Building Resilience to Trauma

Each of us must at some point in our lives confront the adversity that exists around us. This is what makes us the people that we are. Our challenges and what we learn from them allow us to grow and assist us when further adverse issues may affect us. The ability to successfully adapt to adversity is known as resilience.

Throughout the communities and cultures that exist in the world today, there exists a great deal of adversity and turmoil that those who live in those environments must face and either overcome or fall victim to. Throughout history, this phenomenon has been known as survival of the fittest and has existed since the beginning of time. Humans and animals alike either developmentally adapted to fit their surroundings or were overpowered by those same surroundings. The ability to successfully adapt to adversity is known as resilience.

After traumatic events, survivors typically experience a surge of emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and physical responses that can leave them feeling unstable and, in most cases, threatened. What the survivors are experiencing are natural responses to emotional pain, stress, or any kind of disturbing event that occurs in a person’s life and overtakes the person’s ability to cope with feelings of helplessness, being unloved, unwanted, and diminished self-worth.

Each of us must at some point in our lives confront the adversity that exists around us. This is what makes us the people that we are. Our challenges and what we learn from them allow us to grow and assist us when further adverse issues may affect us. 95% of people experience traumatic events such as misfortunes, loss, emotional or physical stress, abuse, family or relationship problems, etc. The way you respond to these events determines if post-traumatic symptoms occur or if you are strengthened by your resilience.

Everyone is born with some form of resilience, but not everyone can tap into their resilience in the face of traumatic occurrences. The resilience inside of you continues to grow and become stronger the more you use it. Here are a few tips on how to strengthen your resilience to trauma.

Make connections.

Building resilience to trauma is not something that can be done alone. One needs to connect with close family, friends, loved ones, and other acquaintances and form good relationships with them. Typically making connections with others who have things in common with you can also be important. What is most important about making connections is learning to accept the support others would like to give to you. You can teach others how to support you so that they are rendering the best support possible to you, strengthening your resilience.

Avoid seeing the crisis as an unbeatable problem.

No matter how big or small, everyone faces problems and crisis situations. We must make an active decision on how we choose to see and handle these situations. All problems have solutions if we take time to effectively problem solve. Start to see a light at the end of the tunnel. Find the positive in the situation and build on it to find your solution. Use your strengths to handle whatever problem may come your way.

Accept that change is constant and a part of a living.

Nature has taught that everything has a season and change is going to be inevitable. Change indicates growth inside of you. Allowing and accepting the change in you and around you helps grow your resilience. Being able to be adaptable allows you to handle things better when they come your way.

Move towards your goals.

Goals should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time Based. It is not just enough to set goals; action steps need to be implemented to make sure you are moving towards achieving them. Daily try to do something that will get you one step closer to attaining your goals. When you accomplish one goal, set another. Reach for the stars. The sky is the limit.

Look for opportunities for self-discovery

Who AM I? In the face of adversity, we tend to lose ourselves making us confused and more vulnerable to continued trauma. Rediscovering one’s self allows one to be more confident in standing their ground when it is needed the most. Look for any opportunity to discover new and old things forgotten about yourself that would help show your growth. Say positive things about yourself and always remind yourself that you are resilient to any kind of trauma that may arise. Be your own cheerleader, believe in yourself and trust in your instincts.

Anyone can learn to bounce back from trauma and become stronger and healthier. The journey of building resilience to trauma is not an easy one and will not be the same for everyone. With the right amount of time, support, understanding, and belief in one’s self the journey can become more fulfilling and life-changing for the better.