



The Resilience Timeline™: A Step-by-Step Guide to Mapping the Strengths and Relationships That Carried You

With companion [Folder](#)

Created in collaboration with [Dr. Tian Dayton, PhD](#), Psychodramatist and Relational Trauma Expert.

The **Resilience Timeline™** uses the same method as the trauma timeline for a different purpose: to place strengths, good choices, and sustaining relationships into developmental sequence.

This is not a counterweight to make a hard exercise more comfortable, and it is not positive thinking. Difficulty tends to be remembered in sequence while strength is remembered as scattered moments, which makes strength feel accidental. On a line, good decisions visibly led to more good decisions, and capacities visibly developed out of what was faced.

Before You Begin

Read this page before you draw anything.

- ✓ Set aside about 30 minutes.
- ✓ Keep entries short. Sequence is the point, not detail.
- ✓ Small counts. One conversation, one decision, one steady person. Resilience is rarely made of large moments.
- ✓ Expect this to be harder than it sounds. Strengths are often less available to memory than injuries. If little comes at first, start anywhere and work outward.
- ✓ Include what you did and who was there. Both belong on the page.



How to Build It

01: Draw the Line

Turn the page sideways and draw a horizontal line across the long edge.

02: Divide It Into Five-Year Segments

Mark 0, 5, 10, 15, on up to your current age.

03: Above the Line, Note What You Did

Times you rose to a challenge, made a good choice that led to others, asked for or accepted help, felt genuinely good about something, had a realization that changed something, or showed kindness, grit, or strength.

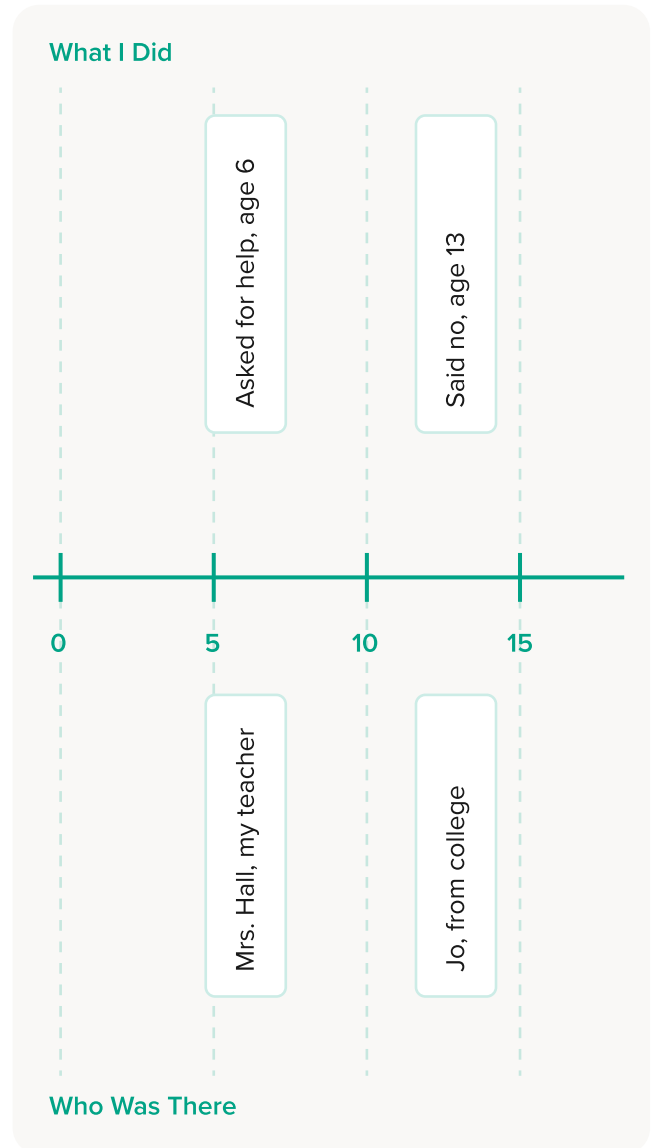
04: Below the Line, Note Who Was There

Moments and relationships where you felt loved, seen, or supported, and people who helped you move forward. Name them.

05: Work in More Than One Pass

Entries surface later. Leave room to come back.

Example:



What Counts as an Entry

- A time you rose to something difficult
- A good choice that opened the way to others
- A time you asked for help, or let help in
- A strength built by facing something, not avoiding it
- A realization that changed how you did things after
- Something you made, finished, or figured out
- Acting with kindness or integrity when it cost you
- A person who was steady, or who saw you clearly
- A time you left, said no, or held a boundary
- A time you struggled well, and it shaped you

My Resilience Timeline™

Brief entries. Ages 0 to 40+, extend the line into the right margin if you need more.

What I Did

0

5

10

15

20

25

30

35

40+

Who Was Here

Work in more than one pass. Entries surface later, so leave room to come back.



Reading What You Have Drawn

The value is in the pattern, not the record. Look at the whole page.

- **Look for chains, not moments.** Follow one good decision forward. What did it make possible two years later, or ten?
- **Notice what you built out of difficulty.** Capacities usually sit near the hard stretches, not away from them.
- **Count the people.** Look at how many names ended up below the line, including brief ones. Isolation tends to overstate itself in memory.
- **Find the earliest entry.** You were likely resourceful earlier than you assumed.
- **Set both timelines side by side.** Same life. Seeing them together is the point of doing both.



Reflection

Which strength here did you develop by facing something hard?

Which good choice led to the most that followed?

Who below the line would you thank, and for what specifically?

Which of these strengths is available to you today?

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