



OPTIMIZING YOUR RESILIENCE

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RESILIENCE

Resilience sounds easy, but mastering it can be as difficult as life's inevitable changes.

Employing new psychological and sociological discoveries, we will explore 10 practical strategies to help you master adversity.

The class will present easy-to-use tools so you can develop resilience, for life's inevitable challenges.



CHARACTERISTICS FOSTERING RESILIENCE

- Commitment: the ability to engage fully with focus
- Our perceived ability to exercise control over the circumstances
- Our perspective: the ability to view adversity as a challenge
- Positive meaning in traumatic experience
- Resources that we have available to us financial, social, personal
- Genetic makeup
- The type of challenges we are facing
- Suddenness or Expectation of the crisis



RESILIENT THINKING

- Understands disruption is intrinsic, healthy, normal and necessary as part of the human condition
- Sees we are human beings in the process of becoming
- Understands that if we take the time to unfold we won't unravel
- Understands that who we are keeps changing
- Self-reflection time helps us to open to who we are
- Develops strengths so that disruption in one area of our life doesn't extend to all areas



STRATEGIES TO INCREASE RESILIENCE

- 1) Healthy Optimism --- you will get through it
- 2) F.A.C.E. Facing fear by:
Focus, **A**ceptance, **C**ommitment, **E**ngagement
- 3) Meaning and Purpose
- 4) Emotional Balance
- 5) Social Connection/Community



MORE STRATEGIES

- 6) Mentors -- be one and find one
- 7) Mental and Physical Fitness
- 8) Accept the Unknown
- 9) Humor and Recreation
- 10) Life Beyond Loss



HEALTHY OPTIMISM

Healthy Optimism is the basis of resilience since by providing energy and hope it facilitates an active and creative approach to challenging situations. It reduces reactivity to stress by helping us remain calm.



FOCUS, ACCEPTANCE, COMMITMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

Facing Fears

We all have fears and typical reactions are fight, flight or freeze. Recognizing our reactions and being mindful rather than by only responding mindlessly to our conditioning is helpful.

Observe the fear and its impact on your thoughts and emotions:

F.E.A.R. **F**antasized **E**xperiences **A**ppearing **R**eal

F.E.A.R. **F**ace **E**verything **A**nd **R**ise



DEVELOP YOUR OWN STRENGTHS

- 1) Positive Mood/ Optimism
- 2) Common Sense
- 3) Peacefulness, Contentment, Serenity
- 4) Endurance, Motivation, Self Discipline
- 5) The difference between try and triumph is a little OOMPH
- 6) Compassion for self and others
- 7) Social Support
- 8) Altruism wishing others well and being in service to them
- 9) Your perception of the stress
- 10) Self-care physical and emotional



MEANING AND PURPOSE

As Nietzsche said, “Those who have a **why** to live, can bear with almost any **how**.”

Ask Questions such as:

- What gives my life meaning?
- How do I cope with suffering?
- What have I learned about courage and strength?
- What have I learned about vulnerability, intimacy?
- How can I best share with others what I have learned?



EMOTIONAL BALANCE

Praise and Blame,
Gain and Loss,
Sorrow and Pleasure
Come and Go like the wind.
To be happy,
Rest like a tall tree in the midst of them all.



SOCIAL CONNECTION/COMMUNITY

- Kierkegaard said “The door to happiness always opens outward.”
- Who can count on you?
- Altruism releases Oxytocin and gives a sense of meaning and purpose which can reduce symptoms of depression.

Help Yourself by Helping Others



MENTORS

- Mentors in our life that were helpful in guiding us. How would they have handled this challenge? Stepping back and asking this question may allow you new answers.
- Who can you be a mentor to?
- Where can you give back some of the support and gifts that you have been given?



MENTAL AND PHYSICAL FITNESS

- Being physically fit increases our attention span, creative problem solving and memory.
- Physical and mental exercise helps us improve our ability to improvise, synthesize and adapt to life's inevitable changes.
- Adequate sleep is an important adjunct to both physical and mental fitness.



ACCEPT THE UNKNOWN

- Accept ambiguity and our inability to predict and control the future. Worrying only diminishes our vitality and creativity. Much of our stress comes from resistance to our life as it is. By accepting ambiguity we can actually feel more secure.
- Be compassionate to yourself.
- Try to let in the good, the support that is there for you.



HUMOR AND FUN

Even in the dark pain of living in a concentration camp Viktor Frankl wrote that each day he would find something, anything to laugh about.

As Frankl put it:

"Humor is another of the soul's weapons in the fight for self-preservation."

Or as Swami Beyondananda said:

"To be happy in life, you must be able to take a joke. And if you can leave a few as well, all the better."

"Life is a sitcom, so sit calm and enjoy it."



LIFE BEYOND LOSS

- How have you and your priorities changed?
- What have you learned about your ability to adapt and change?
- What strengths have you discovered in yourself?



SWEET ARE THE USES OF ADVERSITY

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

As You Like It, W. Shakespeare

