tell me Liberty sucks wa wa wa wa you know. But um, I say OK I'm not Liberty I'm Pume – what can I do to better that experience, um, so it's all about the attitude from an individual. When you criticize some people take it the wrong way but some people take it as a learning curve, so I'm one of those who learn. .... From criticism.... And praise.</p>
<p>Alright, and what kind of personality aspects do you think you have or that a resilient person should have in order to be more resilient and in order to stand up after being beaten down?</p>	<p>I think firstly self-confidence; you need to be confident in yourself. To know you can go through the situation, you can do it. Believe in yourself and um, the determination – like – have a goal, you know, because when you have a goal you will be</p>

	<p>resilient to go through with it all because you try to obtain that goal um, be determined, you know, I, ja, um, determined, enthusiastic, all those things, I'm always positive about things, and when I am negative about one thing it's because I'm just fed-up with people – I've done what was positive, say what I need to say, do what I have to do, and ja. But I'll give constructive feedback you know, so be open minded - you know, that's another personality that I have – I am very open minded – I look at things broadly – not just one-sided – so that's how it helps me with resilience and being resilient in all my situations.</p>
<p>And what happens when you get fed-up? What then, is there any way of reminding yourself to be more resilient? Is there anything you can maybe do to be more positive?</p>	<p>Yes, I just need to go home and sleep – I need a pick me up - um, then I forget about it and then ... just give me the opportunity to rant and rave at you ... and then it's passed, um, as long as you'll fix it – but if you don't then I'll get fed-up again (giggle) We need that. I'm not always happy; I'm not always smiley smiley. Like, I told a guy off cos he didn't want to give my CD back for loading a system on a brokers computer and it's frustrating because that particular potential business I'm losing cos my broker cannot um, do quotes and he's been irresponsible by not giving me back my CD, and this really just got to me, you know, but I'm over it, I got another CD, so.... I've been resilient with him because its money.. You know, I've been very patient with him, very.</p>
<p>So do you believe that patience is one of the key aspects in resilience?</p>	<p>Oh extremely, extremely hey.</p>
<p>OK anything else other than patience, other aspects that you should try and possess?</p>	<p>Ja, patience, no... look at the long term, not the short term, um, Ag, so many things that comes into play, you know, different emotions that's very difficult to express right now, If I had a list, I think a full page, I'll write down everything you need.... I can't just point it out.... But patience is crucial .... I think resilience and patience go hand in hand, so ... and have vision, you know, know what you want.</p>
<p>Ok then just in closing do you have any ending comments, is there anything else you would like to add about any experiences, any emotions anything that comes to mind that you would have maybe said half an hour ago that you didn't have a chance to?</p>	<p>No (laughter)</p>
<p>OK, thank you very much for your time. If you have any questions or anything, please let me</p>	<p>Thanks, Thanks very much, I will e-mail you if I need anything.</p>

know or if you would like feedback, please let me know, otherwise as I mentioned you stayed Participant No. 3 and there will be no other involvement.	OK thank you.... Bye.
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INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 5 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand by the word or construct of the definition of resilience?	No matter what obstacles are thrown at you, you basically overcome them, I see that as resilience.
Alright and can you tell me about a time In your life when you had to demonstrate this, you had to be resilient?	Sure, every day in this job. (giggle) Personally or work wise?
Personally or work, anything you can tell me will be fantastic.	Sure, my Mom got sick 5 years ago so I had to be very resilient then, I mean I had a full time job, I had my kids to look after and I had to look after my Mom, so I think that's probably the most resilient I've had to be.
Alright and can you tell me a bit more about that, how she became ill, and how you coped with everything?	Ja, she had colon cancer so I was at the hospital with her the whole time and still keeping my job going, looking after my kids so ja, it was just balancing pain and emotional stuff together with work and running a family, so that's how I see resilience.
How did you manage to do that, what kind of resources did you pull on, how did you get through that time?	I'm stubborn (giggle) I think emotionally I'm quite a strong sort of person – as my Mother – I suppose I get it from her. For me, I had to be strong for her, more than anything, so I called on friends to help out – friends helped with the kids and what have you, and work wise – I'm a bit of a work-a- holic so that was quite hard for me, it almost made me take a step back and say hello – prioritize and ja, I suppose I learnt to prioritize, things like that.
Alright, and any other experience that you would like to mention where you had to demonstrate resilience?	Shoo, I can't think of any off-hand. I think every day in this job that we do –because it's an interesting job, you've got to be able to have relationships with people, you have to be good on the admin side and you've got to put up with people on a daily basis. A lot of the brokers we deal with are very difficult. You have to be able to help them and get business from them – so you have to be resilient in this job. There are obstacles every day.
Alright, and what kind of things help you to be resilient in this job?	I think it's trying to find balance in life – I sort of try and balance family life – exercise – I think exercise in this job is very important as a stress reliever,

	and just try and keep optimistic I suppose. Try and look on the bright side of things every day.
You mention optimistic, optimism, how important do you think positive emotions are in being resilient?	It's very important, I think negative emotions make people sick and sick people can't perform at your best ever, so I think optimism in everything you do in life is important.
Alright, and you mentioned that family and friends pulled you through when your Mom was sick – how important would you say a support system is in resilience?	Very important, especially if you are a woman, I think. I mean in this day and age you work, you have a full time job, and you have a family you have to look after, so ja, I think it's very important.
With regards to your kids, how do you be resilient when you have kids to look after AND you have a full time job, one that is so demanding.... And a part time job shoo!	I have a part time job as well,  Ja (giggle) I think its attitude at the end of the day – they are important to me, in my life so as I said, it's trying to find that balance and ja, it's a hard one to answer.
Can you think of any other instance going back as far as High school, Primary school maybe Varsity if you attended or Tertiary education where you had to be resilient in the face of any other challenges?	Shoo, that's thinking back a long way! (Giggle)
Take all the time you need.	I think in life you always have to be resilient, no matter what you doing, whether you are at school – I mean, when I was at school it was all girls so I think I had to be resilient because girls are very bitchy at school, um, from that point of view, also I came from a poor family and I went to a school where was all sort of, rich girls, so I think I had to be resilient and form this sort of 'extra layer' um, ja, I think when I was educated I was away from .... I mean I left home when I was 17 – so I was quite young – and I was in a different Country to my parents – so I think I had to learn to be resilient there as well., I had to stand on my own 2 feet.
Can you tell me more about the environment where you say you came from a poor home and you were in a very rich environment, can you tell me more about that?	Um, I grew up in Zambia, I was born in Zambia, and when Zambia became independent my parents moved to South Africa – my Mom's British and my Dad's South African, and when we came here they lost everything – they lost all their money, we couldn't take any money out with us so they basically started from scratch and my Dad was a lot older um, we went to live in the Free State and my Dad was a miner in the Free State, so my Mom always wanted us to have a really good education so we went to this very expensive school which they couldn't really afford, so my Dad had to work night shift and what have you to actually get us to go to school but, in hind sight I had a good

	education but it was very difficult for me as a child – cos I was the poor child in class and I was left of a lot, so ja, I suppose that made me resilient forever and a day.
And how do you think facing that kind of challenge helped you in today’s environment? Be it working and personal.	I had to learn to stand up for myself and be myself and not worry too much about what the others thought, so I think that stood me in good stead for the rest of my life. Really, I’m still that way., if you don’t like me, tough, tough to you kind of thing, so.
OK, when you say you were in a different Country from your folks, you obviously had to have a lot of resilience there because you had to stand on your own 2 feet as you said, at a very young age, how did you get through that? What kind of resources did you pull on there?	I suppose friends, but ja, I’m quite independent so I managed on my own really. Funny enough, I hated the Free State when we lived there so I was quite happy to get away from there, and sort of re-invent myself, so in a lot of ways it was good for me. It was scary in the beginning but I had to re-invent myself, so ...
Alright, you mentioned re-inventing, that’s sort of along the lines of change, am I correct in saying that?	Yes,
And how important do you think changing, adjusting, re-inventing yourself is important in resilience?	I think it’s very important – especially in this day and age because everything changes so quickly and if you can’t change and adapt then you get left behind in everything in life.
How do you think being able to change at such a young age or become resilient with change at a young age, how do you think that’s helped you today?	(Giggle) Um, I’m adaptable I suppose, especially in the job that we do, you have to be adaptable; you have to adapt to different personalities that you deal with every day. You have to adapt to the financial environment that we are in, it’s changing all the time, but I think I suppose whatever you do in this day and age, because technology is changing so rapidly, so if you can’t try and keep up with that kind of technology then you going to be left behind.
Alright, and with regards to resilience, do you think it’s something that’s a learnt trait that you learn through challenges in life or is it something that you learn from your folks or that you get from them biologically?	Look, I think you are born with a personality, I think every-body is born with a personality – but I think things that happen in your life do make you more resilient. I mean you can start off as a resilient person, but if you have more obstacles thrown at you – you learn that resilience, so I suppose it’s a bit of both.
With regards to any of the previous experiences when you were so young, how do you think it moulded you then? If you know what I mean, if that question is making sense?	Not really, because I think everything in life moulds you in some way, so yes I had to be independent at a young as, we moved around a lot when I was a kid, so from that point of view – being adaptable – I mean I look at some of my friends, they went to the same school their whole

	<p>life, they were at the same Primary school, High school – that’s all they did, they never moved., whereas as a kid I went everywhere, I moved to lots of different schools. I think that’s definitely made me resilient.</p>
<p>Item No. 11 on the resilience scale that we filled out “I seldom wonder what the point of it all is” you scored a 4 on that which is directly in between strongly agree and disagree, so we can say that you are reasonably neutral there – any specific reason why you neutral? Would you like to elaborate on.....?</p>	<p>Sorry, can you please repeat that.....</p>
<p>Sure, “I seldom wonder what the point of it all is”</p>	<p>Ja, well I suppose everybody wonders sometimes, I mean that’s quite a broad sort of question to ask, I mean, I know what I want from life but I also think maybe I don’t always see the bigger picture, you know, the spiritual side, and I think a lot of people lose track of that, so ja, that was a bit of a strange question for me.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned there having to see the bigger picture, or you know where you wanting to go, how important are things like goals or goal directed behaviour for you in being resilient?</p>	<p>I don’t know if the 2 have anything to do with each other? Goals and resilience? Look, resilience I think is obviously a strength that you have, goals I think are important, I mean I do set goals for myself whether it’s a short term or long term goal, there’s a difference, I have different goals for different things in my life, whether it’s for work or for my personal.</p>
<p>OK, you mentioned a spiritual factor, how important is that element in resilience?</p>	<p>That’s very important! When I was saying earlier about balance, you need to have a balance with your spiritual side, with your work side, with your emotional side, if you are not balanced in all those things you’ll end up having some sort of problem somewhere.</p>
<p>What happens if that balance is ‘shot’ out of balance, how do you cope then? How do you become resilient then?</p>	<p>My theory in life is if things aren’t in balance you generally get sick and it’s your body telling you to actually ‘figure it out’ I know it sounds a bit ‘kooky’ but that’s how I am. (giggle)</p>
<p>Not at all – um, and then item No. 12 on the resilience scale “I take things one day at a time” you were also very neutral on that.</p>	<p>Well, it’s like I was saying, I do set goals for myself so, I have long term goals but I also take one day, each day at a time so I’m sort of in between there because I don’t think you CAN just take one day at a time, but I also think some-times it’s very important, I mean if you’ve got a problem in life – you need to sit and work it through one day at a time until you’ve sorted the problem out, so ja, that’s why I said that.</p>
<p>And then is there any other experience that you</p>	<p>Shoo, if you think about it it’s actually quite hard</p>

<p>would like to relate to that you may have thought about in the interim of this conversation that could aid in explaining resilience or where you had to face a challenge?</p>	<p>to think of things defining moments. I think another thing that made me resilient is having my kids, I had my first daughter quite young – I was the only one having a child at that time, so I think that made me resilient in a way as well. I had to learn from scratch what to do with no real help from anyone. So, that was probably a moment. I worked in the hotel industry – that made me resilient, we used to work 18 hour shifts at a time, so I learnt to cope with things like – as I said – one day at a time, and I’ve always worked hard and I think that’s made me resilient as well, I believe in hard work.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned that in this job you need a lot of resilience, obviously because of establishing relationships with people and the fact that things are always changing, new products etc., how do you feel that you keep up a certain level of resilience? Surely some people have days where they thing Ag, I can’t do this anymore! How do YOU keep a constant?</p>	<p>That’s why I was saying earlier on.... One day at a time.... So if you are having a bad day, it’s just today, tomorrow will be better and that’s always been my philosophy in life. I think I’ve shown my resilience, I’ve been in this job for 10 years (giggle).. I’m generally an optimistic person and I try to see the good things, obviously I have days where I think “stuff it” and I just want to go home, but this is this job and that’s what I remind myself of every day.</p>
<p>What kind of personality characteristics do you think someone who’s resilient has, or that you have?</p>	<p>I think your independence, optimistic, entrepreneur in a way – I think you try and see the brighter side, and just keep going each day. (giggle) It’s a hard one to answer.</p>
<p>Then just in closing, is there anything that you would like to add, any comments, anything that you might have thought of?</p>	<p>Can’t think of anything off-hand, no.</p>
<p>Alright, well thank you very much for your time, I really appreciate it.</p>	<p>OK.</p>

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 6 : ANSWERS
<p>Tell me what you understand by the word construct or resilience.</p>	<p>Construct, resilience that would be um being able to keep going in the face of adversity, so when you have every reason to give up but then you manage to get the inner strength to continue going on and then the champion inside sort of takes over. That's how I understand it.</p>
<p>And tell me when have you had to do that in your life?</p>	<p>When the chips are down and you've got targets weighing on your shoulders and in our case Brokers being difficult and you have to try and swing them your way when you are trying to make a sale and they just not biting – and you got targets to meet – and if you don't meet targets then you don't exactly earn anything so that's when it happens.</p>
<p>Alright, and is there a specific experience in your life – even dating as far back as primary school, high school or even in the tertiary education – if you were part of that – how did you have to be resilient in the face of adversity?</p>	<p>OK, um, shoe, I've got many examples. High school I'm going to use my matric experience – we – it was a bit tough getting to school - it was like very difficult, we had to walk um I think it was 15 Km to school to and from and then studying was also a mission because we didn't have adequate lighting so, what kept me going was the dream of one day getting out there through education and then as a result as was the top student in my class – so that was in a way challenging for me to number 1 make sure I wake up every day – do the 15 Km to and fro and then at the same time study and beat those who were in a way able to make end meet. So my matric was one of my biggest struggles – and achievements to date.</p>
<p>OK and how did you get through that struggle? What did you use, what tools or you know...</p>	<p>My Mom was a good coach, she has a way of pep talking and encouraging you in her own ways of helping. She won't exactly sit you down for a long speech but she kept throwing good motivation every now and then, which kept me going even though I was having noise ringing in my head when I want to give up on something – then I remember her saying “you can do it, wake up my son, you are a champion” so she had a way of encouraging me and pushing me against all odds.</p>
<p>Alright. Is there any other experience that you would like to mention? You said that you got many.</p>	<p>Yes, when our second daughter was born um, we didn't have, we were in a difficult position, we lost our house, we were 8 months pregnant and we had to move out of the house and find something else on a negative salary, my wife was not working, we didn't have food, so it was a big</p>

	<p>challenge to No. 1 being able to keep the family together because when it's like that, when the wife starts doubting you and all that it's difficult, so having to keep going and try to paint a better picture of the future which I think worked and then as a result we were able to pull through Then our baby was born and a few months down the line I found a better job and we had all we ever needed for the baby and us, so that was another experience, when baby No. 2 was born... it was crazy.. it was difficult.</p>
<p>And how did you get through those times? Was your Mom still your coach? Were there some other factors?</p>	<p>No this time it was different, I had a good Pastor and so we would go for counselling and we would also be there you know, and he would talk to us – to me especially – and then he would just pray with us so it was mostly prayer with baby No. 2. Because I remember Linda was saying.... Linda is my wife, how on earth are we going to do this baby, we can't even look after the first one, how are we going to go through with the second one .. I was we just gotta be strong; it's going to work out. I didn't know how but, um, terminating the pregnancy was not an option for me, which, I'm quite happy that didn't happen, cos baby is like 9 years old now – she's beautiful – she's talented and she's doing exceptionally well at school, so that was good.</p> <p>I'll show you the pictures just now (giggle). Ja, but they look like twins, cos baby No. 1 was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> March and then the following year 28<sup>th</sup> March baby No.2 was born – now the look like twins. Crazy (giggle)</p>
<p>OK, any other experiences you would like to relate to? Again, you said you've got many; I would like to hear more.</p>	<p>Um, that was when I was working in the call centre as a consultant and, a service consultant ,and then you tend to get very difficult clients who are impossible to please and having to number 1 be nice to them, number 2, with the notion that the customer is always right, even though they are calling you names or abusing you verbally and all that you just need to keep your cool and then you just have to be resilient and you don't go down to their level and start swearing back at them because you are the professional - they are the client – they have to be always right, so there are times when after speaking to 80 people and you've got this person 30 minutes before you knock off and they are just swearing at you and they are being racial and all that then you just need to like</p>

	<p>do you best not to go down to their level and start swearing at them so you treat them like a customer and the customer is always right. So call centre was another good training ground for resilience and as a result I worked 4 years in the call centre, I was the top consultant and then after that I moved to become Supervisor at the call centre – then I moved into training and development because I did a good job as a consultant. So I needed a lot of resilience and maintaining that cool to not start swearing at them. That was another example.</p>
<p>Alright, any other example or any other instant you would like to mention? Go for it.</p>	<p>Um, I'm going to have to think hard now.</p> <p>One of the most difficult experiences in our lives was when we didn't have a car as a family – 3 kids, no car – just the whole aspect of being patient and to say it's going to work out, it's going to be OK when all your peers and everybody around you have cars – so – as a family we didn't have a car – so that was another test of character – that went on for many years by the way – cos we only got a car about 4 years ago. So from when the kids were born to like when they were 6 we didn't have a car and once again having the courage to keep the family together, being content, being happy and even the challenge getting around and um, that character was tested again, I think, and ja we got through it and are still as a family intact which is quite good, but at times it was difficult cos sometimes we got caught in the rain, you know, walking with 2 kids, me with one, Linda with one, and all the experience with the taxi guys, holding your baby and some guy next to you smoking and you can't say anything cos you might end up with a bruise.</p>
<p>Alright, and how much do you think all of those experience have helped you to be more resilient now?</p>	<p>Its character that you come out with, its being able to appreciate the small things in life, um, and also to be able to share your experiences with others that are going through hardships, so I use my experiences to encourage others and say “even these shall pass too” so don't give up work hard um work for a better tomorrow because what you see today is not a permanent state of affairs – so – those experiences sort of helped me to grow as a person and they made me stronger and I am more resilient now because whenever I face a challenge I do try to compare this current situation with</p>

	<p>everything else we have been through and then I do end up with a smile to say “we can go through this” no need to give up just bring out your best and it will be OK. So ja, I love the character part that comes with different hardships and experiences.</p>
<p>OK, so am I correct in saying that everything that you have been through has helped build the character you are today?</p>	<p>Yes, that’s 100% right because if everything was in a way, handed down, without having to No. 1 work hard, I don’t think I was going to appreciate everything that we have right now. The first thing being family and to just appreciate the little blessings like you know, waking up with health, a roof over your head , you have a job to go to – you’ve got food and the kids are smiling and going to school, um that for me is like priceless – in a way – so in terms of resilience that makes me even tough as a person because I can face any challenge with a smile on my face, and I remember telling this to the children – whatever you come across at school, just remember your goals. So you set your goals and work hard towards your goal, don’t give up, don’t be discouraged no matter what happens, um, just remain focused – so I sort of pass on the whole aspect of No. 1 being strong, being resilient and not be strayed to and fro by the winds because life with throw many challenges at you and then as a result you just need to remember the inner strength that we all possess.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned before, the aspect of faith and that you had chatted to a Pastor – how much do you think that played a role in you being resilient?</p>	<p>A very big role, um, there are times when you feel like you can’t face tomorrow, you got nothing going for you and then the faith part just takes over and then instead of feeling sorry for yourself you have to see the bigger picture – to say it’s not about today only – there is more to life than what is today, so in an on-going basis I think faith plays a very integral role in building character and making you a stronger person than you are at that moment. So it does bring out the best in me, I think.</p>
<p>Alright, and in building that character what kind of characteristics – personality characteristics – do you think you have or that resilient people should have?</p>	<p>You need to have a backbone, you need to be able to OK... A vision, that’s where it starts, without a vision it’s very difficult to even wake up in the morning and look forward to delivering your best in whatever you do – so a vision is the way it starts for me, and I’ve seen it with many influential leaders that I aspire to, so No. 1 they do set a vision, they follow it no matter what comes, they will still follow it – so that’s one of the things –</p>

	<p>vision – it helps because without it why would we even bother to wake up in the morning, get ready and go through traffic and face everything else that comes with the day and being able to do it the following day, next week, next month and still give out the best that we can offer – so without vision its ... I don't see any point to life.</p>
<p>OK, you also spoke about an inner strength – can you tell me more about that in terms of resilience.</p>	<p>That started with my Mom, she had a way of speaking kindly and in a motivational way which in a way made me believe in myself to say, No.1 “I am no loser” No. 2 “I can achieve whatever I set my mind to” No. 3 “It’s important to work hard and to celebrate small victories”, which is why I, I mean on a daily basis I sort of, I do count my blessings, see the things to be grateful for. So that started with my Mom, she did a great job I think, raising all of us up, eight of us – we are three brothers and we’ve got five sisters.</p>
<p>Alright, and you mentioned the aspect of patience as well, how important is that in resilience?</p> <p>Especially in South Africa!</p>	<p>Yes, without patience you pretty much can mess up everything cos if you don't cultivate patience you sort of want everything done yesterday and as a result you miss out on most of the things, for instance watching children grow is one of the best experiences ever – but if you don't have patience you pretty much want them out of your house, out of your way so that you can live your life, but by wishing that you lose out on the miracles that are happening right in front of your eyes every day. So patience allows you to see and appreciate things as and when they happen. That's a good character to work over and develop – I think if we had more patient people we will have less um, accidents, even on the road, cos I see a lot of exciting things on the road when we drive.</p> <p>Yes, especially in South Africa. Joburg to be exact!</p>
<p>Alright you also mentioned the idea, or the notion of happy or happiness – that's a very positive emotion, what kind of positive role does emotions play in being resilient?</p>	<p>Without that you – you do – you will struggle. I also mentioned the issue of counting your blessings and appreciating the positive things that are happening around you, so without that, once again you can overlook all positives and focus on the negatives – when that happens your stress levels will start building up and when that happens your health will suffer and when you are very unhappy – then you are going to make everyone around you unhappy – including your clients – so there goes everything – your job, your family, your health and eventually you got nothing – so that's one of the good things we should work on – my</p>

	<p>mentor - my Pastor taught me that – ja – he’s a good man to me.</p>
<p>You just mentioned now that your Pastor was your mentor, how important is it to have a mentor in being resilient?</p>	<p>Having a mentor, its important because No. 1 not only will they... a mentor shares their failures with you so that you don’t go a repeat them, No.2 they are achievers in their own right and as a result they sort of help you to see a bigger vision of the future – and once you have focused on the future then whatever is happening today is not going to hinder your aspiration of improving where you are at that moment, so you need a mentor so that they can help sharpen your resilience and you can overcome the little adversities that can become stumbling blocks going forward. So you need a good mentor or role model who will help you and shape the vision that you need to follow as a person.</p>
<p>Alright, and so how important is it in that relationship to be able to relate to someone? You mentioned that you share with people your experiences and how you came out of hardships, how important is that?</p>	<p>It’s very, very good feeling and I do spend time at our church youth group talking and what happens is they – where we are at the moment – we – there are a few things that I’ve picked up along the way and I am able to pass that on and share those experiences with them – with youngsters – what is more fulfilling is when you can literally see the stars, sort of sparkling in their eyes when you are motivating them and they are being encouraged and you can see a change in character – because it’s very easy to see a young boy going down the destructive path and after you have spoken to them a few times, then you can see that shift in the way that they carry themselves – in the way they walk, in the way they talk and the things they are focusing on, so for me that is also priceless to see a young person benefitting from what you are planting in them which is good words, kind words, words of encouragement and then helping them to see a future in their own lives – not just what they are seeing today, I mean they are not going to be in high school forever – that will pass – I mean high school is a challenge but nothing compared to what they are going to be in the future - a meaningful person who is going to contribute positively to the society. So just painting those pictures for all of them and allowing them to almost touch that future where they will be is priceless. I love it.</p>
<p>Alright, so you being resilient is also helping other people?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

<p>OK, in terms of – you said, it’s testing your character, every challenge that comes along, you mention that’s what tests your character and that you either build from there or you move on. How do you carry on building after hardship, after hardship, after hardship – how do you carry on building that strength?</p>	<p>For some reason hardship um, in a way, has a way of making you stronger, because I remember saying earlier that if we hadn’t gone through some of things that we went through I don’t think we would be um, better parents compared to if everything was just handed down easy. I don’t think we are going to appreciate um, I call them small things, but appreciate what we have on a daily basis, so that for me goes a long way to No.1 allow every experience and then take lessons out of that because without it then its just a waste if it took you a week to go through that hardship – then it’s a waste of a whole week that you didn’t learn anything out of it. But, now taking lessons out of hardships makes you a stronger person and then being able to look back and reflect on that um, draw those lessons and then you are able to build on that and then pass on the experiences to your children and to everyone else who can benefit from it.</p>
<p>OK so would I be correct in saying that appreciation for those smaller things or you know, the finer things is what helps you to be more resilient each time something comes along that is difficult?</p>	<p>Yes, because um, going back to that example of the call centre – there is no way I was going to allow somebody I haven’t even met to ruin, at that stage my career was important, for my family who was still very young at that time – so I had to be resilient in staying true to No. 1 to my profession, No.2 to me as an individual because had I allowed any of those instances and lose my cool and shouted at them and get a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> written warning and then get a dismissal – it was not going to be worth it so I didn’t allow adversity to dictate my path as it is, so you embrace what you are going through and then being strong, resilient and just focus on the future. I remember what I did to the desk, cos we had cubicles to work from in the call centre, I had positive pictures of cars that I would like to drive one day, holiday homes that I would love to own one day and then far away destinations that I would love to go visit and every other dream..... if I see something nice in a magazine then I will cut it nicely, paste it on my desk, and then that’s like a motivation, you’ve got this person swearing and performing and going all out to ruin your day, and then when looking at a positive picture will help you to keep going and just be nice, even if you can’t be nice.</p>
<p>Alright, so then just quickly would I be correct in saying that for you resilience was also something</p>	<p>Yes, I needed that because it’s easy to quickly start feeling sorry for yourself and allowing anger to</p>

<p>that was stimulated by visual positive things?</p>	<p>build up and when anger builds up we all know that you end up doing things that we will regret. So, if you have a positive frame right in front of you that helps to calm your emotions and then being able to remember what's important – and what was important at that time was to be the best consultant anyone has ever seen and then, um, being able to take home what I wanted which was a good salary.</p>
<p>OK, and then tell me how has all of that, that you've been through up to now, how did you become more resilient in this job that you are doing now?</p>	<p>I needed those experiences now more than ever cos now we are dealing with um, Old Mutual Independent Advisors they have been around in the industry, they have seen all the ups and downs so you can't bluff them, you just need to be genuine – now having said that, they are not the kindest people, um, they can be very, very rude and um, you can't allow that to get through to you. You cannot allow that strong personality that they have to discourage you so – I'm grateful for the experiences that I had in the call centre because that made me stronger, that helped me develop a thicker skin to deal with difficult people, um, to develop integrity because your word has to be your word with IFA's because they been around in the industry for 20 – 30 years so they know when a person is bluffing, when a person has poor workmanship – if you say you are going to respond to an e-mail at 1.00 pm, let it be at 1.00pm – end of story – so the years spent in the call centre helped me cultivate this professional personality and respect and positivity and integrity - and I think I need that more now than ever with IFA's can be very difficult people to please.</p>
<p>Alright, would I be correct in saying that the call centre definitely taught you that patience and responsibility with having to deal with these people.</p>	<p>Yes, it was like 5 years, on the phones and I still maintain that I did a good job which is why I won every prize that they had and every extra commission that was on offer, I sort of won that and um, those experiences never go away, they keep coming back, so whenever I need to draw from that – they are like somewhere on a shelf – where I just go and retrieve it.</p>
<p>You mentioned that having a thick skin is important – do you think developing a thick skin has helped you be more resilient?</p>	<p>Yes, without it I would be in tears half the time because like I said IFA's are not the nicest people – they can be very vulgar in terms of language and they want things done yesterday even before they tell you so if you don't have a thick skin you will be running around with um, you will be depressed to put it straight forward.... Ja.</p>

<p>OK so definitely the difficult experiences in the call centre have helped you to deal with more difficult situations at this IFA level.</p>	<p>Yes, and it was a nice training ground for me, because that was all about (1) pleasing the customers and then (2) knowing all the is to know about the industry – so all that helped me to prepare to deal with IFA’s – so whatever question they have now on investment I can recite with my eyes closed – and ja – aim to please – so whether they are nice or unkind – I don’t allow that to change who I am supposed to be – a professional.</p>
<p>So how would you say that applies to your life? How have difficult situations in your life, helped you to deal with the more difficult situations in life, e.g. The situation in matric where you had to walk 15Km to school, how did that help you when you never had a car – is there a part of resilience that helped you out there.</p>	<p>Yes, in a big way because you can imagine if I wasn’t that resilient – having the courage to pull the family together in the face of adversity that was going to be difficult for me um, I’ve seen a lot of people who do give up um, do go on the wrong which includes um, doing bad stuff to get money... I’m thinking of stealing... you end up in jail – then there goes the family when you are in jail for a couple of years.... Ja... stealing and robbing ... whatever it is, so I just had to focus on doing what my mother told me which is you work hard whatever happens because it will pay off at the end of the day. I saw that happening when we were in the call centre when the salary wasn’t enough to cover what we needed, so the incentives came in and so I work so hard that I won every incentive which eventually I didn’t even consider the salary, it was just the incentives that will cover everything for me : transport, food, clothing, baby supplies, incentives were enough to cover them because we were collecting vouchers every week, every month .... So that working hard, that aspect that Mamma told me ... So I didn’t break down from who am I supposed to be to somebody else – who will end up stealing and robbing and end up in jail and there goes the family.</p>
<p>Alright and then obviously with the different job or another addition to the family that brought about change how is adapting to change important in being resilient? You know, you have one baby and then all of a sudden baby No. 2 comes along – we need more space – we need more food – nappies ...</p>	<p>(Giggle) It double the trouble</p>
<p>How did you adapt to that change</p>	<p>It’s very important to learn the aspect of accepting change because if um, if you don’t accept change then you – not only do you allow life to pass you by but you also fall into the trap of self-pity and</p>

	<p>being irrelevant.... So you don't want yourself in a situation where you are becoming irrelevant to what's happening in the future. I'll use the example of the cell phones – if you come from the times when we used diaries only – and no phones – then you going to find it very difficult relate to anybody today – so adapting to change and accepting change and accepting the challenge of having to learn new ways of doing things – that's very important and that's one of the life skills that we all need, not just some people, but all of us., but I've seen that aspect in most of the leaders that I look up to, you need to be able to adapt and change when it is necessary to do so – because being caught in the past makes you irrelevant.</p>
<p>Alright tell me where do you think resilience comes from, are you born with it, did you learn it, or maybe something you got from your parents?</p>	<p>I think it is developed, earlier on I mentioned that I am grateful for the hardships because if I didn't have the hardships I don't think I'll be the person I am today – so – even with the children I don't – I'm going try and allow them to go through their own experiences – get their fingers burnt here and there – but I am not going to shield them forever, because if I do that they won't be that strong to go through life when I'm no longer in the picture for whatever reason – so resilience is developed, can be developed, but it helps to have a good coach who will every now and then pep talk you – but at the same time it's going to be your experiences that help you to develop character.</p>
<p>Alright, and then just in the questionnaire that you filled out ; Item 22 says "I do not dwell on things I cannot do anything about " you circled 2 on that which is strongly disagree – how do you feel about that? Can you tell me more? (Repeated)</p>	<p>Can you repeat that? What does it say?</p>
<p>It's possible you misunderstood the question.</p>	<p>That is definitely a mistake.</p>
<p>Fantastic, then just in closing is there anything else you would like to add, something that you might have thought about during the conversation something you want to share?</p>	<p>Just some positive words that I picked up from my mentors, my managers, including my current manager Fil, Its important to 1. Believe in yourself, in your abilities and where you see shortfalls... work on them – develop yourself – study – improve yourself – that also allows you in a way to be more resilient on a world which is ever-changing – so – believe in yourself, build that future that you want to achieve in 5 years, 10 years 15 years – physically see that person that you wanna be and work hard to achieve that, so when someone swears at you on your way home,</p>

	there's no need to go try and be like them, just be resilient, focus on getting home safely and then achieve your dreams.
Fantastic, thank you very much for your time, I know you guys are super busy with the challenge. Bye.	Bye

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 7 : ANSWERS
Could you explain to me what you understand or what you could define resilience to be in your own personal words?	Resilience is the way in which you basically react and sort of handle yourself in situations that you experience through your life, whether it's work or family or on a personal level, professional level so basically your ability to strive in difficult times or something along those lines.
Alright, and can you relate to – per that definition – any experiences in your life where you had to be resilient?	Yes lots, (giggle) well in work obviously. Just last year, being appointed as Branch Manager – the branch has gone through a really tough year with staff and things like that, so I think that's forced me to dive into the deep end and make things work and make things happen. From a work point of view, definitely. From a personal point of view, I think being a parent with kids you know, that makes you resilient. There have been many situations like that, um, ja and also on a personal level certain family problems and things like that and experiences throughout the years, also I think have made me a lot more resilient than I am.
OK, can you elaborate on your choice of those and tell me more about how you were resilient in a situation?	Well, let's take the work example, when I took over the branch last year – the branch was kind of doing well – but all of a sudden consultants started losing interest in their jobs, guys weren't doing what they were supposed to be doing and I ended up dealing with a lot of the problems, and sort out problems why guys weren't calling on their brokers and things like that. Eventually I sort of got rid of half the branch and employed new people throughout the year and that's really made a big difference. Do you want specific examples of things or how do you want me to explain it?
If you can just explain to me in terms of how you were resilient, or how – because you are a resilient individual – how you got through that time using resilience?	Obviously as a Branch Manager I have a specific job I have to do, I have specific goals I want the branch to have and things weren't happening the way I wanted them to happen so I had to just dig in and make sure that the changes I implemented were the right changes for the branch, that the

	<p>people that were leaving – I replaced with better people that knew what they had to do. I had to ask for help from my superiors and the guys above, but I guess when I’m faced with any tough situation and I know what the end result is then I’ll find a way to get there, so it doesn’t matter what it is and how bad it is and how difficult it might seem – I’ll find a way to get there.</p>
<p>Alright, so would I be correct in saying that resilience for you is definitely – it stems from a goal directed area?</p>	<p>Ja definitely, I mean if I believe in something or I know that there is something specific that I want to achieve then that will be my driver to get there... and I’ll find a way to get there somehow.</p>
<p>And on that same note, motivation in terms of something that you are interested in helps you to be more resilient?</p>	<p>Ja, motivation is an interesting one because I find that working with people, a lot of people need to be motivated by somebody else, whereas I don’t need to be motivated by somebody else personally. If there is something that I want to achieve, that’s motivation for me, I don’t need somebody else to tell me – no come on you can do this or whatever it is – so I find with some people, you’ve got to spur them on and help them and give them guidance and tell them that they doing well and that. I must be honest, for me self-motivation has always been there with every-thing I’ve done. I don’t know if that’s just how I am or – you know I am sure there’s other people like that as well.</p>
<p>Alright, so would I be correct in saying that a need for achievement – a personal need for achievement – is some-thing that helps you to be more resilient?</p>	<p>Definitely!</p>
<p>With regards to any other experience that you would like to relate to, can you explain to me how you might have demonstrated resilience in a different manner?</p>	<p>OK, let’s talk about my family situation I’ve had. Before I decided to get married and all that kind of stuff, my parents weren’t happy with certain choices I made and how certain things happened and I sort of rebelled against that and said – you know what – I have my own life to live and my wife Candice and I went through some difficult times with my folks in terms of, you know, saying to them we want to move to the next step in our lives, we want to move on, move out, live together and get married and that but my parents weren’t happy with a lot of the things, and they created a very difficult atmosphere, created a lot of problems – but through all that time I could have backed down and said I’d rather keep my parents happy and forget about everything else, you know – but I again sort of had a vision in mind or a goal</p>

	<p>or something along those lines in saying that I wanted to LIVE my own life; so I didn't go back to my folks just to always make things right – I didn't always back down and say hey, I'll just go with what-ever you guys say, I stood up for what I believed in and it was a difficult process, an on-going thing that took many years and eventually I realized myself that what I did WAS the right thing and through all the difficult times that we went through and all the fights and the problems and the discussion and e-mails, whatever you want to call it, um, I think that definitely made me a lot more resilient as a person being able to handle difficult situations, and I'm able to give other people input, who are going through similar things. I don't know if that really answers the question.</p>
<p>OK, with regards to having to stand up, as you said, after being knocked down so many times, what do you think were key or important factors that actually helped you do that? What would you attribute that to in terms of maybe personality characteristics or external resources?</p>	<p>Let me think about that. You know, a lot of the resilience I have I think is because of the person that I am and how I do things and how I handle situations and that, um, it's difficult to say because I think every difficult situation that you are faced with, it doesn't matter if it's work or personal or whatever, it makes you stronger for the next time you are faced with a difficult situation. The experience you gain out of each difficult thing that you go through makes it – I think – easier the next time you go through something of a similar nature. External factors – I think, support from friends – support from family – with regards to the problems I experienced with my parents also helped a lot. I think to know that other people believe in you and that tell you what you're doing is NOT the wrong thing – so I think having a good support system definitely helps because it's not easy to always go through things on your own.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned 'belief', how do you feel belief ties in with resilience, belief in yourself, belief in a goal, belief in a higher power?</p>	<p>If we don't believe in anything then what's the point of being here? You know, what are we all doing here? So whether you believe that there is something after this life on this planet or whatever, that's fine, I mean I believe there is something after this, otherwise why are we here for the time that we are and then there's nothing there-after! I think believing in something is really important, for me personally, otherwise I don't see a purpose to life. If I just wake up every day and was happy with how things are and never strive towards anything or ever want anything more;</p>

	then it's kind of pointless.
And on that note, do you think that having a purpose in life or having things that give you purpose in life helps you to be resilient?	Oh definitely, I mean – just looking at the personal problems I experienced with my own parents, I mean, I was with Candice and I love Candice and I always said to myself this is the person I want to spend the rest of my life with – so that's where my focus needs to be – so ... and then again, the same with having children – once you have kids then you want to provide everything that's the best for them so anything that poses an obstacle along the way is just something you need to get over in order to be able to give them the best.
Alright. You mentioned earlier on how you feel that the more hardships or the more challenges an individual faces the more likely they are to deal with it better the 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> time round, do you feel that happened to you as challenges presented themselves, or as experiences happened that lent it to resilience, do you feel like you almost increased your bank of resilience?	Definitely, if I look back a year ago when I was appointed as branch manager, you know, I had a hell of a lot to learn, my colleagues all of a sudden became guys who reported to me and I had to change perceptions about that and ... they know sort of where to draw the line with me ... they won't push things like they did before, so I think each and every experience I've had has helped. Also on the personal side like all the problems I had with my parents, over time eventually I got to a point where I would just say well you know, I've dealt with this already, I don't need to go through this again and I put a quick stop to it, whereas before that it would be something that would drag on and take forever to sort out.
And how do you think resilience in your personal life – like you mentioned with your children and your family and the issues that came along with that – as opposed to the resilience that you have experienced from a work point of view, how do you think that they tie in with each other?	(Giggle) now you're asking some interesting questions....  Um, ja, I guess everything ties in. I'm a firm believer that you are a product of your upbringing that how you were brought up will shape the type of person you'll be, I mean people don't just become drug addicts or whatever if they are brought up in a good environment and have the right values towards them, so I guess everything has to tie in in some way or another. Do you want me to give you an example? I'm not quite sure how to answer that question.
OK, if you have an example, go for it.	Um, can we come back to that question?
Sure. You mentioned how you are a product of your up-bringing, do you think that resilience is something that you learnt through your experiences – like you mentioned – or do you think it's something that you were born with or that you might have been given from your folks?	I'd say it's probably a combination. Experience teaches you a hell of a lot but I also think some people are generally just not as tough as others and I guess that's kind of your personality or that kind of thing, but experiences do generally play a big part.

