



Standing Firm Amid the Storm: Resilience Practices for Young People

Job Market Magazine (23 January 2026)

By

Elsie Yung
Founder and Lead Consultant
elsie.yung@els-asia.com
www.els-asia.com



When challenges arrive one after another, the ability to remain clear-headed and steady is often underestimated.

As a new year begins, many students and young professionals set fresh goals for themselves—hoping to perform better academically, progress more smoothly at work, and move life onto the “right” track. Yet reality rarely waits until we feel fully prepared before presenting its tests. Pressure, change, and uncertainty often arrive together, and at a pace faster than expected. What truly determines whether someone can move forward steadily over time is not how detailed their plans are, but whether they can remain mentally clear and emotionally grounded when situations begin to feel out of control.

Recently, I have come to a deeper understanding of the concept of *resilience*. Resilience is not about forcing oneself to endure blindly, nor is it about pretending to be calm while everything feels unsettled. Rather, it is the ability to clearly distinguish between the *event itself* and one’s *personal reaction* to it, even in the midst of chaos.

When challenges pile up, it is easy to be driven by emotion and rush into judgement or action, often making situations more complicated. At such moments, the most important task is not to solve every problem immediately, but to stabilise oneself first—so that decisions are not dictated by emotional turbulence.

First: Focus on the Breathing and the Body

Under pressure, breathing becomes shallow and rapid, and thoughts begin to race. Intentionally bringing attention back to the breath and slowing its rhythm is a way of placing the brain “back in the driver’s seat.” When the body settles, the mind regains the space to think clearly.

This step is frequently overlooked. Many people move straight into analysis and judgement, yet in a highly tense state, making rational choices is exceptionally difficult.

Second: Observe Before Reacting

When difficulties arise, pause to ask yourself:

Am I looking at facts, or at assumptions?

Am I responding to the situation, or to my emotions?

This brief pause helps shift attention away from fear and anxiety, allowing the core issue to come back into focus. This is not avoidance; it is a mature form of self-management.



Third: Stay Grounded in the Next Action

Staying *grounded* means directing attention to what can realistically be done next, rather than feeling overwhelmed by the entire problem. Even completing a small, concrete task can help restore a sense of agency. When people feel able to act, inner stability gradually returns.

I often remind students and young professionals that resilience does not mean never falling. It means knowing how to steady oneself each time one falls. Growth naturally involves moments of confusion, adjustment, and recalibration. Learning how to regulate breathing under pressure, maintain clarity in difficulty, and choose responses carefully amid uncertainty is, in itself, a vital life capability.

Conclusion

The world will not stop presenting challenges, but you can choose how you meet them. Stabilising yourself before addressing the problem is a form of wisdom that sustains long-term progress. This January, whether you are facing examinations, work pressures, or life's uncertainties, may you learn to stand firm amid the storm—and carry forward a sense of clarity and strength into the future.