

Myrna Lapres
September 29, 2025



Coach Myrna, September 29, 2025
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Video Games That Build Resilience

Dr. Jane McGonigal is embracing technology for the sake of improving the lives of kids, youth, and adults. She is a world renowned designer of alternate reality games—or games that are designed to improve real lives and solve real problems. Believing that game designers are on a humanitarian mission, her number one goal in life is to see a game developer win a Nobel Peace Prize.

In 2009, internationally renowned game designer Jane McGonigal suffered a severe concussion. Unable to think clearly or work or even get out of bed, she became anxious and depressed, even suicidal. But rather than let herself sink further, she decided to get better by doing what she does best: she turned her recovery process into a resilience-building game. What started as a simple motivational exercise quickly became a set of rules for “post-traumatic growth” that she shared on her blog. These rules led to a digital game and a major research study with the National Institutes of Health. Today nearly half a million people have played SuperBetter to get stronger, happier, and healthier.

Dr. McGonigal specializes in games that challenge players to tackle real-world problems, such as poverty, hunger, and climate change, through planetary-scale collaboration. Her game “SuperBetter” helps players tackle health challenges such as depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and traumatic brain injury. The online game

for ages thirteen and up builds resilience—the ability to stay strong, motivated, and optimistic even in the face of change and difficult challenges. Playing “SuperBetter” unlocks heroic potential to overcome tough situations and achieve goals that matter most.

Drawing on hundreds of studies, McGonigal shows that getting superbetter is as simple as tapping into the three core psychological strengths that games help you build:

- Your ability to control your attention, and therefore your thoughts and feelings
- Your power to turn anyone into a potential ally, and to strengthen your existing relationships
- Your natural capacity to motivate yourself and super-charge your heroic qualities, like willpower, compassion, and determination

As inspiring as it is down to earth, and grounded in rigorous research, SuperBetter is a proven game plan for a better life. You’ll never say that something is “just a game” again.

Check out her website: www.superbetter.com/

Dr. McGonigal also published a book on the same topic:

www.amazon.com/SuperBetter-Living-Gamefully-Jane-McGonigal/dp/0143109774

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