Have you ever suffered a loss? Have you struggled? Have you waded through a seemingly unstoppable tide of difficulty—ever? And you survived! You are resilient!! Resilience is the ability to bounce back, again and again, with every obstacle we face.

Is the person showing little emotional distress in difficulty necessarily more resilient than the person who fails and feels intense negative emotions, yet tries again the next day?

No. Someone is not born being resilient or not. Resilience is a learned ability and one that you can build.

This newsletter is dedicated to all of you resilient folks! Even if you don’t think you are. :-) Read some of these resilience activities and exercises which may help you develop your resilience, or make you realize how resilient you already are. Either way, the outcome is more confidence in your ability to bounce back. Which is so very important right now and always.

Here are five common elements that people need to thrive in their lives. Are you personally thriving in each area? Which area do you need to focus more on to be happier and possibly more resilient? One of these areas might be a good place to start your journey!

- **Career**: liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals
- **Social**: having supportive relationships and love in your life
- **Financial**: managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security
- **Community**: liking where you live, feeling safe and having pride in your community
- **Physical**: having good health and enough energy to get things done daily

“The human capacity for burden is like bamboo – far more flexible than you’d ever believe at first glance.” – Jodi Picoult
You may have heard it before: You can’t help others without taking care of yourself first. First rule in the event oxygen masks are deployed while in flight...put yours on before assisting others. Self-care is an important way to protect your physical, mental and emotional health so you can better adapt to changes, build strong relationships and recover from setbacks. You can also better support those around you who might be in need.

When creating your self-care plan, it’s important to consider the following questions:

1. **What will I do for self-care?** Stick to the basics and add certain self-care activities to your calendar. Some examples are getting enough sleep, exercising as appropriate for your own health, eating healthfully, spending time with loved ones, using relaxation exercises and practicing meditation.

2. **Whom can I call at any time?** Identify people in your life who you trust and can talk to about the good and bad that may happen.

3. **Whom can I reach out to if I need more help?** Identify who you can call if you are feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or sad. This may include loved ones, a coach or teacher, or mental health professional.

**Self-Compassion Journal**

This exercise will feel familiar to anyone who has tried journaling before. Keeping a general journal or a gratitude journal can help you express your emotions, recognize the good things in your life, and keep a positive outlook on life. Keeping a self-compassion journal gives you a chance to exercise mindfulness and keep in touch with yourself in a kind and compassionate way.

All you need to start journaling is a journal, a writing instrument, and a willingness to write honestly. At the end of each day, take a few minutes to go over what happened, especially events that made you feel bad about yourself or judge yourself.

Be sure to apply these three emotional tools and principles when you write:

- **Mindfulness**—Bring your awareness to the painful emotions that came up. Write about not only what happened, but how it made you feel. Avoid being judgmental of yourself or being overly dramatic about what happened, and practice acceptance of yourself and your actions.

- **Common Humanity**—When you journal, make sure to write down how your experience connects to the larger “human experience.” Acknowledge that we are all imperfect, we all make mistakes, and we all feel pain. Keep in mind the factors that exacerbated your response to this particular event.

- **Self-Kindness**—When you write, write with understanding and kindness to yourself. Treat yourself like a beloved family member or dear friend, and give yourself the encouragement and love that you would give to them. Use a gentle tone and reassure yourself of your goodness.

If you keep a self-compassion journal and stick to these three principles, you will build your abilities to keep your thought and emotions organized and increase the depth of your compassion for yourself.

(SELFCOMPASSION.ORG by Dr. Kristin Neff)

---

Remember that everyone’s self-care plan will be different — and that’s OK. Equally important, don’t be afraid to ask for help. Reach out to the supportive people in your life and discuss self-care methods that may have helped them and what you’re hoping to achieve. Feel free to contact me at anytime for additional resources or help creating your self-care plan. I would love to help. :-)

Christine Robinson  315-772-2597