



Resilience: Developing Skills to Bounce Back after Setbacks

“Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.” Nelson Mandela

The sunshine and warm weather are a clear indication that summer has arrived! While this time of year usually brings fun outdoor activities, vacations, and backyard barbecues, we find ourselves slowly and carefully easing back into our previous activities with a new sense of awareness.

These past few months have been challenging, but with a new season comes a fresh start. While this start might look a little different than we planned, it's an opportunity to reflect on the lessons we've learned and the progress we've made.

One of the biggest gifts spring gave us was resilience! We learned how to face difficult situations with creativity and problem-solving strategies. We met challenges with positivity, and we learned how to pivot when obstacles arose.

Research has shown that while some people seem to come by resilience naturally, these behaviors can also be learned. Here are ways to foster your own resilience.

Find a Sense of Purpose in Your Life

Be an observer of your day. When do you feel at your best? Usually those feelings of living your best life align with a purpose. For example, maybe you feel your best teaching, parenting, or volunteering. Think about what you enjoy and do more of it.

Create Positive Beliefs in Your Abilities

We all have special talents and gifts. Let's celebrate them. Maybe you are a wonderful cook or you are super organized. These are small skills that go a long way. Write down your talents big and small and think of all the ways those talents help you and others. Small talents create big impact in your life and the lives of others. Let your talents shine bright.

Develop a Strong Social Network

Your social network could consist of one person or ten people, either way, make sure you reach out to friends and keep those connections strong. Maybe you plan a Zoom call, go for a socially distanced walk, or send your friend a card or email. These are all ways to foster good relationships that will support you during difficult times.

Embrace Change

Change is challenging even under good circumstances. If you are facing big changes, think of one positive aspect associated with that change. For example, if you are working from home, what are some perks of your home office that don't exist in your workplace? You can make a fresh lunch, fold the laundry on your break, and hang out with your pets. Finding the positives makes change less scary and more enjoyable.

Be Optimistic

We have the ability to put a positive or negative stamp on any situation. Look for the possibilities in a situation to keep your mind in the positive zone. It's easy to default to the negative, but stay curious. Keep learning and search for that silver lining. It's there.

Nurture Yourself

Take a self-care moment once a day. This could be as simple as taking a deep breath, lighting your favorite candle, putting on a great song, or reading a good book. Self-care doesn't have to be long and expensive. It just has to be mindful. You are taking a moment to honor and care for yourself so you can be your best for others.

Develop Your Problem-Solving Skills

Be a solution person. Whenever you are faced with a problem, think of three possible solutions before collaborating with others. Let your mind run wild. Not all your solutions will work, but the good news is you only need one solution to solve a problem. This creative brain-storming allows you to think outside the box and actively work toward solving a problem.

Establish Goals

Goals are your roadmap to success. They give you a specific task and a time line. Write your goals down and look at them often. They can be your motivator and guide.

Keep Working on Your Skills

Putting time and energy into improving your skills is a positive way to stay active and move forward. When you better yourself, you better those around you. Maybe you start a new project, pick up an old instrument, or try knitting. No matter the skill, you are using your time in a positive, productive way. Pick a skill that's important to you, and practice, practice, practice. The time will pass faster and you'll be more skilled on the other side.

We hope these tips help you bounce back from setbacks and walk boldly into the future. No matter what summer has in store for you, we know you will meet it with open arms. Spring allowed us to put the tools of resilience into practice. With that knowledge and experience, nothing can hold us back!

