Black Cockatoo
MEN'S COUNSELLING

BUILDING YOUR HARDINESS

Practical ways to meet life's challenges and find your way forward

HARDINESS ISN'T ABOUT BEING TOUGH ALL THE TIME.
It's about knowing how to respond when life gets difficult.

Comfort doesn't prepare you for the inevitable challenges of life—hardiness does.

DR Paul Taylor - The Science of Hardiness Podcast; 2026.

STAY CONNECTED TO WHAT MATTERS

When things get tough, try not to withdraw from everything. Keep showing up for the people, activities and responsibilities that give your life meaning.
Ask yourself: What is worth staying involved in?

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN INFLUENCE

You may not be able to change the whole situation. Look for the next choice you can make: one conversation, one decision or one practical step.
Ask yourself: What is one thing I can do?

DON'T TURN A SETBACK INTO A VERDICT

A difficult experience does not define you. Avoid sweeping judgements about yourself, other people or the future while emotions are running high. When you're ready, look for what you can learn.
Ask yourself: Am I judging myself by one difficult moment?

DRAW ON OTHER PEOPLE

Hardiness isn't a solo effort. Talk honestly with someone you trust, ask for help when you need it, and offer support to others. A different perspective can help you see more clearly.
Ask yourself: Who could I talk to?

THE HEALTHY RETREAT

When thoughts are racing or emotions are running high, pause, step back and give yourself time to settle. Then return with a wider perspective and decide how you want to respond. A pause is not giving up or avoiding the issue indefinitely.

LOOK AFTER THE BODY THAT CARRIES YOU

Movement, enough sleep, nourishing food, time outdoors and recovery can support your capacity to handle everyday demands. Choose what is right for your health and ability. Hardiness isn't about pushing through every warning sign.

GIVE YOURSELF TIME BEFORE YOU DECIDE WHAT IT MEANS

After a difficult moment, emotions can make the whole situation feel bigger and more final than it is. You don't have to make a lasting judgement about yourself, someone else or your future straight away. Settle first, then look again with a clearer head.

MAKE IT REAL THIS WEEK

Choose one situation that's challenging you. Ask: What matters here? What can I influence? Do I need to pause and recover? Who could help me see this differently? Then choose one manageable next step.

A THOUGHT TO TAKE WITH YOU

"A bad experience doesn't make you a failure. Give yourself time to recover before deciding what it means."

A Black Cockatoo reflection

A LIGHTER THOUGHT

Being hardy doesn't mean being bulletproof. Even the toughest blokes need a rest, a helping hand and sometimes a rethink.

A little reminder: strength includes knowing when to pause.