<p>Alright, and with regards to your personality, what kind of traits do you think you possess or other people that are resilient possess?</p>	<p>Well I think if I'm given something difficult to do, I will find a way to do it, there's never been anything I don't think I've been able to not complete. Yes it might be challenging to do it or it might have required me to adjust and change my view or be uncomfortable while I was doing it – but I'll find a way to do it, so I think being able to adapt to the situation makes a really big difference. A trait that resilient people possess, ja being able to adapt, being able to take the bull by the horns – if I can say that – and say I WILL get this done and just get on with it. There should be no excuses, I never think of reasons why I can't do something, I always think of ways of how I CAN do it. There are probably lots of others but I can't think of them right now.</p>
<p>On that note of saying how you know you CAN do it that relates strongly to a positive emotion how much do you think positive emotions or positivity plays a role in being resilient?</p>	<p>You have to be, because if you're in a tough, difficult situation whether it's emotionally, physically or whatever it is – if you don't think positively that you going to get through it – well then you're going to fail from the word go.</p>
<p>OK, with regards to the questionnaire that you filled out item No. 7 “I usually take things in my stride” you were very neutral in that scoring 4 in between 1 – 7 so that would directly between ‘strongly agree and strongly disagree’ how do you feel about that statement with regards to resilience?</p>	<p>I take things in my stride.... That was the question, um, maybe that's something that's changed over time for me, if you had asked me that a few years ago the answer would have been different – I don't know if that's possible, but I used to take on as many things as possible to do, and I found that that would compromise the quality of what I was doing, or how I did it etc. So taking things in my stride, I don't know if I am answering this correctly, but how I understand it is if I'm faced with a whole lot of things I have to do, and they all sort of difficult, that I'd rather try and identify things that might be easier to start with and work through those and then move onto the more difficult things that I know will take more time etc. Just in the job that I do every day – I mean, I could spend the whole day just doing e-mails but there are so many other things I need to do so I'll leave e-mails for 2 hours and do something else, whereas in the past I would often get distracted and move between things and not maybe focus on one thing at a time. I don't know if that really answers the question?</p>
<p>No that's fine. Would I be correct then in saying that for you being resilient is exercising time management?</p>	<p>Ja, I've always been good with time management, um, so ja, for me personally, definitely. I don't like doing anything outside of a time frame or being late or things like that so time is important.</p>

<p>OK, Item No. 11 “I seldom wonder what the point of it all is” you scored 2 there which is basically between strongly disagree and disagree, so in other words if we reverse the item would you be saying that you often wonder what the point of it all is?</p>	<p>OK, maybe I misunderstood the question.</p>
<p>OK, no problem, I think a lot of people didn’t understand the reversal there. Don’t worry about it.</p>	
<p>Item No. 12 “I take things one day at a time” you were more on the strongly disagree side than the Agree side, so how would you feel about taking your things one day at a time with regards to resilience?</p>	<p>I think it’s important to take things one day at a time even though I think the world we live in now is a lot more complex than perhaps what it was 20 / 30 years ago, so there’s a lot more distractions, a lot more things that you can end up being busy with or doing, um, I’ve learnt, for myself – and I try hard – and it comes back to that other thing of taking things in my stride, but I find I’m more relaxed if I take things one day at a time, um, you know, instead of trying to rush everything or always being worried about what’s going to happen if I don’t do this today – and often when you look back it’s something ...you think to yourself, well I was worried about this yesterday, but the fact that I got it done today has given me the same result then, I think to myself, there’s no need to always be concerned and worried. It’s something I battle with still, but I think I’ve improved a bit on it (giggle) of late.</p>
<p>With regards to distractions as you mentioned in the previous statement, how do you continue to resemble resilience or to resonate with resilience when there are maybe more negative distractions or when things don’t exactly go your way, how do you continue to be resilient?</p>	<p>It’s not easy. I mean if you’ve got personal problems and issues and you’re also trying to focus on your job and things like that it does make it more difficult because you spend your time thinking about things that are distracting you from what you should be doing, so it is difficult but I just try and shut it out and get on with what I HAVE to do. I don’t know how I do it, but I do. It is difficult, and I can only imagine for people who aren’t resilient that it must have a far bigger effect on their lives than it would for somebody like me, for example.</p>
<p>Alright, in that statement there you mentioned somewhat of a focus – do you think that part of being resilient is being able to adjust your focus?</p>	<p>Oh definitely, you have to. You are faced with so many things every day. I get days when I get phone calls from 10 or 15 brokers with varying problems that I have to sort out so you have to be able to focus on each one of those things and give each one an equal time and effort to make sure everything gets done and that kind of thing.</p>

<p>OK, you also mentioned that being a Father and how that requires resilience – can you elaborate a bit on that?</p>	<p>Kids need attention, they need time so you know you come home after a busy day or something like that and you still have to be bright-eyed and bushy-tailed for the next 3 hours for them, to play with them, read them bed-time stories – bath them and things like that, so I just think it's ..... You've got to give them that time of day otherwise they'll be unhappy – so (giggle) I don't know if that really answers the question?</p>
<p>In that same domain of being resilient with your children, how would you attempt to teach them resilience, or instill resilience in them, the same way you have been resilient? Do you think that's something you can do, seeing as you mentioned you are a product of your upbringing?</p>	<p>Ja, no sure, um, look I think as a parent to teach your kids values and certain ideals and hope that they use some of that in their lives. Being able to teach them to be resilient I think will have to come through their experience with life and how they experience things at school and later on when they go to University or they study or go to work and things like that, through friends. I guess I can give them examples of things I went through and if they happen to go through something similar I can show them the way and tell them what to do, but I think they have to experience things for themselves. I don't think resilience is something you can teach to anybody.</p>
<p>Alright, and then with regards to any previous examples, maybe say Primary school, High school, that sort of thing, maybe before the experiences we've spoken about, is there any other times then, that you had to demonstrate resilience?</p>	<p>During school, nothing out of the ordinary other than – from a personal point of view – my Dad was sick a lot of the time so he would spend a lot of time in hospital, which would obviously have an affect emotionally on me, I was always worried about him and how he was doing, but at the end of the day you must focus on what's on hand and get through school and things like that. But no, out of the ordinary I don't think there was anything.</p>
<p>And as a Manager, looking after a number of BC's, how do you remain resilient in that domain?</p>	<p>A lot of what I do with the Consultants is I try and teach them things that I used to do as a Consultant because in the branch we all have difficult Brokers, guys that, you know, you dislike dealing with – that are always difficult –give you problems and things like that, but at the end of the day they are also human like you and I are and ..... they no different, so I try and teach the guys and I don't like to manage with an autocratic kind of style where I say either you do it like this or there's no other way, so I give them a lot of space to do things the way they want to do and I encourage them to come and tell me how things are going and I give them ideas and suggestions – and they'll quickly learn whether things work or not. They know</p>

	<p>where to draw the line with me in terms of trying to push boundaries and things like. But ja, I mean I like to have a more participant style of management where I ask people for input and encourage them to run with their own ideas.</p>
<p>Right, and Liberty Life recently experienced a bit of restructuring and South Africa, as an economy, recently had a bit of an economic downturn, how do you remain resilient in that time, when things like finances that are out of your control seems to be a problem and any other aspects that are not directly or immediately controllable, how do you remain resilient then?</p>	<p>Well, if you just switch on the news every day you can sit and be depressed for the whole day because of all the stuff there is. It's stuff that's really not nice, whether it's economic problems or starving children or whatever it is or natural disasters wiping out cities and countries and things like that – a lot of bad things happen around us, in general, but I chose not to let that have a really big influence on me because there's nothing I can do about it, I mean there's nothing I can do about the world going into a recession again, um, I can be concerned about it, I can possibly worry about the future of the world for my children, which I guess I do, like any parent would, but there is nothing I can specifically do about it, I can only do the best that I do every day and encourage other people to do the best they can every day. In that way we can maybe make a difference, but not about how things are happening. I mean changes in Liberty, changing in any corporate company happen all the time, every month there's some-thing new, so that's like the only constant thing that we have IS change., but that's not a hassle for me, I've got absolutely no problem adapting to change., I never have, so from that point of view it's fine.</p>
<p>Alright and if that change is change for the worse, maybe not necessarily change for the better, in terms of maybe retrenchment, demotion, that sort of thing how do you remain resilient in the face of that sort of adversity where it's not for the better?</p>	<p>Well, if it's not for the better then I will have to understand exactly what's happening – I mean, if I knew I was going to be retrenched I would accept the fact but I would immediately start making a plan to find something else – to get myself into another job or .... I mean a simple example of what we had a couple of year ago is that they changed our remuneration model and in 2009 / 2010, I earned less money that I earned in 2007 /2008 because of the structure of the model that we had, which was very de-motivating, I mean we had continuous fights with management about how they were paying us and things like that, but we got through that time, it wasn't easy but eventually our words were heard and they made changes that have improved things a lot. There were a couple of us that ... It was myself – and I think you've interviewed Sheatal, we had meetings</p>

	with our directors and stuff on many occasions about the remuneration model and how we were paid and eventually they listened to us and they changed it, so ja, when things happen that aren't for the better - if you resilient you make a plan and you do some-thing about it.
Alright, and then just in closing is there anything that you would like to add about resilience or any comments, thoughts, perceptions that you might have thought about in the interim of the conversation?	Um, I think if you are resilient as a person it will probably help you in life than if you are not resilient – and unfortunately as I said earlier – I don't think it's something that you can teach – you learn it through experience and I think it would stand many people in good stead if they were more resilient that what they are. I can think of people that I work with that aren't as resilient, and had they been more resilient in situations things would have probably worked out better for them. Unfortunately it's not something that you can teach somebody, they have to learn it and maybe you can help them along the way – but no, other than that, nothing. It is an interesting topic and interesting subject, something we faced with every day. Ja.
Alright, that you very much for your time.	Ok.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 10 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand by the word or a definition of the word resilience?	I think it's how you cope with different aspects of your life where if it's difficult or where it's easy – a coping mechanism - how you deal with everyday life and confrontation and so forth.
Alright and can you explain, if there are incidents like that in your life where you had to be resilient?	I think everybody has that, you go through difficult times and good times. I think mine was when I had my little girl, I wasn't prepared for the time and the moment, so ja, you kind of deal with it and ...
Can you tell me a bit more about that, when you had your little girl?	Um, OK, I fell pregnant – there was no way I could have fallen pregnant so it was yay – miracle baby sort of thing, carried on working, thought I could do everything and I think it was just the whole thing of motherhood, and carried on working and stress at home and the whole balancing act that didn't.... you know in the beginning....so it's kind of you think OK, how am I going to do this, and eventually I think you just take each day as it comes and eventually you come through it and you realize OK, I'm through the worst.
OK, and how were you resilient in that time when	I think just to say, Ok the next day is going to be

<p>you thought Oh my word I don't know how to do this?</p>	<p>better, I think it's just taking that moment and get through that moment and also know that this is not going to last forever it's got to get better, it can't get worse, I think you have to have that mind frame to know.</p>
<p>Alright, so am I correct in saying that resilience for you is taking each problem or each day as it comes – step by step?</p>	<p>Baby steps – ja.</p>
<p>Is there any other incident in your life, anything that you can refer to – possibly could have happened at Primary school, High school, earlier on in Varsity days where you had to show resilience?</p>	<p>Well I was a Cop for 9 years. I think with all the different situations I had then, and I was very young, you had to learn how to cope – you know – dealing with crime scenes, with people that are arrogant, that aggressive – you know – criminals as such AND then innocent people, I think you tend to train your brain and to know how to deal with each situation – I think because of that I can actually now look at different situations and not just act on emotion, you know ....I'm having a flip of a day!!</p>
<p>So would I be correct in saying that all your past experiences have definitely built you up to be more resilient today?</p>	<p>Ja, definitely.</p>
<p>Can you tell me anything more specific whilst you were a Cop for 9 years that have made you more resilient, I'm sure there's a million incidents – this is probably quite a task but take your time?</p>	<p>You know what, it's actually difficult cos when you look at for instance let say a crime scene that you were in you act automatically – you basically go, this is what I'm trained to do, this is the procedure you have to follow and you do it, OK sometimes you are inhuman and sometimes there are human aspects but you can't get emotionally involved at that moment because you have to be there for other people. But I think afterwards you know, you can feel that you were stressed, but you kind of coped with it. What I'm thinking of now was a bus accident with a whole lot of school kids, one of these huge Putco busses and it was raining and they turned a corner and a big 18 wheeler truck took the corner and he actually wiped out 7 cars and a school bus, we were called to the scene first and we arrived there with the ambulance, and I think for any other normal person who arrived there, they would have gone bonkers, because you had pieces of people lying on the road there were kids that were really hurt and there were people deceased and it wasn't just the bus, there were 7 cars, 2 taxi and other cars and the one car was pinned underneath the truck, so I think with something like that – when you see that – you just do your job, you get there and get the injured</p>

	<p>people out, you start blocking traffic, and you start phoning the right people and that's what you keep on doing until the whole situation is taken care of. Make sure that the right people are on the scene, that people are taken to hospital and all that. So afterwards you think 'how in God's name did I do that' so, to me it's an instinct that you act on so...</p>
<p>OK can you tell me a bit more about that resilience being an instinct for you? How do you bounce back after a crime scene like that, I mean obviously with the images that you have and how vital that moment is, how do you bounce back and not dwell on people that might have been deceased or people that lost children or something like that?</p>	<p>It's difficult to say, um, with me for instance with that as well, because we were a whole lot of friends that worked together or the people who worked together were friends so it's like they were family, they always had your back and even in a situation like that, afterwards you'll sit and probably go drinking and talking and stuff like that and I think everybody blocked it out – you know, the visual aspects of it. You block it out because you can't put your-self in their shoes at that moment, I think then you'll probably lose it. I think it's difficult for people with children to actually attend that scene. I think people would have gone over the board like for instance now, with my daughter, I won't – there is no ways – I'll lose it. Anything for me now where there's kids involved and stuff, I can't – to me it then very personal. With us back then we were youngsters I think we were probably so stupid, so you worked hard, you played hard... So.</p>
<p>So the week-ends of the "downtime" were probably your way of de-briefing....</p>	<p>Ja, you can say that.</p>
<p>And was that important for you in being resilient for the next job or next scene that maybe came along, you needed to sort of as we say "de-brief" to be more resilient the next time around?</p>	<p>You know I can't say that because there were times that we were 24/7 on call. So, there will be times that you will work for 3 months and some of that time, like for instance Easter week-end; you'll go from one scene to another to another to another – and 3 days later you still haven't even slept. Yet, it doesn't bug you – when you have downtime then you either just chill or you spend it with your friends you won't go to a function or show your face, you just want your own time with the people you are close to so..</p>
<p>So am I correct in saying that for you, in terms of being resilient, a support system is very important?</p>	<p>Ja, a support system ja.</p>
<p>Alright, and in terms of anything else whilst being a Cop maybe the fact that you are a female, that you are white, that you were young, anything like that that made you have to be more resilient?</p>	<p>Ag you know what, back then when I started we were the first girls that started to work outside, to go onto the tactical course, to work in a specialized unit where we went out to get your armed robbers</p>

	<p>or your suspects and stuff, and we 4 girls that they started with, so I won't say there was a stigmatism back then where women work here and men work there, we were the ones that were tried outside, that were successful but with that you've got the thing where the guys are very protective over the girls, Ok, so they'll give you the space to show yourself to show what you can do, but up to a point, which for me was fine because it doesn't matter where you are, people will see the women as the weaker sex, um, if it's a soft target – even with the Cops if you go out, that will be their target – to hit the women or to target the women to actually get to the guys and I think it's with everyday life as well, so I think with us to have that back-up with the guys always with us and us giving – um, they actually giving us the chance to show that we CAN do the same – to me that was empowering and I think because of that – where people will give you a chance to prove yourself and you do it, that also builds up respect for yourself and knowing that you can do better, knowing that you can cope.</p>
<p>Alright, and what personality characteristics do you think are important for resilient individuals? Or characteristics that you maybe possess?</p>	<p>Um, you know what, I think different personalities got different aspects to deal with it, for instance you get a very outspoken person who will probably talk more to be more resilient, to embrace that, and then you get other people for instance, that will like their downtime or people that are very active to get rid of that or to .... I think it's about having a balance – to me – that's how I see people dealing with resilience.</p>
<p>In terms of balance, how important do you think that is in resilience?</p>	<p>I think it's... it has to be quite a strong point because I think if you can't see the good and the bad – I think – and because of that I don't think you'll push through or you've got to see, or there's a light at the end of the tunnel to actually be able to push through, because if there's not going to be any hope, you're not going to try. I think that's part of resilience as well, is how you going to push through if you think ' what am I doing this for, you know.</p>
<p>OK, you mentioned hope there, which happens to be a relatively positive emotion, how important do you think things like hope being a positive emotion, or other emotions like you say, seeing that positive outcome, that outlook, how important do you think that is?</p>	<p>I think that's very important. I don't think you can get up every single morning and NOT have hope, especially in South Africa; everywhere in the world, you put on the radio and all you hear is about murders, you hear about faction fights, you hear the Rand's going down, you hear recession,</p>

	<p>you hear this Country is bankrupt ..... And I think with all that – if you have to look at that you going to think Oh God this is so negative, the world’s coming to an end! If you are going to have that outlook you are not going to go out, be the best you can be - at Liberty (giggle) or try harder to actually be better, to make more money, you know, you’ve got to have that aspect of hope or seeing in the future.</p>
<p>OK, so resilience for you is definitely a future orientated positive outlook.</p>	<p>Ja.</p>
<p>Is there anything else you can tell me, maybe with regards to another experience or how you see resilience or anything in your life that might make you as resilient as you are today? Or have that hope that you have today?</p>	<p>You know what... no, it’s just like I said, life experiences. I think my thing is also people look at choices that you’ve made in life and people say Ah, I made the wrong choice, I should have done this or I should have done that, and I think you are actually in life today you are where you are supposed to be. The greater plan, the greater good, to me you are exactly where you are today because that’s where you’re supposed to be, it doesn’t matter what other wrong choice, right choice – or what choices you’ve made, you are where you are. I think that is part of resilience as well. Because you wouldn’t have been here if you didn’t see where you coming from or .... You made choices.</p>
<p>So with regard to those experiences do you think resilience is something you learnt through those experiences or do you think it’s something your folks might have given you or something that you were born with? How do you think that comes into play?</p>	<p>Um, you know what, I think part of it is instinct and part of it is experience, because to me, the more you experience in something the more you can – I can’t say counteract – but the more you’ll know what to do, cos if something happens you say well I acted like this – this is what I got what if I acted like that? But the next time you’ll know, OK This is what happened ... so you get used to it.</p>
<p>So are you saying you learn from experience?</p>	<p>Ja, part of it is instinct and part of it is experience.</p>
<p>Do you think that in your experiences if there were things that you had done differently that you would have learnt more? Or be in a more resilient position today, or as you said, when your baby girl came along, you weren’t prepared for that role, do you think that had you done things differently previous to that that you would have been more resilient with her?</p>	<p>No, no I wouldn’t.</p>
<p>OK, then just with regards to the resilience scale that we filled in – it says “I can get through difficult times because I have experienced difficulty before” you were very neutral on that, you were</p>	<p>Um, what was the question again?</p>

<p>literally slap bang in the middle you said 4, can you explain a little bit more for me, just how you feel about that?</p>	
<p>I can get through difficult times because I have experienced difficulties before.</p>	<p>You know, to me that's um.... Everybody has experienced difficult times, probably the level of difficulty is more for some people than for others, but I can't go a say that I had MORE difficult times so my resilience is better – you know, it doesn't work like that, that's why I'm neutral – people deal with things differently – to me it's – you know what –So what – life sucks! Deal with it! Go on. Difficult yes, difficult no, you can't go ja you know..... this is what happened now I've got to be treated like that, to me it's just go on, we carry on .....</p>
<p>Alright, Item No. 26 – it's a very ambiguous item, it just says "I am resilient" you were very neutral with that, but yet your experiences show that you are or did resemble a lot of resilience, how do you feel about that?</p>	<p>You know what, resilience you'll have some days and some days you won't. I think everybody has their moment, their weak moment where they just want to sit in a corner and cry for 10 minutes but it doesn't happen every single day but you get your moments like that and when it's over and done with self-pity it's done and off you go. So you can't always be resilient, you can't always push through; you are going to have those little fall apart moments and tears .... So you can't always be the one that's .....</p>
<p>OK, so am I correct in saying that for you resilience is not a continual consistent thing, you have to – like you say – sit in the corner so that you can get up again and be stronger the next day?</p>	<p>Yes - Ja.</p>
<p>OK, then also item No. 15 "I have self-discipline" you also were very neutral in that scoring 4 but obviously with regards to being a mother and being a Cop – and those are very important roles – so how do you feel about only sometimes having self-discipline?</p>	<p>(Giggle) well ja, that's also; you live such a disciplined life, you get up in the morning, fetch your child, get dressed, brush your teeth, and brush your hair.... So everything's a routine and you've got to push it through a be disciplined and discipline you child, so there are moments when I think, you know what, I'm just going to laze today, like.... Probably like last month, one Sunday I thought, you know what, I'm NOT going to get dressed, I spent the whole day in my PJ's – which I don't normally do. To me that was just like, let it go, park off, no make-up – no clothes and ja... (Giggle)</p>
<p>Alright am I again right in saying that in terms of self-discipline, resilience for you is also to be able to let go sometimes so that you can be reminded about why it's important to be resilient in other</p>	<p>Yes,</p>

<p>areas?</p>	
<p>OK, is there anything else you would like to add that you maybe didn't in the interim of the conversation, another experience that you could touch on? It could relate to maybe how you had to experience a positive emotion, for example, being a Cop, like you said things are often dismal and you never really get called out to a scene because it's a "happy" moment, how were you hopeful in that situation?</p>	<p>You know what, with scenes and stuff, you always get the ONE scene that something extraordinary would happen or it's something nice, or you know, it's not always doom and gloom. Also where I worked, I worked at the communications department so we didn't JUST do crime scenes, I had to do all the media releases, television interviews, radio interviews for all your crimes that happened but in the same thing, we've also done talks to kids, on Captain Crime Stop and know your number, know your strangers, um, what to do when a stranger approached you – we spoke to women groups, we taught self-defence to some of them you know, and to spend that kind of time with normal people or people that you can help I think with that it's always nice and positive. We had one scene and that I will never ever forget, it was an accident scene that we attended - we were doing a water table for a marathon and it was way out in the gamadoelas and a person came running up to us – there was a car accident – it was 3 youngsters – and that was like yonks ago and we sat there and waited for the ambulance and we sat and chatted to the guy because the one guy went into shock and I just sat there and chatted to him and everything – anyway the guys came and gone, you never find out afterwards what happened – you know if they died you'd always find out – but probably 5 years after that I had the one guy walk into my office at the police station and he sat and started talking to me and I was like, what the hell is this guy doing, and from all the accident scenes and stuff HE actually came to say thank you! That will always stay with me. From one in a million. He actually came back, didn't know our names or anything but he looked us up and said you know what guys, remember back then .... I was the guy.... Thank you. So stuff like that, that will always stay with me – always!</p>
<p>Ok, so resilience for you, or finding resilience it almost stemmed off that special moment – like you said – that one in a million – you keep that in your mind when you need to move on?</p>	<p>Ja, that one in a million – right</p>
<p>Would you say that for you is also like a source of motivation?</p>	<p>Ag you know what, no I won't say because I think you do things because you have to and if you going to look for appraisal every time you do something – I think it's for the wrong reasons – I think you</p>

	have to do it because you want to do it, it's who YOU are.... And then if that comes back then it's like Wow, bargain you know, it's unexpected, you can't sit around waiting for something like that to happen because then it won't you know. It's one of those 'out of the blue' things.
So would resilience for you, be a very unselfish thing – you know, to reap the benefits of resilience?	Yes, it has to ...
Alright again, just in closing, is there anything you'd like to add that you might have thought of in the interim of our conversation or any other situations – anything that pops into mind?	No, nothing.
Alright, thank you very much for your time I really appreciate it.	OK pleasure, I hope I could help.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 11 : ANSWERS
Per definition, what can you tell me what you understand about the word resilience, or the construct resilience?	Resilience, um I would understand to mean somebody who's quite strong and hardy that can overcome difficulties and that is stronger through those difficulties, so I think it's your inner strength, your strength as a person inside from your experiences.
OK, and can you relate to any times in your life where you had to demonstrate this kind of resilience?	Yes, I'd probably say that when I went through my divorce – that took a lot of resilience because I was married for a long time and it was really a tough thing to do um, and I think I've come out of it like a whole person, so I had to be resilient especially because considering I was running a big job and to carry on, I couldn't let that knock me over.
Alright, can you talk more about the experience with maybe some specifics as to what you felt or what got you through that time that was more difficult than any other?	I think, probably how I felt at the time, devastated, um, because I don't really believe in divorce, I'm a Christian, so it goes against my belief system, um and I think I was the kind of person who probably would have wanted to try and keep the marriage because I've also got a child so her devastated... I suppose like um, and I know you'd know them, Kubler Ross's stages of death and dying, it's kind of those things that you go through. You go through anger, you go through hurt and you slowly but surely you um, you know, I went to counselling and you work through those feelings that you've got.
What sort of characteristics or personality traits do you feel that you had at that time, that you were	I think, um, that I'm quite a hardy, I don't know if hardy is the right word, um, I think I believe,

<p>able to stand up again, so to speak, from that hardship?</p>	<p>maybe it's belief systems that would have helped me and that is like things happen for a reason, so I've got certain belief systems – I would say my faith – you know, that God will get me through this, that my faith will help me, um, ja, I think it's mainly my belief that there's a reason for all things and I think also that I've tried everything I could so .... Saying to Tobe, let's do counseling and once you've done everything you can, you know, there's nothing more you can do that person wants to go ahead then you just have to accept it. So, I think it's a feeling of acceptance and I think I'm quite a strong person inside, I always see myself as a whole person, as a strong person so, I didn't take it personally, because – not that I didn't make mistakes – but I'd say well I've done everything I can here so I need to move on. So, I don't know if that's....</p>
<p>Yes definitely. You spoke about belief, having a belief system and also having faith or belief in something, how do you feel that belief not only in faith – as you mentioned that you are a Christian – but also belief in the idea of something, or belief in a certain goal – how do you think that plays a part in resilience?</p>	<p>I think that if you can look forward, there is a goal to work towards, or there's your children, or whatever it may be, I think you can always so to yourself "OK, this is not the end" whereas if you have no hope and faith, and a goal, you may actually say to yourself "well I can give up" you know what I mean, cos I can just commit suicide because It doesn't matter cos this is so devastating I won't recover. So I think it's like you can look ahead and say "OK, this is a setback, it's really a hard thing but it's OK I'm going to get through this and I'll be a better person, so, ja I think that's what your faith will do and also if you've got another important person or your children you'll say well, ja it's hard, but my daughter is really important so I must do this for her.</p>
<p>Alright, you spoke of hope, hope being a positive emotion, how do you feel being positive in these situations helps or makes you more resilient?</p>	<p>I think it's very important to be positive no matter what you go through, I think if you look at people that get sick like cancer on any of those things – if you don't have a positive outlook, I know I'm a very positive person, um, then you will give up. I think that's the thing, you WILL actually give up, whereas I am not the kind of person who gives up, even though the most difficult things, I'll survive, because I believe that there will be a cloud but tomorrow it will be better – it will be OK – so, I also think when you have faith or your beliefs, you will also believe that this hard thing is going to</p>

	<p>build my character, it's going to make me a stronger person. If I can look inside and see, OK what are the things I can see, like, maybe there's nothing I can do about this, but maybe in the next relationship I need to work on this and that. I think it's about looking inside to look outside.</p>
<p>With regards to that sort of outlook that you spoke about, do you think it's important to be future-minded in order to be resilient?</p>	<p>I think so, um, I think the present is very important. You need to live your life in the present but I think future is about what do I want to achieve going forward, like, otherwise you wouldn't save for retirement, or you wouldn't worry about your child's education so I think, yes you need to focus on the now to get through what you are going through, but it's good to say "OK, where do I see my future" so I think it's a bit of both. I think you need both in your life.</p>
<p>OK, would I be correct in saying that maybe that has to be goal orientated?</p>	<p>You future – yes I'd say so.</p>
<p>Then, just with regard to the work place, obviously you hold a very important management position within Liberty Life at the moment, and I'm sure throughout your career you have had to manage people in the interim, how do you feel that that resilience that you went through in other aspects in your life such as your divorce – how do you think that's helped you in the work place – to be more resilient?</p>	<p>Um, I think, and Dave will also bear me out, I think in especially what we do, because there is a lot of – in the level I deal with – there's a lot of negativity because by the time things get to you it's usually a problem that you are dealing with – a lot of the time it's how to resolve some-thing, how to solve something, um, you've got to look for alternatives and solutions – and with staff or people – people problems you've got to ... they going through stuff as well .... You've got to try and help them get through it, you've got to be strong to be strong for others you know what I mean, you've got to be ... I always say "you lead from the front" so, you know, I know people think it's very strange but I really didn't discuss what was happening, I couldn't until it was finished, but I think if I had of I would have probably broken, you know, down – at work – and I would never do that, it's not my style. So I think you've got to be resilient and strong if you going to get to a high position because you'll never be able to deal with the peoples issues, the problems that you face, the calls that you get every day you know, and we deal with a lot of stuff that we don't know from one day to another in the broker market – you don't know what you gonna get. So, every day may bring a different problem. It may be slightly the same but not always. So, you know, you gotta think on your feet, you've got to be tough, um, ja – but have a people – gentle side, not like you know hard.</p>

