

Mark Agnew – Keynote Speaker

*An Adventurer's Guide*

# The Secret To Building Resilience

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# Why Resilience Matters

When I kayaked the entire Arctic Northwest Passage in 103 days, of course resilience mattered. It can be less obvious why it matters in a corporate setting.

A 1981 study followed managers in the telecoms industry during a time of great change and downsizing. The study found:

## **Those without resilience:**

- Struggled in work
- Burned out
- Had higher rates of suicide
- Divorce rose
- Suffered from heart disease

## **Those with resilience didn't just survive, they thrived:**

- They were excited by the challenge
- Deepened their personal and professional relationships
- Rose to the challenge



# The Competitive Advantage

Imagine your edge if your resilience staff get better when times are tough while competitors crumble under stress





# What Is Resilience

The definition of resilience is to “**withstand**” difficulties, or “**recover**” quickly from setbacks. These definitions miss the true essence of resilience and why it can give you such a competitive advantage

True resilience is the ability, not just to survive, but to **thrive in adversity**





# The Secret to Building Resilience

When my teammates and I were trapped offshore by a dynamic and deadly icepack, it took us 14 hours of kayaking and hauling to reach safety. All the while, we were never certain when the mayhem would end.

Was I scared?

I am a professional adventurer telling you about resilience - surely I wasn't scared?

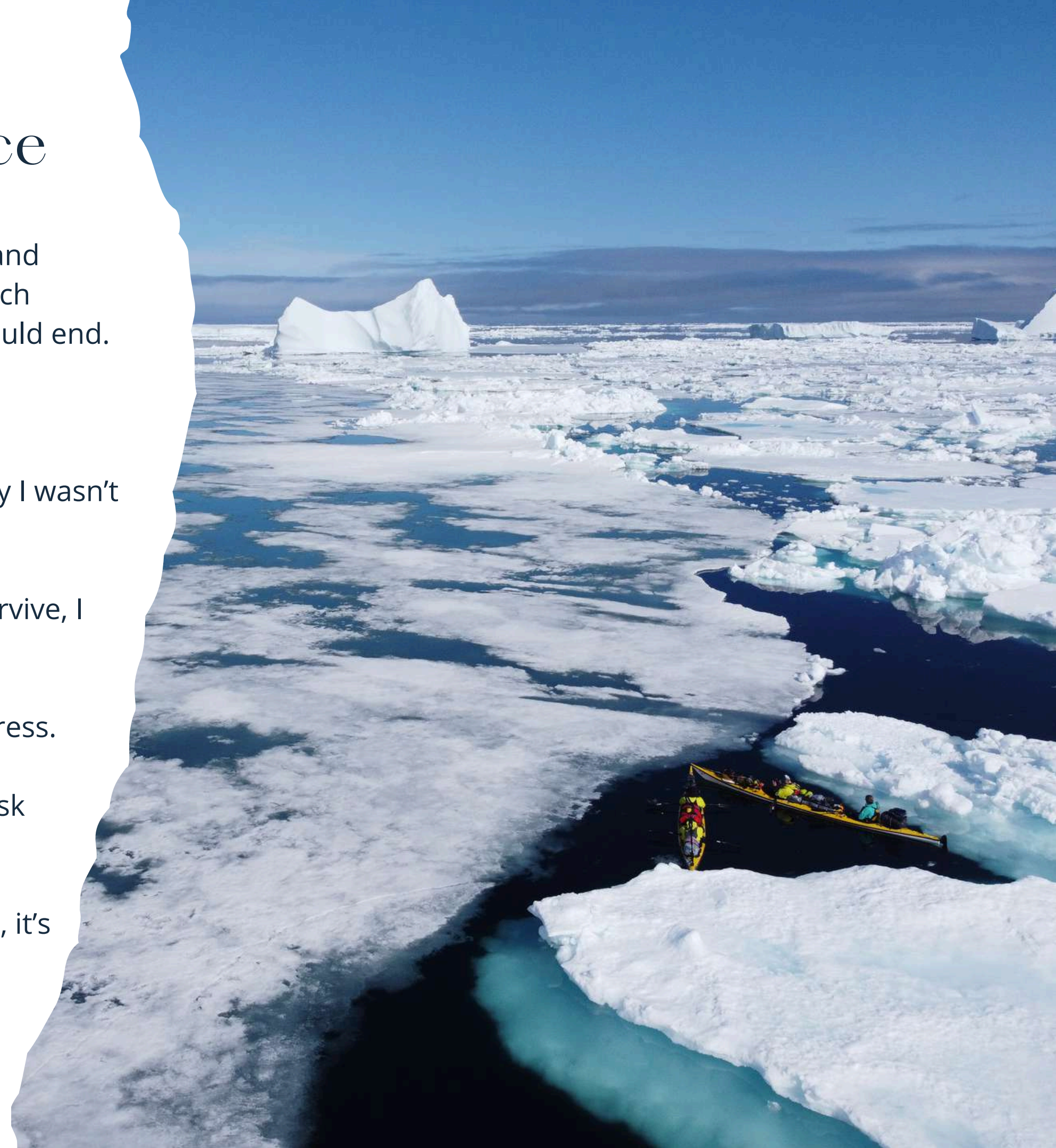
I was. At times, I was terrified. And yet, I enjoyed it. I didn't just survive, I thrive.

