

Human Tolerance

Why the magnitude of displacement that a single lifespan is meant to absorb has no precedent in psychology. Every recommendation for preparation presupposes something rarely stated: that a person endures the transition psychologically and physically. The magnitude and the speed of the displacement that converge here have no precedent in documented psychology. This is no cause for panic. It is a reason to treat tolerance as its own dimension of preparation.

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PART I

Foreword and Position

The five building blocks of preparation, geography, mobility, speed, mindset and spiritual anchoring, rest on a silent assumption: that the person who applies them endures the strain of the transition. This assumption is nowhere tested. This whitepaper states it and treats it as its own quantity.

The tone here is deliberately sober. The aim is not to create fear but to name a variable that the rest of the preparation literature silently presupposes. Whoever has a good location, several passports and a clever strategy but does not get through the first years psychologically or physically has nonetheless not endured. Tolerance is the condition under which everything else becomes effective at all.

The central claim of this paper is to be read with care. It is not that a certain percentage of people break down. It is that no one knows how many people can endure a displacement of this kind, because there is no population that has lived through such a thing. This is a reasoned hypothesis, not a measurement, and it is disclosed as such in Part V.

PART II

What Falls Away at Once

In a normal life, large losses come singly and spread out over time. The new thing about the transition is not the single loss but the simultaneity and the speed.

Four sources of human stability are at stake at once. The occupation, which is not only income but daily structure and a part of identity. The status, the place in an order that suddenly no longer holds. The social structure, the matter-of-factness with which one knew where one belonged. And the sources of meaning, the stories from which a life drew its significance. If one of these falls away, that is a heavy blow. If several fall away at once and within a few years, it is something for which the individual has no practiced pattern.

What was historically spread over generations, a structural change here, a migration there, is in this phase meant to be absorbed by a single lifespan. Exactly this compression is the core of the problem. The human is adaptable, but adaptation has a speed limit, and about that limit the experience of the past says little, because the past was slower.

PART III

What the Literature Knows and What It Does Not

There is research that comes close, and there is an honest gap. Both belong on the table.

Stress research knows the concept of allostatic load, described by Bruce McEwen: the body can handle acute stress well, but lasting, compounding stress leaves measurable traces and wears down the reserves. The Holmes and Rahe scale shows the same from the other side: stressful life events add up, and the more of them converge in a short time, the higher the load and the greater the risk to health and function.

Closest come disaster psychology and the research on flight and displacement. They document what happens when people suddenly lose place, structure and meaning. These studies are real and serious, but they are local and time-bounded: one region, one event, one period, afterward often an intact outside world to rebuild into. The displacement at issue here is broad and lasting, and there is no intact outside world next door. Therefore these comparisons yield a lower bound rather than a ceiling.

This is the honest gap. No population has lived through a displacement of this magnitude, this simultaneity and this speed. The question of how large the share is that can psychologically absorb it therefore has no empirical answer. The strong hypothesis that a large part would struggle is plausible but unproven. It belongs on level three of the degrees of certainty, plausibly reasoned, not measured.

PART IV

Strengthening Tolerance: The Preparation Dimension

The good news is in the diagnosis itself. Tolerance is not a fixed quantity. It can be built in advance, and that makes it a preparation like the other building blocks, only turned inward.

Relationships, the strongest buffer. The most robust finding of all disaster research is simple: people with real, load-bearing relationships endure more. Social connection is the single most effective buffer against strain. This is the direct link to the trust cluster of the Decoupling Thesis. Whoever invests in

relationships in the quiet years builds the reserve that carries in the hard ones.

Body and rhythm. A body used to exertion, and a day that has a rhythm, are no side matter. Routines that survive a disruption give hold when the outer order breaks away. It need not be extreme, it need only be reliable. Reliability inward partly replaces the reliability that is lost outward.

Inner anchoring and meaning. Viktor Frankl showed that even under extreme deprivation inner freedom and meaning can persist, and that they are the load-bearing element when everything else falls away. This is the core of the mindset building block, and it is not esoteric: panic produces bad decisions, and the ability to keep a moment's distance under pressure is the precondition for action. Whoever has a source of meaning that does not hang on occupation and status does not lose the ground at the same time as occupation and status.

Tolerance is not a constant. It can be built in the quiet years, and it is the one preparation that carries in every scenario, the optimistic as well as the hard. Relationships, a resilient body, a reliable rhythm and a source of meaning beyond occupation and status are not wellness. They are the inner counterpart to location, mobility and speed.

PART V

Method and Open Questions

This paper moves on sensitive ground, and it treats it accordingly.

The central claim, that a large part of people would struggle with a displacement of this magnitude, is a hypothesis on level three, not a measurement. No concrete percentage is asserted. The comparisons drawn on, allostatic load, disaster and displacement research, are real but imperfect, because they lack the simultaneity and the duration that make up the actual problem.

The topic touches the wellbeing of individual people. The institute treats it without alarmism and without remote diagnosis. It names a structural variable, it makes no diagnosis about individual persons, and in case of doubt it recommends the conversation with professional support. Open remain how tolerance distributes across people, what most increases it, and how it can be honestly assessed. The institute seeks the collaboration of psychologists, stress researchers, and disaster and migration researchers. The ongoing source curation is open at ASIresilience.org/evidence.

PART VI

Sources and Evidence

McEwen, B. S.: the concept of allostatic load, the cost of lasting and compounding strain for body and mind. Holmes, T. H., and Rahe, R. H.: the scale for the accumulation of stressful life events.

Disaster psychology and research on flight and displacement as the nearest comparison points. They show high strain after sudden loss of place and structure, but are local and time-bounded and therefore yield a lower bound.

Population data on meaning, loneliness and social bonding only from solid sources such as Pew, OECD and Eurostat.

Frankl, V. E.: inner freedom and meaning as the load-bearing element under extreme strain. Link to the mindset building block of the Decoupling Thesis.

Cross-references: Bertossa, R.F. (2026). The Decoupling Thesis. Geneva Institute for ASI Resilience, Whitepaper Version 2.0, May 2026 (trust cluster, mindset and anchoring building blocks). Bertossa, R.F. (2026). Freedom After Superintelligence, The 13th Scenario, Part IV. Full ongoing source curation at ASiresilience.org/evidence.