<p>OK, right, just quickly going back to your divorce again, how do you feel that a support system at the time was important in order for you to be resilient as you are today?</p>	<p>I always look back and think, I know I also did studies in that and they always say you must share – with the psychologist, or another significant other – because you need to actually get it out, you’ve got to work it through, so to me that is very important. I don’t think you need many people, but when you come to the office you get support – even if the people don’t know – at least it’s a supporting environment and we are – I think we have a good environment with our people. You must have one significant other at least, that you can talk to, that you can bounce things off, because you need to talk to someone, OK, am I doing the right thing – so I think it is important. Obviously I would say, in something like that, go to a councillor, see someone that’s objective, um, that will help with your resilience because they help you see things in perspective. I did do that and I did that for my daughter too.</p>
<p>In terms of resilience, if we said that you are resilient, would you say that you learnt through those experience or would you say it’s something that you were born with or that your folks might have given you?</p>	<p>I think it’s a bit of both. I think that you can learn resilience as you in the work environment, um, but I also think it’s an innate thing, I don’t know, because what makes one person so different to another? You know, what gives you different coping mechanisms? So for me it’s a bit learnt, but I think you need to have something in yourself as well. I do read a lot of books on leadership and.... But I think resilience..... ja, you are born with some of that, that’s what I think. (giggles)</p>
<p>Alright, and is there any other experience that you can relate to or shed some light on?</p>	<p>Ja..... (giggles) I can tell you, I was saying to someone – I don’t know – maybe it’s just me – but I think I was born old in a way, and I say that because although I am the youngest in my family – and a lot of people don’t know what I’m going to tell you – but my brother had a break-down when I was about.... I think he was in his late 20’s and I was about 20 – 22, so I think, you know a lot of journey’s or things that happen in your life – they build your character but you are also born in a certain way, so I don’t know why but I’ve always been – in my family, that strong person, um, that’s been the support for my Mother because, I’m the kid, the young kid cos my brother is older than me, but he’s been through stuff, he’s had breakdown so you know I’ve always had to deal with that stuff, so I think that’s just why ... those kind of things also built my character. Probably, which made me stronger which is probably translated in</p>

<p>If you think back to that situation, maybe the situation of your divorce as well, or any other situation where you established or demonstrated a lot of resilience, what kind of things stand out ... what did you sort of lean on ---- was it a support thing .... Were there certain outlets that you used, different things that you focused on, what would you say got you through the tough times?</p>	<p>the way I handle people in the office, I think.</p> <p>Um, I think I'd probably go back to my faith, and then I think probably dancing at that time, because I did quite a lot of dancing and I was quite good when I was young, so like now I'd say things like gym, I really like doing something like that, or reading – I think it's important to have something that you .... Like an escapism ... if I can call it that. If you can go and do something, get it out of your system, you know, work up a sweat, do you know what I'm saying. I would probably say my Mom, you know, my Mom and I have a very strong relationship. We are very similar, we have a similar belief in faith so I would say she is my significant other that I would share things with – which I wouldn't share with no-one else because I'm quite a private person when it comes to my personal stuff. I've done some part-time counselling and there my stuff has helped me – that probably also made me more resilient, because I did my honours in psychology and I never practiced cos I never did my Masters, but I've worked at 702 crisis centre and various places, so I think by helping other you get stronger, you know, that's another belief I have and that is by giving, you get. You know, the more you help your people – if you give to others you actually get back and it does make you a better person, makes you a stronger person.</p>
<p>Alright, and how do you feel, again, as being the manager at such a top level, how do you help your brokers in this environment, because you have to be very resilient as a broker because you don't always get the yes please and thank you ma'am – It's always a game of more difficulty – how do you help them to be more resilient?</p>	<p>Um, I guess, I think probably the way .... And that maybe goes back to the Colin's and the other people, I think first of all what you probably try and do is ... I always say it, and a broker said it this morning... you must be solution focused, so I think I will always say – like if she said the consultant didn't give her a solution – she just gave her a problem – she – so that's what you got to try and do.... Is, you got to be honest – I think you must be honest in your feedback so if you can't do it – say so. Be efficient in your feedback, so if you promise you are going to do something commit to it and do it. Like my philosophy, I saw the broker this morning and I've already done the feedback, and I'll do it before I get home so that I know it's done.... And then all I have to do is follow up. So, I think um, it's about commitment, it's teaching the broker that I'm committed to your business so you need to be committed to me – it's a partnership.</p>

	<p>Um, and then honesty and being solution orientated. So even with Col and those people, I'm going to tell them straight – I can do this or no I can't. Let's have a look at how we going to handle this, um, how can I help the broker, how, what can we do. So I don't know if that will build up resilience in them, but hopefully it does.</p>
<p>OK, and in terms of something like an economic downturn that happened relatively recently, how do you foster resilience in yourself in knowing that with everybody who is employed by Liberty Life there's definitely things like retrenchment or demotion, how are you resilient in the face of that adversity when it's something financial that Governs a lot in your life?</p>	<p>It's a good question because we actually went through that. I don't know if you know that but maybe, um, Frank de la Rey and a whole lot of people were moved – some of the people in my team – um, we went through that process and I think the thing is it's hard I haven't been through that before but you know, I guess it goes back to what I said before, I think there is a reason for all things and I think because I believe in myself and if it happened to me I think I have enough skill, I'll get another job . I'll start my own business; I'll do something, so I'm not afraid of the unknown. I think as far as the people, no matter what you go through, I think what you have to do as a leader is – and it's not always easy because I'm a female, I'm emotional, you know, not just an analytical, so you got to try and control your emotions so there is information you shouldn't give out to the staff – you've got to keep some of it back. What you've got to put out to them is, don't worry it's going to be OK, we are going to get through this, there is a positive to this, so you got to look for ways to give the staff a sense of comfort no matter how anxious you may be feeling, um, to me you have to put a positive approach out there, um, so ja, but we did go through that and it was very hard. It really was hard.</p>
<p>Alright, and then in terms of for example, you just said you possess a lot of skill and that that to an individual learning a skill or having a skill like a resource – do you think that resources in terms of a skill, a support system or anything that would be considered a resource, do you think that's important in order to be resilient?</p>	<p>I think you've got to be able to tap into your resources, so I think that's where someone like me would be – is lucky – because if I take Liberty, I mean I've been here for a long time, so yes, I think resources help you to be resilient because 1. they can help you with your solutions and I think if you've got resources you can bounce things off them so whether it's a colleague in the work place, they will help you when you going through a hard time, so I've got a guy who started same time as me – Arno – so when I've had a hard time – or him – we would phone one another so that's also about having a contact in the work place and that resource – you know, you can actually say, this has</p>

	<p>happened, how would you deal with it? You know, I feel like bad about what's happened, so how do you feel? I think that can help you with resilience. And then obviously if you have good networks and you treat them right they will come through for you and they'll help you with being more resilient.</p>
<p>Would I be correct in saying that being able to relate to someone in the same situation or maybe having a couple of people in the same kettle of fish would help in resilience, to bounce ideas off each other?</p>	<p>Yes, I think that comes back to... It's a very strange thing.... I know you are quite young, so you haven't been in a marriage and all that but I think sometimes THOSE things, when you council – when you've been through something, if you've had a life experience, you can, funny enough, people somehow get drawn to you – so they'll come and say they going through a hard time a relationship – they'll come and tell you and you can help them because you've been there and obviously that help is not do say to them ja, 'dump the guy', you need to listen, you really just need to listen and sometimes just BE there for people.... So because 1<sup>st</sup> prize is always to try and see, cos you can't fix anything for anyone, but you can just be there – come alongside people.</p>
<p>OK, something we haven't touched on but it does seem to come up quite often, indirectly rather, is change, and adapting to different situations, because everything seems to be situational, how do you feel that being able to change and being able to adapt is important in resilience?</p>	<p>Very important. I think I may be very lucky there, but I like change, so I'm not a person .... I actually get bored with the same – although I'm often in a job a long time, I've been in this job for 5 years – I think – cos I had a franchise for 2 years and I ... before that I was in Health care, so I've had lots of different jobs, um, and I think it's very important because if you look at the way the world moves now, technology and all kinds of things, um, you've got to be able to adapt to change. So I think that's VERY important from a resilience point of view.</p>
<p>Alright, and in terms of change like that, is it important to maybe stand your own ground for things that you believe in when change is happening – which would you sway to in terms of resilience, having the belief of standing your ground or changing when there is a time of uncertainty?</p>	<p>I think you have to look at the situation – look, I'm quite a toughie (giggle), so I do – some people are scared of this woman – they'll probably tell you I stand my ground and I fight for what I believe in and I think that's really important but it mustn't be just for the sake of it, so sometimes you've got to say – you've got to be discerning enough to say “ you know what – this is not THAT important – let it go”. I think if it's something that's important – and why I think that is important is because it's often good for the business – so you've got to be able to say... for Liberty.... I am going to stand up and I'm going to be counted here because that's actually good for the business and I'm going to make a difference. But sometimes you've got to say no,</p>

	<p>it's not that important, I don't need to stand here, so I think you need a bit of both here. I'm a firm believer if it is important and if it's going to make a difference then stand up and be counted for it.</p>
<p>Right. Is there anything else that you would like to touch on that – maybe instances in your life or the workplace that – again – made you have to grab onto resilience and fight through a hardship or a challenge, anything that stands out, any key aspects or personality traits that you would notice in yourself, anything like that that you could maybe elaborate on?</p>	<p>Probably maybe just say determination, to me is very important, um, optimism, you must optimistic, I'm a very optimistic person – I'm a very determined person – I'm a very motivated person, um, and I think all of those will help you with resilience. But no, nothing else that I can think of besides what I've told you.</p>
<p>Alright, and then just with regards to Item No. 12 on the resilience scale, "I take things one day at a time" not that it was in any way out of the normal scale, it's a 1 to 7 and you scored a 5 which is more on the agree side, but borderline neutral – how would you say that taking one day at a time relates to resilience?</p>	<p>I think that although – let me use an example – although like I'll have a target that I've got to get to for the year, for me it's not like I wouldn't plan or something like that, I'd say let me face THIS day OK, and I'll deal with this day's stuff and once this day is a bad day, maybe..... maybe it goes back to my divorce, so today I'll deal with this, um, I know where the future is going but I'm going to just handle this because it's easier for me to handle this and it makes me strong. You know what, when this day's over I can put it behind me and tomorrow I can wake up and that's a new day. So it's not that you don't plan, it's not that you don't look ahead it's not that you don't focus on the future, if that makes sense – I'll work with that day's stuff. Sometimes when you think... shoo, it looks so big, you know, almost too big to cope with, whereas if you have a presentation for 400 people, you focus on that's the next thing I've got to do., and tomorrow when that's over I'll focus on the next thing that I've got to do, so it's very goal orientated to me although I got to get there, I know I got to do this and then I got to do that and then .... So that's how I work, that's what I mean by one day at a time. So it's not about NOT planning, it's about working with what I have to deal with now.</p>
<p>OK, so will I be correct in saying more of a like, baby steps, time management thing.</p>	<p>You know, it's like eat the elephant but one step at a time so I ... I've got a plan, so if you say to me OK, so what's your 5 year plan, I can tell you what it is and I know in all aspects of my life what it is, but I work with TODAY'S stuff, so when I know I've got to present to 400 people, I'm going to work with that's my next thing I have to do. And like with my daughter, that's the next thing I have to do and so I'll focus on immediate, but I have my plan. It's</p>

	just to deal with that stuff and do it properly and do it well. That doesn't mean to say I don't have a plan in every aspect of my life, I do, if that makes sense.
OK, and just to finish off, is there anything else you would like to add, it could be with regards to actual resilience as a Construct – any other experiences – something you might have thought about in the interim of the interview? Anything else you'd like to add?	Nothing that I can think of hey. I think I've pretty much covered most of what I want to tell you.
OK, thank you very much for your time.	OK Jess, no problem.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 12 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand by the construct or the word resilience?	Being able to bounce back from change, um, ja, bounce back from change I suppose.
Alright and can you tell me where you had to do this in your life?	Plenty, um, divorce, immigration, changing jobs, Liberty alone, commissions, our pay cheques, um having a child I suppose there's a lot of examples.
OK, can you elaborate on any of them, any one you want?	Ja OK, the one – I was supposed to emigrate in January the one year and about 2 weeks before I was to leave my ex-husband thought he could take my daughter – I'd already sold all my possessions, I'd given up my job, I had air tickets, I'd paid for passports : and I had to start over. I didn't go; it took me about 6 months to get a job again, um, so ja that was quite tough. How many examples do you want?
As many as you are prepared to give me. There is an hour slot.	Oh wow – OK. My ex-husband then left to go and live in the US – suddenly – left his child behind – married another woman which was tough on my daughter – it was tough on me as well because he was a support structure for her, so him being gone was ja, I had to change my life to fit in being a full time Mom and Dad, and there were all the issues that went around my daughter – her accepting that her Dad was gone. Um, ja, that's about it hey, I think.
Alright and what helped you to get through these experiences?	My daughter I suppose, because if you have a child, there is no other option. You have to "make shit fit" um, you just have to find a way to do it, you can't say to your child – well sorry we don't have a roof over our head, you just got to make sure there is one!
Is it the same for both situations?	For immigration?
For immigration and when your ex-husband	Ja, I only had myself to depend on so it's always

<p>moved over, is it the same – I mean – did you use the same resources to be resilient?</p>	<p>just fallen back on me, um, I don't know what else to say.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned you had to look out for your daughter, you had people that you were responsible for, how much support did you get there from other people – was support something that helped you to be resilient?</p>	<p>No, lack of support actually helped me be resilient. If any-thing, I lost support when he left – when I didn't immigrate, I was going where there was support and then everybody had already left except me, so the whole plan had fallen apart and everybody that was supposed to be my support were back in the UK and I was in South Africa, so um, I had to depend on myself. I don't have his family to depend on, they also – they basically shunned us – ja, it's always just been me.</p>
<p>OK, and other than your daughter being your motivation, what else can you say that got you through it? Was there any .....</p>	<p>Oh, my Psychiatrist got me through a lot! A few little white pills a few times a day, ja, that's definitely .... I did actually lose the plot and she wasn't .... My Psychiatrist helped me through a lot with it. Um, still does.</p>
<p>How important do you think that kind of – if you can call it – 'a hup-stootjie' in life, how important is that in being resilient?</p>	<p>Um, I don't know if it's actually being resilient because I see it as actually staying sane to make myself resilient, if that makes sense? Um, try it without medication, um, and then I'm useless! So I have to see her and she basically supports me to stay sane so I can carry on being resilient and pick up the pieces until such time as I don't have that responsibility any more.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned before your divorce as well, can you tell me about that where you had to be resilient?</p>	<p>Um, I had to start over, obviously, with a small child, um, being used to having that over income there and just having that other person there – actually that didn't really test my resilience too much because it was my decision so by the time I left I was pretty sure of where I was going and what I was doing. So I don't really think there I had to be too resilient in that situation.</p>
<p>In terms of the personality characteristics that YOU possess, what do you think or which ones do you think made you resilient or were attributable to you resilience?</p>	<p>I wouldn't say they are attributes – stubborn, um, cut off my nose to spite my face – they definitely not attributes – so just me fighting back.</p>
<p>OK, so how important is it to constantly fight back if you want to be resilient?</p>	<p>How important is it? It is very important because there is nothing else to depend on. If I fall apart then – if I'm not there to handle anything – then everything falls apart. I hope that answers your question.</p>
<p>For sure. Is there any other experience that you can think of, even as far back as Primary school or High school or challenges that you faced in your life that you had to THEN be resilient?</p>	<p>Ja, when I was 13 – midway through the school year – I was sent to live with family in Port Elizabeth – on a farm – no running water, we had to milk cows, we had to slaughter animals um, it was a terrible time in my life, I hated it – it was for</p>

	<p>2 ½ years, um, I wasn't really welcome there so it was that – trying to survive the bitchiness with 5 cousins – 4 girls and a guy – um, also having to have left home, my parents – I was a long way from home.... Same as well with Primary school, at 9 I went to boarding school, um, same thing, you behind your parents, you get home sick – also all-girls school so girls can be pretty bitchy um, so ja, when you are a boarder you have to stand on your own 2 feet, I'm sure you know that from being at Varsity or whatever, so ja, I suppose maybe I did learn a little bit of how to accept change, you don't have a choice, you have to. If you don't, there's no point.</p>
<p>So would I be correct in saying that resilience for you is almost being forced to deal with things?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Alright and you mentioned there, changing and adapting, how important is that for you in terms of being resilient?</p>	<p>Um, I don't actually know how to answer that.</p>
<p>No problem. Did you feel that that force of change or having to just deal with the situation – was that 'key' in making you resilient?</p>	<p>Ja, you know what, whenever change comes along if it's something that you can change then fight for it, but if it's something you can't change then you might as well go with the flow. I don't try to work myself up too much about the fact that change is coming and these are now the steps I have to take to handle it or cope with it. It's just an acceptance of ...OK can't change it... get on with it. Ja, just keep going. Keep fighting.</p>
<p>Alright, and do you think that kind of resilience that you</p>	
<p>Have learnt and have today, is that something that you learnt through those challenges or is it something that you might have got from your folks or that you were born with?</p>	<p>No, I wouldn't say I was born with it, I wouldn't say it was from my folks either. I think it's just the situations that I've been dealt, it's um, that's the way it's been, I have to do it. So ja, that's it.</p>
<p>Alright and do you believe that as the situations got worse there were more implications or it required more of a force to deal with the situation and as that grew more intense you got more resilient?</p>	<p>Yes, I would say so, ja, because some of the changes were big, and if I hadn't been up for it, I don't know – things would have fallen apart – so, they have made me more – I suppose with resilience you can say like an 'outer shell' very hard, and I had to become that way. Um, and that's the way it is.</p>
<p>And how do you think those experiences that you faced from such a young age – always having to deal with the situation, how do you think that helps in your working situation now?</p>	<p>Well, if you are at Liberty there is change every year, um, it's again, you weigh up your Pros and Cons and decide whether it's worth fighting for or not....and most of the time it's not. You fighting a corporate so you sit back, you take it and you take</p>

	a breath, think about how to get past it. Pretty much...maybe it's just my nature...you know, if somebody says to me it can't be done or like Liberty, you can't fight it, I'll accept that. So ja I suppose that's helped me in my job. Um, definitely. Weigh up Pros and Cons and decide whether you are willing to fight or not.
How important do you think positive emotions and future outlooks – goals – those kinds of things are? Were they important in your experiences of being resilient?	Um, they are important as far as my daughter is concerned further than that I don't really care much what happens.
So, if hardship has to come along again – this time, how will you approach it, maybe differently or what resources will you use to be resilient in another situation, given all your past experiences?	Hm, I'll take a lot of medication....(giggle) does that answer it. I do, I must be quite honest about my 'meds' I'm useless, so with the meds I'm pretty much numb all the time, so, do I really worry, does it feel like it's a challenge or not – no not always -
OK, would I be correct I saying that maybe your meds are your coping mechanism for you?	Oh yes, definitely.
Do you have any other coping mechanisms that you can think of?	My daughter is a big – she's just a – I have to – her Fathers not here, there is no family, I have to – there's just no choice, it's a luxury I can't afford to um, not deal with the stuff, I have to.
Alright so would I be correct in saying that resilience for you is clearly living for something, ie. Your daughter?	Yes.
Item No. 11 on the resilience scale "I seldom wonder what the point of it all is" you marked 3, so strongly disagree, how do you feel about that, that you disagree with the fact that you seldom wonder what the point of it all is?	If I'm right, it means that I DO wonder. What's your question?
How do you feel about that with resilience, constantly worrying what the point of it all is? Does that either aid or be against your ability to be resilient?	No, I don't know.
OK, Item No. 14 "I have self-discipline" you said you were more on the strongly disagree side – would you may be like to explain that in terms of resilience? It sounds like it takes a lot of self-discipline to be where you are right now with your job – with your daughter – even with things like taking meds. Making sure that you DO see a psychiatrist? That all requires a lot of self-discipline – and you do it – so how is that important in resilience?	Without it I wouldn't be resilient at all, I'd be in a heap on the floor most of the time. Um ja, I think that answers that.
Alright, and then is there anything else that you can tell me, any other experiences that you can pin-point where	No, my daughter is my most important factor to keep going.

There is maybe something that you KNOW got you through – e.g. Support, your daughter – I know we have mentioned that quite a few times and my apologies if it seems a bit repetitive. But anything else that you can explain or just mention.	
If I may ask, once your daughter isn't the one that you have to look after anymore, as you said, when that responsibility goes – what will keep you resilient then?	I wouldn't have to be resilient.
Alright is there anything else – final comments – anything you might have thought about in the interim of the conversation that you would like to add?	No – I hope it's helped you but I doubt it.
It has, thank you very much for your time I really do appreciate it.	OK, good luck with it.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 15 : ANSWERS
Alright tell me what you understand about the construct or definition of resilience?	Um, I'm guessing something that could have been that you could have overcome in the past like a challenge and that you had to become stronger as a result.
Are there any times in your life where you had to do that? To be strong and fight a challenge.	Yes, a lot of times actually.
Can you tell me something about those times?	One of the times I was at school in grade 11 and was hard because my Mom and Dad were getting divorced and I was very sad at the time and was very suicidal and my Uncle took me in and looked after me for that year. It was one of those things I had to be strong – and for my brothers as well who were not doing well – so that's one of those situations.
How did you get through that time, what did you do to get through that time, because obviously it was very difficult with your parents going through a divorce and like you said it was hard.	Yes, one of those times that was hard and for me to want to commit suicide would have been very selfish because I know I have little brothers who look up to me and I had to be strong for them, so that's how I got myself out of the situation.
Alright, so would I be correct in saying that something to fight for in the bigger picture at the end helped you be more resilient.	Yes that's right.
Can you tell me about any other situation where you had to be resilient?	Another one I guess was after Matric I didn't have any money to continue my studies and I could just have given up there but I chose to see the bigger picture I had in mind and yes, that's where I am today – working for Liberty Life.
OK tell me something more about not being able	Well, what I did was I started looking around in

to financially have funds for University, tell me how you got around that?	newspapers for a membership with Liberty Life in 2005, they put me in a learnership and then from there I was job hopping and then in 2007 Liberty called me back and employed me as a Broker Consultant and I guess it's just about getting a job and I decided to work.
Right, any other situation that you would like to mention, anything else about your resilience?	No those are the only two I can think about.
OK, in both of those two situations what were the kind of things that got you through, what did you rely on to know that everything was going to be OK?	Unfortunately there is not a lot you can rely on except yourself because you know you are going through a difficult time so actually you have to rely on yourself. Unfortunately It wasn't easy but like I said before having a bigger picture – it's one of those things that helps you to move forward.
Alright, in terms of characteristics like personality – what characteristics do you have that make you resilient? Or do you think anybody has a kind of resilience? What resilience characteristics or personalities do you think people should have?	Um, self-belief should be one of them, um you know what, no matter how tough the situation is you should have the strength to move on, what can I say, confidence, I don't know, self-belief is one, and if you've got that you can carry on, move forward and deal with the situation.
OK, can you tell me a little more about having confidence in your situation?	Um, (giggle) these are some difficult questions hey. Let's put it this way, if I didn't have confidence in myself I guess I would be down and out – but having faith in yourself you can come out of a lot of situations because you are confident in what you do – it might not necessarily be what you want to do – but you being confident you come out on top at the end of the day.
OK, and your faith, you mentioned having faith in yourself, how did that help you?	I think my faith in God is what helped me. I believe he would not put you in a situation where he will not give you strength to go through with it, you know. So that faith in Him has helped me.
Alright, and had you not been accepted into the learnership or apprenticeship at Liberty Life how would you have carried on being resilient then.	I don't know hey, I guess it would have been a defying moment in my life – I don't know – I guess I would have tried something else cos it was a matter of either of learnership or I go try find a job in retail and try and do something to save enough money to go school. I guess if I had taken that route I would most probably save up enough money to go to study for medicine.
OK and now being in the position where you can, being in a better position, how do you plan to carry on from here on?	I'm not on top yet, till I get on top I guess I have to be resilient.
OK, so am I correct in saying that for you being resilient you stay motivated and stay driven in your goals?	Yes I want that for myself.
OK, so can you tell me more about that? How to	(Giggle) Um, it's not any goal in mind – it's actually

stay motivated and how to stay driven?	where you see yourself at the end of the day and for me here it's just a mere stepping stone for me because the end picture is having your own business one day – and until that is done I believe it's the end picture for me. Until then I can't give up.
And do you think resilience is something that you learnt through these hardships and experiences or do you think that it's something that you might have gotten from your folks or were you born with it.	Some you got born with but some you have to learn with different situations because for me for instance I grew up being dependent on my parents but I couldn't depend on them always so I had to learn to be resilient.
Alright, and if you can what do you remember were certain defining moments when you, as you said when you couldn't be dependent on your parents anymore – if you can remember anything – you know, what made you stand on your own two feet so to speak?	It started when I learnt that they were going to divorce and stuff, I mean that's when I started to – I had to be tuff and I couldn't depend on my parents anymore cos they were separated and my Dad and I didn't get along – we don't get along – so my Mom had my other two siblings to look after so I had to find a way. I was lucky that I had a bursary at school so I didn't have to pay school fees. So in terms of money to buy stuff I ended up working for my Uncle at the garden, you know, to maintain myself.
You mention younger siblings; do you feel you had to be resilient for them? Do you feel that's part of being resilient?	Yes, cos I mean if I at any stage wasn't strong for them no-one would have been strong for them. They would have gone through a tougher time than they were supposed to I guess.
Right, so am I correct in saying that people depending on you makes you resilient?	Yea that I agree with you.
In terms of things like positive emotions – like you say you have to stay strong – you know – you have to hope that things are going to get better – how do you think positive emotions play a role?	Um – that plays a role in terms of – how do I put it – if you hang around with negative people all the time you end up being negative yourself, you end up believing not knowing what you want – but in terms of hanging around with positive people and you being positive yourself you are able to go forward – if I can put it that way.
OK, and in regards to the questionnaire we did, item No. 9 says that I feel that I can handle many things at a time, you circled 4 there which is very neutral right in the middle of the Agree and Disagree, and how do you feel about that, can you tell me more about that?	OH, there are times when I feel I cannot handle it any more, especially in this job, where at times it feels as if it's all coming together - can't deal with it any more - So
And what do you do then?	Go out for a smoke (giggle) Try and recoup and have that positivity again and come back into the office and do what you get paid to do.
OK, so like a refresh?	Ja
Alright, item No. 14 (I have self-discipline) you	Um, self-discipline, how can I put it? Going out

<p>marked 4 there, which is neutral can you explain that a little more for me?</p>	<p>with friends for an example when you know that you are not supposed to be drinking that much and then you end up going overboard and that's why I said neutral because there are days when I go out and say to myself, you know what, this is the limit.</p>
<p>OK, item No. 15 (I keep interested in things) also again you marked 4 there, again very neutral, how can you explain that with regards to resilience?</p>	<p>The reason I guess its neutral is cos I don't keep interested in things – as people we lose interest quickly, we lose interest in things – like what happens – like our job – it's not the most fascinating job in the world and if we have to keep that interest we have to be able to do the same day to day – I guess you get to a point where you totally lose interest and then you got to find stuff to make you think again, why am I in this, once you get there then you gather yourself again.</p>
<p>How do you feel being resilient means you have to stay interested in things, do you think that the two tie in for you? Take your time Yes of course</p>	<p>Yes you could say so because I'm – (long pause) how do I put this –  Can I use a relationship as an example? Um, you know in relationships we lose interest easily in terms of you might love somebody but then again that interest , you know becomes of no interest, you love that person in the first place – because if you see yourself marry that person then unfortunately you can resent them in terms of you might not be interested in them any more</p>
<p>Alright, and then item 26 is very ambiguous or rather a blatant statement (I am resilient) you circled 6 there which is on the strongly agree side. Can you tell me more about why you think you are resilient?</p>	<p>Cos of the situations that I have been in and I have come out of part of those situations a better person and those couple of things I mentioned earlier going through things like suicidal and having to depend on myself – so I could say those are the things which make me resilient or being who I am today.</p>
<p>OK and as you say you were suicidal, how did you take yourself out of that position, how did you actually change your frame of mind to no longer be suicidal – which in turn would make you resilient?</p>	<p>Positive thinking – I guess for me it was more my siblings and them being dependent on me and looking up to me as their older brother and stuff – I had to start thinking positively for me to be able to get on in that situation cos I had to. I started hanging around with positive people cos the minute you are in that and you hang around with negative people that don't motivate you as a person you not going to go out of it so I had to change my way of thinking – by thinking positively – I started reading more you know, about God.</p>
<p>Alright, and how did you cope when you were</p>	<p>Every time I go through a difficult time or situation</p>

younger and had resilience like you say you do now, how do you think it helps in your working environment?	at work I always end up thinking of where I come from and where I am today so it ends up with where I am saying... You know this situation compared to where I come from – this situation – I can always get over it – so that how I do it.
So comparing the resilience on like saying this situation is hard you know, but I have had it harder before so I should be able to deal with it. Would I be correct in saying that because you've been through so much that is so difficult it helps you to deal with difficult times now because they seem almost easier.	Ja, much easier than before.
Can you tell me anything else about those two situations that you maybe thought of now that makes you more resilient like you say you relied on yourself or your self-belief or anything like that that springs to mind.	Nothing else hey.
And then if you could just mention more about your faith. You mentioned that your faith is something that you needed to have. How do you think that plays a part in resilience?	Um, you know what faith is the start and the end of all things – if you don't have that then unfortunately your resilience... you can't be resilient because in all of us we've got to believe in faith and in order to be resilient you have to have faith before anything else so if you don't have the faith or believe in anybody – some people believe in God and some people believe in others and that kind of stuff and you know if you don't have that you can become resilient .
OK and then just in closing is there anything else you would like to add or thought of during the conversation or anything that you think is important - advice for people to be resilient – anything like that?	No nothing else hey.
Thank you very much for your time I really appreciate it I know you guys are really busy.	

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 16 : ANSWERS
Hi. Tell me what you understand about the construct resilience – what it may mean to you personally?	Personally I think it would be your ability to adapt to your situation and make sure that you come out on top or at least, how should I say, a set of skills that would help you to survive in whatever situation you're in.
Alright, and are there any experiences in your life that you can relate to where you had to demonstrate this kind of behaviour?	Ja, my whole life.... (giggle) When I matriculated I studied Architecture and when I qualified I couldn't find a job cos basically the building industry was going down so instead of running

	<p>around moaning about not finding a job I had to make one and ja, that's where it all started. I opened my own nightclub from literally R300 bucks in my pocket. I went to a guy who had premises and said to him – I'm not finding work – I need to do something so give me a chance and I work my butt off and ran my club for 2 years. From there I got into Liberty and I think the only interview I've been through in Liberty was when I first started here and that was in the call centre. Every move I've made I've worked my ass off – adapted to the role I was given – and made sure I came out on top to the point where I was offered the next move. It was basically change, adapt to your situation, work your butt off and get to the next point.</p>
<p>Alright. When you studied Architecture and you were looking for a job and couldn't find one – what are the kind of things that you experienced then – maybe in terms of emotions or feelings?</p>	<p>You got to go through the whole thing of doubt, was it the right choice, did I study the right thing? I wouldn't say it depressed me as such, but you get to that point where you think – you know – I'm having to depend on everyone else to get what I want. I had to move back in with my parents because I had nowhere to stay, I couldn't afford rent um, so ja, you go through that whole thing, you know, am I worth it? Ja, you actually feel worthless, and then I got to the point where I stopped feeling sorry for myself and get up off my ass and do something about the work situation.</p>
<p>OK. That moment there where you actually decided to do something, would you say that after feeling down for such a long time – what helped you to turn around there – was it something that happened, something that someone said, what spiked resilience there for you?</p>	<p>I think you just get to that point where you have to step back and look at your situation and think, you know, is this going to be me for the rest of my life? No matter how many people say to you, you need to do X, Y and Z – If you don't decide it for yourself, it's not gonna work and I think I just had to get to that point where I turned around and said, you know what, I'm not going to depend on anyone else for the rest of my life, I'm not gonna let the situation dictate to me where I go – make a plan and get my ass into gear and go forward. It's more a case of I woke up – I wouldn't say it was ONE particular day – but you know, you wake up and get to that point where you think to yourself – is this all that my life is worth? I decided this is NOT me, I've got to do something – I couldn't find a job and like I said, I had to make one.</p>
<p>Alright and with regards to your next step – starting your nightclub – I'm sure that it wasn't easy with only R300 in your pocket and asking</p>	<p>No, it's a lot of hard work. You just have to push on you know, the first few guys I spoke to looked at me and said "are you mad what do you think</p>

<p>people for favours, how did resilience play there?</p>	<p>you going to do” but luckily there was one guy who said he’ll give me a chance but I had to prove to him I was willing to go that extra mile, to put the effort in and get the place. We worked out a plan on how we were going to run it, and ja, just sheer hard work and just hanging in there and believing in the whole concept – and that’s what got it going.</p>
<p>OK and then another experience with regard to working at Liberty Life, how did you find resilience to play a part there?</p>	<p>When I first started at Liberty I was in the call centre and it was a case of get up and go to work, answer the phone, go home. They had what they call a little “leads” program where if you got a client on the phone and they said to you if you could pick up one or two points um, that maybe the client’s got an R.A. but they don’t have Life cover or some-thing, if you could send that ‘lead’ onto one the in-house Advisors, then we used to get paid on those leads if it was successful. After spending 6 months in the call centre, I made a friend in the out-bound as well as one of the advisors, and I said to him, you know what – I don’t want to be stuck in the call centre for the rest of my life – can you train me and show me exactly what I’m looking for, so I go to work and after work I’ll actually go and sit in their department and he’d say to me, this is what you looking for, these are your key points that the client will mention. After 18 months in the call centre I was approached by the out-bound manager for a position as an Advisor. They said I was one of the most successful guys to pass leads through – I just wanted to move – it’s not – I HAD a job, but I didn’t just want a job, I wanted a career, so I decided I’m going to sit there and listen, pick up points, and ja, that is how. I won the leads competition every month consecutively for about 14 months and they said to me, you know what, you’ve got the points, move over and they actually offered me a position as an Advisor. Again, it was just not wanting to accept the situation the way it is. I go back to Head Office today, there are guys that were in the call centre when I was there, that’s still sitting in the call centre and moaning that they stuck in the same position but no-one does anything about it. They all waiting for someone else to say you need to do this or you need to do that. I think that’s where I was lucky because I got to the point where I</p>

	<p>turned around and look at the situation and say “I’m not going to wait for anyone to offer me advice or anything, I’m going to go out and look for it and work at it so that I can get somewhere.</p>
<p>Alright, so would I be correct in saying that in order to be resilient you need to go that extra mile?</p>	<p>Ja, I think you also need to be – for want of a better word – ambitious. If you happy with the cards that life has dealt you, you just going to sit back and go ja, well this is the cards I’ve been dealt, I’ll accept it, but if you’ve got that hunger, you’ll put in that effort and you go further.</p>
<p>OK, and on that note how much do you think motivation or drive for future vision, for wanting to be better, how much do you think that plays a role in resilience?</p>	<p>I think that plays almost about 80% of it. If you don’t have the drive or ambition to go anywhere, you just going to sit back and say, ja, I’ll accept this. So basically you need to be motivated and it’s not someone else motivating you, it’s self-motivation. Like I said, I could tell you for example, Jess you need to do your Thesis, you need to do your Thesis, and if you don’t want to do it, you find something else to do all the time, so it’s up to YOU to decide – do I want to accept this or do I want to move on – so you need that mental frame of mind to say, you know what I’m gonna push on forward, I need to get somewhere.</p>
<p>Alright, is there any other incident or experience you can relate to that was a challenge or that made you rise above, or forced you to get up and dust the ...?</p>	<p>Dust myself off ....ja, there is one, not a particularly pleasant one. A couple of years ago I was dating someone – she was a conduct for concerts – we kept in contact and all through the time she said come over, come visit me, come visit me, and the day I landed in New York I phoned her and said I’m going through to central station, hopping on the Greyhound and coming through to Virginia – she turned around and said to me – “I’ve met someone so you can’t come and stay with me”. So it was a case of OK, you are 16 000 Km away from home ... and ja ... what do you do. I had a couple of Dollars in my pocket, my bus ticket was booked, so I hopped on the bus and went down to Virginia, but I used it as a tour, so I toured the whole East Coast of the States, back-packed, put my stuff in lockers – put the key in my boot – put my boot on – slept on benches in stations – ja, I spent 2 weeks running around the States, feeling a bit depressed, confused, but ja, making the best of the situation – like I said, got to see the East Coast, got to run around .... That, um, I think it builds character – all your life experience build character and if you had to let one bring you down somewhere in the</p>

