

Resilience: Not Just Surviving

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In hardship our true character is challenged and revealed, for example, during a world-wide pandemic. As we are several months into this, for many the novelty and short term fighting spirit has faded. We now sit with a new level of acceptance that this new way of operating will not be ending soon.

Many of us may be surprised that we were not as strong as we thought we were, feeling discouraged and tired. Some are disappointed in friends and family who are fearful or reckless in their actions. And even though those things may be true, it's also true that many of us have dug down deep and are discovering a strength and flexibility we didn't know we had. We are seeing good in our communities as people are creative and caring in response to challenges.

Resilience is not new to the human condition. We have seen it in generations before us and we can learn from it still today. Resilience is recovery in any form. It can be physical, as when we build endurance through strenuous exercise, then catch our breath and feel invigorated at the end. It can also be overcoming the physical strains of an illness and recovering vitality. Our bounce back can also be emotional and spiritual. What do we know about the characteristics of resilient people? The Resilience Recipe is one part gumption, one part grit, and one part grace.

Gumption is determination and vision. Resilient people move towards goals with positive action. They perceive challenges as opportunities of self-discovery and improvement. They resolve to stick it out for the long haul. Resilient people anticipate a better future.

Resilient folks are authentic and realistic with themselves and the situation. They believe in themselves and their ability to roll with change. They keep perspective, drawing on wisdom to improvise and know when to pivot course.

Those with gumption are resourceful to reach for personal connections for support and to give support. They look for role models and avoid negativity.



Grit is that part of oneself that refuses to give up.

It is being too stubborn to allow the challenge to be unconquerable. Grit means facing fears-- recognizing emotions and tolerating the uncomfortable ones.

Grit is a hardiness and resolve that is bolstered by physical exercise and self-care that allow one to be up for the task. It means being willing to take responsibility for oneself and to know when to humbly ask for help.

Grit also is pluck and spunk. Resilience is encouraged by a healthy dose of humor and the ability to reframe the situation to see irony, spirit, and vulnerability.

Finally, resilience is about grace. Grace is staying calm in chaos as well as being tethered to a purpose greater than ourselves. It is finding meaning in the day-to-day experience and gratitude for the little things as we move toward individual goals and a collective mission.

Grace is a two-way street. It is being compassionate and forgiving to others, encouraging and helping those who stumble, and it is also being patient with yourself. Forgive your slips and down days, but strive to do better next time. Be generous in your interactions with others, and accept the hand that is offered to you.

If you are interested in hearing more about Resilience and creating a personal growth plan, consider contacting your [Employee Assistance Program](#) for strategies and encouragement.