Resilient people and non-resilient people experience the same stress.

The difference: resilient people feel stressed and complete the task anyway.

This is the secret of resilience. It's not avoiding negative emotions, it's about learning to:

## Sit With Discomfort





# How To Sit With Discomfort

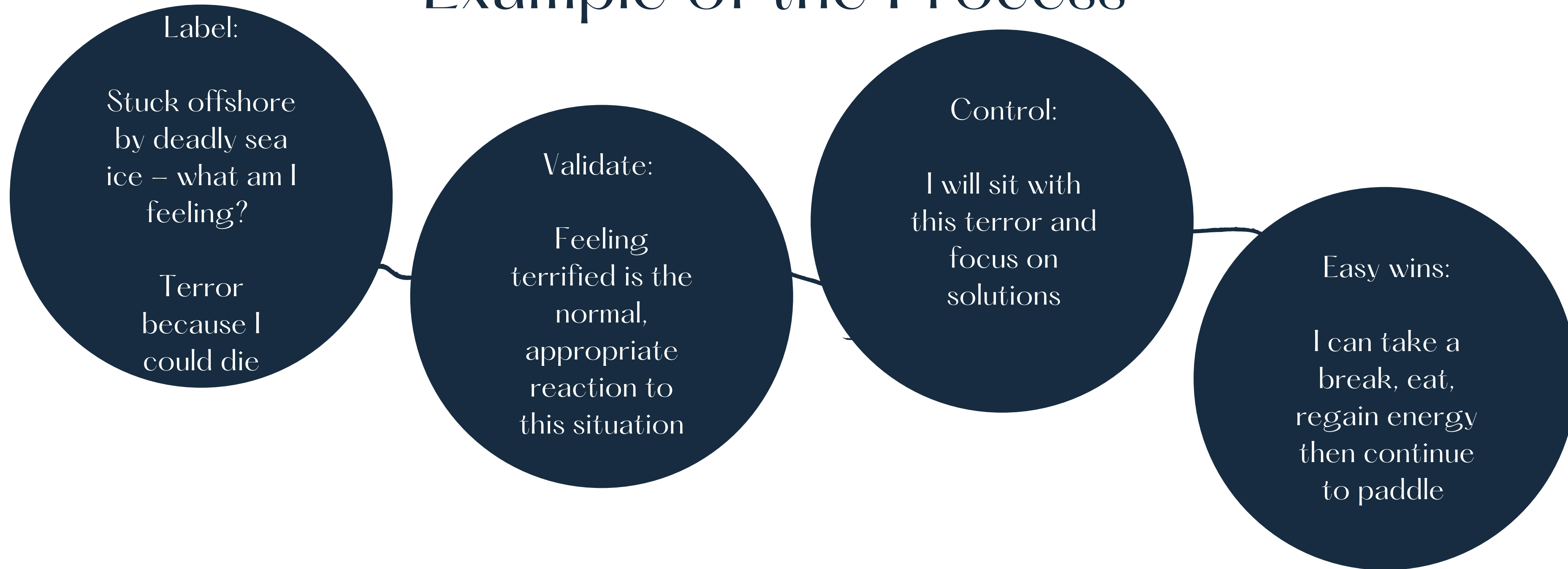
Sitting with discomfort means being comfortable with negative or difficult feelings and avoiding the temptation to fight and repress the emotions.

If your staff fight their negative emotions, they spend energy dealing with the emotions and not the situation. If they sit with the emotions, they can spend their energy on solving the situation irrespective of how they feel. If your staff learn to sit with discomfort, they can problem solve, saving your company time and money, instead of experiencing burnout and stress.

- **Teach your staff to label their emotions** - be clear and precise about what you are feeling and why
- **Validate emotions** - if you are in a stressful situation, the appropriate response is to feel stressed. Validating your reaction helps you let go of the urge to repress your emotions and robs the emotions of their power
- **Practice** - sitting with discomfort is easier said than done. Tell your staff to practice articulating their reactions and validating their emotions, and to have self-compassion if they are still overwhelmed. They'll get better at it with time.
- **Irony** - once emotions have been labeled and accepted, they often diminish
- **What can you control/easy wins** - once your staff have accepted their reactions as normal, sit with the discomfort and start focusing on the situation. They should ask themselves, 'what is in my control and what are the easy wins?' By taking low hanging fruit, bit by bit the solution presents itself.



# Example of the Process



And then, easy win by easy win, we found our way to safety not because I rid myself of fear, but because I went through the steps, sat with discomfort and focused on what I could control in spite of being afraid – in fact, I enjoyed myself



# Ready to take your team to the next level?

Let's talk – [mark@adventureagnew.com](mailto:mark@adventureagnew.com)

Excite your audience with tales of adventure and applicable corporate lessons in the power of sitting with discomfort, thriving in adversity and building teams that endure





# TESTIMONIALS



"The way he engaged the team was really inspiring"



"An inspiring story, which was relatable to my team"



"Entertained and kept the audience gripped"



"A thrilling story about the Northwest Passage"



"I'd highly recommend Mark for your event"



"I cannot recommend Mark highly enough"



"Inspiring, engaging, entertaining & poignant"



"We learnt the value of the journey over the goal"



# CONTACT

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