	<p>beginning of your life, the rest of your life you just going to be ... I'll accept it, I'll accept it., whereas if you can fight through one you can fight through all.</p>
<p>You speak about characteristics there, or like how you build character, what kind of characteristics or personality traits do you think someone needs to be resilient or what characteristics do YOU have that made you resilient?</p>	<p>Um, drive, ambition, good grounding... you know, um, a lot of people will say to you that they are ambitious but if you look at what they want, it could be just 'pipe dreams' whereas if you've got the motivation and you are willing to put in the work, you can turn any dream into reality. So you need the drive, you need ambition, you need self-motivation, you need to be disciplined. If you're not disciplined then halfway through you can turn around as say, you know what, this is too much work or I can't do this anymore, so you just got to put your head down and push on through. Like with the nightclub business, when I started, my first week-end I had 200 people in the club and the guys looked at me and said, are you sure this is going to work, and I said we'll just keep pushing and pushing and see how far we go – and within a month I was ending up with 2000 people a night in the place. If you don't have that drive we could have turned around after the first night and said – you know we tried; it's not going to work so let's try something else. So you got to have the discipline and determination to push on through it. So let's get this going.</p>
<p>Alright. Your previous example, with your girlfriend in the States, obviously more of a personal thing rather than a work related thing, do you think it's the same kind of characteristics that made you resilient enough to make you use that opportunity – make the most of it?</p>	<p>Um, I'd say ja, you know, It's again the willingness to accept the situation and do something about it. Because I had a return ticket I could have said, you know, change my ticket I'm going back home, but that wouldn't have done any good, because I would have been sitting back here being all depressed and confused, whereas I thought, I'm there, I may as well make the best of it.</p>
<p>With regards to resilience, do you think that it's a learnt trait that you learn through all your various experiences or do you think that it's something that you are born with or that your folks could have actually given you?</p>	<p>I think it's more something that I've inherited through my parents, um, you know, my Dad has worked hard all his life and he always said to us – no matter where you want to go or what you want to achieve in life, the way to do it is through hard work, um, nothing worthwhile comes easy and if you sitting on your ass doing nothing you won't get anything – so I always remember – I always think about my Dad when I'm in a difficult situation, I always think back, you know, what did he tell me, what did he teach me, and ja... God Bless his soul, he is the one that said to me "if you</p>

	<p>don't do something about a situation you not going to get anywhere".</p>
<p>Do you think having influential people, such as your Dad, in your life – and that kind of support system – or like social support – family, that sort of thing – do you think that's important in being resilient?</p>	<p>That's very important, it's very important. If you don't have people that support you, no matter what you try, all it takes is one person to give you that negative energy and say; this is not gonna work, or that won't happen, and if you take that to heart or if that's all you are hearing or all anyone is ever telling you, then that's the path you are going to follow. If you look at small kids – if someone keeps telling a little kid : you stupid, you stupid, you stupid, they're going to start believing that, and at the end of the day they'll say : I can't do that I'm stupid, I can't do this I'm stupid! Whereas, if you've got positive role models and positive support around you – all through life – you could turn around and .... As they say "the world is your oyster" then you can do anything as long as people support you and believe in you. Also, I think, if people believe in you – you believe in yourself. Whereas, no matter how hard you believe in a dream, if no-one else supports you, or believes in you, you tend to get that negative vibe and you tend to get depressed and you start thinking, is this going to work, do I put in the effort, is it going to be worthwhile. It's human nature that a negative vibe does get to people all the time, it's just how you react to it and if you have strong influences with people helping you that you can overcome it.</p>
<p>Alright. You spoke a bit about belief, how much do you think belief plays a part in resilience?</p>	<p>Like I said, if you don't believe in something yourself for No. 1 it's just a pipe dream. The first step to achieving anything is believing that you can do it, so if you just turn around and say I want to earn a million Rand but you don't actually believe it, it's just gonna be you running around saying I want to earn a million Rand – but if you believe in something – you have a tendency to work towards what you believe in. Once again, if you've put in the work and you've put in the effort you can achieve anything. But it all starts with that belief in .... Whether it's a concept or an idea ...make it more than just an idea, more than just a concept, um, it's got to start somewhere, like you can have the idea, I need to do this but if you don't believe that you can achieve it, you're not even going to start, or think about putting in the effort to achieve what you want.</p>

<p>You also mention, rather on the other side of the scale, also being depressed or unhappy or getting yourself into a dwaal, how do you think positive emotions play a role in resilience? Or positivity?</p>	<p>I think positivity would be one of the key factors in getting you out of your depression, or out of ... being down, should I say, because as I was saying, if you are depressed and all you hear is negative, or all you're experiencing around you is negative energy, all you ever going to be is more depressed. Whereas if you are down and depressed and someone says to you – you know what, don't worry It's going to be OK, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> person tells you and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person tells you the same thing, if you have that positive re-enforcement, eventually you going to turn around and say, you know what, maybe everything WILL be OK, and once you hit that point where you DO believe in it, you'll find you'll start working on it. Your whole mind set changes and well... hey – everything is OK – I can do this, I can do that, and next thing you know you've moved completely from the negative side of the scale to the positive.</p>
<p>With regards to questionnaire that we filled out the other day, Item No. 11 says "I seldom wonder what the point of it all is" you marked 3, which is on the side of strongly disagree, so would you say that you do often wonder what the point is?</p>	<p>Yes, sometimes you do, you look at your life and you go – you work hard, you earn a bit of money, you've got your own house but at the end of the day he who dies with the most toys – still dies. So, you look at it and think 'what is the point of it?' But then you turn around and you look at the joy you can bring to people and all the happiness and then that's when you realize – there is a point to life –</p> <p>When I was growing up, one of the things my parents always taught me is that no matter how much you have, there is someone that has less than you and if you can help them you should, always. And just to help a person, to see a person grow, makes you realize it's not all for nothing, there is a point to life and there is a point to everything that you do.</p>
<p>Alright. How do you think that's tied in with resilience? Maybe referring to something personal if you like.</p>	<p>Um, remember the movie "Pay it Forward"... If you help someone you also get that feeling that I've achieved something. You might not have achieved something physical as in earning an income from it or getting some- thing physical back, but you also have that positive re-enforcement that you might have achieved something today or achieved something with what I've done. When I was busy in the nightclub, once my club was running, I could actually employ people, and say to them, I need bar staff, I need guys to man the reception – and at the end of the</p>

	<p>day when you see some guy running around and he's sitting at home and he tells his Mom, you know what I'll buy you bread, I'll buy you milk, you know, it's actually helped that person to better himself, I don't know, it's a weird feeling, it's like for me, if I can help people..... I mean, you can ask the guys in the office here, no matter who needs what, I'm always running around trying to help people to do something because it's not just a case of I've done this for you now I need X, Y and Z back, it's just that.... I've been blessed in my life and have achieved quite a lot, so why shouldn't I help you achieve something as well.</p>
<p>Are there any previous experiences, maybe going back as far as Primary school, High school – where you went through something that you had to demonstrate resilience to get where you are now?</p>	<p>Um, not off hand .... It's a long, long time ago. (giggle) So ja, you know what um, growing up, high school was normal          You either one of the in-crowd or you're not. I was lucky I had an older brother at school with me so by the time I got to high school I wasn't picked on ..... ja it was quite easy growing up, um, although when I was in high school way back when – it was the time when we still had all the riots and – you know – they were trying to get Mandela out of jail and all that stuff, so every now and then we would spend a month – six weeks – boycotting school, guys would be demonstrating, and you know, my parents were still .... All our parents would be expecting us to still be studying and when you write your exams you still have to pass .. so you put your head down, do your thing, work, study....</p>
<p>Alright, and how do you think challenges such as the challenges in the nightclub – the Liberty Life challenge – all those kind of experiences were you had to demonstrate resilience, how do you think that's helped you to be resilient today?</p>	<p>It's made me believe, like I say, I can achieve anything. No matter what I put my mind to, I can do it. Every situation they put me in going through my 10 years at Liberty now, has taught me something, I made a plan, I got out of the call centre and now I'm an Advisor. I've been working as an Advisor .... I pushed my stats, I had the activity, I had the calling, I had the stats to the point where they offered me a BC position, and every position I've just made the best of it. A lot of people tell me I'm lucky .... Um, because they put me in Stanlib – I spent 2 years at Stanlib working and I done the best I could and I came out 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Joburg region – from there they put me into SBFC into a unit that was doing I think 70 or 80 million on average for the year, and I spent a year and a half there, well I came half way through the year, spent 6 months and finished it and my first</p>

	<p>full year that I spent with the guys I took that stats from just on 90 million to 320 million and then from there they moved me and that's how I ended up here. Currently working my bum off as well to .... A lot of the office based consultants are just sitting back going – as the cases come in – we load it and they are averaging maybe 8 – 10 million a month on the stats whereas I am making the effort because I know, the consultants I am looking after have a quite heavy workload – so since I've moved to Janet's branch – 7 o'clock in the morning I'm at my desk just to make sure I have enough time to get through everything. You know, if there's things we need over and above what our job description is – like if they say to me – “we're waiting for a medical” – I'll get in my car and drive to doctor and fetch the medical and bring it back. Um, I'll drive to a Broker and go pick up an App., if the consultant can't do it. Whereas a lot of the other guys will go, well, if you can't pick it up today, then, when you pass the broker tomorrow bring it through and we'll load it. Whereas for me it's if you can't pick it up today let me go, I'll go and pick it and bring it back and load it. Um, I think I'm currently – like last month – I was one of the highest consultant, I think I was THE highest consultant I the office, I did 32 million or something. I've learnt now that if I want to achieve something I've got to believe in it and I got to work towards it..... and that's it.... I make a go of anything.</p>
<p>How do you feel, for example, when there was an economic downfall – when there was the economic downturn – I'm not sure in which position you were in when it was at its rifest, how do you stay positive then? How do you show resilience then, when everything seems like it's not going – for you – in any direction?</p>	<p>I was actually at Stanlib at that point and we decided we weren't going to think about it. We had like a planning session and a lot of the guys turned around and said, you know, let's not talk about the economy being down, let's look for one or two positive points and just focus on it. So we get a list of stats that came out which said employment was down, the housing price is down, but there's been a slowdown in retrenchments – and we'll actually use it and go to the brokers and say look, there's actually been a bit of a slowdown in retrenchments, it's looking a bit more positive – and just trying to get that positive vibe going with the guys, and ja, they in turn will take it out to their clients and say – don't worry, X, Y, Z is happening but there is a little bit of positivity here or a bit of good news over there – and ja – we just pushed on through to the point where we ended</p>

	up here.
OK, so would I be correct in saying that in order to be resilient you need to focus on the positive things or the things you know are going to get you through the times?	Yes, you've got to just, like I said, as long as you've got that positive feedback and positive energy around you – if you believe in it and you work towards it, no matter what the circumstance are – you could always look at something to get out of it and turn that into something positive or good news.
In terms of any future goals that you might have, if currently is not where you want to be for the rest of your career – how are you going to be resilient in getting there?	Currently I've actually started a company on the side – I'm running a mobile DJ setup and so.... And also just working towards that and making contacts, meeting different people, because I do weddings, corporate events, and just talking to people about it and telling them about it – this is what I'm doing, it's getting my name out there and also getting feedback on people believing in you that you can do this. To the point where I am doing one of Liberty's functions in the middle of November. It's nice to know that the people you work with in an Industry actually believe that you can do something else and they support you that, so if ja...If this didn't work out for me in the next 2 or 3 years, I know for a fact ..... I wouldn't say it's something I can fall back on, but I've got a basis to start working from and there will always be something to add onto and something that I could work with.
Alright, so would I be correct in saying that having strong foundations, basically, in life, is important if you want to be resilient?	Ja, a strong foundation is very important. As I was saying earlier, it all goes back to that first time you had an idea. Cos if someone shot you down with your very first idea, you wouldn't have many more ideas. Whereas, if you had someone who supported you and said, you know, you've done this and this and they've seen you actually achieved it and they start believing the fact that you CAN do things and you started believing in it from way back when, as you go forward, every new experience just re-enforces the belief and the idea that you can achieve whatever you want.
OK, and just in closing any final comments or experiences, notes on resilience, anything that you'd like to add?	Not off hand, it's just – as I say – it's belief, put your head down, work and ja, you can overcome any obstacle and achieve any dream.
Good. Thank you very much for your time.	

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 17 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand by the construct or the word resilience?	Ok, basically adapting yourself to a situation or how well you handle the situation or anything difficult that comes by you.
And then, how do you feel about if you ever had to do this before – is there any experience you can tell me about – any happening that you can relate to where you had to be resilient?	Lots of things – we’ve – well I come from a family where we had a very difficult upbringing, um, my sister was in Grahamstown studying Pharmacy at the time and my Mom was diagnosed with stage 3 cancer. So she was in hospital and my Dad had a heart attack and ended up having a triple by-pass at the same time. So there was no support structure, Mom and Dad both were in hospital um, I had to give up my studies to look after them plus find a job so that we can have stuff and home and my brother got accepted into 1 <sup>st</sup> year Med School, so we weren’t going to not let him in, um, because he had gone to so many interviews and so we were going to let him go, you know, after so many black students get preference – so even though he had an A in all his subjects – um, they made him wait for a year before they accepted him. So we said he must continue so then I was alone at home looking after Mom and Dad and running the farm, running and helping out anywhere and everywhere and then ended up in the travel and tourism industry. There was a lot of hardships that we had to deal with, just myself and my younger brother – and I think that’s why we value relationships a lot, we value life more, um, with my sister – she was away from it all so she really didn’t um, experience that and we noticed that – just myself and my brother – if anything happens in the family – the eldest sister would run to the two of us – what do we do – what do we do – you know, and then we’ll be so calm and collected, you know, and we’ll do everything on our own, but they’ll need someone to tell them what to do. So like my father always used to say, don’t worry, you’ve been through the university of hard knocks and she hasn’t, so she’s had a pampered life so it’s very difficult for her to cope. When my Mom passed away she went into this depression and we just carried on, we knew it was coming, we made her as comfortable as possible, we did whatever we could.
Alright, and what more can you tell me about that experience that made you stand up after all those	I think just the fact that my Dad brought us up to just never give up and he taught us that one day

<p>hard knocks that came your way?</p>	<p>you will reap the rewards of your hard efforts and we just continued and we carried on and carried on and um, I think we started, after a while, realizing that what my Dad actually said was true. Because you can actually see that you'll reap the rewards of your hard work, um, initially is was very, very difficult because I mean when other kids were going to watch movies with their friends and going out to parties and clubs, we were working on the farm, and we were doing deliveries, night deliveries, and we were doing things that normal kids our age wouldn't have done. So from that point of view we accepted responsibility at a very young age – so for us it's very difficult – I mean, (giggle) the guys in the office – even now – if they need anything, the first person they would come to is me. Even Janet, if she needs anything, go to Sheatal, you know, anything , it's not, I suppose – I've learnt from experience so I don't tend to wait for something to come to me – I will work that much harder to try and get to it myself. That kind of thing.</p>
<p>Alright, so would I be correct in saying that it's a very future minded sort of situation where you are always looking into what can be done, where you'd like to be, goal orientated, future driven?</p>	<p>The ... I don't know if you believe a lot in ... um, it's a very similar concept to The Secret, where you visualize and then it ends up being actual – so when we were kids my Mom and Dad used to really go read all these spiritual books and they used to do a lot of research and – I mean, my Mom and my Dad were born Hindu's – but my father - something inside him said – you know what – this can't be the religion because there is no way that I am praying to a stone object and that's not God and he feels that if God was standing next to him, um, he would feel really hurt if he was praying to a stone object. Then my Dad went on the whole sort of drive, if you can call it that, and he used to search through everything that was, he went through Buddhism , through Muslim, um, he studied the Koran also for a while, he did Christianity and all of that but then he would .... He still didn't find something he was comfortable with – so finally he went to a group of peopled called Christdelphians, which is also studying the word of God, which is also the Bible, but their interpretation is very simplistic, they don't read too much into the lines, so they don't believe in the Trinity or they don't believe in Christmas, um, because every day could be Christmas cos in the</p>

	<p>Bible it doesn't tell you the exact date that Jesus was born – that kind of thing – so it's just very simplistic way of understanding the word of God, so my parents then converted to Christianity. But, all through that time, imagine being living in a Hindu culture and we going to school and everyone mocks us cos your Mom and Dad have now converted to Christian, it was very difficult for us, but then my Dad used to always say, think about it practically and he said he's not forcing any religion onto you – when you grow big and you decide what you want to become then you follow that religion and he taught us how to respect religions. He told us not to depend on anyone to come and give you bread and butter - try and make sure you get that yourself. So that was brought up in us since we were kids – I means one of my brothers is the CEO of Price Waterhouse the other is an Orthopaedic Surgeon – OK I didn't study cos I had to give up my studies to .... I started..... I did 2 years of BSc majoring in Micro Biology and Chemistry .... And then I left that because I thought maybe .... Micro Biology.... We on the farming thing.. so I thought.... I'm also a nature lover so I thought that's the route I want to go, but then circumstances changed and I ended up having to work in the Travel and Tourism Industry just to make sure that I helped pay my brothers fees so that he could go to Med School – a lot of things, my other brother just started working and he wasn't even a partner, he was just doing his Articles at the time so he wasn't earning a huge income and my sister was still studying as a Pharmacist so it was difficult – so circumstances made me change what I wanted to do to what I'm doing now, and then I got married, had kids, and then my Dad passed away after my Mom died, so there was no-one to watch my little one – so I said OK – I was working in Travel and I was .... At that time is was already 24... and I was working as an Incentive Manageress at Cruises International , and we deal with Royal Caribbean Cruises, Starlight Cruises, all of that so my Boss said, you know what, I can't offer you a half-day job – it's very demanding, but I would like you to stay and I can't – I need a half-day position, and then it just so happened that the Financial Advisor that looked after cruises, said, George, if you don't mind can I</p>
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	<p>take Sh.. because I'm desperate for an assistant and I need someone half-day. So George and him worked out an agreement where I would help on some days there and some does here and then I ended up catching the Liberty bug .... (Laughing) and I'm stuck here.</p> <p>So, things have changed and I've just gone with the flow and just worked hard at anything that I've done.</p>
<p>Alright, and you mentioned that you and your siblings were sort of teased and ridiculed for your parents changing religion, how do you feel that, I mean, that situation could have gone both ways, either you could have crumbled, so to speak, under the peer pressure as we all know school can be cruel, or you could have done exactly what you did do, you pushed through it rather and you sort of maybe used it.</p>	<p>Having my parents, and because they come from a background where they studied a lot of religions and they've studied a lot of things they were able to teach us the right way, and these kids, you know, ... my Dad always used to tell us things in stories... you know... he had this really fantastic story about people following tradition and not knowing why they do it, so he used to explain it to us in a kind of easy to understand story. ... And that way it used to just stick in our minds and so ..... One of the stories he used to say .... The one that sticks out a lot was you know in India, where my Dad used to live, a long time ago, there was an old man who always used to pray and he did his prayers at a specific time, none of his children or family ever took interest in what the father was doing, and there was this neighbours' cat that used to irritate the crap out of him when he did his prayers and so he took the cat and he locked the cat up and then he did his prayers so that there was no disturbance, so when the father died, the children said, you know, maybe we should follow in Dad's footsteps because dad was a Hindu and practiced these things, so maybe we should do that – and when the Dad died the cat also died alright – so, now these children remembering what he did, they used to go and look for a cat, to lock the cat up to do the ritual. (giggle) so my Dad used to tell us funny stories like that to explain, the concept, don't just do things for the sake of doing them – find out why he did what he did – don't be silly and go and look for a cat to lock up - you know, that kind of thing. I think it's also about all the studying he did, and he became so learned.</p>
<p>Alright, and do you feel that with regards to resilience, do you feel it's something your parents taught you or do you feel it's something that is possibly biologically passed on or do you feel it's like a learnt trait?</p>	<p>No, um, I think my parents did to some extent help us but a lot of the times we've noticed, especially me and my younger brother, we've noticed that because we were put in a difficult situation, there was no-one else who could help us out, we had to</p>

	<p>help ourselves out. So, we learnt .... Like my Dad used to say “University of hard knocks”... we had to learn the hard way. So we managed to cope, even though we had Mom and Dad in hospital, nobody at home, just the two of us at home cos my sister and eldest brother weren’t there – there was no-one else to help us – so we had to do everything, market deliveries, making sure the farm was running correctly, making sure we go to the hospital cos my Mom and Dad were vegetarian, we had.... They would never eat hospital food, we had to ...at that time I was working at Royal Suites and Hotel and we used to take a bus from Lenasia, go to Gandhi square which was John Vorster square at the time and then my brother would get off the bus and go to the hospital to give them their breakfast in the morning. I went straight to the Hotel for working and then I had a really wonderful boss, um, Ronald Levy, a Jewish guy, and always used to say, you know what if you need to go see Mom and Dad, use the company car, go and check them out, sort them out with lunch and everything, so the Chef used to make pure vegetarian lunches for me and I used the driver to take me to the hospital in the afternoons – go and give them lunch, go back home and then some cousins of mine would do the supper trip. They were both in the same hospital, just in different rooms.</p>
<p>You mentioned something about a wonderful boss, siblings, you had quite a few siblings, parents that were very devoted to not only you as their children but to the actual growth of you as an individuals and as well as cousins, do you feel that a strong support structure is important in being resilient?</p>	<p>I think so, definitely</p>
<p>And over and above what you’ve told me, can you relate to that in any way and maybe shed some more light on how else support is important?</p>	<p>I think... you know when we were very young I was accepted for BSc for two years, actually it was my 2<sup>nd</sup> year that I left and then my brother was just accepted at Med School, and we lived out in Eikenhoff – and Eikenhoff to Lenasia – and we didn’t have a license, so my brother and I drove the truck to my Dad’s brothers house which is in Lenasia, park the truck off there and they used to make sure that they prepared stuff for us to take to hospital.... I mean.. if they were there they used to do the supper trips and they always used to encourage us and say don’t give up..... when I</p>

	<p>wanted to study further... and then I thought, you know what, my sister is becoming a Pharmacist, my younger brother is becoming a Doctor and I'm nothing – you know – I used to always feel very upset and depressed about myself, and then he's say don't work we'll make a plan, we'll do something for you, and we went on the Internet and we checked what courses were available and then I thought maybe Travel and Tourism cos I've got other cousins in that Industry and they love it and they travel a lot, so ja, why not, I think I need a break. He was there for me and supported me all the way through – even at the times when we had difficulty in paying the fees he paid them for me. So I think family and support structure... even when my Mom was very sick, put it that way, when she was back at home and we had to take her for Chemo Therapy – she could not sit in my Dad's car because it was very low profile, so they had to come all the way from Lenasia to Eikenhoff to fetch her, take me with her for Chemo sessions and bring us back and they never ever asked for anything in return, they would never take petrol money, nothing, they just did it – it's just that kind of support – and that also made us better people cos my Dad always used to say, and my Mom as well, you do one good thing for a person then they must do a good thing for another person and in that way it just kind of spreads....</p>
<p>Alright, and you mentioned quite a few times where resources were available to you in terms of funding from family members, or you mentioned like your Boss would let you use the company car and the chef would maybe cook something for your folks in hospital, how do you feel that resources play in resilience?</p>	<p>Resources; Let's just say, I don't think it would play a big role because if that wasn't there I would have made another plan. It just made my life easier at the time, but if it wasn't there I would have made a back-up plan because my brother and I always worked on a back-up plan, (giggle) we always do. Cos we know if something is not going to happen the way we want it to we always think of something else. My sister hates that, she thinks we are a bit looney, but...we always work on back-up plans (giggle).</p>
<p>Going back to where you said in your second year you gave up on the Micro Biology situation because you... As we said... one thing happens after another... how do you feel about that in terms of this whole resilience thing we have discussed, you had been through so much up till then, being forced to make decisions that were maybe not ones that you wanted to make, but</p>	<p>I just feel that no matter what had happened, had I finished my Micro Biology or my Botany or whatever um, that hasn't defined me as a person, this has, all the different experiences that came along has had some kind of a learning experience behind every incident that happened. I mean, if my Mom hadn't been diagnosed with Cancer, we would not have been on the farm, if my Dad</p>

<p>made anyway for the greater good and again, stood up after all these hard knocks – how do you feel that that fits in, how does resilience play a part in that decision you made or how do you feel about that?</p>	<p>hadn't died I wouldn't have been with Liberty, cos I was with cruises, I mean certain things happened along the way that made me change what I wanted to do at that point in time, but if I think about it in hind sight it actually turned out better than I would expected, I mean, I'm here! I'm happy, so...</p>
<p>And touching on that, being happy being positive, as we mentioned before being future minded in this situation, how do you think things such as being happy or positive emotions in general, play a role in resilience?</p>	<p>It helps a lot um, there was a time where my brother and I had ... it was very difficult for us... especially because we used to feel that other kids had more than us you know, we had to grow up very quickly, um, from that point of view we always used to feel negative that we missed out on part of our childhood – but then if we look at it now we look at the kids, how they behave, and how we behave, it's completely different, they don't appreciate what they've got. You know, we do, and then at that time when we were very, very low there was no-one that encouraged us and just things that my father told us and we started becoming positive, and it made us look at things in a different light, just having a different positive attitude makes you look at a situation differently. If you are negative your outcome is definitely going to be negative, but if you think about it positively, you actually going to say ja, it's going to be OK; if I just make that little more effort I will get to where I want to go. So the positivity that you should always have in every situation, I mean, it even works here in the office – there are so many instances when you are working on this big deal but then you just Don't get it – then you feel so de-motivated – you've put your everything into it – but then there is something coming around the corner that's better – so you just got to be positive.</p>
<p>And when something like that does happen, when you get, as you say, de-motivated, what do you do to restore that resilience? How do you go about believing that – yes – I've been knocked down now, but now I've got to stand up again, how do you do that, how would you stand up again?</p>	<p>I think everybody has a different way of coping with something like that, me, I have a thing ... I bake – if I'm depressed or moody... my husband knows ... even my kids know if I'm in a bad mood... I start cooking up a storm, or gardening or flower arranging, I'll do something creative that I like and then they'll know, OK, she needs some space or time and then I'll be fine. Or one of the old age homes I frequently go to – one of my Dad's friends – she's in this old age home down Ellis Park way in Observatory – it's a really grotty place – the Gerald Fitzpatrick Home for the Aged – and she just</p>

	<p>turned 92 and I tend to go visit her – she always cheers me up, um, it’s just doing something not for me but I like giving, I get more pleasure out of giving than receiving – that kind of thing – so I’d rather do something that makes me feel better. ... and then I think, you know what other people are worse off, they don’t have a home, they don’t have cloths on their back – I mean I tell my kids the same thing – I said you complaining, you want Reebok shoes – and look at that poor guy in the street – he doesn’t even have a pair of shoes. You know, it just reminds them that there are others out there that are worse off than we are, so stop feeling sorry for yourself and get back up there and work a bit harder and get where you want to go.</p>
<p>Definitely, with the baking or gardening as you said...</p> <p>And do you feel that it might just change your focus and then once you get to think about the problem again you’re maybe refreshed – would I be correct in saying that?</p>	<p>I think it’s just therapeutic ...</p> <p>Ja, um, I think about it in a different way – I won’t be upset like for example, one of the deals I lost recently, I was quite miff because I put a lot of hard work into it, and Sanlam came along and offered them a whole lot of bells and whistles and it went Sanlam’s way. But then I thought about it, you know what, they can only offer bells and whistles for so long and then the Broker is going to say, you know what I am not getting any joy out of it, now with conflict of interest, they can’t buy brokers gifts and expensive things, so it’s coming back and they are back as my top brokers, so.</p>
<p>Alright, and going back to something that you mentioned in the beginning, um, where you said that your brother had to constantly work on interviews regardless of his A + aggregate because he wasn’t of black or whatever the requirement was at that specific year was, how do you feel that you prevailed with resilience in that aspect, where you couldn’t really do much to change the situation?</p>	<p>There was nothing we could have done, I mean, you have to accept that – but he was accepted at quite a few other institutions but he said he didn’t want to go there – he wanted to study at Wits because it was close to home and he didn’t want to incur more expenses and put more financial burden on the family – so he told one of the lecturers and he said, you know what, why don’t you do first year BSc and take the exact same subjects that 1<sup>st</sup> year Med students would take and then if you get Cum Laude in all of them you can just actually say you want to do second year Meds and they can’t actually stop you; and that’s how he ended up doing it. So he thought of a different way of doing the same thing he wanted and getting into second year Med school the year after.</p>
<p>Alright, so would I be correct in saying that’s a pretty good example of how he sort of was</p>	<p>Exactly (giggle) it’s just thinking of creative or different ways of how to handle a situation, don’t</p>

<p>resilient, to take a different way around.</p>	<p>just think that going one way is the answer, you might have to look at different avenues to get where you want to go.</p>
<p>Right, and then you also did mention that during the time of where you felt an inferiority complex as you mentioned with regards to all your siblings having studied something, or currently studying something, and you were busy playing “mom” back home, how do you feel, when you mentioned you were depressed back then, how do you feel you got out of that, and were resilient after – to be where you are now? No don’t worry – relax.</p>	<p>I just thought to myself – you know what – when I made the decision to stay at home, it was my decision and if I had to think back I would never have changed my decision – I WANTED to stay at home because now my parents and they are the ones that at the end made sure – you know, I was the most important to my parents and I think that already, for me, is a big plus. Sorry, I’m going to start crying. Whenever I talk about it I get a bit emotional. Um, I don’t think I would change things, because it gave me the opportunity to spend time with them, especially when they were really sick and there was no-one else that they could count on. And if you look at my sister – even now – she’s the Pharmacist, for Pete’s sake – if something, I mean, she battled to fall pregnant, she finally had a little daughter, but every 5 seconds she’s phoning me – this one’s doing this, what now, and I would tell her you should know! But no, she’ll phone me cos I’ve had 2 kids – I’ve got 2 boys, but she keeps phoning me – even if it’s just going to get her licence renewed – how do I do this, who do I go and see, because she doesn’t know that – she’s not street smart – she’s head smart – but not street smart.</p>
<p>So I would basically be correct in saying that you were a pillar of strength for your family during that time when things were upside down?</p>	<p>I don’t think it was only me; it was a lot of people I think. It was a combined effort and we all just helped each other out. It was a difficult time for everyone, and I think we just sort of leaned on each other – and when I was upset and crying my little brother always used to come and tell me to cheer up, or he would buy me a chocolate or he’ll do something silly to make me laugh – I think that’s why the two of us get on very, very well, and no matter what we will do anything for each other.</p>
<p>Alright, and with regards to that, how important are relationships or maybe very mutual, reciprocal relationships, where you know, like you say you could lean on your little brother but in return he can lean on you too. How important is that in being resilient?</p>	<p>No, it’s very important; I think that if it wasn’t for my support structure it would have been easy for me to crumble. I’m very fortunate that my Dad was the youngest of 7 brothers and 2 sisters, a very big family, so we were, um, I don’t know if you know about Indian families, when we were very young we were all brought up together so my Dad’s 7 brothers were all living in one house with their wives and kids until it became too small and</p>

	<p>then we started buying separate houses – but most of my cousins I – I actually don't refer to them as my cousins because we were all brought up in the same house – so I refer to them as my brothers, I don't differentiate between cousins and brothers – and even now – I mean if I just have to pick up the phone – there will be like a 100 people at my house. I kid you not! Um, I mean we had one of my nephews passing away in a car accident a couple of weeks ago and just made one phone call and the message spread and within ½ hour all – every single member of the family – were at home. We had like 120 people at home and that was just immediate family.</p>
<p>Now that's support structure for you!</p>	<p>Hmmm, if I phone, if I'm running late for work, if I just phone one of my cousins and I say, you know what I'm running late he says you know what, don't worry I'll go and pick up the kids – then he goes to pick them up, takes them for extra-curricula's – he's got his grand-daughter so he takes her along ... I don't have to worry. If I'm late and I haven't cooked by the time they get home one of my sister-in-laws Will phone me, you see, again I don't differentiate between cousins' sister-in-law, but they will phone me and say are you at home and if I'm still on my way home then before I even get there, I bet you they would have sent food. She would have cooked because she is at home most of the time and she's not even 5 minutes from home but she'll make sure and she'll send food, and every Sunday, like clockwork, we have to go to their house, which is my Dad's eldest brother's house, that's where we parked the big bakkie, um, we got to his house every Sunday – the whole family gets together for Sunday lunch and everyone just brings something and then we all just have a big treat (giggle) on a Sunday. We catch up, and sometimes we miss a couple of people cos they've got other functions or something - we all – every Sunday gather at that house and if one week goes and he doesn't see us he phones and says where were you? He's 92 – he'll shout at you, he'll say... why didn't I see you? Complains! So I think family as a support structure is very, very, very, very important!</p>
<p>Alright, and then in the first question you mentioned that there were actually quite a few experiences where you could demonstrate</p>	<p>Um, there's quite a few other situations that happened, um, after I got married and – ok – I don't know if I can – OK this is off the record,</p>

<p>resilience; is there anything else that you would maybe like to touch on – that we haven't spoken about before?</p>	<p>basically once you get married you're not supposed to marry into another cast, other than your own, so Hindus have a cast of their own, so when I got married, I married into a cast other than my own, so we belong to the cast of farmers and they belong to the cast of barbers, like cutting your hair, like um, the way they did things and the way we do things is very different, especially in the way that we pray – I told you my parents were converted and they had a huge issue about it and um, just things got very ugly at one stage um, where we had to move out of our house because of it, and it wasn't, but now if you look at it – it was just the situation because they didn't understand my background and they weren't happy about it and Indians tend to over dramatize a lot of things, I must be honest, they do. Um, so we had to move out but now if you look at it um, it was a good move because now my Mother-in-law is my best friend. Um, and My new sister-in-law isn't her best friend. I'm not saying that in a bad way but it just made her realize that things that I used to do, little things that I used to do for her meant a lot to her but she didn't realize that at the time and now every weekend comes she phones my husband, please can I come and stay over, she looks for every opportunity to stay over. We've asked her to move back in with us but she refuses to leave her house because she is also very stubborn – because that's the house that her husband bought for her and she's not moving – that kind of thing, but um, there's a lot of things that have happened, I mean, one of my cousins, we were very, very close, she passed away on that Helderberg plane crash – so that also – there were so many other things that happened in our family – not only in our personal lives - but also stuff at work – where you get upset because decisions get made and you have no control over it. I mean there was once when I had one of my top brokers, they are my platinum writers with us, and because of the whole segmentation, I'm not sure if Fil told you about segmentation; our units were taken away and they placed brokers with the person they felt was the best OK, so I lost my platinum writers, I was really miffed because now my earning potential was next to nothing – so that time I said – you know, bugger</p>
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	<p>it I'm going to find my own brokers and I'm going to see what I can do, so I signed on a couple of new brokers and, guess what, 3 months down the line</p> <p>Those platinum brokers were begging for me back, because they were not used to that – the new person that with put with them – she was messing things up in a big way and they liked the way that I worked – it used to be a smooth process – if they asked me something and I didn't know, I got them the answer by the end of business, so they couldn't work the other way. So I went back to the top.</p>
<p>OK, and how do you – what kind of key aspects or personality traits do you think that a person should have or that you have to be resilient?</p>	<p>Um, I'm a bit stubborn, persistent, um, the one thing I think would be a downside which I know I have, I'm very, very overly sentimental. Not only sentimental but sensitive if I can call it. So if someone says something or does something it really hurts me, I would be like upset for days but then I'll eventually get over it, but to be resilient you shouldn't let your emotions sort of rule what your thinking is because it just makes me do stupid things – trust me, it makes me get cross with that person and I have a problem, I can't keep quiet, I say what's on my mind, um, whereas everybody else might go and tell somebody else and somebody else and the story comes back it's different, I tell that person to their face, I'll tell them they were wrong, I tell them to their face, so there are some people in the office who might not like me but that's just so, can't help it (giggle)</p>
<p>(Giggle) And anything else that you feel - you mentioned that you felt resilience was a learnt trait, that you had to learn, um, what do you feel was most important in learning how to do that, were there any personality traits there or any sort of methods, resources, anything you can touch on that made you – or that you can attribute to resilience?</p>	<p>I'm thinking about incidences in particular, I mean like when my Mom and Dad were in hospital and we had to now make a plan – buy the stuff for the packaging for the .. we grew spinach and broccoli... so we had to pre-pack them and then deliver them to the market, and at some point we ran short of a lot of things, and to get them, and you don't have a drivers licence and to drive all the way to City Deep to buy the stuff on your own – I mean – you had to think of very creative ways (giggle), so apart from having family who said OK fine we will take you or whatever, we had to juggle around a full time job, juggle around going to feed Mom and Dad in hospital um, you know, it was difficult for us um, and then we just sort of – OK my brother and I structured plans for the day, so we say OK, market deliveries he'll do one day and I'll do the</p>

