

FFWPU UK: TogetherAll - Get Through The Tough Stuff

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Resilience is our ability to cope with life's challenges and bounce back when things go wrong. Some of us are naturally more resilient than others, but the good news is that resilience is something we can all learn.

It's not just big life events like divorce or losing our job that can knock us for six. Sometimes minor setbacks such as someone criticising our work or the car breaking down can feel like major disasters. Which is why resilience is such an everyday essential.

Resilient people are resourceful and self-aware; they understand that set backs are part of life. At the heart of resilience is a belief in yourself, but also that bad situations can get better. It's a 'glass half full' rather than 'glass half empty' approach to life.

Some of us are more naturally resilient than others. But resilience is not necessarily something you have to be born with or learn in childhood, although some of us are lucky that way. We can all learn to bounce back.

1. Reach out

Resilience doesn't mean toughing it out or going it alone - or even relying too heavily on one or two people. It's about having a selection box of people or friends who can support you in different ways - and letting friends know you're there for them too.

Make a list of who energises you and who drains you. Resolve to spend more time with people who help you feel relaxed, happy and motivated, rather than those who drag you down. Text, email or phone one of them today.

2. Stay hopeful

People who are resilient find hope even in the worst circumstances. We can't all be natural born optimists, but it's easier to believe things can improve if you can see setbacks as temporary. Remember all things pass in time, and this will pass too. Make it your mantra.

We can all think of people who've overcome misfortune and turned their lives around. Find some inspiring examples and stick them on the fridge door or on your screen saver to remind you. Imagine what they might say to you in times of trouble.



3. Know your strengths

When you're in trouble, don't underestimate the skills and strengths you already have. Remind yourself what difficulties you've overcome in the past, how you met them and what this shows about you. Use this to help you now.

Remember resilience isn't about being overconfident, riding roughshod over people or thinking the world owes you something. Think about your strengths and talents, but also be realistic in what you can expect and achieve.

4. Take charge

Resilient people feel they can control and influence events. They don't see themselves as victims or let their troubles define them. Each time you are faced with a setback, ask yourself what you could do to turn it around. Even better, ask how you might benefit or learn from it.

Visualise what you'd like to happen, instead of what you fear will happen. So instead of, 'I messed that up, I'm going to lose my job', say to yourself: 'I messed that up, but I'll use it to get better at my job.' Do something today that helps you in this.

5. Find a sense of purpose

Drifting along wherever life leads you can leave you vulnerable to setbacks. Find something to work towards that helps you feel in control of your life. Set yourself small goals that you can move towards one small step at a time.

Remember three special times in your life when you felt proud, fulfilled or happy. What made these important to you, and what do they say about what really matters to you? These are your values. Set yourself some goals to help you live by these values.

6. Step back

When things go wrong, one bad thought can lead to another, making your troubles seem worse than they are. Try to step back and find another way of looking at the situation. Use this to help you get things in perspective.

Imagine you're looking at the situation through someone else's eyes - those of a friend or an objective observer. Or picture yourself looking back at this in a year's time. Even just breaking off and doing something different can help you see the problem with fresh eyes.

7. Build up your reserves

It's harder to face up to life's challenges if you're running near empty. Whatever the pressures, always schedule in time for relaxation or pleasure. We all need time to recharge our batteries.

Ever been so absorbed in the pleasure and challenge of 'doing' that nothing else seems to matter? Whether it's singing, cooking, sport or something creative, find an activity you are passionate about - and lose yourself in it.

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