

Think Tank May 2016

Focus: How Resilient Are You?

Persistence and resilience only come from having been given the chance to work through difficult problems. – Gever Tulley

In honor of Mental Health Month, we're taking a look at the role that resilience plays in good mental health. Studies have shown that resilience is a key factor in being able to move past life's challenges and traumas, and those who practice resilience have a higher happiness quotient. But did you know that it's not actually a trait with which one is born? According to the American Psychological Association, resilience involves "behaviors, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone." What this means is, while you may naturally be a "glass half empty" personality type, with practice, your glass can become significantly more full.

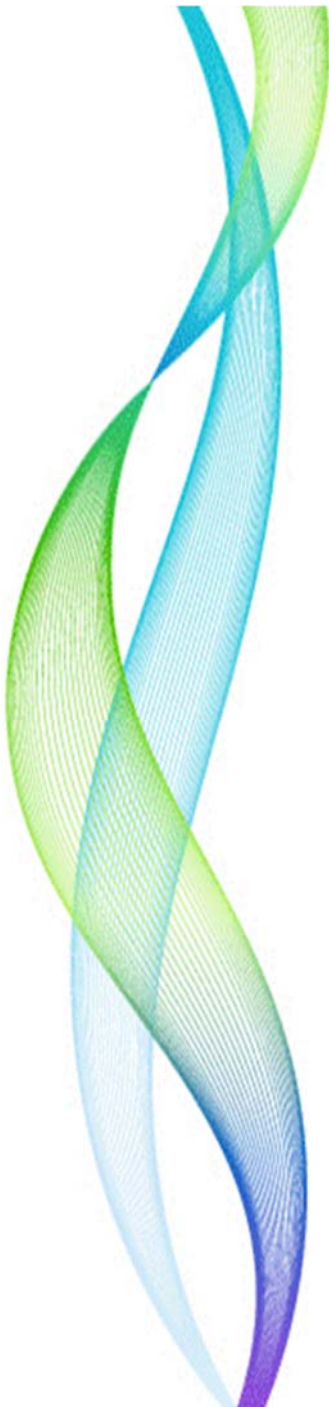
Building resilience typically involves these essential strategies:

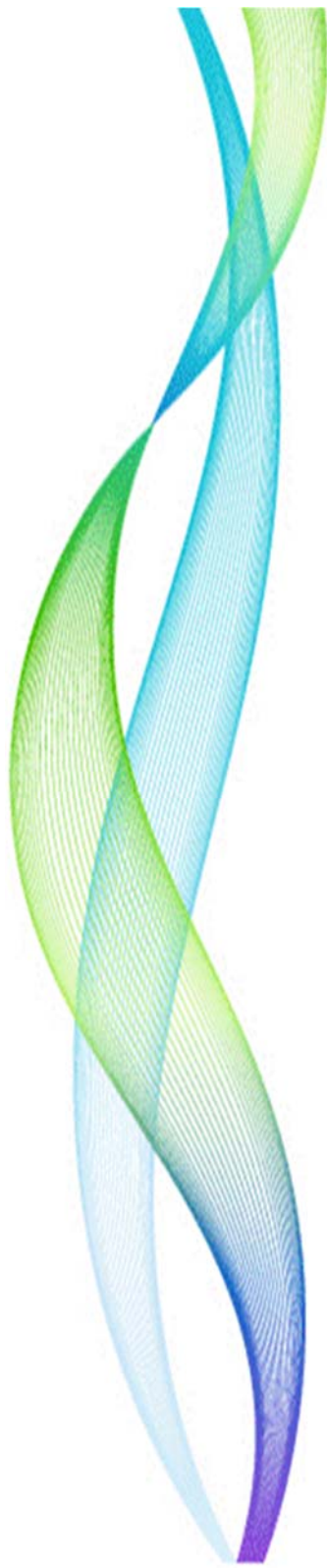
- Setting and achieving regular (and realistic) goals
- Developing and appreciating your basic self
- Learning how to manage feelings
- Improving communication skills

Resilience also requires taking care of your physical and spiritual health, including getting proper rest and nutrition. It might also include journaling, prayer, meditation or spending time in nature.

Looking at ways you've shown resilience in the past can also build resilience. What events have been the most stressful to you, and how did you handle them? Did you reach out to others, or wish that you had? What has given you the most hope and joy in your life? How can you incorporate more of that into your current life?

Seeking help during those times when resilience seems beyond your reach is essential to feeling and getting better. Find what works best for you, whether it's sharing your feelings with a caring friend or family member, finding a support group or talking to a licensed therapist.





Reconnect: Couple's Game Night

While lots of couples get together with other couples, or their own children, for game nights—why not a game night just for two? Order your favorite takeout and blow the dust off your favorite board game or deck of cards. Pour your favorite beverage, light some candles—and be sure to keep score with something sexier than a traditional point system.

Bibliotherapy: *As Close To Us As Breathing* by Elizabeth Poliner

A beautiful story of three sisters in 1948 Connecticut examines the ways different family members handle tragedy. Seen through the eyes of Molly, just twelve years old when she witnesses the accident that affected her family throughout their lives, this is an “unforgettable meditation on grief, guilt, and the boundaries of identity and love.” From the author who also wrote *Mutual Life & Casualty*.

Time-Out: “Good Job” Alternatives

In our “Everyone gets a trophy, just for showing up” society, we sometimes fail to let children, well, fail. “Good job” has become parents’ automatic response to everything our kids do, and unfortunately, when a child hears it all the time, it doesn’t mean as much. Plus, “good job” focuses on results rather than efforts. Alternatives to “good job”? A warm smile or pat on the back. A genuine “Thank you.” Or how about, “You worked really hard on that!”

Self-Care Strategies: A Vacation for One

Even when we love our jobs, spouses and children, our identities can become so wrapped up in these relationships that we sometimes neglect the essence of who we really are, all by ourselves. Plan a vacation for one (you!) doing the things you enjoy or have always wanted to do. Maybe it’s a weekend of painting for beginners. Or perhaps you book a few days solo at your favorite resort, meet up with a group of college friends or just schedule an afternoon of golf or spa treatments. “Getting away from it all” is one of the best ways to rejuvenate while at the same time, “getting back to yourself.” If taking a trip right now isn’t an option, you can still enjoy a staycation, even for a day, in your own hometown.



Take Two: *Papa: Hemingway in Cuba*

Itching to visit Cuba? Start with this film. *Papa: Hemingway in Cuba* is the true-life story of the relationship between Miami journalist Denne Bar Peticlec (played by Giovanni Ribisi) and legendary writer Ernest Hemingway (played by Adrian Sparks) in which “the young journalist ventures to Havana to meet his idol, who helps him find his literary voice while the Cuban Revolution comes to a boil around them.” This is the first Hollywood film shot on location in Cuba since 1959. –source:

www.angelikafilmcenter.com

Our Time is Up: Stayed tuned for our June issue...