	<p>next day so then he would plan stuff for the next day for the farm workers to do, so we had a sort of schedule that we used to draft and that's the only way we felt we could cope because we used to be sort of real school children – time tables – but then after a while it started becoming the norm. We just felt that we had to find ways, um, or find means of doing things.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned that you have 2 boys. How do you feel what you parents told you, as well as the experiences that you went through in terms of resilience, how do you think it will reflect on them if they ever had to go through something like that?</p>	<p>That's just one of the questions that my husband and I had the other day, we said, you know, our children have things so easy I mean we put them in a good school, they've got everything that they want, um, they don't know what it is to have hardships – so what we – we have this thing in the community – I belong to the Pattadar community which is the community of farmers, and the Pattadar community have youth groups and women groups that go out and do charitable work and you actually go and you can see what hardships these kids face, or the elderly face, or whatever</p> <p>So we decided, you know what, for them, um, they've got a reward chart for a week, so they've got to have X amount of stars before we give them a treat and X amount of activities they've got to do before we give them another treat. So, one of the things that we put on there is they need to do charitable work, and they need to tell us how it feels to see someone else suffer because that's the only way they are going to understand – you know what – my Mom and Dad really, really work hard, because .... We noticed, my eldest one, he's going to be 13 – he just takes it for granted – he knows he's going to get it – he's not worried where it comes from – how his Mom and Dad work hard for it, so we said that's not on, and now he's got to work, if he wants extra pocket money he's going to have to do chores in the house. So we making it difficult, so now – I know before I had kids I said, I'm not going to let them do this, I'm not going to let them say this... but you know, we have to be cruel to be kind. Because we have noticed that with Prachant, he doesn't appreciate things and things that we buy him, things that we give him – you know it's taken us a long time to earn the money - and then if you give it to them , you know he doesn't take proper care of it; whereas Ravire – we started from small – he's 5 years old now – but</p>

	<p>you notice he packs things away, he looks after it and then he gets cross if his brother doesn't appreciate, and then he also stands up a lot, he ... their personalities are very different and we've noticed that, one likes the outdoors and is very outgoing, whereas the other one – he'll be happy if you just gave him his computer and he'll just sit in the corner, not talk to anyone and be on the computer the whole day. They like chalk and cheese, so now we said, OK , no more computers – we put a password on his laptop – which was my old agency laptop, so we said OK, the only time you get to use the laptop is when you are doing homework. So that's why we put a password on it, if we outside in the garden, he must be outside with us, otherwise, nothing. He's into the swimming thing, so if he wants to go swimming he needs to lose the attitude ... (giggle)</p>
<p>So with regards to that in terms of your kids, or with anyone in your life really do you feel that, especially when you were, as you said, when you and your brother had a schedule, you had to go to the market, you had to go to work, there were things that you sort of HAD to do, do you feel that discipline is an important thing in resilience?</p>	<p>Yes, I think discipline is a very important thing, especially if you looking at the environment we are working in now, we've got X amount of brokers that we look after and if you work on a calling pattern, so then X amount of ... most of the days I see X, Y, and Z, so I've got to ... Monday I see Prism and I see Global Asset Management and Tuesday I would go to another broker, Thursday is one of my busiest days, I see 11 brokers in one day – but 8 of which are in one brokerage, so it's not a huge train smash... but just planning like that, being disciplined, making sure that I go every single week without failure, I think is the secret behind my success, because if I'm in the face of the broker all the time – even if I know all the time there's nothing for me to give him or there's no planned marketing call for today or I don't know what I'm going to say to him because there nothing really to talk to him about – just going there, and even if it's talking about 5 minutes of junk, he sees you and he'll feel bad – and say, you know I didn't give you a case this week, but I'll write 2 cases next week. That kind of thing. Just making sure you there when, like they expect you and then the day you don't come they'll say "what happened" so I think just following structured call planners – being more structured – that's been so successful for me.</p>
<p>OK, and going through what you did at such a young age and as you said being forced to deal</p>	<p>You know what, when my Mom and Dad was sick, it was a very, very emotional time for us and I</p>

<p>with the hardships, how do you think that's transferred into your work that you do now, what have you taken with you that helps you to be more resilient in being a Broker Consultant because you have to deal with all sorts of trials.</p>	<p>think, I'm not sure how or what the reason, but my brother and I are able to cope very well emotionally so if we get presented with horrible situations or, even if Brokers crap on us for something that Head Office has done, we don't take it THAT personally, but I do, I told you I get hyper-sensitive – I get really angry, I'll find out what the fault is, I'll fix it up and I'll prove to him, you know what, not everyone at Liberty is bad, but I do tend to sometimes get emotionally stressed out about the brokers, but it's not the end of the world, I think most of my brokers I have now, I think they understand me, they know me as a person and they know what they can expect from me. I mean Sandra de Compus used to be the most difficult broker on the planet, nobody wanted her, and then I got her and now she's my best friend, she give me business – she even LOADS the cases herself (giggle) but if she has a problem she'll phone me and moan, moan, moan and I'll just ignore her and I say OK Sandra what do you want me to do, and she'll say OK do this. So, you know, you get to know the brokers' personalities and then you know how you have to deal with them, you just adapt yourself to the broker, I mean Len Tindall is one of the brokers that's very analytical and he's very rigid – you mustn't talk fun things, or you mustn't Deviate from the topic because he hates that – he likes structure – he calls to discuss premium plans and that's that – don't try and discuss my cats or dogs or anything – he won't respond. So you just have to adapt yourself to every different broker personality.</p>
<p>OK, so you speak a lot about adapting, um, would you say that's another thing that you need in resilience, is to be able to adapt to a situation?</p>	<p>Yes, you have to, and the thing is um, if you wanted to get on with everyone and you want them to give you the business you've got to also try and put yourself in the brokers shoes and understand what he's going through and what he wants and try and sort of align yourself to what he, um, what he requires.</p>
<p>Alright and how would you say that um, we spoke about stress, and anybody's job has a decent amount of stress and it's the way the world of work goes...? And how do you feel, going through everything you did at such a young age, and becoming resilient, how did you feel that you being resilient</p>	<p>It's just how you cope with the stress everyday.....  It does, it eases off a lot because I don't take too much – I don't work hard, I work smart if you know what I'm saying. A lot of the BC's on the floor – they running and</p>

<p>now eases off stress if any?</p>	<p>chasing their tails most of the time, um, with me, I've taught my brokers, this is how you load an app – make them do it, I don't do it. If they need to follow up on something, I show them on the system how their assistants can follow up – they do the following up – only if there's issues, then I'll work in the office with the brokers – if I go and see a broker and he says you know what: there's X Y and Z that needs to be done, I'll do it in his office there and then before I walk out the door – so when I come back to the office there's nothing for me to do. The other BC's will sit her for 2 or 3 hours stressing to get their Admin done.</p>
<p>Alright then, am I correct in saying that it's definitely time management and ....</p>	<p>Correct and not only that um, I don't know what's the correct word, um, it's, they are completely stressed out, if you look at BC's a lot of them are quite stressed out because the brokers ... there's just SO much admin .... I mean that's one of the reasons why they got all of us assistants – support BC's – to assist us with the Admin because no-one was coping, but I was coping fine on my own and I – that's why I said I must just take my stuff back because there are more mistakes in the stuff Warren has done than if I had done it myself the first time it would have been correct. But now, to double check what someone else has done – that's an added stress to me. So I'd rather do it on my own.</p>
<p>Alright, and is there anything in closing that you would like to mention about ,,,</p>	<p>I don't know if this will help you but Liberty did an analysis on all the BC's, so we had to fill in a whole lot of questions and then a lot of people around us, our brokers, other BC's, had to fill in a questionnaire on us, so they would tell us what our personality traits were and how resilient we were on a graph and the closer you are to the axis are shows you how resilient you are to meet the other characteristics. I think I've got the book somewhere at my desk if you want it. Um, but it shows the BC's resilience how they can adapt to an analytical broker as opposed to an amiable broker or um, demanding broker – you know – driver broker – so we've had that done – so I don't know if you will want to look at that because – for a person to be a BC the main thing that that test does is their resilience. Because if you are a BC you have to be resilient to be able to mould yourself to</p>

	the brokers um, personality traits.
Alright and how do you... just on that note before we end off ... how do you feel that working in this environment allows you to express that resilience? Does this environmental organisation culture allow you to do that, to express your resilience and to be as resilient as you can be?	Ja, it does and a lot of the things, if you look at, if you want to be more successful in this environment you have to be resilient, that's the one thing you have to be, resilient. Because any situation can crop up and you have to deal with it, and how you deal with it, and how you achieve the success or failure out of it, is what's going to define you as a person.
Alright and how did you do on that, on resilience, on the axis?	I was very close to the axis, so it basically tells you that I can mould, go to any of the character traits, or I can mimic any other character trait, basically.
OK, so as you mentioned before, am I correct in sayings it's about you adapting to different personalities and allowing yourself to see their interests?	Yes definitely.
Alright, and is there anything else you would maybe like to elaborate on, an experience or an emotion with regards to resilience?	NO.
Alright – well – thank you for your time ...	I hope this helps.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 19 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand about the construct or your own personal definition of resilience?	Of resilience – shoo – well basically to be able to obviously being strong, to be able to roll with the punches, I suppose in a way, um, so whatever life throws at you and being able to get through that, move past it, and move on.
And when in your life did you feel you had to demonstrate that kind of resilience? Can you chat to me about a couple of experiences?	Um, ja sure, let me think. Not a lot (giggle) I've been pretty lucky in my life to be honest, but I think it's things like – I've been with Liberty so long, I've been through three retrenchments so that's also like being able to build yourself up to say everything's going to be OK, or we can get past this, or you know what, if I do get retrenched, thinking past that and to say "what am I going to do" instead of putting myself into a position where I sit there and go oh, or become withdrawn or something like that. I think that's one of them. Because it is a tough time, retrenchment, um moving house for me was the worst ever... I swore I would never move again. So ja, and we haven't moved since. I think years and years ago when I first met Greg his father passed away quite early and we split up because he felt he had to look after his Mom and you don't necessarily

	<p>understand why – I suppose he now wants to leave you because he wants to look after the family and from his point of view it’s a totally different side of things and I think ... because you you’re trying to build your life together and suddenly you are faced with this – and ja, how will we get through this now – will we ever get back together, you know, that kind of thing. Ja, I haven’t had much in my life from a really heavy point of view where I’ve had to be .... Nothing sort of death wise in terms of really close family or anything like that, so ja.</p>
<p>Alright, and can you tell me more about the resilience you showed through the retrenchments that you faced?</p>	<p>I think the first one that we went through was – I remember I was working in Pretoria – and they were actually closing the whole department. For me the biggest thing was – not for myself – but being strong for my team, and getting them through it and all I was doing was helping them trying to find them jobs and positions everywhere and going for interviews at other companies and stuff rather than myself. I know that it hit me quite hard and we also had a blubs at home because of that because I was so focused on my team and getting them through this whole thing so I wasn’t really thinking about balance at work and home.... That was my sole focus, is making sure that they were OK. I was going to be OK anyway, type of thing. So I think it’s about going into work every day and try and get them to understand that no matter what, we would actually get through this, despite the fact that – as I say – I was part of that whole thing, I wasn’t showing that I was part of it purse, I was showing them that I was there for them. As I say, it was a part of going through that whole thing and you were going through it just as much. I wasn’t showing the emotions – sort of – that might have been – you sort of lock them away – be strong – show them that everything is going to be OK – going to work with a smile on your face – you know, because I think for me, if I kind of fell apart, you know, maybe it would have put a different spin on it, I don’t know. So emotionally I think I kind of blocked that. Ja, so emotionally I said I’m not going to cry, I’m not going to break down, you know you’ve got to get through this so...ja, apparently I do that.</p>
<p>OK, and with regards to the second or third retrenchment? Same sort of thing or anything</p>	<p>Um, the one was more of a voluntary one, so we knew that people would actually ... that really had</p>

<p>different there with regards to resilience?</p>	<p>no sort of effect purse. Um, the last one was very different; it was just a case where we had to apply – again for our jobs or for a job – within that same arena. That was very different, that was for me I think anger more than being strong or blocking it – ja, I suppose I was quite angry – I was quite put out. I had been managing the training team in Joburg and when we went through these whole things, we had to re-apply for jobs – I don't think .... I suppose it's bad but you almost anticipate that well, they not going to put any-body else there, because nobody else could apply for those jobs outside of the actual team. Ja, I think it was anger because when they actually announced I didn't get that position, I um, there was 2 other people that were – I wouldn't say lower than me cos that's not the right word – but um, if you want to call it subordinate to me, and the one that really annoyed me the most was that fact that he'd nearly been fired a couple of years previously. So I think for me that was more sort of ... emotionally I was angry and I actually went to Jo and said "explain to me, we been running this ... so I think I was ... it was a totally different emotion, it wasn't one of I suppose, fighting for the team, it was almost fighting for myself. I think I was angry then, I wasn't upset or anything, I was quite put out because somebody else had got the job.</p>
<p>And how did you bounce back from those – so to speak – how did you get from experiencing so much anger within the same company to now being a Branch Manager?</p>	<p>Well, exactly that, I um, shortly after that, Janice was looking for a branch manager which obviously I knew because I worked in the same arena and so basically I thought, well that's it, I'm moving onto something else – so I actually approached Janice and said to her look I know you have a branch manager's position and I know how it works and I said to her um, you know they ask you to look at somebody else or whatever and she said to me ja, I do and then I said well let me know because I'll apply for it, so basically I think it was more - from my point of view – it was almost like a "toffee" to say, well stuff you I'm gonna kind of go and do something else.</p>
<p>Alright, and how do you feel resilience helped you to basically get where you are today in terms of the experience that you had with the retrenchments?</p>	<p>I think really it was just going into something specifically like this because I always swore I'd never work on commission, so I think it was really more of proving to everybody that actually I could. It was a case of Ja, I'm going to do this and I'm going to do it to the best of my ability. I'm going to</p>

	<p>prove – I don't think necessarily to anyone else because I don't think everybody else doubted that I could do it – but I think more to myself. I'd been paid a set salary for so many years – ja, it was almost proving it to myself that I could do it. ... And here we are 5 years later. So that's really it, I got tucked in to something new in one aspect, because it's obviously a total different angle on things and I think I just put my whole self into it and say, I'm gonna do this. It was actually for once some-thing that I was going to do for ME. I needed to take the bull by the horns and say I CAN do this.</p>
<p>So would I be correct in saying that facing challenges or tackling challenges is definitely a key aspect in being resilient?</p>	<p>Oh absolutely. For sure, you have to take things head on.</p>
<p>Alright, and with regards to previous experiences that you mentioned with your spouse's Father passing away, how did you demonstrate resilience then, when there wasn't much in your control – you couldn't really be pro-active as you were in your work place, how were you resilient there?</p>	<p>I think being supportive on that side in one way because we were still friends, it wasn't that we at logger heads or something like that, but really saying to myself, well you know you can't sit here waiting for the rest of your life, so you need to actually move on, so I went out and bought my own house and moved in with a colleague friend of mine who was getting divorced and ja, so I really just said I'm not going to sit around here waiting or sulking about it you know, you have to move on with life and so ja, I packed my stuff and literally packed up and moved on and said well that's it. I think going out there and being – showing the whole independence this, because I'd never been on my own or bought a house either, so this was like ja. ....</p>
<p>So would I be correct in saying that having to face new and different aspects of life also forces one to grow and so as a result makes you resilient?</p>	<p>Oh yes definitely...</p>
<p>And on that note of growing – an aspect that comes to mind is something like change and having to adapt, how do you think that resilience plays a part with that?</p>	<p>I think change is a big thing, it's something that a lot of people don't deal with – people don't like change generally – it depends what change actually brings with it. There is change for the better which is always great, every-body likes that, but when it's change maybe because of a necessity, um, like in most things, I think resilience plays a big role. You actually have to think about fitting in to that and moving ahead and developing and like you say, growing and changing your mind set in terms of certain things. As I say, it depends on what change brings, change generally brings a whole thing of either development or growing or change in mind-</p>

	<p>set, um, that's what I would say.</p>
<p>Then just with regards to again the example of your spouse's Father passing away, how much do you think social support or a support structure plays a role in being resilient?</p>	<p>I think it plays a huge part in being resilient. Support structures whether it be friends, family colleagues or what-ever it might be I think assist in that whole process because I think if you are alone in that, things go through your mind and you talk yourself in and out of different things, whereas I think sometimes it's when you sit with people that are there just either from a silent point of view, just to know they are there or from a point where you can just talk to anybody, bounce stuff off them, they come back with – whether it be ideas – or they put different things in your mind to think about – so I think it puts a different spin into terms of your thinking process um, because you not just swirling around in your own mind what you know and re-hashing it and take this and then that and re-hashing it – you can actually talk yourself in and out for the rest of your life, and I think drive yourself crazy – so I think support structures are certainly what got me through – really plenty, whether it's just an ear.... I remember when Greg and I split up, I mean I was around my friends every night, they fed me, watered me, um, I would just pitch up there and I was comfortable with them, I was comfortable in their space, in their home, cos I know I could rock up there any time and they were there.</p> <p>And they would just BE there. So I think it does, whether it's – like I say – someone that you just going to sit with maybe talk about it or not, and with other people I think you have different support structures. There are people that you can really talk to and hash through it and then there are others that you just want to be in their company, you feel ... you actually just feel great being in their company.... You don't want to talk about a specific issue ...</p> <p>So definitely, support .... I don't think I can do it on my own. As I said, I'm very fortunately to have a great support structure in family and friends; I think it plays a huge role in terms of getting you through those things.</p>
<p>Alright. What role do you think positivity or positive emotions play in being able to stand up again?</p>	<p>Huge. I'm a very, very positive person. I think if you are positive about going through life and those challenges life throws at you, I think you actually deal with them at a different level – better – because obviously there's lots of things that get</p>

	<p>you down in life, but you can't let them drag you right down that you become .... Well I don't. This day to day at work – I mean small things – some people really let it upset them but it's all about the attitude and how you .... Because at the end of the day it's only you yourself that can actually get over that and be positive. I</p> <p>Can't walk in here and say to you "you must be positive today" I can't do that, I can say you need to do X,Y, and Z today but I can't make you positive about it. I look around the office and you can see people who get over the humps a lot easier if they have the right attitude in terms of being- you know what, push it aside and let's move on! Let's not dwell on it. I unfortunately battle with people that have that negative attitude all the time; to me they are like, heavy (giggle) like bricks. They drag not only themselves down but also people around them if you don't ignore it and just move past it. So Ja, I think having a positive attitude really helps with getting through stuff – with resilience and being more resilient.</p>
<p>OK and how did you have a positive attitude when you were being retrenched, when things weren't going so well with your spouse?</p>	<p>I think it's really a thing of, you know what, I've got.... Firstly despite the fact that you getting retrenched... I think it's a case of you know what, I know that I'll be OK, I know that I'll find a job – even if it wasn't at Liberty, I knew that I would find something else. OK – you just have to tell yourself that you CAN do it. So it was a case of ... I'm always telling myself that I'm fortunate enough to have great friends and fabulous family and stuff like that so it's all about just ... for me it's look at the things that you have in life as opposed to maybe the things that you don't. You know, I've got my health, I've got 2 legs, 2 arms, I can see, I've got all these wonderful things. I think it's for me, there's always people far worse off in terms of what I've got, and even then in that first retrenchment, shoo it was years ago, in 1993, um, 1995 sorry – and I think – ja it was a case of – in those days we weren't faced with some of the challenges in terms of BEE like these days, so I think then for me it was fine, I mean I knew that I would find a job and I would find a job for every single one of my people – I would find a job! If not, I'd find something to do, you know, keep me busy, keep me going, there's plenty of opportunity out there and I think it's how you look at it.... To be honest.</p>

<p>Alright, would I be correct then in saying that both ways in terms of seeing something or knowing that it's going to be OK that factors such as relief and future orientated thinking play an important role in being resilient?</p>	<p>Yes, I would say so, definitely. Because I think if you don't think positively and believe in yourself and believe in everything that you know you are capable of you would drag yourself down and then you'd really have nothing. I think you need to think about – who am I – what can I do – what skills do I have – what can I offer to someone – and it might not be something that you are doing now, I mean there are always some skills that you can offer. Even now I think, Oh well, what happens if I decide I really don't want to do this anymore, what then, I'm always thinking about later, what would I like to do, what can I start, maybe studying but maybe later on in life when I don't want to have a full-time job or whatever – what do I want to do, and I I'm thinking about that the whole time. I think, that's what I love, that's what I'd like to do, and I think Oh, what about retirement, what am I going to do, that sort of thing. So ja, I was always thinking about developing and what can I do, what skills can I grow, what can I look at – so it's moving forward the whole time, not backwards, not dwelling in the past.</p>
<p>OK, so again, would I be correct in saying that it's like a future goal behaviour, that you've got to having something you keep working towards that keeps you going or specifically what kept YOU going?</p>	<p>For sure. It's always about moving forward, you can't dwell on the past, you can't live in the past – it's happened, you can't change it and no matter how much sit and dwell on it it's not going to change – it's already happened – so you have to always think future – you know – what's out there. What can I be doing, you know, and what can I look forward to in the future.</p>
<p>Then, in terms of resilience do you think that it is a learnt trait, something you learn with the experiences you go through or do you think it's more something that you are born with or that you folks might have given you?</p>	<p>It's a hard one! I actually think that in a way it's something that might be inbred, I'm not sure that it's something that you can teach somebody. I think it's something that you just have in you in terms of your make-up, in terms of the way you think. I don't think you can teach someone resilience, you kinda have to have it in you – you go round and you see so many people who just give up – so if it was something that you could teach people I'm not so sure so many people will just give up. That's my opinion; I think you've got it in your make-up... Um, maybe ja, you are born with it – maybe it's something that your parents teach you, I don't know, but I think it's something more IN YOU.</p>
<p>Alright and do you think that the experiences that you've been through in life – obviously the ones</p>	<p>Not necessarily, although sham, people that get knocked back and forth the whole time – gee, they</p>

<p>that were harder and required more tenacity and more focus, and more of a challenge – do you think that people who have more incidents of that kind of experience are more resilient than people who haven't been through that much?</p>	<p>are resilient. I'm not sure that they are MORE resilient, they just have to deal with it in a different way. I think that whatever knocks life throws at you – well I believe if you have that in your make-up – you get over them and sort of just keep moving forward. Maybe they are more resilient, I don't know., I don't think so, I think people are resilient to sort of whatever gets thrown their way, whether it be 5 x a year, shame that would be really terrible, or whether it's once every 5 years – I don't know.</p>
<p>OK, items No. 8 on the scale that we had people do, "I am friends with myself" although a very ambiguous question, you were neutral on that score of 4 between strongly agree and strongly disagree, being a positive person how do you relate that sentence or that statement to resilience?</p>	<p>I think for me, as I say, I am always positive, I think part of that is because I maybe tend to be a bit hard on myself, so I don't perhaps also allow things to drag me down or what-ever. I think it's maybe that – I remember where that question came from – but I think it's maybe because I tend to be quite hard on myself and I also tend to..... ja I think I am friends with myself; I don't hate myself, definitely not. But I think I am quite hard in terms of me, can I do better? I should be able to do better, did I do enough there? You know that sort of thing, so I think it's ... ja, I do tend to be a bit hard on myself.</p>
<p>Again, would I be correct in saying that that sort of ... it can relate to determination or expectation, always wanting more, would that – for you – be strongly linked to resilience?</p>	<p>Yes. I would say so.</p>
<p>OK, and then item No. 15 on the same scale "I keep interested in things" you were also very neutral on that score, once again between strongly agree and strongly disagree. How do you feel that being interested in some-thing – because we spoke about goal directed behaviour – how do you feel that plays a part in resilience?</p>	<p>I think it does, and I think whether I'm interested in it or not - so if it's something that really interest me, then I can be but if it's something that I sort of have to go through that I maybe am not overly interested in – if it's not part of my thing I want to do then I'll be less interested in it if I can say, it's not that I'm totally disinterested, but I tend to become unfocused on stuff that I've really got no interest in. So for me, and it's been a thing for a long time, I'm a person who – if you speak to me and show me things – I can relate to that kind of thing, but if you had to hand me a dissertation or something, I'll just switch off, unless I'm interested in it. If it's something that grabs me – great! Something like the Newspaper – doesn't do it for me at all. I will find out what the news is from other sources, either from watching the news or what someone tells me, but I have no interest in something like that –so it depends on, in terms of my goal orientation where I am, so I'm resilient if</p>

	<p>it's something I really want. I don't necessarily focus as much on something that I don't really want.</p>
<p>OK, so could we say that resilience, or your interest in something in terms of resilience is indicated by your motivation to relate to it.</p>	<p>Ja.</p>
<p>And then, item No. 25 "It's OK if there are people who don't like me" you strongly disagree, can you elaborate on that with regards to resilience?</p>	<p>Giggles.... Um, I think it might relate back to the other thing .... Um, are you friends with yourself. I think ... I don't actually like it when people DON'T like me, or I think they don't like me. Obviously you go through life and not every-body likes you. I'm not saying that everybody has to love you or leave you, or something like that, but for me it.... I strive to be a good person and get things done and help other people and so ja, for me, one of those things to go through life – it really kind of hurts me if people don't like me because then maybe they are not seeing the real me, kind of thing, ja its um, it's like running the branch now – I've got a very different team now to what I had before and my team before was great, we got on well and every-body liked me, whereas now I know that sometimes I have to make decisions and say stuff that ..... you know, you don't necessarily want to – but have to get in across there and then they don't like YOU but yet it's not YOU, it's not me that's passing it down, so "don't shoot the messenger" type of thing. I don't like that feeling where everyone is glaring at me – but ja, we do go through life, there are people that don't like me, but it's almost a personal affront on me, I know it's not but I think it's ..... I'm not sure how that could relate back to resilience? I mean, it doesn't stop me but I will try harder I think, with that person, ja, I'll try harder to maybe change their perception – so I suppose resilience would be trying harder, pushing harder with that person rather than somebody else.</p>
<p>Could you tell me, if you were in a situation – especially because you are a manager and I'm sure you come across it often – where someone, or you get the impression that someone doesn't like you – or by chance you hear that someone doesn't like you - how do you persevere with that person in terms of being resilient with them, like you say you try harder?</p>	<p>I think it's really just that I approach them.... Not from that point of view or going to say Oh you don't like me or any-thing like that, I think it's really just being myself and showing them that actually .... I really try to go in and sort of chat to them, you know, just having a general chat, like how's things going and just finding out more about them like what exactly makes them tick. I think that maybe, once again, that I care,... I wouldn't go in bulldozing with guns blazing ... but it's really</p>

	just making sure that I speak to them, not try and avoid them, um, because that also sometimes – you thing, oh well they don't like me so I'm just going to avoid them – I don't do that. I chat and just be normal in an attempt to show them that (giggle) actually I am a nice person you know.
So would you then say that perseverance is important if you want to demonstrate resilience?	Yes.
Can you tell me, in your own personal opinion, what personality traits or characteristics do you think an individual has for them to be resilient?	I think they have to be ... have a really good attitude in terms of being positive and I think sort of being – apart from having support groups – be independent – be able to stand on your own.... Positive, definitely positive, or as positive as one can be under the circumstances. I think sometimes, how I can put it, standing up to face things, so being kind of- waking up every day and saying well, "I can do this" um, it all relates to being positive. You've got to be independent – I think – and sometimes I suppose a hard look at yourself and know who you are and ja, I think just being able to think things through, being able to run through stuff and talk yourself into moving ahead. You've got to have a goal, you've got to be sort of goal orientated To be able to get through something.
Alright, then just in closing, is there anything that you would like to add with regards to an experience or some-thing you feel about resilience, any additional comments or anything you might have thought about during the interim of our conversation?	No, nothing. Giggle.
Alright – thank you very much for your time.	Thanks Jess.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 20 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand about the construct or per personal definition of resilience?	Resilience – um – I would probably say its ja..... I don't know what you're looking for?
No right or wrong answer, just whatever you understand by it.	Um, resilience, OK probably on an individual basis I think um, along the lines of what someone can take on a day to day basis, I'm not 100% sure though.
Alright and can you relate to any experiences where you had to do that, where you had to take things on a day to day basis or if you had to say manage as well as you could?	Ja, probably every day (giggle) no I'm joking, um, ja, in my work environment, I mean I've had to put up with different personalities and people that I probably normally wouldn't want to put up with

	but have to, based on work so you know, if I'm even on the right path, I don't know.....
No, it's completely what you understand and your own description of whatever it may be.	Alright, shoo
Maybe just to give you a bit of direction – resilience - being able to stand up in the face of adversity or deal with more difficult situations.	Ja, well, I suppose there are obviously positions and situations on a daily basis that we have to deal with you know, where clients aren't satisfied with either something that we have done or service levels aren't right or you know, from facing normal day to day challenges, um ja, but I think that happens pretty much all the time and how we deal with that I suppose.
Alright, any other experiences, maybe personal experiences – things that happened to you in high school that you were able to get through – that kind of thing?	Um, are you looking specific sort of incidents or just general?
If you can give me specifics that would be fantastic.	Sure, probably my personal experience is that I'm probably not a great presenter, um, you know, so I don't like stand-ing I front of a crowd of people and talking – although I'm quite outspoken and loud – so ja, from a presentation point of view at school I absolutely dreaded it and I think working through that and facing that, and probably in a working environment as well, having to deal with those.... Cos you know, we are marketers and that's what we do, we need to run presentations, so that's one example. Um, ja, shoo, I don't know off hand.
Just to give you an example, a lot of people have spoken about things like deaths in the family, divorces.....	Oh Ja, lots of that – I've had my own personal challenges also divorce I suppose was a 'blood' test, you know, um, I was involved for 10 years and got married, was married for 5 ½ and was faced with affair after affair, so that's an example of dealing with resilience if you can call it that. And overcoming challenges there and also I suppose I was anti divorce so the fact that we actually did get divorced, and I asked for it, is quite an interesting event and um, ja...
And in terms of your divorce, how did you demonstrate resilience there, how did you stand up again after so much heartache?	Um, ja I think you kind of just go on with it, I mean you realize things will get better and you know, things aren't meant to be as you plan them, or you have no control over planning them so you kind of just go on. I suppose I also had to adjust my personal belief system because I was so anti divorce and then ended up getting divorced, I think I had to change and adjust certain things to be able to do that and know that I can get through

	it.
Alright, and then what sort of methods or what did you result to in terms of getting through it as you say, what played a part in helping you out?	Oh, my family and my friends were my support system. I buried myself in work for a while – and alcohol (giggle) for a while. My support system, I think, pretty much helped me through that.
Alright, and how important do you think a support system is in terms of being resilient?	I think it is quite important, I think from a certain aspect you can only carry on with things for so long and eventually you give up so, you know, I think if you've got the support of family or friends or peers then I think it is, it plays a role.
OK, and then you spoke about change and adjusting – how important is that in terms of being resilient?	Oh no, I would probably say that's one of the most important things, in my personal aspect – that you have to adapt to situations – I think you can't always see things in black and white – you have to kind of have a little bit of grey or whatever – colour – I think you have to, people are different and how they see things are different and how you adjust to them is also important.
You also spoke a little bit about a belief system, how much do you think that belief in either a system or yourself – or in anything really – plays a part in resilience?	Well, I think it's important, you know, if you don't have or believe that you can do things or have a belief system as in whatever you want to define it as – from a religious point of view or whatever – I think it is important, certain people rely on that to get them through day to day challenges – life challenges – ja, I would think it's kind of important.
Alright, and are there any other experiences that you can think of off- hand where you had to demonstrate resilience in that regard, maybe pulling on one of those resources to help you out through something?	Um, ja, no (giggle) not off-hand hey, um you putting me on the spot hey Jess (giggle).
You are more than welcome to take as much time as you like to think about what you want to say.	Shoo, ja, I can't think off-hand.
Alright, and what kind of personality characteristics do you think resilient people have?	Um, resilient people shoo, well I would think that you would have to stick at something. So I would probably say you are quite a go-getter come um, shoo, if I had to look at myself I mean I think you would want to achieve so you would certainly stick at something to break through whether it be with somebody or a company or whatever the case may be, personal or .... Um, so I think you would be ja, enjoy challenges – set goals and ja, something along those lines....
Alright, and in terms of emotion in being resilient do you think that has a hand in anything?	Ja probably – if you are too emotional you'll give up, and then probably find no worth in it and not sticking it through, um, and if you are un-emotional you won't see the need to go through with certain things so ja, I think you have to have

	some sort of – in-between balance.
Alright, with Item 3 on the resilience scale that we did in the board meeting it says “I am able to depend on myself more than anyone else” you marked 4 there, being very neutral, can you tell me a bit more about that?	I marked 4 did I? (giggle) Um, I’m able to depend more on myself than anyone else, um, ja I mean I think that there are a lot of people I can depend on but it also depends on your state of mind you know, where you are in a situation, ja. (giggle)
Is there any experience you can maybe tell me about where you had to depend on yourself more than anyone else?	I would probably refer to my divorce, um I don’t think people understand going through that, and how much you have to just keep going – maybe that.
Alright, and then item 19 “I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways” you marked 3 on that, falling more to disagree....	I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways.....I think I’m pretty much of a ‘black and white’ person most of the time so ja, I have a strong opinion in whichever direction so I kind of have to become a little bit more versatile, and one of MY problems personally – is that I am not as versatile as I should be. I’m strong opinionated so if I do believe in something then I kind of stick to it and I don’t hear out other people’s opinions.
OK and how important is that in being resilient? In terms of being versatile.	Well I think you need to be a little bit, to a point, um, I think everyone has to be a little versatile, I think once again it goes back to who you are dealing with and the personalities that you’re dealing with and what they want and how they view something. I would probably say it is quite.
Alright and in terms of looking at a situation in a number of ways, and we spoke about change earlier on and having to adjust, do you think that’s important in resilience?	I think probably, I would think you would have to adapt to certain people, um if they are too strong maybe you need to back down or ..... I don’t know, ja.
And in terms of resilience do you think it’s something you learn through experiences or do you think it’s something that you possibly get from your folks or ....	Well maybe, I suppose it could be how you were brought up and if you were forced to do certain things, because they do things a certain way, I would presume that that would play a role and then later on in life you may take on that/their view, I’m not sure but I think it could be a combination of life experience as well.
Other than your divorce was there any time in your life where you thought to yourself ‘Oh my word, I don’t know how I am going to get through this’?	Um, shoo, I would probably say that was the biggest challenge I’ve ever faced, um, not off hand if there is any-thing bigger than that or close to that or important, really. You know I see exams and things like that as a jinx you know, I don’t think - you know you can get through a lot of things but you do you know, and studying ja, tertiary education I think – varsity and college – whatever – um, but nothing on that scale. I’ve obviously had a few health issues so that might also be other times when I thought Oh. And ja, you

	don't always see a way out, but there is.
Alright, would you care to elaborate on health issues maybe?	Cool. About 4 years ago I was diagnosed with an over-active thyroid. I think at the time.... I like to read a lot.... So when someone tells me I've got something I read too much – have too much information – um ja, so automatically the black and white thinker ..... the more info you have the better, but it's also not – you know – it's automatically going to happen to you, so – obviously I had to go for various treatments like radioactive iodine therapy where they kill the thyroid and then they thought I had growths on my tertian and then we have the cancer scare and so ja, I mean those .... You have to keep going and the support system that you have is again important. So that would be one of the other important experiences I've had.
Alright, and how important is it to stay positive in these experiences or challenges?	Listen, I mean I'd love to say I've always stayed positive but I don't think you do, so I think it is important to believe that you are give something that you can handle, but I do think that you have doubt – well I do anyway – I'm automatically everything is bad person, so I work through that. So if someone tells me something I AUTOMATICALLY think it's bad before it's good and then I'll slowly figure out that there's good and it actually does work out and I ..... ja black and white thinking (giggle).
OK, can you tell me how you work through those things or something that comes to mind how that doubt situation starts getting a bit of light at the end of the tunnel?	Sure I suppose if I look at my health and when I was first diagnosed I automatically thought there's no way's I could fix this and that I will have to change how I live with the information I had at hand, you know, and that the only reason why you get this is because of cancer and the only reason why you have this is because of stress and so, if I look at it like that then I think the information plays a lot on how you react and working through that... shoo. I think that as the experience went on you know, the treatment went on, I started feeling better, the medication started working and then you discover it's not as bad as what was originally made out to be. Or you made it out in your own mind. Maybe?
Alright, so a little bit of hope in each situation was always the light at the end of the tunnel?	Yea,
Item No. 26 is either very blatant or subtle, but "I am resilient" you said strongly agree, can you	I think I feel that I'm resilient because I don't give up easily, I've got a goal and whether it takes me a

explain to me why you said that or what makes you feel that you are resilient?	day to get there or 5 months to get there or a year to get there, I'm GOING to get there. I think it's just a personal thing, either how I was brought up – probably how I was brought up – never give up and just continue to go for it, so ja I think I'm resilient because of that. I don't know if I am though (giggle), but I think I am.
OK, so will I be correct in saying that things like being driven or motivation are important in resilience?	Yes, I think so. I like the challenges and I like to know that I can do it.
Is there anything specific that you can relate to that gives you drive, gives you motivation?	Um, I think just general challenges, I mean work wise, I love being incentivized to be able to achieve something and make a mark, if I can call it that, um from a personal point of view probably the same, if I picture something I like or what I would like to do I generally will do it, or try to do it and if I start something I have to finish it. I am a bit anal (giggle) I can't let something be half is – it has to be done and done properly, so.... I'm a bit of a control freak I suppose.
Alright item No. 13 "I can get through difficult times because I have experienced difficulty before" you did say strongly agree with that in terms of the fact that you scored a 5 on a 1 – 7 scale, so how important do you think it is to have experienced difficulty before in order to attack another difficult situation?	Well I think if you haven't faced a lot you don't know how to conquer something, I think personal experiences do play a role or – I see it like that – I think it makes you stronger and those experiences define you if you can call it and make you who you are. Before I experienced all my, you know, the divorce, my health issues and whatever experiences I've had, I was probably very naïve and open to anything, but I think now I have formed an opinion on things, I have my belief system, I think I know what's right and wrong and how I would see right and wrong in my situation and so ja, I think all of that plays a role in moving forward. Ja definitely.
Ok, and is there anything else in losing that you would like to add, final comment – maybe something you thought of in the interim of the conversation?	No, not off hand.
Thank you for your time.	OK.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 22 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand about the word or construct, resilience? How would you define it personally?	Personally – it's not giving up. The way I see it, we all face challenges, some people just accept the challenge and some almost accept defeat. I think somebody with resilience will stand up to it and try

