The Making of a Theory

Understanding the Resilience Depletion Theory™

How repeated human patterns became a new explanation for hidden resilience decline.

Pattern → Theory → Reflection → Responsible Practice

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The Making of Resilience Depletion Theory™

The origin story, central question, and early theory-building movements.

Welcome and Theory Origin

Theories do not begin as polished diagrams. They often begin with a pattern that refuses to disappear. For almost 30 years, Joyce Odidison worked with leaders, teams, professionals, couples and organizations navigating conflict, strain, disappointment, disengagement, low trust and leadership pressure. Across many different settings, one question kept returning: What is being weakened inside people before the visible breakdown?



Origin lens

This section asks readers to look beneath visible strain and notice the repeated human patterns that gave the theory its shape.

Purpose of this resource

This companion resource helps you follow the reasoning that led to Resilience Depletion Theory™ and invites you to become a careful

observer of your own life. It is not designed to label every difficult day. It is designed to help you notice recurring patterns, ask better questions, and identify the internal capacities that may need protection or rebuilding.

How this resource is organized

1. Pattern appears	2. Theory takes shape	3. Reflection leads to action

- **Part 1:** How the pattern behind Resilience Depletion Theory became visible.
- **Part 2:** The core ideas and propositions that shape the theory.
- **Part 3:** Reflection tools to test the explanation against your own experience and identify a responsible next step.

The central question: What if burnout is one possible outcome, while resilience depletion names the deeper process that can occur beneath it?

How to move through this resource

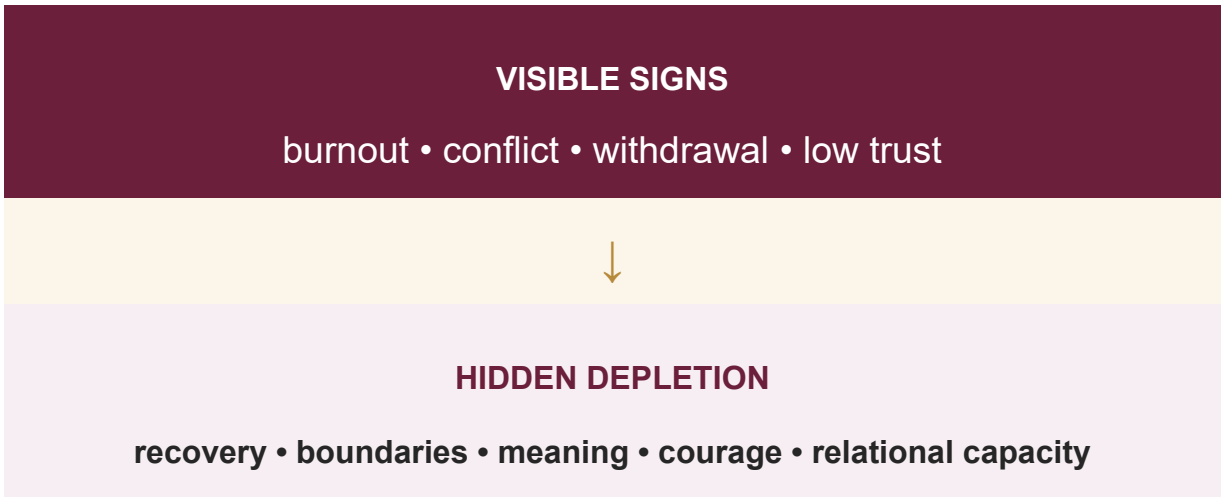
- Read it alongside the book section that introduces the Resilience Depletion Theory™.
- Pause at each reflection page and write what you are genuinely noticing.
- Separate one-time events from patterns that repeat across time or settings.
- Return after 30 days and note what the theory helped you see earlier or explain more clearly.



1. A Theory Begins With a Pattern

Many of the problems we can see are signs, not complete explanations. Burnout, conflict, withdrawal, irritability, poor decisions and declining trust can tell us that something is wrong. They do not always tell us what has been progressively depleted or why rest alone may not restore it.

The recurring observation behind the theory was that people can remain productive, responsible and outwardly functional while becoming less able to recover, relate well, think clearly, tolerate pressure, maintain boundaries, draw on meaning or act with wise courage. The decline can begin before a visible crisis.



Resilience Depletion Theory™

Resilience depletion happens when a person repeatedly draws on their inner capacity to keep going without restoring the anchors that replenish, stabilize, and sustain them.

Resilience Depletion Theory™ proposes that resilience is a renewable but drainable life resource. It becomes depleted when a person repeatedly draws on their inner capacity to live, lead, recover, care, decide, and keep going without restoring the inner anchors that replenish, stabilize, and sustain them. Over time, this depletion weakens the hidden structures that help a person remain whole under pressure, often showing up as burnout, conflict, mental health strain, disconnection, or leadership instability.

> **Pattern statement:** Outward functioning can continue while inner resilience capacity declines.

2. Moving From Observation to Explanation

A useful theory does more than name a problem. It offers an organized explanation of how a pattern may work, what conditions make it more likely, what consequences may follow and what observations could challenge or refine it.

The Seven Movements

Observe → Question → Name → Propose → Map → Apply → Refine

Observe	Question	Name	Propose	Map	Apply	Refine

→ → → → → →

Stage	Movement	Purpose
1	**Observe**	Notice recurring patterns across people, roles and settings.
2	**Question**	Ask what the visible labels fail to explain.
3	**Name**	Give the hidden process language that makes it discussable.
4	**Propose**	Form statements that explain how depletion begins, continues and spreads.
5	**Map**	Identify the resilience capacities and anchors involved.
6	**Apply**	Use reflection, measurement, conversation and rebuilding practices.
7	**Refine**	Compare the explanation with lived experience and emerging evidence.

3. The Ideas That Made the Pattern Visible

Resilience as capacity

Resilience is not only a personality trait or a demand to keep pushing. It depends on internal capacities that help a person adapt, recover, maintain relationships, make decisions, lead and move forward. Those capacities can be strengthened, protected, spent and depleted.

Resilience as currency

The currency metaphor makes an abstract idea tangible. Daily life makes withdrawals. Some are necessary: learning, caring, leading, changing and doing difficult things all require resilience. Other withdrawals come from chronic conflict, disrespect, uncertainty, vigilance, misalignment, overload or repeated self-abandonment. Deposits restore, protect or strengthen capacity.



Follow the movement

The key question is not whether resilience is spent. It is whether withdrawals repeatedly exceed meaningful deposits and whether the anchors needed for replenishment are weakening.

Resilience as an Anchored System

The seven Resilience Anchor Currency Streams provide a map of the capacities that help people remain grounded and rebuild:

1. Identity (You Who)
2. Foundational (Your Why)
3. Conviction (Your Truth)
4. Sustaining (Your How)

5. Protective (Your Limits)
6. Transcendent (Your Beyond)
7. Activating (Your Stance)



A connected system

Depletion may begin in one anchor and spread. A stronger anchor may also help protect or rebuild another.

Continue the journey.

Use your observations with the Seven Resilience Anchor Map, the Resilience Depletion Self-Check and the 30-Day Anchor Rebuilding Plan in the Reader Resource Kit.

①	②	③
Self-Check	**Anchor Map**	**30-Day Plan**

Cracking the Code on Your Resilience

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