

Building Resilience

It's wise to be aware of the 7 factors, and I highly recommend reading the book to explore each of them more. And...in the meantime, here are 10 suggestions that can get you well on your way and some questions to ask yourself.

Connect. Good relationships with close family members, friends, or others are important. Accepting help and support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience. Some people find that being active in civic groups, faith-based organizations, or other local groups provides social support and can help with reclaiming hope. Assisting others during times of need can benefit both the giver and the receiver.

Avoid defining events as “catastrophes”. You can't change the fact that highly stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to them. Look beyond the present to consider how you might navigate future circumstances to make things a bit better. Pay attention to your feelings and name them. When you feel at all better, take note and build upon that.

Remember the Serenity Prayer. Fully accept that change is a normal part of life. Some of your goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations or they may need to be adjusted or redefined. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus and spend your time and energy on those things and those circumstances that can change.

Keep moving forward. Even small accomplishments and gains need to be recognized as positive and progress. These enable you to move toward your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?"

ACT decisively. Take action on adverse or challenging situations as much and as often as you can. Take decisive actions, rather than detaching completely from problems and stresses and wishing they would just go away. They won't. So engage and do the hard things now, don't put them off. You'll feel much better and stronger.

Grow yourself. When you learn something about yourself and about other people you may find that you have grown in some respect as a result of your struggle with difficulty or loss. Many people who have experienced tragedies and hardship report better relationships, greater sense of strength even while feeling vulnerable, increased sense of self-worth, a more spirituality, and a heightened appreciation for life.

Nurture a positive view of yourself. Positive self-talk works. The more you believe good things can happen, the more likely they will. It's the law of attraction operating. Developing confidence in your own ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts helps build resilience.

Keep things in perspective. Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.

Operate from an abundant mindset not a scarcity one. An optimistic and abundant (much is possible) outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life. Visualize what you want to have happen, then believe it will happen, rather than worrying about what you fear.

Take care of yourself. Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that **you** enjoy and find relaxing. Taking care of everyone else first makes you last every time and that's not healthy. Eat well, exercise regularly doing what you like to do. Taking care of yourself helps to keep your mind and body primed to deal with situations that require resilience.

More.... some people journal about their deepest thoughts and feelings related to trauma or other stressful events in their life. Meditation and spiritual practices help some people build connections and restore hope. The key is to identify ways that you enjoy and are going to work well for you as part of your own personal strategy for fostering resilience.

Ask Yourself

By exploring answers to the following questions about yourself and your reactions to challenging life events, you may discover how you can respond effectively to difficult situations in your life.

When was I resilient before? Focusing on past experiences and sources of personal strength can help you learn about what strategies for building resilience might work for you.

Answer these questions:

- What kinds of events have been most stressful for me?
- How have those events typically affected me?
- Have I found it helpful to think of important people in my life when I am distressed?
- To whom have I reached out for support in working through a traumatic or stressful experience?
- What have I learned about myself and my interactions with others during the difficult times?
- Has it been helpful for me to assist someone else going through a similar or difficult experience?
- Have I been able to overcome obstacles, and if so, how?
- What has helped make me feel more hopeful about the future?

As you explore your own strategies for building and strengthening resilience, you will be able to help others as well. It's worth the time and it's worth the effort.