	<p>again you know, that whole concept of falling down and standing up.</p>
<p>Alright, fantastic. Can you explain to me any experiences with regards to that definition you gave me – are there any experiences in your life that you can relate to where you had to demonstrate that kind of resilience?</p>	<p>Um, OK – personal, it’s finding your husband (giggle) is the best way of explaining that. You know, if you meet these guys – it’s wow you know what’s out there – it’s the whole proverbial thing of kissing the frogs before you find your prince, so that’s on a personal level. Um, I only met my husband when I was 29 – so it was getting a bit old, thinking I’m never going to find a husband, (giggle) so that’s on the personal level. Business level is that I think when you looking for another job, and you apply and apply and you get turned down all the time and for various reasons – I’ve been in recruitment for a while, so, prior to being a BC, so I know it’s small things that sometimes people look at, sometimes it’s just the colour of your skin and they say sorry... So it’s also about not giving up cos there is something out there, the right job for you. When I do apply for a job, I actually don’t give up I just try and try and try again. So, ja, that’s on the business side.</p>
<p>Any other experience where you actually were, as you say, knocked down and you stand up again, anything that stands out in your mind?</p>	<p>I think with any new job you experience that where you start and you think to yourself, Oh hell, what have I done, this is really not what I thought it would be – so you do get that knock down sensation and say OK, I made a bad decision but you have to make the best of it. You know, just try, try very hard. Sometimes you have to change your personality in a working environment to be able to adapt to it, which I struggle with, but I do. Sometimes it a mind shift where you realize this is not what I wanted, this is not what I thought it would be but let’s see what we can get out of it. I believe everything that you do, no matter what it is, whether it be experiencing a bad nickel setback, or whatever it may be, I think teaches you something. It helps you in the future and you don’t realize it at the time, but it does. If you are in a career or a job and think to yourself – what the hell! Those things, that job, will teach you different skills. You tend to go to a more comfort zone – you know – this is what I know, this is what I want or expect so when you are in a career or a job that you think OK, now I’ve made a really bad decision it widens your skill base, it opens your eyes to see and think things differently. It’s that whole comfort zone I think.</p>

<p>Alright, and did you experience that when you started working here at Liberty Life or any other previous job?</p>	<p>At this specific job, I've been with Liberty for a while – um, my perception of a Broker Consultant and to what it was, was very different um, ja so I did experience that but I merged myself in it and I'm enjoying it.</p>
<p>What would you say – with regards to that experience – what would you say helped you – as we stay – stand up and choose to win rather than face defeat, what helped you in that situation?</p>	<p>Well, I thought about it a lot, and it was just a basic mind shift, you know, I could be unhappy, come to work and really be unhappy and that's most of your day gone – being unhappy – and I made a decision, I took a few days off I sat at home and thought about it and I realized, you know what, I've got a job, I'm earning an income, I work with nice people, let me get what I can out of it and um, ja.</p>
<p>You spoke about being unhappy or happy, do you think that being happy, or positive emotions play an important part in being resilient?</p>	<p>For sure.... Definitely – I think it goes hand-in-hand. If you are not positive you can't be resilient. If you're a negative person then um, negativity, you give up easily I think, so you know, I've never met anyone that's negative who's resilient. And also, when I was working in recruitment I was recruiting sales people, the financial advisors for Liberty – I did that for almost 4 years – so that was a huge mind-set, attitude that people had to have to be able to be good advisors – you know – it's a very cut-throat industry – your income is very erratic, so your resilience has to be high, to believe, you know, it's coming, it's going to be better.</p>
<p>You mention the word erratic, so can you – or would it be safe – and am I correct in saying that things such as change or adapting to the situation is very important in resilience.</p>	<p>Yes!</p>
<p>Can you relate to that in any other experience with regards to work or personal life?</p>	<p>Ok, working in corporate, especially Liberty, change is inevitable, they change daily – I mean when you go for a months' leave – when you get back ... EVERYTHING'S changed. (Giggle). The systems changed, the manager changed, your colleagues have changed, I mean, just about everything is changing all the time. You need to put yourself first, and that was actually one of the things that I battled with, when I took a few days off to actually re-focus and that, I had to make it clear to myself as a person, that being a broker consultant does not define me as a person, it's not me, um, my job and society today – Ok, they look at you and say alright, you're a doctor – you are THAT type of person, you're a teller in a bank – you are THAT type of person – and people do that you know, they think you THAT job, you earn that</p>

	<p>type of Income you know. People class people in South Africa um, more by job which kind of relates to the salary etc., but people do define people by their careers, and I made that decision that I'm not going to do that to myself anymore. And that helped me. I am NOT a broker consultant – I am Karin – and so ja, that was huge for me. With change it is inevitable – even if you doing your own business – if you don't change you are not going to succeed, so it's a mind-set and a belief that you have to have that you have to change, you have to adapt all the time and in today's age and technology you have to do it quicker than you did before.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned the word 'belief' how much do you think that belief in either something like faith or yourself or in a future goal, future orientated vision, how much do you think that plays a part in resilience?</p>	<p>I think it plays a huge part, more so belief in yourself, having faith in goals is important to your balance in life, I think but I think the resilience part .... Um, OK, with faith comes a community – so that community helps you if you partake in that kind of activity – so faith has a slight part of it, but I believe more in belief in yourself and your capabilities plays a huge part in your resilience.</p>
<p>OK, speaking of community – so you think something like social support or a support structure – be it from family, friends, people that can relate on the same basis – how important do you think that is in resilience?</p>	<p>I think it's important – actually very important. Your family to have um have support from your family. Something that, we actually..... When I was doing the interviewing, that was one of the things we looked for in a recruit. Do they have a support structure? For example, If you are a single Mom, we wouldn't even consider you, and as bad as that sounds, but you know, your needs are very different and you need is to feed your child, and if you can't feed your child will you commit fraud? Which I think any single Mom would – I mean, I'm being honest, if I didn't have any money to feed my child, I would, I would consider all sorts of other alternatives. So, if you have a support structure in place it does help you.</p>
<p>Alright, with regards to doing what needs to be done – you know – if you have a hungry child at home – it's maternal instincts to do what needs to be done to feed the child, how do you think or how would you relate that to resilience in your mind?</p>	<p>I think it does play a part because it's almost like a driver behind it. You want to give your child the best so to do that you HAVE to do whatever you do. So, I think it's the driving force behind being resilient. I mean, if you didn't have any care in the world what are you working for, why do you want to be resilient you know.</p>
<p>So in that would you say – or would I be correct in saying that caring for something or someone is definitely part of resilience – for whatever you have a passion for - is that what's going to lead to</p>	<p>Yes, it could be. I talk from my own – that it's my children, my family but for someone else it could be his love for a Ferrari or Porsche so that's going to make him resilient to achieve that goal ... so it</p>

<p>your resilience?</p>	<p>depends what you care for.</p>
<p>OK, am I correct in saying that goal directed behaviour or having a goal to look at is definitely important in resilience?</p>	<p>Yes, Yes ...</p>
<p>Can you relate to any other different experience that is maybe goal directed or has goal directed behaviour?</p>	<p>Um, I think – if I think back to school – long time ago now for me – um, something I remember which maybe will help with this is that when a person believes in something and believes that can do well – fathers sometimes do that with their children – they actually harsher to them, more strict, and a lot of teachers were like that as well in class, you know, they weren't too worried about the kids who were just the "run of the mill" or just getting by, but the one's they believed could exceed or excel – whether it be for their own personal motives or whatever – you know, to say they got 6 people distinctions or varsity entrance, or whatever the case may be, but they were a little bit more harder, they focused on that, so ... sometimes when you are in a working environment and a manager seems to be a bit more stricter or harder on you, you kind of get that feeling that they are pushing you for whatever motives THEY may have at the time – maybe they WANT to promote you or they want to see you excel so they are a little bit more focused on that individual, so personally I Haven't really had that experience – apart from school days – but I always have that, when I was a manager, you do kind of do that, you want to develop that person more so you expose them to more. So I think that does play a role.</p>
<p>In your field of Human Resources, as you said you were involved quite a bit in recruitment and now you just mentioned that you were a manager at some stage, what characteristics or personality traits or maybe potential competencies did you look for in people if you wanted them to resemble resilience or to demonstrate resilience? What kind of characteristics stick out?</p>	<p>Um, I must think about that – Um, when people have gone through a lot in life it can be anything, coming from a very poor family – a single unit family – you know, just a Mom that's looking after them and they still giving it their all. I've had some people that you can actually see they've had a hard life – a tough life – but they sitting in front of you and they happy and they're positive and they want to do better. It's difficult, you can't explain it really. It's almost like a mind-set, you know, other people just give up, they... A lot of white men in S.A., they get retrenched and then they give up and say – Oh well, there's no more work for white men in this country, so ja, you know, sit at home! I see that happen quite a lot. An entrepreneur is a different type of person and that's what you</p>

	<p>looking for, your resilient type of person, um, a person that will try anything and not just stick to what they know. I think that's also important. It's very difficult, difficult to answer but I think that plays a large role – when people have had hard knocks and you can see they didn't just sit back and take 6 months off and wallow in self-pity ..... That was another point, we would never ever recruit somebody that was more than 3 or was it 6, I can't remember.... If you were unemployed for a certain period of time then we wouldn't consider you either. Basically that equates to what I was saying, that ja, they just don't give up. Rather take up a job as a teller or a street sweeper or whatever you know, to build up a skill base, to build up income..... I don't know, it's very difficult (giggle)</p>
<p>Ok and how important do you think – as you mentioned – skills or building a skills bank and have resources are in terms of being resilient?</p>	<p>I think it's very, very important. Because if you are faced with whatever, you need to be able to do whatever, you know, um, example: if you've got a drivers licence and you were unemployed but you still got your car, you can start a lift club – do something with your car – deliveries, you know, try things. Sometimes you don't actually realize it but it could be something really worthwhile. It comes back to where I believe people that take risks, try new things, um, those are the good people, the entrepreneurs.</p>
<p>Alright, with regards to your first experience in finding your husband, could you relate to that in terms of – did you take risks, how would you incorporate resilience into that experience?</p>	<p>Ja, I think so, I'm a Libra, so I love being in relationships, (giggle) maybe a bad thing sometimes, but I took risks, I mean you have to – sometimes, against my better judgement, cost I hate guys that are shorter than me, I'd go out on a date with a guy ... Say... give him a chance you know, I suppose that's just the way I was, I'd give guys chances – many years ago I thought gee you know, you date, you date all kinds – blonds, redheads, Portuguese guys .... Whatever, but I grew up still in the very "apartheid" eras so I never dated somebody of another colour. (giggles) But I would have if I grew up in today's day and age you know, but ja, I dated regularly... (giggle) I'm going to start blushing just now..... but I think it's important, because you don't know – I even dated a used-car salesman – ja, he was the short guy, but you have to try, I don't know, and you realize then that I want somebody that's .... I don't know, I want to date somebody that's taller than me, or that's what I prefer or um, somebody that's got a</p>

	<p>good education or somebody that comes from a good family you know, those are important things. Sometimes you have to learn by your mistakes.</p>
<p>So would I be correct in saying that making the comparison in the same way that you sort of have “specs” for a guy, like he must be taller than you, well educated, he must come from a good family; the only reason why you know that is from past experiences, so, from past experiences in terms of being knocked down, you know that next time you are not going to be so sensitive, or next time you not going to wear your heart on your sleeve, would it be the same sort of thing that you – you know what to look for this time around?</p>	<p>Oh yes, definitely. You become wiser - definitely. You kinda see the warning signs early – whether it be a man or a job (giggles)</p>
<p>(giggle) And then is there anything else you can tell me in terms of resilience that you’ve experienced with other people, maybe a friend’s gone through something that you’ve need to be part of their resources or their support structure – what we spoke about – how you need those things in order to be resilient?</p>	<p>Um, well actually I got feedback – I didn’t even realize it – but I think – well I was – I’m a very positive person and I’m forever laughing, I find a lot of humour in things, and people kind of like get drawn to that and they kind of get a little bit out of it as well and they believe well, I’ve had some hard knocks in my life with my ex-boyfriend (giggle) we won’t go there.... We won’t go there (giggle) and yet you know, I’m now happily married and a lot of people think.... Like my friend now, she’s going through a divorce and she’s been married for 12 years and her husband just decided he doesn’t love her any more – so – but obviously there is another woman – but anyway – that’s his excuse and I said to her, “you know what, it’s a bad thing but you must to go through the whole thing, the anger, the revenge, the whole stage, you have to do that – but don’t ever lose the belief in who YOU are” I also went through a very bad relationship and look..... Look who I am married to now. The most amazing man – and I said maybe you will have that future happiness again, don’t ever think that this is it. I think a lot of people do believe that if they’ve had a ..... You know If find such inspiration from that girl that her leg was bitten off by a shark – and now she’s this big motivational speaker and talks about overcoming difficulties and I think that’s the resilience. OK, now you know you can’t do this because of whatever situation – so you do something else – and if you don’t try it – you never gonna know, and you also build up your skills and ja. Maybe you’re a good speaker, maybe you’re a good teacher, or whatever the case may be. So ja, it not about crumpling up, but maybe</p>

	yes, you have to do that initially, but don't hide away those emotions, cry, fight, shout, scream or whatever – but then get up and do the next thing.
Alright, and then just with regards to personality traits we spoke about earlier on, that you might have looked for in potential recruits, what personality traits do you think YOU possess that makes you resilient? Take your time.	There I think the positivity – I've got faith, I've got balance in my life, you know, with support of family and things like that, but personality wise .... Positivity, I don't know, give me ideas (giggle) I don't know, apart from positivity what other personality traits would there be? I find that the people who were successful that I recruited – if I think back – they were all very open people – um, it's not a personality trait but they're open people – they're free to express who they are – if you know what I mean. They weren't timid or shy people um, ja they were just very open and confident in themselves. I think that plays a large role – you know – whether it be coming from childhood or from self or making their own decision to be confident – ja, just that confidence – yes they had their bad days and their bits that they didn't believe in themselves, but basically that confident openness – like you know, when they come into a room they light up the room – I don't know.
Would I be correct in saying they were more extrovert than introvert?	Yes.
So were they more people persons?	Yes, definitely – although – there were one or two that were more introverted um, but they still had that self-confidence about them, even though they were introverted they were very self-confident – um, didn't shire away from who they were – but I don't know how you can put that in a personality trait?
I think it would be safe to say self-confidence could be a personality trait, but tell me how you feel about those people – as well as yourself – in terms of the resilience and something we can call authenticity – you know – being real to yourself and just being open and honest – like you said, how much of that relates to being resilient?	In my personal experience I believe it's very important. It's one of the key things, um, never say die attitude.... I can give you all the lyrics (giggles) there's actually a lot of songs out there – listen to some songs – (giggle) but ja, people who aren't resilient take life too seriously as well, you must enjoy life, you must find the good in life and the humour and the whatever, whatever it is that brings you job. People that aren't resilient DON'T you know, they very negative and they'd rather see the bad in any situation – they read the newspaper – you know, I don't read the newspaper, (giggle) you can put that as a personality trait.

<p>And then just with regards to positivity and how you are such a positive person and how you mention you are always laughing - when things have been in more of a downturn – for example the economic downturn that we experience recently, or restructuring that has happened recently at Liberty Life, how do you stay positive during those times, because we said that that is resilience – being positive in the face of adversity. So, how do you stay positive when things don't seem to be in your favour at all?</p>	<p>Well ja, it was a difficult time – but you need to..... that's where I think your balance comes in, um, you go home and you've got this happy family – which I think is important – um sometimes at home it's not so lekker – you know – and you've had a bad day at the office, to have that balance at home, um, so I'd walk around in the garden you know, look at those kind of things, um, just getting down to basics – I hate that saying – but just getting down to basics you know, realizing you have to be thankful, you have to be grateful of all the things you DO have cos it's very easy to look at the things that you DON'T have and you always worry about the future – like OK, they're going to retrench, maybe, um, maybe we gonna have another big economic downturn again, it's inevitable, we WILL, but you can't worry about how it's going to affect you until it does. Make a conscious decision when you doing that and worry and feeling down about it and say you know ... stop and smell the roses. Go walk in the garden, get back to nature. Get in touch with the people that make you feel good and care. Cos you do, you do have it, the bad days (giggle).</p>
<p>Giggle. You spoke there a bit about a work/family and a family/work balance.....completely hypothetically speaking, how do you demonstrate resilience where both are feeling the effects of a relatively.....</p>	<p>Down? I haven't had that yet. (giggle) I haven't. OK let me think back to when I ... ja... before my husband.... Because, um, I think then your inner strength just needs to be there, you know, if you having a bad day at the office and then a bad day at home you need to have that inner strength, that self-belief, that knowledge that this is who I am and if you don't know who you are that's going to be a problem, so you need to know who you are.</p>
<p>Alright, any other experience going back as far as school, if you please, varsity – if you attended – institutes – anything like that, maybe in sporting or cultural groups – anything where you had to demonstrate resilience on that level?</p>	<p>Um, well the only other thing I can think about is when I was promoted to a manager/team leader there was a, I was within the team environment in which I was promoted so it was a very difficult transition period because now everybody that you have reporting to you were yesterday you colleagues, you know, so that was a very difficult transition for me and for them, um, and I had to have a lot of resilience there because I had to achieve certain goals and I had a very good mentor – at the time – um, she's still kind of a mentor for me – but there were certain steps and things that you had to achieve for you to realize now, Ok people are accepting you as a team leader, um, as</p>

	<p>soon as they start respecting you as a manager – as soon as you achieve something that you told them you would as a manager – you know, it’s like little goals and things that you could measure yourself by, um, so that also taught me resilience in that respect and that you ... Rome wasn’t built in one day.... You can’t achieve.... I don’t know, if you are a manager today you can’t get everybody’s respect today, because I believe that’s the biggest thing a manager must have, if you don’t respect then you are not a good leader and um, so it’s baby steps you know, and each person is also very different – one person will accept you straight out – OK you are my leader now and I’ll leave that task to you, whereas other people will fight it you know, um, and those are the people you win over – gain their trust – do the things they believe in their eyes makes a good leader. It took a couple of months – 6 to 8 months before I was a respected leader in that group, I mean everybody’s different – I was a team leader in a couple of different areas but that also taught me with resilience it doesn’t mean because one person doesn’t respect you or doesn’t believe that you are good at what you’re doing, it’s their belief, it’s their choice, so sometimes you can change it around and if you can then you do what you need to do. But sometimes you can’t and then dust your feet off you know, and just move on.</p>
<p>Alright, and on that note, do you think that resilience is something we call a learnt trait, do you think that it’s something that you learn through experiences in life or do you think that it’s something you born with or you get from your folks?</p>	<p>I think you learn it, and sometimes even as young as being at primary school, you know, um like being bullied at school will teach you resilience.... That’s obviously if you don’t give up and sit in the corner and get beaten... (giggle) But ja, you have to and that comes from self-respect and belief and that your parents teach you – so it does kind of have a tie in I think from how you see yourself and your own self-image and continuously having a fighting spirit, you know, um, but it’s taught, you may have resilience as a child, but it’s something that can get better and better. You can become better resilient.</p>
<p>OK, so am I correct in saying that it’s something that you could possibly be born with but it needs to be spiked or brought on by a certain fear of emotion and an experience or something that would actually bring it out in you?</p>	<p>Yes. Because sometimes –like if you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth – and you never ever had an experience to be resilient when you young, and say your parents pass away and suddenly there’s all this debt and you have no more money, um, what now, you know .... You</p>

	would have had all the traits to be resilient but you've never had the experiences – I think it's like with any skill, if you don't practice it you don't get good at it. I think resilience is a practicable trait. You will get better at it. You will.
Alright. Then just in closing – a final note – is there anything else you would like to add about an experience or about what you feel on resilience .....?	NO, I think I spoke enough (giggle)
OK, thank you very much for your time.	OK

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 23 : ANSWERS
Tell me what you understand about the word or the construct definition of resilience?	Resilience, the ability to withstand tough times I suppose, and the challenges that come with the job. I guess. In relation to the job or general?
In general, life, job ...	Ja, I think it's the ability to rise up once you've fallen, I suppose and the ability to look through difficult times or obstacles or anything like that.
Alright, and can you tell me about some experiences in your life where you had to do this?	Plenty, (giggle) um, ja, look – I think in our environment, I'm talking about a work perspective, where you get given a unit that's not producing and yet you are given a certain target that you need to produce so you either swim or drown, so that's where the whole aspect of resilience actually comes into being. Where, you really need to turn that unit around and actually produce the target, so ja, if I didn't have the resilience then I wouldn't have made it.
Alright, anything else that comes to mind, any other experience?	Um, look, I lost my Mom 2 years ago, and um, I'm originally from Durban, and I've been here for 4 years now, and I was here by myself and I just tried to adjust to the new environment and stuff and my Mom was in Durban and she was my pillar of support and strength and stuff so it was very tough – I had to really be strong and get through that. It did affect my person life as well as work, but I managed to come through, you know, with the little support that I actually had. So ja, you know, that's how it is...(giggle)
What got you through that time?	I think at some point I realized that it was basically me against the world, you know, it's either I move back to Durban – which was something I didn't want to do because I moved up here, I wanted to grow in my career, or move back to Durban and then really start afresh or be in that complacent

	<p>state of being where I was, cos Durban is rather chilled, people are not as driven as they are up here. So I thought look, I've got a reason why I wanted to be in Joburg, and I had to stuck it in and ja., that was it, and some couple of friends of course, they were wanting to be there for me and stuff. So, it was tough, but I made it.</p>
<p>So would I be correct in saying that a support system is important for you in resilience?</p>	<p>Absolutely, absolutely – as much as I would like to think, you know, this macho thing, I'm a guy I can work through this; I had some moments where I would cry to sleep sometimes, but now and then there were people who cared. I knew I could just give them a shout and then they would give me support, ja, it did help. Because they would come up with their own personal experiences with the stuff they've gone through which were diverse, maybe not losing their loved ones but something different but they've actually made it through themselves so it gave me courage to say look, you can also make it, it's not the end of the world, so ja, a support system is very important as well to me.</p>
<p>Alright, anything else that you can think of that got you through that time, other than a support system? Any other tools?</p>	<p>Um, focus and direction I suppose – just like I said – I think the typical example was that about moving, making the decision to actually move up to Jozi um, you know, with that in mind, I said – look I can't put it on hold because of this incident that just happened I need to carry on forth to the decision that I actually made, to come up here and then focus on what I wanted to achieve and the growth aspect that I actually wanted – so ja, I think the self-motivation that I had and the goals that I had and the focus that I wanted to do I think actually helped. I think if I had not had that in line, and have the focus on what I actually wanted, I think it would have been easy for me to just pack my bags and go back to Durban and you know, whatever. So ja, it was quite important to have a target and goals in mind. So I did actually have that as well.</p>
<p>Alright, any other experiences that you would like to share? If you want to take a bit of time to think about it?</p>	<p>Um, ja, I can't think of any now, it's just those that actually come into mind. Ja, that took a bit of resilience for me. Look I mean, I'm a laid back sort of guy you know, um, but ja, from those experiences I actually realized – if I dig deep there's quite some strength in me that I didn't see on a day to day basis but such experiences actually</p>

	<p>do reveal that there's so much more to me than what I think I am. I'm not a confrontational guy, I'm not a .... I don't know, I'm an extrovert, I think. (Giggle) and I like to be liked type of thing. So for me a win – win situation is very imperative you know. If it comes to a Win – Lose situation it's really because – there's really – I've tried almost 90% of the alternatives and there's no other way that I can reach the win – win situation, but ja, ordinarily I'd rather put myself second and maybe let someone else win. But ja, that's just the kind of person I am. But such experiences just like I told you now, they made me aware again that I can be a stronger person and I can achieve whatever it is that I need to achieve.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned there personality characteristics or the kind of person you are, what kind of personality characteristics do you think you need to be resilient, or any other individual needs to be resilient?</p>	<p>I think standing firm, I suppose, in what you believe, um, backbone I think is very important, and a strong character, it's a funny one because sometimes other people, when you stand your ground, and show your strong character – they seem to perceive you as being pig-headed and arrogant, which I think I really battled with growing up as an individual, I really battled because I wanted to please people so badly and then I had to put myself behind in terms of what I believe in, in terms of what I think I am, you know, some of my opinions, I would think ah, no it's fine I'll just let them pass as long as other people go through, but you know, the older you grow, you seem to think you can't do that for the rest of your life, at some point you just have to stop and live your life because they are living theirs and you not living yours, always putting yourself second. And ja, also being a Dad, I kind of realized it does become important and that you need to stand firm and I didn't want to instil the wrong characteristic to my son, I wanted HIM to know, that look, it's a scary world so you need to be very strong and you need to be firm, he is sensitive, but you need to stand your ground. So, from that as well, I learnt from that. Trying to teach my Son, and I learnt that it's something I needed to do myself, you know. For myself as well, so ja...</p>
<p>Alright, so would I be correct in saying that sometimes in order for you to be truly resilient you maybe have to be a little bit selfish?</p>	<p>Ja, absolutely, um, which is rather foreign for me but I had to learn it (giggle) unfortunately ja, look – I think it's a fine line between being selfish and sensitive, I believe that you can still be selfish yet not be insensitive type of thing. So it's just a</p>

	<p>balancing act that one needs to learn I suppose – in life and how you go about achieving both. I guess that’s why it’s called “life” it’s freaky like that ... (giggle)</p>
<p>On that note would you say that balance is important in terms of resilience?</p>	<p>Yes it is.</p>
<p>Balance in life from emotions to ....</p>	<p>Yes, especially dealing with the kind of guys we are dealing with, the brokers – shoo – at some point you want to punch them but you really can’t (giggle) you know, ja, because they always believe they are always right so you make sure that you selfish in terms of you get a point across you make sure that – not that you don’t listen to them – but that they listen to you more and at the same time you’re not going to be insensitive because at the end of the day you still need their support and still need their business. So ja, that balancing act is very, very, very important and unfortunately it’s just a trait that you learn, unfortunately; I wish you could be born with and yes other people are born with that trait but I had to learn it – very difficult – like I said I’m a laid back kind of person so it was very tough, but ja, I’m not THERE, but I’m almost there. I’m much better than I used to be actually.</p>
<p>On that note, with having to learn it, do you think that resilience is learnt or do you think you are born with it or maybe that you get it from your folks? Where do you think that comes from?</p>	<p>From my experience, I learnt it. Because I can tell you now, growing up I did not have it, I really did not have it. I look back at my childhood – um, not that I was bullied – OK yes, I was bullied, but you know, as I grow older I had to learn it, I really had to learn it. I must be honest, it has helped me in a lot of ways, in many, many, many ways if I have to think that I didn’t learn it I would have been stuck with a low self-esteem kind of environment, I would have never achieved a lot of things – the confidence levels that I have – based on the resilience – they have shot up sky high and people take you seriously because you are resilient in your thinking and your execution of your ideas, you know, everything that you do you stand firm. So people do take you seriously, because sometimes, I mean, I know I’m amiable – expressive amiable – so you always want to please everybody, but you want to be amiable and nice to people but it doesn’t pay all the time, you know. So ja, it has helped me a great deal.</p>
<p>And how much do you think this resilience that you had to learn – like was it related to an inner strength – like you said – having to stand up again?</p>	<p>Ja, I think I had it – I just hadn’t tapped on it. Honestly I think that we all do. I listen to all successful people, they all say ja we all have this</p>

	<p>inner strength to be the great things we possibly could be; perhaps because no one has set us down and told us the abilities that we do have within ourselves we seem to think that we do not have. Um, so being in this environment I had to tap into a space where I hadn't been, you know, and then I realized, actually I do have an element of resilience in me, that I never thought I had. Look, if I was a tennis player or what-ever I don't think I would have had as much resilience as I do have now, maybe possibly I could have, but in a different aspect – being in this environment and those experiences that I've just told you about, my Mom and stuff, I did actually have to tap into another force that I never really thought I had which was an element of resilience I suppose, to just raise up against .... I don't know.... Whatever was against me.</p>
<p>Alright and do you think that the more difficult the situation the more resilience is required and as a result – as the situations get more difficult in your life - you learn how to cope with them better?</p>	<p>Absolutely – I always give the example about the kids that grow up in a clean environment – I know it sounds like an oxymoron but I think it's unfortunate because you don't build the resilience against bacteria or whatever, as opposed to, like I've seen the kids in the township grow up in a shack, in the dirtiest of places and how unlikely they actually get sick, and I just wonder how does that actually happen – then you get a kid who lives in Houghton in a clean house and they are forever sick and at the doctors. So the whole thing about building that resilience – but building against those things that come against you, so yes if you are tossed up into the deep end and the more challenges you go through the more you actually tap into that resilience aspect and you actually grow in it and you develop it, so that whenever a situation comes in your way, you already have it well built and you actually able to handle it. I mean I remember when I started in this job, I had to come across some brokers who would go all over the place and I thought I'm NOT going to do this job, now for me, look a broker comes up to me and they tell me whatever because I've got this in-built thing with the confidence – like OK, let's talk about it – you know – what seems to be the problem, you know the whole confidence thing, the whole point of standing up – a broker will say ja well Discovery is good at this whatever, and I understand that instead of, in the past I used to be</p>

	<p>very frightened, Gosh here we go again, you know, um, but because of the belief system and the resilience that I have built throughout my time being here .. so ja, strangely enough its very imperative, like I think there are other aspects that are important more than resilience, like self-confidence and other things that I've maybe not tapped into that if I was made aware how important they are, I think I would be an Emperor now.... Just kidding (giggle)</p>
<p>Alright and for example when you had to move up here from Durban and when you Mom passed away that was all a lot of change, how do you deal with adapting to that change? How important is adapting to change?</p>	<p>Jis, I just tell the guys here that grow up in Soweto and stuff that they are again unfortunate because they have never had to leave their homes and go to a new environ-ment and figure out how difficult it is to adjust into a new place, like I said, also because you have the goals that you to achieve it gets very tough – it really gets tough, social wise, work wise and the whole environment change and ja it does become very difficult and hence if you don't have a plan and how you going to work around adapting to that situation then it, it, like ja...like dead, you know. So you really need to have a focus, like I said, goals, always in front of you and goals without ambition I suppose, character, the strength then again, resilience, then you can always just see them but you can never reach them. So for me moving up here with the challenges that I had I really had, like I told you, change from my childhood like what I used to be into what I wanna be – and again it just became very imperative that I build that resilience.</p>
<p>Alright and how do you feel being positive in these times – you know – things are going to get better – how does that play a role for you in resilience?</p>	<p>Um, ja, for me I think it's just another aspect of resilience. The optimism that I have like I told you I'm a laid back kind of guy – forever laughing – making people happy and stuff – and I think optimism for me is always there, um, like I said I used to be given units that have not been producing in the past 2 years of whatever, but because I'm positive and I believe in myself and being confident of course playing a role and just being resilient – look – just say either I do this or I don't' and if I don't what happens, you know. And then what characters do I need to make sure I execute whatever the role is that I need to do. So ja, I need to be resilient to get up there and make sure that I don't fail and really believe in myself that I'm not gonna fail and one way of actually doing that is o be resilient in terms of how do I go</p>

	<p>about doing that, and make sure that I'm not a push over., and yet – of course – sensitive just like I said at the time, the whole balancing act. So ja, it is very important I think.</p>
<p>Alright, then just with regards to the resilience scale that we filled out, Item No. 20 "Sometimes I make myself do things whether I want to or not" you were very neutral on that directly between agree and disagree, tell me more about how that relates to resilience?</p>	<p>Ja, I think that would relate to my upbringing in the way I am now, that's what I was talking about the whole transition from where I used to be trying to please people, trying to put other people first, into where I wanna be, because I realized that where I wanna be I would have to change that, because if I don't then I can't get to where I wanna be – so that's more of a character change and I really had to be quite resilient in how I go about achieving what I actually wanted to achieve. It's strange that I was actually neutral, I didn't think about it, but ja it's more on the transition to where I am now, so more in the middle ground but getting to where I wanna be in terms of developing the whole resilience thing. Like I said, still an element of foreign to me but ja, I'm really getting there. So ja it would probably make sense that I would be in between.</p>
<p>Alright in terms of item 21, "my life has meaning" you said strongly agree with that scoring 7 which is as high as you can go – explain to me a bit more about that, that your life has meaning to you makes you resilient.</p>	<p>Ja look, I think a bit of a background where I come from in terms of not well off, type of thing, you know, and then you look back and you think, do I really want to see my kids where I used to be and the answer is a definite NO. So in terms of making sure that history does not repeat itself in terms of my off spring I need to really achieve my goals so that my kids start from a different slate from where I started so means and ways of actually achieving that and t make sure I succeed in what I do – now how do I succeed in what I do? – I need to change what I used to be because if I don't change then I will never get to where I wanna be and what does that call for, it calls for me to be very strong willed and I need to be very motivated in things that I want to do and to be goal driven and being able to do those things I have to become resilient because I am going to come across diversity, challenges, problems and stuff like that, now if I don't have those resilience and characters in place, when those challenges come by they are going to pull me down again, so ja, so ja, it's very important for me to know where I am going and how I'm going to get there so that I can change the course of history. So ja, that's what it is.</p>
<p>OK and then just in closing, final comments, is</p>	<p>Until I started talking now, I didn't realize how</p>

<p>there anything you'd like to add, maybe something you thought of in the interim of the interview, any advice you would like to give out, anything like that with regards to resilience?</p>	<p>imperative and how much different the resilient aspect actually ... it's going to get me thinking,,,, absolutely um ja, because a lot of things are now coming into my head, I'm thinking ja, geez, I've had to – OK, here's an example, yesterday I ran over my neighbour's cat, I know.... And yes I cried, but anyway (giggle), but um ja, the way I dealt with it now and the way I would have dealt with it before, it's totally changed, I don't know whether it was about growing up, whether it was about me, having to build this strength and resilience that I had, because what actually happened is I ran over the cat and then I went to tell the neighbours cos I know the neighbours, the owners of the cat, and they were not there, so I told one of my neighbours as well, we need to chuck it away because they have a 4 year old daughter so we didn't want the daughter to see that the cat because shame, the trauma, so we tossed it away so I went back later on to the owners and I told them about the whole thing and um ja, geez, I had to be very strong – I mean for them, because you don't want to break down in front of them, it will just make it worse, so ja, in fact I'm getting them flowers today to give it to them and um, ja look, I think honestly, these things more than just career orientated stuff, I think they do become very imperative for us as a sales force, now and then, just to make us aware that these are the type of tools that we need, type of traits that we need, you know because just like I said, I really was not aware that I have developed so much in the resilience aspect until now. So chances are if you hadn't done this with us we wouldn't have known... ja, ja, we just going after our targets not being aware into what we need to develop in ourselves to make sure that we get to where we need t get to. Look, I mean we doing a challenge now and I know I've got about 20% of my target to do, so such things are very, very imperative – I need to be resilient because it's either sink or swim or drown, such things, and I need to tap into that so now how do I go about doing that, we have never had any formal training, no-one has told us about this sort of thing so, it does become important that we just be made aware of such things.</p>
<p>Alright, I certainly hope the refresh is going to give</p>	<p>Please, ah gee, please. (giggle)</p>

you what you need for challenge.	
Thank you so much for your time, I know you guys are so busy.	No problem.

