

What is Resilience and How do I get some of that.

By

Sharon and Mia Behrens

Definition: It is the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging situations by utilizing mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands. – American Psychological Association

- *Simply it is the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events.*
- *It DOES NOT mean you quit experiencing difficult life issues. Resilience is not a one-time **emotional inoculation** against emotional upheaval and suffering. **It is an active process which maintains personal stability in difficult circumstances.***
- *It is the ABILITY to work through emotional pain and suffering thru the use of emotional/cognitive strategies.*
- ***Resilience must be “fed” by continuing to learn, practice positive adaption that changes thru time, environmental, and developmental stages.** Adaption is not static. It is a dynamic process that relies on an individual’s awareness, self-control, problem solving and social support.*

Children and Resilience

- *It is not something that kids either have or don’t have. It is developed as they grow. Some studies show that there may be some genetic factors in play. But early intervention can ameliorate.*
- *Good News: We do know that **resilience can be built. It is not an innate trait or a resource that can be used up.***
- ***Mia says – “Life doesn’t choose who you are; you choose your life.” It is a commitment to choose, to change. To do the hard work because “In the end it is worth it.”***
- *The single most common factor for children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver or other adult. It is not just quality of involvement; it is quantity of time also. It takes time to develop a trust relationship, especially for traumatized children.*
- Developing child, Harvard

“I cannot hear or feel what you say until I feel safe enough to let myself trust you.”

The good news is resilience can be learned.

Useful strategies: Thriving after Childhood Trauma

- ✓ *Get connected by building strong, positive relationships with loved ones and friends who can provide support and guidance.*
- ✓ *Take care of yourself – exercise, nutrition, time for hobbies/interests (Get out more and experience life)*
- ✓ *Learn humor. Laughter is healing.*
- ✓ *Engage in positive self-talk. Clarifying/practicing your beliefs*
 - *Here are some of mine:*
 - ***I am a young woman of promise with so many possibilities.***
 - ***I am more than my disabilities and my mistakes***
 - ***How we live our life is a CHOICE***
 - ***You can't change the past, so practice living each day with hopefulness, laughter and the knowledge that you are a work in progress.***
 - ***Never, never, never give up!***
 - ***I am who I am today, because so many people cared.***
 - ***There is healing in helping others – find a sense of purpose***
 - ***My Dad use to tell me. "When the going gets tough, the tough get going."***
 - ***Keep answering the question- "What would I do if I could not fail?"***
 - ***I am not a trauma survivor; I am a trauma victor!***
- ✓ *Read books on identifying and developing healthy coping strategies of life. Don't just read about trauma. It sticks you in that dark, negative place. Read about positive coping skills. Read for fun and your interests.*
- ✓ *Journaling is helpful*
- ✓ ***Find quotes and strategies that help with your daily life/routines. Place these on sticky notes and post on your iPad, phone, bathroom mirror, closet door to remind you of your***
 - ***Gratitude***
 - ***Goals***
 - ***Strategies***
 - ***Humor – it helps balance out the struggles***

Identifying the signs of depression and when to seek help.

- ✓ ***Don't wait until overwhelmed with feelings of hopelessness.***
- ✓ ***Fear of stigma regarding the acknowledgment and seeking therapeutic intervention prevents many people from seeking help. Touching base with a therapist redefines new strategies or reboots old ones. Therapy re-sets hope and well-being.***

Employer Awareness and solutions

1 in 3 people are at risk of a mental health issue (depression, anxiety, addiction)

4 in 5 managers are supporting at least one employee with a mental health issue

50% of employees are experiencing burnout

Depression is the world's biggest cause of disability and also one of the most treatable mental health conditions

If Employee depression addressed

Almost 80% of those who receive treatment for depression show the first signs of improvement in weeks.

Mental health care for employees

- ✓ ***Training managers/HR to look for signs of stress***
 - ***Learn how to listen to and apply mental health first aid strategies with employee***
 - ***Learn about the disorder***
- ✓ ***Have available convenient, compassionate mental health care free***
 - ***In person***
 - ***Remote (iPhone, zoom)***
- ✓ ***Know the resources. Make mental health brochures available in break rooms, locker rooms, HR office.***