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 24 : ANSWERS
OK, we can start off by you telling me what you understand about the construct of resilience? Or the idea of resilience, what does it mean to you, if you had to throw out a definition?	Personal definition, the ability to do what you feel is right for you against all odds.
Alright, fantastic. When in your life do you feel you've had to do that?	Um... gee, I think the first time would have been when I almost drowned, which was 1990, February a youngster I went to boarding school, Christian Brothers College, um, don't quite remember what happened but from what I heard it was the second day of boarding school, 1 <sup>st</sup> day of school I jumped into the pool and ended up at the bottom of the pool. Obviously you spend a few – quite a while in ICU and doctors literally said that if I make it, if he makes it he's probably going to end up being a cabbage. Um, and 2 weeks from being out of hospital I was back in the pool and ended up swimming for the 1 <sup>st</sup> team. So I always use that – I think also just, um, that personal strong motivation of believing in miracles – I think anything and everything is possible – literally and um, It's entirely up to you that whatever you make of it. If you have an idea, or whatever, you are not the only one that has that idea, and you learn that the hard way. Um, and you have a choice, you either going to act on it, or you're not. I think it also comes down to faith. Knowing that whatever it is that God has planted in you, which is a seed, he doesn't only plant in you or sows on you, he sows across the board, and whatever then is the one that's gonna make use of what you've been given, then from then forth you can go forward. So that's probably my first one. That, and then sort of I think that when my parents got divorced. That was also a difficult situation. Um, matric I almost flunked – I actually keep asking myself "how the hell did I do it. But ja, and then we just carried on going. And then you've got the little bits and pieces that come in-between, I think being the eldest son, also sort of ... having to rise up to

	<p>different challenges ... when my parents got divorced, my Mom thought that I would take over the reign and the man of the house which I personally thought was absolutely hogwash, um, and you know from there, then I started making decisions that No.1 best suited me and would result in best suiting everybody else around me. And that was my starting point, what was best for me and then what will the reaction of what's best for me, be for everyone else who's going to be influenced by my actions. I use that, and it's worked so far, um, who lot of other little things hey. You go through different challenges, you meet different people, you get to hear things you not supposed to hear, you get to read things you not supposed to have read, um, and I think I over analyse and over-think things through, so I'm forever planning and um, every time when somebody says something, I'll be Oh, OK, it's not an Oh, OK done deal, it's I'm gonna go think about this. Major changes that personally, I foresee coming through, OK, and I've gone and made a decision... OK look while I am here I'm going to make the best of it, and do what I have to do. Um, and then we'll take it from next year March. Um, also just putting time lines onto personal goals makes it count, um, and the different things that you want to achieve I think probably my biggest strength which is also my weakest, is willingness to be always looking to help against all odds – um, I need to learn how to say NO! (giggles) which has also sort have been a nice challenge, um, you get to learn a lot of things, and for me, I get to be humbled you know, um, every time somebody says can you help me with.. It's an acknowledgement of 1, I actually trust you enough to ask you for help it's um, it's for me an acknowledgement of I'm putting to use what has been entrusted within me or for me for however long. Family plays a major role, background, um, my Grandmother pretty much raised me until the age of 3 and then I moved with my Mom and Dad to Rustenburg and lived there for a little while before boarding school. But every Christmas, every Easter every September holidays I went to see my Grandmother – and being the eldest, you know, you've got your, my younger brother, and I've got older sisters, but we never really grew up</p>
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	<p>together, it was like my half-sisters – in fact all my sisters are my half-sisters now that I think about it – but with all the other cousins and we were all, I mean between 8 or 11 of us at my Grandmother's place for Christmas and New Year's – it flipping fantastic, but you playing the older brother, you protecting, you are the guider and everything else and learning how to share and how to give – when to take and when not to – THAT has also just, you know, given a hand.... And I sat down with my girlfriend and she was like, I don't want to be a millionaire, and I said to her, you know what, um, I know exactly where I come from and I know where it is that I'm gonna go, I don't want my kids to experience what I did, when we moved from my Grandmother's house and my Dad had just started working and ... he actually just started his own transport company then ... which is about 30 something years ago, but when you just, at that, his house was up, the roof on but the entire house, but the garage did not have doors and windows – we didn't have chairs, you know um, we didn't have a carpet, you know, and that for me I still remember very well. I remember when I was 5 years old and my Dad had just bought his 2<sup>nd</sup> taxi and that one was a second-hand one and the heater didn't work and my Mom would wait for him to come home just so that she could, you know, organize a bowl of warm water for him to heat up his feet before he went to bed. Little things like that... I appreciate everything, I really do, and when I take guys through to my Dad's house and you tell them that story they like, Dude, you lying ... ja, you absolutely lying... and I'm not. If I told you what my lunch was you'd puke or something. Very humble, very simple, we used to buy grasshoppers – and they had to last – we had to wear them for years, and that for me – I know where it is that I come from, I know where I am, and I've got an idea where it is that I want to go. And this is around about the time where I ask you for a question.... (Giggle).</p>
<p>Giggle... alright, just going back to what you said about the whole drowning incident that you had at boarding school, was it as a result of almost drowning that you decided to prosper with swimming and actually go for 1<sup>st</sup> team status? Was it because you liked swimming ...</p>	<p>Um, probably because of nearly drowning hey, ja.</p>

<p>So it was definitely a challenge?</p>	<p>Ja, it was one of those, I can do it – um, I’m afraid of heights, I used to do wall climbing, free wall climbing, I stand on the balcony on a 1<sup>st</sup> floor and I’m like OK.... And I’ve gone back to have a look at some of the walls that I used to climb and I used to do those without a rope, I’m like, you’re crazy! I thrive at a challenge, I love it, I absolutely love it, um, I hate swimming, I stopped swimming in Std. 9 – Ja.</p>
<p>Alright, and do you think it’s part of being resilient or it ads to being resilient to go and look at a fear or a hardship in the face like that and take it full on so that you can overcome it, do you think that’s part of being resilient?</p>	<p>I like to believe that, um, if you never overcome your fears you’ll never know how not to and if you let your fears rule you then they’ll rule you forever. They will. My biggest fear right now is starting a business. I’m not going to drive a Mercedes as long as I work for this company, guaranteed I won’t, um, and that’s one of the dreams I’ve always had. An ML 63 white, a GL 500 Black, and um, by the age of 45 I want a Jaguar XKR , 4 door V8 Turbo charged 0 to 100 in 4.8 seconds – would love it in maroon with cream or white leather seats – very specific. But right now, I sit here and I’m thinking : do I, don’t I, do I, don’t I? I had a chat with a couple of guys; Charles and I sit from time to time and talk. We haven’t spoken about it in a long while – ultimately, I know exactly where it is that I’m going, it’s only a matter of time for now, um, and THAT is also one of those.... How am I going to succeed... the fear of failure, and if I succeed, what kind of a person am I going to be – am I going to be one of those that,,,, excuse me – all of a sudden becomes pompous because I’ve money – and if I fail, Oh, you just get up again and you get going. You know.</p>
<p>Alright, so am I correct in saying that having things like a future vision or, you got your ML in the back of your head, you got your Jag in the back of your head, that’s what’s keeping you going to stay on top and be goal driven by the things that you can acquire from that, is that part of being resilient for you?</p>	<p>Pretty much, um, outside of – I don’t want to be one of those people that’s come and gone, I don’t. I, I, honestly believe that I wasn’t born for that – I’d like to believe that – um, sort of who is OB? You ask anybody, who’s Richard Branson; he’s that guy who didn’t complete school, went and started off selling rackets, now owns one of the biggest companies. Who’s Donald Gordon? Donald Trump, he’s the guy that doesn’t shake any bodies hand and yet some people still respect him and yet he’ll not show you any common decency to shake your hand. You see. I honestly believe that resilience comes in many forms, in many ways, like Mahatma Ghandi, be the change you want to be, um, or be the change that you want to see rather.</p>

	<p>The man was very quiet as compared to Tokyo Sikwale – man used the name 16 - two different things. It's only a matter of what challenge it is that is before you and how you want to deal with it, and I think that's the different forms of ... hey... one way or another everybody is resilient to something to someone to a situation whatever it may be. We've got one of the people that I work with and there are certain things that she absolutely refuses to do, personally I understand it but if it was me I would probably do them, because if I didn't do them I'd probably have my manager wanting to knock the lights out of me, you know. She won't you see. Um, and I think also you need to be resilient in things you believe in. If you don't believe in it you're going to fall, you're going to fall very quickly. If you didn't believe in you know, the Thesis and that you are going to get your Honours.... Some of the guys are gonna be .... And I'm sure some of the guys have said "no thanks" after selecting them, or when you got them to do the forms.... You could have gotten discouraged, but you didn't, um, there is a story that I like to tell from time to time .... A very long time ago my Grandmother said to me.... one day you gonna be everything and anything you want to be. Don't ever forget who you are, where you come from ... ever! I refuse to allow anybody to put me into a box – I absolutely refuse it. I refuse to succumb to civilization and so forth – something that I fought with my girlfriend about - I like to use my fingers when I eat, doesn't matter where I'm at, honestly, we'll be at a restaurant and I'll order whatever and if on that day I feel like using my fingers, I'm gonna use them. One good reason, that's how I grew up. I grew up using my hand to eat my food; we washed our hands, dried them, ate, washed your hands and dried them afterwards. It's one of those things, it's nothing new, it's something that was there when we didn't have forks and knives. I will change what I feel I need to because I WANT to not because society says I must.</p>
<p>On that note, you speak a lot about belief and faith. Do you think that believing in something or someone, or yourself rather, as you've often said, belief in yourself, do you think that is important for someone who is resilient? Do you think that</p>	<p>Yes, I do. I honestly feel that you do. If I didn't have the little bit that I have, and I say little because if I honestly had a whole lot, the chances are you and I would not have been sitting here, I would have left the company probably some time</p>

<p>you need to have that belief or that faith?</p>	<p>ago, in June. So, there's very little faith at the moment. Working on it. But I do honestly believe that – if you don't have something that you believe in, if you don't have some form of faith and your actions, you're not going to make it. I honestly believe that I'm going to be one of the best butcher owners of all time – I honestly believe that um, and I'm in the process of learning how to cut meat, learning how to tell meat apart from your Sirloins to your T-Bones, to your rump steaks and not when it's cooked, but just looking at it, that's what I wanna do OK, and it's been done before – it's only how IM going to do it that's gonna make me the best. Um, I honestly also believe that if you don't have some form of foundation, that every time you sort of feel a little knocked down you can't bounce off on, you're going to give up on everything. I know we've got an hour, I know that (giggle) and a lot of talking can be done – but in a nutshell – and I'm not finishing off – but in a nutshell – I jotted down a whole lot of things that I didn't want – I then jotted down a whole lot of things I do want. I was married, this is not my wedding ring, um, this is my father's wedding ring when he married my Mom, and a lot of people say, ah you know its back luck and, and, and, one or two reasons why I wear the ring is for me it stands for everything that I believe in and want to be and everything that I don't believe in that stands against. So, I said to you earlier on, all my sisters are half-sisters, I've got one brother and 7 half-sisters; I don't ever want that for me, it's just something that my Dad and my Mother have OK, I don't. Fortunately I didn't have children in my first marriage otherwise I would have stuck it out, I honestly would have, and no matter how bad it got as time went on, for whoever was there I would have stuck it out. Um, happiness, joy, love, caring, understanding, reliability play a major role for me in building a living and everything starts off in some form of a relationship, it's got to be a give and take. I don't ever want anybody to knock at my door one day and say I'm here to see my Dad, to whoever it is that I'm going to marry – if I re-marry – and I don't want somebody to grow up without me being in their life and literally raising them, cos that's what my father did for me, and the only way that I know that I can achieve it is by</p>
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	<p>being successful at what I do and being the best at what I do so that I can set the right example. I said to my girlfriend, I've started 3 Degrees and not completed a single one, and in all honestly the only reason why I didn't complete them is because I didn't believe in them. I didn't, I was doing them because my Dad thought they would be best, which is Transport Logistics, Sports Economics and Law. I don't need an Attorney I don't need to learn Law for me to be able to speak for myself, you Google everything these days. You do. If I'm going to be what I want to be – not only for me, but for my kids and my wife one day – I'm going to have to say I don't need those degrees to be successful because today the world believes without formal education you not going to make it – there's qualified Attorney's that I know of – guys that have done their bar exams and have passed – and the guys only earning R3 500.00 per month. What do you do with R3 500.00 per month? In all honesty, that's about R39 000 per annum. Not a chance, my Dad came from his background and he took both my brother and I, and now my baby sister, all three of us went to private schools, all three, the baby one is still at primary school, and I've always believed that for any generation or for any family to show growth, you need to better. You have to. I went to a private school, um, like a public school, one where you've got over 42 kids in a class – the teacher doesn't pay attention, they don't. It's that form of wanting to do something for someone that drives me.</p>
<p>OK, you spoke quite a bit of how a lot of what your family has done in terms of a support system was something that helped you out quite a bit, do you feel that support in terms of a support structure is important in order to be resilient? Do you think that you need something like that?</p>	<p>I'd say yes and no. Sometimes you going to believe in something that the next person doesn't – sometimes. You need to believe in You, for somebody else to believe in you. Yes, in terms of my Grandmother, if it was not because of my Gran, and I say this with – ja, if anybody else had to read this and they would be.... Wait a minute.... That sounds like OB ... and they remember my family and they felt that their dues were not paid, tough. She has been a corner stone of my success, my failures, my get ups my downs, she's just been there and I honestly believe had it not been because of her, I would have been half the man I am. She raised an absolute gentleman in my personal eyes, she did good and her beliefs, her support were a structure to form that resilience ;</p>

	yes you can!
<p>Alright. On the resilience scale, Item No. 12 reads, "I take things one day at a time" you scored a 2 there for strongly Disagree, so how would you say that affects your resilience? By not taking things one day at a time.</p>	<p>Um, in terms of focus, sometimes from time to time you may lose that – from time to time. In terms of the long term for me, I find it to help. If I was to take it a day at a time, I think I would have lost it this morning. I think I would have. One of the guys said, OB did you ... I said no we spoke about it and you said you were gonna do it. But it's not the first time that sort of thing has happened. But it always ends up, but OB hasn't! That's the short term. In the long term, in a couple of years from now, I might be asking someone, did you? And no but you said, then I'll have a choice, I can get upset, but no, I'm going to be like, you're absolutely right.... I should have. Long term always for me says this is where you are, that's where you're going – are you gonna get there? What are you gonna do to get there? If I want my kids to go to private schools, I want my wife to drive a GL 5 um, I don't want finances to ever be an issue in my house and, and, and, I need to swallow pride, I need to swallow self-esteem from time to time I need to swallow um, like you know, I feel I was actually right and I'm not gonna apologize, just pass it on, for now because in the long run I'm going to reach my goals. So no, I do strongly disagree that short term doesn't work for me. I can tell you this, 5 years from now, how old am I now..... 4 years from today if by chance we are able to sit down and you say to me, have you reached the goals that you had set – my answer would be YES! Without a doubt. Butcher will be up and running, the farm will be up and running because those plans have been put into place and there started to be action. Why, because I don't want to have all the Who/Has that I had growing up. I don't and I don't want my kids one day to have that and I can assure you 4 years from now I will definitely have a son running around. (giggle) or a daughter, but I think that's the long haul of it – I find long term planning to be a lot more helpful, I also find it helpful to focus to be encouraging, strengthening um, and when all else fails that's the one that will always keep you going. I jot them down, I literally do. I sit and write them down, if there's characteristics within me that I think I need to work on I'll do that as well.</p> <p>I used to play on the borderline of paragons and</p>

	<p>confidence. I was actually told by some people, by a few guys from church, when I started off many years ago, OB I think you are arrogant, I'd say no, I'm just confident, but I did, I played on the borderline and playing on the border-line of confidence and arrogance for me is a – what's the word? – Resilience. I can be arrogant when I want to be but I like to just play on the borderline – I love that.</p>
<p>Alright and on that note of speaking about personality characteristics other than an aspect of arrogance or confidence what other personality characteristics do you think you have or resilient people should have in order to be resilient? What other personality characteristics do you think people or yourself should have or possess?</p>	<p>Um, I think it usually comes down to caring. You need to care about something or someone – understanding. I don't necessarily have to get you, but I need to understand you. I don't necessarily have to agree with you but I need to understand you – am I making sense? Um, I think you need to be loving. If I have a fight with my brother it doesn't mean I love him any less, but if I have a fight with one of these guys, I mean I don't even have to love them – I don't even have to like them. If you can possess loving, caring and understanding – for me – that will always help you or help one to being clarity to cause which is really what it comes down to. What is the cause that you are doing, believing and doing what it is you doing or believing in? So those would be the three for me.</p>
<p>Alright, and tell me know what happens when there are obstacles such as fear or maybe a loss of interest or maybe, like you said with your first marriage, it was something that you didn't believe in any more or, something that you didn't feel that strongly about anymore, what happens when that happens and how do you persevere, how do you become resilient then?</p>	<p>Let's take the first marriage, that's going to be a lot easier, Um, it wasn't working, only lasted 13 months, 8 days 6 hours and a couple of minutes OK, but it wasn't working and six months down the line I knew it wasn't working, she knew it, she didn't want to accept it, OK, um, I never thought that I would've got divorced, I must be honest, and the last 6 months for me I used as confirmation of the 1<sup>st</sup> 6. It came down to – you can believe in something and you can want it to work, but if it evidently isn't working, you need to change your course. If the butchery doesn't work, which I highly doubt that it won't, because that I've got in control, then I'll have to change course. If you've got control in something you can do something about it. I can't control your actions, your feelings, your reactions, I can't, I can try and pre-empt them and try to direct them – evidently I failed with my first wife. Because no matter what it is that I tried, it just, this was the way, and that was the way everything was going, um, and I don't know, guys that are pretty much.... I don't like headaches</p>

	<p>unnecessary. I really don't like unnecessary headaches, and I try and put that up front. I will fully understand, support, and, and, and, but don't become a headache – and when you do become a headache, that I don't have control over – there isn't much I'm gonna do about it, there isn't much that I can do about it if I don't have control over that situation. That's probably also part of resilience, is that half the time the guys aren't in control of what's happening. I actually never thought of that – I didn't – you know.</p>
<p>And in terms of that control do you think that resilience is sort of like an internal control or an external form of control?</p>	<p>No, that will be external. Because from the time that you start believing in it, caring for it and understanding about it, the internal is already there. The external is whether you can control your external core. Typical example, Mahatma Ghandi, he managed to not only understand and believe and action his actions but in a way or another, psychologically he managed to gain control of his followers when they wanted to throw stones and everything, he said guys, we not going to do that, we just going to burn the dompass, or whatever it is that they were burning. Nelson Mandela – OK – very little people know this, they were actually going to blow up that building, they were, and yet he had led everybody else to believe it's the civilians. Its all about control, it is, internally and externally.</p>
<p>Alright, you also spoke a lot about changing or adapting to a situation – Would I be correct in saying that you need to roll with the punches or change when change is due in order to be resilient? Feel free to elaborate.</p>	<p>Sometimes, not all the time.</p> <p>(giggle) Um, change is good, as long as you are not compromising on your beliefs and norms – roll with the punches – yes, adapt to a situation but don't ever change who you are, and I think that's also important, which comes down to that foundation. That's important, a backbone – you need to know who you are – you need to know what it is that you standing for, you need to understand it as well. There's got to be some form of passion – there has to be – there needs to be that relation-ship between you and that path.</p>
<p>Alright, with regards to resilience do you think it's something that you learnt throughout your life – through learning and experience or do you think it's something that was passed on to you from your folks – the same way that you might have</p>	<p>No, I don't think that you learn resilience, you are born with it.</p>

<p>your confidence because your Father was a confident person, or do you think that your learnt resilience?</p>	
<p>Alright, and if you are born with it how is it fostered, how is it brought out? Is it brought out by, in your opinion, experiences or is it something that you...</p>	<p>It's probably nurtured as a youngster or at a young age and then you yourself start to develop it. I also think that if it's properly nurtured and properly guided it can be a very good thing. Resilience could be seen as stubbornness and that for me would be resilience that wasn't nurtured, that wasn't guided, that wasn't pruned, that's the way that I would see it. I don't know if you guys have covered this – personal belief – alright I haven't had a to chat to a psychologist about it – but um, characteristics actually needs it – that's a personal belief, um, either you are or you're not um, and that's how you have guys that will crumble and guys that will make it. Ben Hoven failed 51 times before he got it, not Ben Hoven, sorry , Walt Disney – 51 times before he got it right – filed for bankruptcy 50 times – how many people are going to do that? Very few, um, I honestly think that, and it maybe you right as well, that maybe situations could also lead one to it. But it's got to be imbedded from somewhere – somehow, somewhere it's gotta come from somewhere. My one came from family, my one came from background, my one came from Wanting better. When I was at pre-school and my friend, we went through to senior, no junior primary – the story earlier on about the lunch packs – OK, we would get left-overs from last night – now back then within the black communities your stable meals were your pap or your mabele and cabbage and a little bit of steak or a little bit of chicken, whatever, and his Dad was one of those guys who was very well off and I remember his lunches would be like sarmies, cheese sarmies with a bit of bacon or ham and we would sit there and chowing our pap and cabbage and you know, sometimes you'd find that you didn't have that additional piece of chicken because some aunts and uncles came over uninvited (giggle) you know, and so you'd have your pap and spinach or your pap and just cabbage – and I remember the one time I was having lunch and he walked up to me with his lunch box which was very fancy, I must say, I remember it was orange, and um, the cover was very bright pink, um, and he's like, so what are</p>

you having for lunch? Oh, I'm having pap and cabbage, and he's like no man my lunch is better than yours, you know, and I was like, OK so what are you having, and he opens his lunch box – Oh gosh! Sarmies and remember those old Melrose that you used to squeeze, ja, and he had one of those and some Vienna's, and I'd like Hmmm, nice, nice. You know, um, and as I grew older he continued to do that right up until about grade 4 – that's when I left that particular school and went through to Christian Brothers College – but from Junior Primary all the way back to elementary he used to do that to quite a few of us and we used to feel pretty kakky – until that one day, for some or other reason I turned around and I said to him – you know what – I know who I am, I know where I am, and I know where I'm going – do you? To me it was more of – I'm having this because this is what my parents can afford, and I know that my parents have gone the extra mile to make sure that I've got food in my stomach and I've got everything that I need to get through to Varsity and, and, and. Where are you going to end up? Who are you gonna be? You know, um, and probably that's when I started realizing that somewhere inside there's someone a little stronger – YES I CAN – somewhere – inside. And, um, from Then forth I started to realize that there were certain characteristics about me that made me a little bit more different – not special – just different. From time to time I would get out the box, um, from time to time my grand-parents would say something totally different to what they would say about any one of my other siblings across the board, and the family started to realize that – I will go to any member of my family and ask them for their car keys and they'll hand them over – any other member of my family is not going to be that lucky. Um, and as I got older I started to realize – there is something special about you – there is something different about you, um, every time I see a guy on a street corner and I've got an additional R10 – I never give them money – I drive to the nearest garage or shop and I them whatever and give it to them. And that's another thing that I personally do differently, and half the time I do it without having to think about it. And it's not done because whoever might be looking or .....

	<p>Somewhere, somehow it's one of those.... Give you a little bit. Um, share a little bit. And you know, I'll be very honest, the little that I was entrusted with, a lot has come out – quite a lot, and maybe I just need to get my head right – cos the heart is probably right, I just need to get my head right. Um, and once that's done then maybe every-thing else will fall into place. Maybe, maybe not, it's just one of those things. Uncertainty is always there – when Nelson Mandela said it is an ideal that I'm willing to die for – he almost died for it – how much do I want what I want? And how far will I go to get it?</p>
<p>And then just in closing, your final comments, is there anything else you would like say or add to – any of the experiences you shared?</p>	<p>Naaa, (laughter)</p>
<p>Alright, that you very much for your time.</p>	

INTERVIEWER : QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 27 : ANSWERS
<p>OK, in your own words, by your own definition, tell me what you understand about the construct or the word resilience?</p>	<p>It's just about your ability to bounce back. So if you are confronted with something and it doesn't go your way – just your ability to deal with it either positive or negative. So.</p>
<p>Alright, and can you relate to an experience in your life where you ever had to do that- exactly that – bounce back? Alright, tell me about them.</p>	<p>Oh ja, quite a few ...</p> <p>Um, probably, um, it was my post matric year and we had a whole lot of guys gone out boozing, matrics and prefects um, one thing led to another, there was a bit of a confrontation during the course of the evening with some parents and – that was a Friday night – and we thought it was all sorted out on Saturday and then on Monday morning we went to school and there was a governing body meeting and they wanted to finger whoever had caused the hassles, there must have been about 11 of us. Five prefects and – everyone had already been warned – they were all on probation and stuff – I was the only guy who hadn't been in trouble, and um, to cut a long story short I lied to cover and help all the other guys out and because of that I lost my prefects badge, my honours blazer, and like we were awarded a tie for various things, I couldn't captain our rugby team, I</p>

	<p>couldn't captain our water polo team um, so it was quite a – something to get over – because you know you weren't really wrong, but the fact that everyone else got away with everything, um, ja, so I just took it in my stride, I think, probably not as well as I should have, but actually I think I did handle it very well. Because I just carried on as if nothing had changed, nothing had happened, you know, and ultimately I still ended up captaining the team, the coach just re-structured the way everything was done – I think it was harder for my parents though because – like you wear a white blazer at school – and that was taken away etc., etc., so to go back a week later in your normal school kit like a Std. 6 was quite something. That's probably been the biggest, the single most thing that sticks out in my mind in terms of resilience, so.</p>
<p>Alright, and how do you after having your blazer taken away and X, Y, Z that went with it, how did you bounce back, how did you get back on track?</p>	<p>Ag Jess you know, it was simple, I didn't let, I trained harder, I worked harder I .... It wasn't like I was very non-challant about it, I kind of accepted the consequence of my actions cos I had no-one else to blame – I mean for a short while I obviously blamed a lot of other people who I was in... but um, you know I just um, decided that I would take the brunt for it and um, ja, I mean you know ultimately I didn't lose friends, I didn't lose whatever, you know, my water polo team and rugby team WANTED me to captain the team which I did kind of silently um, ja, and it just meant that I, um, I'm of the opinion that there's certain things that you have control over and certain things you don't. The things that you DON'T have control over you can't worry about it, because if I do worry about it, um, that will be the end of me, I think, so for me it's – ja – um, what's done is done I can't change it and I just suck it up and move on.</p>
<p>Alright, is there any other experience that you would like to relate to with regards to resilience?</p>	<p>Um, probably, um, about 2 years ago they looked for management here, I went for the interview, did what I had to, Tuesday they contacted me and confirmed that I had the position. Tuesday night they phoned me and said we had to meet on Wednesday morning, then on Wednesday morning we met for breakfast and then they were retracting the position, and it's not the first time that something like that had happened. Previously it was about offering me a Junior management</p>

	<p>position which they retracted and moved me across to Stanlib, but that wasn't so bad – but this – it was like a culmination of 2 years of, you know, I wanted to be in management, I wanted to do X, Y and Z, um, and ja, they retracted the offer and for me that was quite something cos I always excelled as a consultant and I've been told that I was good enough to be in management and then they re-shuffled and did their thing and instead of just letting it get me down I thought bugger you guys, I'm looking for business elsewhere. I'd been networking up until that point and then took a management position with Liberty down at the coast, and again, it just made me want to work harder etc., etc. So you know, I could have been bitter and sour and say you know, stuff you okes, I'm looking for a job with another company because I don't like management, um, but I didn't. Ultimately that little experience in Durban – I was there for 6 months – and they phoned, Janice phoned me and said there was a position open in Jo'burg and we want you to come back to Jo'burg, which I ultimately did and ja, I was here for a year and we got branch of the year – so ja, I think if I'd let the fact that they retracted their offer twice now, get to me, I'd still be a consultant or be with another company etc., etc. I think that's the other thing that probably sticks out in my mind.</p>
<p>OK, and on that note when you say you didn't let it drag you down and you didn't fret too much over it, would you say, or am I correct in saying that positive thinking is definitely a key construct in terms of resilience?</p>	<p>100% - I'll always try and like talk to the consultants, for example, about positive thinking – again – there are certain things you have control and certain things you don't and why worry about the things you don't have control over. If I can get my guys in my team to think like that they would be a lot happier, they would be more positive. I'm a firm believer of that whole – positive attracts positive – negative attracts negative etc., etc. So definitely, positive thinking and a positive attitude is one of the ways in which I get through anything that's uncertain or whatever.</p>
<p>Alright. Another thing you mentioned was how you kept saying to Liberty that you were interested in management, do you see that as a path of goal setting? And would that be important in resilience?</p>	<p>Ja, you need to have a target or like an end product in mind because I think that if you just coast along you are not going to develop yourself, you not going to do what-ever and I think that these guys that are called "lifers" you know, that are, that don't want to aspire to anything else, um, I find that these guys specifically are very negative more often than not. There are obviously</p>

	<p>exceptions to the rule I think, you know, I can think of a number of consultants who have been in the industry for a very long time that have moved around from being a consultant, to management, into broking, back to being a consultant and they were quite happy with it, you know, but I don't know anybody that's been doing this for 30 years or whatever, or 20 years that is exceptionally happy in what they are currently doing. So, I think you've got to have a goal – if your goal is to be a "lifer" in terms of consultant, I don't think you going to be a very happy person because I think people stagnate and they become accustomed to whatever happens around them – so ja, definitely goal setting because it's like anything, you know, you accomplish something and it's that sense of fulfilment and if you don't feel happy about fulfilling something, well, then I think, in my opinion, there's definitely something wrong.</p>
<p>Alright, so am I correct in saying that you need to find meaning in whatever it is that you are doing in order to be resilient?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Alright, in terms of how you would describe someone, or yourself as resilient, what kind of personality or characteristic traits would you say that you possess that makes you resilient?</p>	<p>For myself, because I can't speak on behalf of somebody else, I just found that guys that have always been involved in a sport, team sport, but having said that, you get individuals who excel in like an individual sport, that if they, or if something happens, you know, generally when the goings good, they're doing well, but quite often when they hit a snag, you know, I don't think a lot of people in that position are able to get up immediately and continue doing whatever it is, or being successful – um- you know, and – I mean, look at Tiger Woods for example, one man show, something like that, and he's, I mean it's been 2 years now and he hasn't made a come-back. You know, same thing, Roger Federra, you know, in terms of an individual sport. So I do think you need people around you to help you through it, to talk about it, to maybe see it from a different perspective, you know, because I also think that quite often when somebody is not resilient is because they either don't have a lot of self-belief or they seeing it from one sort of perspective and that's why I think that chatting to somebody, either in a different field or not in the same head space as you or in the same business as you, can sometimes give you a different perspective, which</p>

	<p>can help to drive you forward.</p>
<p>OK, and on that, do you think, or am I correct in saying that a support system, or structure, is important if you want to be resilient?</p>	<p>Ja, I think that you do need some sort of sounding board, call it that, whether it's a mentor, whether it's close friends, whether it's your – and again I'm talking from my own experience – a couple of your polo mates, or what-ever because if I'm having a chat to one of my polo mates – I mean – these guys are a diverse bunch as you possibly can get – so it's quite interesting to, for them to listen, and then to give you their input. But again It's also about, listening to what they have to say and then it's what you do with that information. I think that also plays quite an important role. So, support structure, whether it be someone you speak to or a mentor or just in social, you know, it depends how you define support really, but I do think you need a sounding board, um ja.</p>
<p>Alright, you mentioned the word or the idea of belief – how do you feel that plays a role in being resilient or in resilience?</p>	<p>Well, I think you have to be positive and you actually have to believe that you can do something. Because if you DON'T think you gonna do it it's never going to happen because you always going to find excuses or blame some-body else, and by the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> time – if you've tried that many times – you always going to have a negative about that specific thing. So ja, I think you've got to believe in what it is you are going to do and um, and you've got to believe that YOU can actually achieve it because again, if you DON'T believe it can be done – then why are you actually doing it.</p>
<p>OK, with regards to the experiences that you mentioned, if we could name them hardships, the way in which you went about them, or the way in which they happened, do you think that because they were challenging, or as I mentioned hardships, that that's what made you more resilient? Do you think you grow each time you get knocked down?</p>	<p>Yes, definitely, 100%. I think that again, my personal thing is that I don't believe that you have a destiny, or whatever it is, I think that you choose your path or whatever you want to call it, and you learn from very experience and apply what you've learnt from that experience, um so if those sort of events or hardships hadn't happened to me I don't believe I would be sitting here today, you know, where I am so ja, I think that hardship, that experience or whatever definitely plays a huge part in where you are.</p>
<p>With regards to resilience as a construct when we spoke about it, per your definition, do you think that it's some-thing that you learnt as you went along, or something that you were born with, or ultimately something that your folks gave to you?</p>	<p>Sigh.... Nature vs. Nurture – Jess, I don't know, I don't think you can be taught to bounce back. You know, I think it's to do with having the right people as a sounding board, as if I didn't speak to the right people, you know, or if I didn't listen or absorb what was being said to me – again I think – what was said to me, I could have reacted 2 ways, so I think it's about having the right sounding board</p>

	<p>and then making your own mind up whether the advice that's been given to you or the feedback that's been given to you is how you perceive to be good or bad advice because if it's bad advice you not going to take it and ultimately you not going to become resilient or if it's good advice and you apply it you will ultimately bounce back from that hard-ship, um, so is it something that you born with or is it something you have learnt.... I don't think it can be taught</p> <p>I think it comes through your experiences so I don't think that it's taught. I think it's something that you just get to work through.</p>
<p>In terms of your experiences where you say you could have either chosen road A or road B where it could have unfolded into 2 completely different scenarios, what do you think in You, or your surroundings made you choose to rather bounce back as opposed to crumble?</p>	<p>Number one, I don't like failure; the only thing I've ever failed was 2 exams or whatever, so for me it's about my own personal thing. I don't want to fail in anything, I don't want to be seen by my peers as failing and maybe, and ja, I think that's it, that's probably the biggest thing, that me, myself, I don't like mediocrity, you know, because everyone can be mediocre or average, I mean, I've always excelled at sport, I've been, you know, but it hasn't been driven by anybody, it's more just my nature, my wanting to succeed – I guess.</p> <p>Ja, probably that.</p>
<p>So would I be correct in saying that aspects like motivation and trial are definitely factors if you want to be resilient?</p>	<p>Ja, I think so, most definitely actually. So again, if you not driven to anything, if you don't have that end goal, you not going to achieve anything, you not going to experience the High, that euphoria of the feel good moment when you do achieve it, you know, you can become quite accustomed</p> <p>To be average or mediocre. It's always a great feeling to reach a goal.</p>
<p>And in your personal life would you say those drives or motivation stem from a pattern or something or would you say that you have that drive and motivation for anything that is required of you, whether you are interested or not?</p>	<p>Well, I like to think that it spreads across all aspects of my life, I think, you know, I want to be successful at work, I want to be a good cyclist, I wanna be a good runner, I want to be a good polo player – you know – I want to have a nice home, I want a comfortable home, I want to entertain friends, because I've got a nice home, so I want to .... I don't think it's just focusing on money, or work, I think It's across everything, whether or not it's in EVERY aspect that I want to do things or not but when I'm in a situation where I don't want to be there or I don't um, then I think I become accommodating um, but I mean I won't sit there and sulk, I'll make the most of the situation,</p>

	<p>because again, I'm there – what am I gonna do? Am I gonna sit in the corner and bitch and moan all day, or am I going to make the most of the situation I'm currently in? So I think there are instances where I don't want to be there and stuff, but I think I make the most of the situation. I hope... I think I take it across all aspects of my life.</p>
<p>Alright, and in terms of having to make the most of a situation sometimes that would require one to maybe change a disposition or adapt to a situation – how do you feel adapting and change – fits in with resilience?</p>	<p>Well I think you've got to – but again, that's my ..... If I look at a colleague or specific friends rather, you know, they don't make the most of the situation they're in, because they have a driver personality, or an expressive personality I mean, so they'll let everyone know that they not enjoying or don't like to be there and stuff, um, I don't, you know, I'll just by there, get it over and done with etc., etc. So Ja, um, something like that. I think that's about it.</p>
<p>Ok, no that's perfect. Then in terms of going back to your first situation, your upset at school – clearly a very big disappoint for you – and as you say feeling the disappointment of your folks in you, because obviously there are three sides to every story, including the truth, how did you,.... How was resilience a key role there with proving yourself or maybe having to stand up again?</p>	<p>Gees, I think, you know what, I think that I actually – my folks pulled me through that, not because they were creating a scene or that, but I remember when I told my Dad, for example, firstly they phoned my Mom to let her know – she didn't want my Dad to be included so we went through – we did the thing, they came back and said this and this, this, this. So that night I had to go and tell my Dad.</p> <p>OK, so..... it was the first time I'd ever seen him cry. He didn't say to me that ah, he was disappointed or anything, he said to me, you know you going to lose your honours blazer now, because that was for him, the biggest thing. OK and the week-end before, it was Selbourne versus Dale, and he'd taken my brother and I up – with my Mom obviously – to go and watch the rugby and I went – I can remember walking around the back of the pavilion – and my Dad like looked at me and said “what are you doing?” You know, why don't you walk through the front? I said no, don't worry you guys, cos I was feeling more embarrassed for my parents more than anything else, you know, and my Dad said, “not a chance” and he made us walk in front of everybody. For me that was a moment where – you know what – if I've disappointed this man so much, like I thought I did, and he could still walk with me in front of everybody, um you know, that for me was probably a big defining moment and ever since then, for me it was like, why care</p>

	<p>what everybody else thinks, a decision has been made and this is the last time I'm going to wear this blazer and – you know what – stuff what other people think, I've got no control over the outcome and so just move on. I think that from that aspect I took a lot away from that specific moment. Really, you know, in terms of being resilient in going forward.</p>
<p>Alright, would I be correct in saying that you were then able to stand up to the adversity of the situation?</p>	<p>Look, you know, adversity I think it was more just .... I was...it wasn't so much adversity where I was confronting the situation, it was more I think accepting that the outcome could not be favourable but, you know, if those were the consequences, well then deal with it OK, but there's no reason for you not to just keep going forward.</p>
<p>OK, and is there another moment or another experience that you can relate to where you felt the same sort of defining moment, or if something sort of needed to resonate that much resilience in you?</p>	<p>Jess, you know what, I think that um, the thing is that if I think about it there's no one defining moment, you know, the 2 moments that stick out the most, it's those 2 moments, so for me to say, gees, another defining moment – nothing springs to mind. You know, in terms of anything that's happened where I've had to .... Um, maybe if I think about it .... From a personal perspective... maybe my divorce, but that was – again – totally different situation – um, you know where I went off the rails for a couple of months, but ja, you know, you can't sit and wallow in self-pity forever you know – put your big boy panties on and move forward, so there wasn't really a defining moment or whatever, it was just time hey, so ja, um, I suppose if that's something that came to mind, but other than that not really hey.</p>
<p>Right, we spoke about personality traits. What do you feel personality wise, were aspects in yourself that got you through those kinds of moments?</p>	<p>I think that you should.... I wouldn't say a full on extrovert, but you've got to be able to be a good peoples person, I think, because if you are an introvert I think you going to struggle, you withdraw, etc., etc., and again, I think that it goes to your sounding board/support, you know, surround yourself with people that are in a positive frame of mind, who aren't negative, who aren't .... So ja, that sort of personality.... Outgoing, good to be around, somebody who is more of an extrovert and ja ... probably that.</p>
<p>Alright, and how much do you think that being resilient or having resilience such as the aspects in your life plays a role in the business world or in a working environment?</p>	<p>A heck of a lot, I think if you get into this industry, for example, and you become a consultant and you become, and you take no for an answer or you don't have thick skin and you take offense to what</p>

	<p>somebody says to you in the heat of a moment you will never succeed here. I think um, I can't compare it to anything else other than the industry that I've only ever worked in. But I know for a fact in this industry if you don't have the ability to bounce back after a bad day, week, month, quarter; you will never make it here. I think you've got to have the proverbial thick skin in this industry to succeed. Most definitely.</p>
<p>Alright, and on that note, you being a Manager, and having people that are not only looking up to you but subordinates – so to speak – how would you – if given a chance – give them the opportunity or the learnt trait of resilience? How would try to instil that in them?</p>	<p>Ag, you know what Jess, I try every day, I promise you. That's why I say, you know, I work with consultants that have been doing this for 10 years who are exceptionally bright from a product perspective, from a, just a general knowledge from an IT perspective but they just don't know how to bounce back after a bit of criticism, they don't know how to bounce back after a bad month, um, they get to a point where they just blame everybody else. It's tough, I have my set of ideas on how I think and how I get through a day and how I wake up and try not to be negative, you know, where if a decision has to be made that's not going to affect – you know if somebody's made a decision that I'm not happy with – well – fire away, it's been done you know. I find that a lot of these guys hang onto those little things and almost create more havoc and create more negativity because that's the only way they know how and it's frustrating from my perspective because I think I've got probably – in my team of 7 – I've probably only got 1 person who's really resilient in the way that I probably see myself, um, who's always positive, who Has a bad moment but then in 5 minutes it's over, you know. Whereas everybody else just, you know, there's a lot of negativity and they drag the people around them down and it's one of my pet peeves.</p>
<p>And you being as positive or resilient as you are, how do you deal with that, given that they make up most of your surroundings in a business environment?</p>	<p>Um, I get out the office a lot, I walk to the offices next door or I pop out and get out of the office for 10 minutes. I can't surround myself with negative people often. So when the guys aren't here I'm happy but I can tell you now that when I see some of the guys walking into the office I get like a little bit frustrated because I know what's coming and I'll listen to the nonsense for a couple of minutes and I'll deal with it and then I've got to get up and do something because I can't stand to be around</p>

	that sort of..... I just can't fathom why people are like that.
In terms of that would you say that having a release or changing your focus is an important thing in resilience?	Yes, Yes, I think that's why I feel 100 times better if I run, have a swim, cycle or have a gym session or whatever. That's my – and I don't like to do it in a group – I like to be on my own because it gives me time to deal with, um, process things that happened during the day, how might I have reacted differently or said something differently or done something differently, so you know, I do think that getting away is a good coping mechanism, or just to get myself back in a good space, so ja.
OK, and more of a – I suppose trick question – if you can, off the top of your head, if those kind of things work for you, what are the chances of instilling, or introducing rather, these kinds of coping mechanisms to your staff?	I've tried! You can ask anybody here, um, who takes their team out the most for a get-away, I mean a team thing, so who will take their guys out for an afternoon to just break away from something, you know, and It's my team, it's my branch and you know – but - there's so much – you know, you can take a horse to water but you can't make it drink. I buy the guys books on things, I subscribe to 'Abstract' every week they send me a book and let the guys take a look and if they like it, I'll buy them the book with pleasure. But I think if you want to hang onto the fact that somebody at Head Office who deals with your case always pisses you off; regardless of what you read, what someone says to you or whatever, if you don't want to embrace what you're listening to, I think you always going to struggle, so as much as I would love to and as much I'd love to try and get the guys out of the work mode, you know, try and get them to interact, try and get them to.....I think it's up to the individual to try and make the most of those kind of opportunities.
Alright, so would I be correct in saying that those same individuals need to possess their own individual drive and motivation in order to succeed?	Yes, ja.
OK, just on that issue, or on that note, how do you feel that organisational commitment, or their commitment to Liberty Life – not only as an organisation – but to the selling of the product, how do you feel that has, if any, touch on resilience?	I don't think currently – if I look at my branch for example – I don't think that we have the right people in these positions, I think I've inherited a legacy of problems which I'm trying to address, you know, I've got guys in my team who want to be farmers, they don't WANT to be in this industry so when something comes up that they don't like it's kind of well, you know, whatever.... Or if something comes up that they should be doing –

	<p>and they don't, it's almost like Oh well I don't really care. Whereas I'm saying guys strive for 100% perfection, they like but what for, you know. Also, in terms of product I think that if we don't have a good product the guys struggle, um, I think when we've got a good product they think is easier to sell, they sort of well, OK, now we've got a better product so it should be easier. When they not being paid correctly – also, big problem, huge problem, um, you know, and when they are being paid more like they used to it seems to be running a little smoother. So ja, product – I do think that the company should provide a decent product but also I think that any good sales person, regardless of what they been given to sell, will sell it.... So</p>
<p>Alright, then just in closing any final comments, going back to you rather than your team, is there anything else that you would like to add on a note of resilience that you might have thought about in the interim of the interview.</p>	<p>Jess, no. I just think that being resilient boils down to each individual, um, you know, and I think, like I said, if you surround yourself with positive people, positive things happen. If you're always negative and finding a problem with something I don't believe you will ever be successful, I really don't. Again, it's quite easy to when something doesn't work – point a finger at somebody else, um, I don't think that's the right approach, I think you need to re-evaluate, learn from it and just make sure it doesn't happen again, you know, that's my philosophy in life. Like I said earlier, I can think of 2 experience, maybe the divorce was, in terms of resilience but if somebody said to me today, would you change anything in your life, because It was too hard or whatever, I would say no, because if it wasn't for those experiences and the lessons I learnt, I wouldn't be here today. That's the bottom line. I believe you are given a choice and you make a choice and live with the consequences.</p>
<p>Alright, thank you very much for your time.</p>	<p>Perfect, pleasure.</p>

INTERVIEWER: QUESTIONS	PARTICIPANT 28 : ANSWERS
<p>Tell me what you understand by the word or your definition of resilience?</p>	<p>Um, I think resilience is your ability to handle situations, not just situations, but to keep going. Because if you keep running into problems all the time you find a way to deal with it and carry on with it. So you don't let it, but eventually it does, but you try to not let it get to you and keep going,</p>

	keep going, keep going.
Alright, and do you have any experiences in your life where you had to be resilient that you can tell me about?	My job actually (giggle)... mostly because that's where I spend most of my day. There's so many various areas that we work in, but because you are dealing with people all the time, and you have to sort of, you create expectations or your brokers have expectations of you and you have expectations of other people, having those expectations not being me, you run into problems in this department. You'll get one situation or one client where everything about this client just goes wrong, you know, and so ja, more often than not that's what happens.
Is there any other experience you can think about in your personal life maybe where something could date back as far as Primary school, High school, where you had to lift your head and get out of a challenge?	Oh, it was so long ago. I think my biggest challenge was with my Son, he's been diagnosed with a condition called Developmental Disorder, OK, it falls in the autism scale, so when he was very little, I think about 3 or 4, the teacher started noticing that something wasn't quite right, he wasn't always understanding and all of that, and then we went through a whole series of tests – you know – child psychologist, neurosurgeons you know, I heard about doctors that I didn't even know existed, and then eventually placing him in a special school – he had to go onto medication which he's still on. Then this one didn't work and that one didn't work or it was either too strong or not strong enough and the combinations, and then finally now – he's going to be 9 soon – he is on the right dose of medication, he's in a great school and he's.... we can see the progress that he's made over the years. I suppose that was the biggest challenge for me in my personal life.
Alright and how were you resilient in that how did you get over it, so to speak, how did you work through that?	I think because we surrounded ourselves with professionals basically. We have good doctors, therapists, teachers – people at work and family were very supportive so In the mean time I was working through all of this time as well, so it was just a case of you know what, it's got to be done – and do it. You know, pick yourself up and just keep going.
So am I correct in saying that a support system for you is very important if you want to be resilient?	It helps, but it's not a necessity, but it does help when things are coming at you from all sorts of angles, then, you know, if you only dealing with one specific issue then, yes it's nice to have it, but you kind of just put your head down and carry on. If there's more than one stress situation in your life then having a support structure is very

	important.
Alright and what would you say necessitates you know, what kind of situation – if any – did you experience that necessitated more than – you know – it was more than one thing coming at you, as you said – and you required that family support?	Um – It was with my Son when he was being tested, his Father and I were busy breaking up and of course there was work, changes as so on. Initially my family didn't know everything that what was going on and eventually it became too much and I spoke to my parents and my sisters and everybody.
Is there any other situation that you can think of – any other experience where you could share how you had to overcome a challenge regardless of how big or small it is?	Um, I can't think of anything specific because every day at work is like, you filled with challenges of all different kinds, so um, can't really think of anything specific hey.
Alright and what do you think, other than being able to rely on your parents and your sisters in that time, what else got you through, what other kind of maybe characteristics or ...?	Um, I didn't do it often, but I used to keep a diary, it helped me to get rid of my thoughts and then I went onto Dr. Phil's website and I worked through a lot of the – he's got all these worksheets and things that you can do, it depends on whatever situation you are going through – and I read a lot as well. For lack of a better word – self-help sort of things where you find a lot of people in similar situations and how they got through it because it obviously gives you ideas on how you can address situations in your own life as well.
OK, so would I be correct in saying that it's important for you to be able to relate to people in a similar situation in order for you to be resilient?	Ja, you could say that.
You mentioned self-help – you know, a sort of positive outlook – how important is the positive emotion in being resilient?	Oh no, that's like probably the biggest thing because you know, the other thing is that I also had to tell myself often don't be around negative people because that affects you And to be grateful for the little things in life. So every day I think of 3 things, even if it's the same things – to be grate-full for, like um, initially it used to be a conscious thing and now it just happens – it's like thank you for the roof over my head, I got a plate of food to eat last night, and I have a job, you know. So little things like that. So just reinforcing and I know some people write it down, I couldn't be bothered to write it down, first thing when I wake up in the morning – you know – just be grateful for 3 things and carry on with the day. I found that that also – by starting the day off on a positive note, helped me, when the other things started coming at me, because by the time you get to work you've been through traffic – there's already 5 people that have annoyed you, or you swore at somebody, (giggle) you get to work and

	<p>you know there's a whole pile of stuff – from yesterday's problems – there's more stuff coming today, there's more work coming today, Head Office wants you to do this, your boss wants you to do that um and it helped me to get through that, so at the end of the day, like, I'm so tired, but it wasn't so bad after all, you got through it.</p>
<p>Alright, so what kind of personality characteristics do you think you have that make you resilient?</p>	<p>Um, I think having a positive outlook on life, I am a strong personality um, I'm independent, I don't need to be babied and looked after – I don't need somebody to come to me every time and say 'you did so well', you know, it's nice to hear but I don't need to hear it so off I go – I don't need that constant reinforcement. I think I've got self-confidence, maybe some people call it arrogance, but I don't need people to like me or that kind of thing. I am who I am, I don't expect anybody to like me or be my friend for whatever reason, so it's like ja, just being a strong individual and I can be on my own without being lonely, I enjoy what I do, I enjoy spending time with my Son, I take pleasure in the little things in life as well. That's basically me.</p>
<p>OK and do you think going through what you did with your Son, that hardship and having to rise to the challenge, do you think that helped you in your work environment?</p>	<p>Ja, definitely, because I mean – look – nobody expects.... You can't control everything that happens in your life and something like a behavioural challenge or a learning disability comes your way – you can only do SO much. And to not concentrate too much on the things that don't really matter, so I think it also help you to – it helped me at work to look at what the actual problem is and then tackle it from the inside out – not pick this pick that – this is the route – OK – go straight to that and address it there. You know, instead of coming at it from all different angels.</p>
<p>Alright, so would I also be correct in saying prioritizing.</p>	<p>Yes, that would be the word.</p>
<p>And with regard to example the learning disability with your Son, you weren't really in a position to prioritize there because for a long time you didn't quite know what it was- as you said, specialist after specialist, so how did you sort of prioritize to be resilient there? How did you tackle that in terms of taking that one step at a time?</p>	<p>Um, it was just a case of push through a keep going. We had to find out – because it started with a speech delay – and then a little bit of occupational therapy issues as well but mainly it was the speech delay and we needed to figure out why he had a speech delay because he didn't have – he couldn't have a conversation like this then, he didn't have spontaneous speech, he would speak to you copies from movie scripts – so he's got entire movie scripts in his head that he can recite to you at any given time. Like if he wants to ask</p>

	<p>you something or if he wanted to say something, I think also because we were looking towards the future like, where's this child going to end up going to school, um, because there aren't many specialized facilities so you have to find out what the issue is in order for you to address it. So I think that was just finding out exactly what it is so that we could get him the best of what he needed. Because we not always gonna be there, I always say I'm not gonna be there to explain to you or to somebody else, he's going to grow up one day and people are not going to understand his behaviour of why he says things the way he does – um, and people are nasty you know, so I think that was just so that we can equip him with the right tools – I think it was more about protecting him from the big ugly world out there that propelled the resilience in terms of keep on going, keep on asking questions until we get the answers.</p>
<p>Alright, so it's safe to say your resilience was triggered by a need for your Son?</p>	<p>Ja.</p>
<p>And tell me, do you think that resilience is a learnt trait, something that you learnt through these experiences in life or do you think it's something that you were born with or that you might have gotten from your folks?</p>	<p>I think some of us are born with it, I think I was one of those people, but it can be learnt, but you often find that people who have to learn it don't really want to cos its hard work. It's easier to have a pity party all the time and say what about poor me, than to say OK, what do I need to do to get on with this. I think some of us are sort of naturally – um, we are born with it or we have a natural affinity toward it, if we not born with it and then you adopt it as one of your characteristics because you want to get on with life and get things done and get going. Because there is life to live, so um ja, I think more often than not you either born with it or have a natural affinity towards it and then you adopt it and take it into your life.</p>
<p>Alright and then just item No. 3 over there "I am able to depend on myself more than anyone else" you scored very high on that, you said strongly agree, would you say that there is any other experience in life where you had to demonstrate that or are we just talking about that experience we discussed now?</p>	<p>Um, when I was a kid my parents (I'm 1 of 5 children by the way) so, you have to be resilient when you are in a big family. (giggle) My parents always saw me as the strong one, I only found this out much later, when I was already grown up like – I was living in Johannesburg actually – and they would just sort of leave me you know, I would get on with things, I would do my work, get good grades, when I was older if I wanted to get a job I went out and got it and when I wanted to study something I said this is what I want to study and they just LET me get on with it, you know, and I</p>

	<p>always felt then that they never really cared, so if I wanted to do something I just did it myself. Eventually I got to a point where I didn't ask them anymore, I just carried on with it. I suppose that would be my first experience of that kind of thing.</p>
<p>Do you think resilience is identifiable from someone else for example the way your parents identified it in you?</p>	<p>It must be, I think so ja, I think you can see or you could probably tell by the way somebody reacts to a situation but you can't tell just by looking at them, how they react or handle a situation will be an indicator of um, do they throw their arms up in the air and go ' I can't deal with this' or do they first try and when they get to a brick wall, you know, they can only go so far, and then go and seek assistance. Um, ja.</p>
<p>Item No. 13 "I can get through difficult times because I have experienced difficulty before" very similar to what I asked you earlier on but I'll ask again, do you feel because you went through difficult times – and you were forced to face a challenge where obviously you were not prepared to give up because of your son, because of your driving factor, do you think that will help you in the future if you have to face more difficulties?</p>	<p>Um, what was the question again?</p>
<p>Item No. 13 "I can get through difficult....."</p>	<p>Ja, Ja Because you sort of – in a sense that you learn – I think if you don't learn from the experience then you won't ....I try to learn a lesson from everything, I don't like having crap in my life for starters (giggle) but there is always something, there is a lesson to be learnt so going forward I can already see the warning signs, even if it's a relationship situation, you know, like, you always go for a particular kind of guy, and then you think, but this guy is actually an ass-hole – you think some people are nice but they not and you start seeing the characteristics like much earlier – before it would take you a whole year before you started noticing something's not right here, and then as you grow older or as you go through more experiences you realize, no, no, no, I think also from relationships – I'm like – from the beginning I'm not interested in nonsense, and it's not that I want to be married or I'm saying I must marry this oak now, but don't play games, you know. Like I see it from just looking at people, like this oak, no seriously it's not going to happen, so (giggle) Ja – if you've learnt from past experiences you see it coming. That's why with work – I've been doing my job for quite a while – you not always prepared</p>

	for it but you know how to handle it when it comes again. So ja...
Alright, so would I be correct in saying that with each experience you obviously grow more as you learn and then as a result you know how to approach situations better?	Ja,
So resilience has taught you how to approach situations better whether it's personal, work, any kind of aspects in life?	Ja.
Alright obviously with approaching situations sometimes you might have to change the way in which you approach a situation obviously personal life might not be the same as work life, do you think that changing and adjusting to situations is important in resilience?	Oh you have to because at work you dealing with work things – there's also a level of professionalism – there's the way you speak to people, the way you write e-mails and that kind of thing and of course with every situation or every person (every person has a different personality) so you can't react the same or have the same response to every situation because you not going to get anywhere then, it's not going to work, you not going to achieve, maybe eventually you will, but it's going to take you a lot longer if you approach every single situation the same way.
Item No. 17, "my belief in myself gets me through hard times" you scored 6 on that which is also relatively high, it's agree, do you think that believing in yourself through all those times is what helped you to get where you are now, and helps you to be resilient?	Ja, um, I went through a very bad phase where I didn't actually, it was when Josh's father and I were going through a very bad stage and I didn't have any self-confidence and I didn't have anything and I woke up one day and I said 'what happened to the person that I was' you know, 10 / 5 years ago, and I slowly started building up my self-confidence again, I started doing things you know, and believing in myself which eventually got me out of the relationship – it wasn't a good relationship to be in – um, it helped me with my work, um, the thing is if you don't believe in yourself then you can't expect other people to believe in you or have confidence in you – so ja.
Alright, is there anything else that you can think of that is important for resilience for maybe yourself or terms of maybe advice for someone else to be resilient?	Um, sometimes you just have to pay attention to what's going on around you because then you'll see things, you'll notice things, you'll hear things and maybe whatever comes your way won't be that bad or you'll be more prepared for it, but it's like ' pay attention to what's going on around you, I think that would be one thing I'd say.
Alright and then just in closing is there any other situation you can think of or anything else you would like to add about resilience or anything you might have thought of in the interim of our conversation that you'd like to add?	Not that I can think of.

OK, thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate it – I know how busy you are.	OK, thank you.
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## Appendix D

### Illustration of confirmation of raw data (interviews) as attained by a second reader

#### Hardships

The hardships these people had to endure were of a varied nature, but never short of severity and personal anguish. It ranged from absence of parental care, extreme poverty, joblessness, to being almost a non-entity in a large family. Some have had to fend for themselves without parental guidance, even from very early stages in their lives. One participant described how she, at fifteen years of age with the help of her brother of ten years old, had to farm, take the products to the market, go to school and visit their parents who were both in hospital with a debilitating illness. Apart from suffering financial hardships of all types, there were the traumas associated with rape, parental divorce, homelessness, unplanned pregnancies, immigration, racial abuse and bullying at the work place. Some recalled how difficult it had been to raise their children without the luxury of their own motor vehicle - how they had to tolerate the discomfort and debasement associated with taxi transport when they tried to live a respectful life. To them, when reminiscing about these experiences, it felt as if it had all been a test of character they have had to endure, to manage and pass through, some way or another. In later years in their lives, they again have had to face hardships, such as restructuring that left their jobs and income degraded or out-sourced and abuse from customers, managers and marital partners that ended in divorce.

In the face of all these adversities, these people survived and attained success. All these experiences would have served as mitigating circumstances for failure and yet these people attained success in a highly-competitive business world. A reader who has empathy cannot be left untouched by the stories of suffering these people have had to endure, incidences from which they have emerged seemingly unscathed. Through courage and determination, they attained the success they had always visualized for themselves and for their children.

## Support

The participants acknowledged the value of the support which they had received during difficult times. Depending upon the structure of the family of origin, they paid credence to the motivating effect of encouragement given by either both or single parents, grandparents, or other nuclear or extended family members. Some acknowledged the value of religious faith and pastors to whom they could turn for encouragement when in deep distress. Others felt that faith in oneself was more important. Many mentioned the value of good mentors and coaches in their lives – mentors who had guided them either by way of advice (“who could now and again pep-talk you”) and support, or by way of example – people with whom they could identify and who served as an inspiration. One person mentioned how she followed the advice of the TV programme’s *Dr Phil*. Another consulted a psychologist, but all, when interviewed, felt proud that they had made it, could look back and could advise others how to overcome tribulations.

Good networks, friendships and team support served as valuable entities to make them feel socially embedded in a supportive system. The personal support received from the intimacy of marital partners and the love for their children encouraged them never to fail their own parental responsibilities. One received much support from a kind employer. Many indicated the motivating influence of the experience of success, how they realized how much they had grown and how this served to propel them forward.

## Origins and strategies.

There were mixed opinions amongst the participants about the origin of resilience – whether it is innate or learned – nature or nurture. Some felt very strongly that it was not something they had learned or that it could be taught. They were quite adamant that it was innate, as one said: “I do not believe it is taught, it is an instinct you just have to live through.” A statement made by another participant in support of this view was: “the only thing that changes is the situation you are resilient in.” However, others believed that it has been instilled in them by their parents, by what they had said, how they had believed in them and had encouraged them and how they had lived their own lives. Some reason that it was a combination of both; nature and nurture in interaction.

- Vision.

The importance of having a vision or a realistic goal has been emphasized as almost a *sine qua non* for success. All the participants believed that that was the guiding force in their lives - knowing where they wanted to be. This helped them to “keep their cool” when things did not go smoothly; “to see today not as a permanent state of affairs.” To have stayed focused, to have kept a future orientation is what mattered to them most. One person pasted pictures of beautiful homes and cars on his desk to keep him remindful of where he was moving towards and not to allow the abuse of others to derail him from his focus. They are quite specific in what their goals were and believed that through persistence it would be attained. “If you do not have a plan it is like death” said one. It is the long term vision that they held onto, but also at the same time they reminded themselves that tomorrow was another day that might be easier than today.

As much as they emphasized the importance of a future orientation, they also emphasized the importance of the here and now, the task at hand. “You are where you are supposed to be ... right choices or wrong choices it does not matter..... make the best of it and move on” said one.

- Hard work

They all mentioned hard work as a necessary devotion to accomplish success. Success to them meant that they had accomplished their goals. They did not measure it in money-terms “the one with the most toys also dies” but in terms of what they had overcome and accomplished. They adapted to changes, even welcomed it as a form of challenge.

- Positive disposition

As part of this vision they believed in the value of being positive, of surrounding oneself with positive people and deliberately avoiding negative people and negative news. Some said they did not buy newspapers which published all the negative news. They wanted to remain positive and they felt or believed it was because they had stood up for what they believed in that had made them become successful.

- Faith

To some, faith in their God and prayer helped them much to move through adversity – “when everything seems to be falling apart.” Some appeared to say that although faith in a God was a good thing, faith in themselves, in their own inner strength, was what it was all about. One person said: “don’t ever lose the belief in who you are. If need be, reinvent yourself”.

- Self-rewarding behaviour

To celebrate even small victories was considered necessary to motivate oneself. “Speak kind words to you yourself” was the advice given by them. This tied in with their general self-reliance – they did not wait for others to define them or their worlds.

- Determination.

To stand one’s ground, unwaveringly in the face of adversity was certainly regarded by the participants as one of the most important characteristics that had driven them to success. They often mentioned the need of having a thick skin – a strong outer layer to protect themselves against hardships and abuse. To them this was necessary to maintain self-respect. Self-respect to them was essential. It could be attained through professionalism in whatever they were doing in their work. They did not allow other people to unsettle them, but did not respond aggressively; they saw themselves as professionals in their field and acted accordingly – “I refuse to allow anybody to put me into a box.” The words “move on” kept coming up in most interviews; it was about not giving up.

- Self-development

As part of their professionalism they believed in self-development. They believed that the road to success ran through further studies, continued learning; knowledge and wisdom by developing oneself. They regarded (even the unique experiences of hardship they had suffered) as positive events in their character building. “Wisdom grows within a person” was a statement often made. They faced challenges as learning opportunities. The decision to develop was something they had taken upon themselves,

an inner desire to achieve. “The work does not owe you anything, you have to work for it yourself” was another statement that illustrated their inner locus of control.

- Realism and enthusiasm

The content of the interviews generally pictured an enthusiasm for life and a realistic evaluation of themselves and their environment. They made realistic interpretations about their situations and problems, but faced it “head on” as one said. They also made realistic interpretations about themselves and were generally not arrogant. They accepted their circumstances as reality – “go with the flow, but work hard, work creatively”, was what they believed in. They believed one has to have back-up plans, to invent strategies to cope and to be solution focused. They realised that they could not change the past – one said: “What’s done is done, what happened, happened. I can’t change it and just suck it up and move on” and another: “Face the consequences of your acts – do not point the finger at other people; re-evaluate, learn from it and just make sure it does not happen again. Take positive action.”

They realised that weak moments did come where one would cry and be sad, “But when it’s over and done, off you go” was the advice given.

- Humility and caring

It was a very striking characteristic that the author noticed in virtually all of the participants – their willingness to be considerate towards others. They believed that personal strength was gained by giving to others and caring for those who were less fortunate. These persons showed no signs of egoism or ethnocentrism - they were concerned about serving others, about the welfare of their families and friends.

- Exceptions

There were a few exceptions. One person seemed to rationalize his failure; another posed the question, “Am I arrogant or just assertive?” One described himself as stubborn, aggressive, but diplomatic – “I did everything for myself, no friends or contacts helped me”. Maybe these were not really exceptions, but just other ways of describing their authenticity.

- Summary

People who are resilient show a very strong determination to succeed against all odds. They have a vision about a better future. This is not a vague vision - they know exactly what they want for themselves and their family. They are strongly focused on what they are doing at present – the here and now, to do what they do well, so that they will be able to succeed. Even if the now is hard and uncomfortable, they believe in a better tomorrow. They are driven towards and by success. They are achievement-motivated, they set their own goals, they measure their success and they celebrate their achievements, no matter how big or small - each step counts. They are hardworking individuals. They are realistic about themselves and their situation, matter-of-fact people who have moved on from their past. They are not unemotional and inconsiderate, but they do not ponder the past for too long. Their hardships and failures are interpreted as learning events and their successes as milestones in a continuous self-development process. They are positive, enjoy life and do not mingle with negative persons. They appreciate the contributions of those who helped them along their way and they will actively search for mentors and coaches to assist them further along their path towards self-fulfilment.

Whether resilience is an inherited trait or learned attribute is not clear. This study did not attempt to establish an answer to this problem. The persons interviewed had different ideas about this, ranging from believing in either nature or nurture or in an interaction between the influence of the social environment and inner individual personality qualities.