Bouncing back: how to improve your resilience

Being able to cope with whatever life throws your way requires resilience. It's a quality most of us have to some extent, but some people seem to bounce back from setbacks with greater ease. These highly resilient people thrive in conditions of constant change—they're flexible, sociable, creative and learn from experience. When hit by major setbacks, they don't complain about life being unfair, instead they manage to land on their feet and often end up stronger than ever.



Strengthening and developing your resilience will make any adversity easier to cope with and, as a result, become less stressful. Highly resilient people all possess certain qualities. By developing these same qualities, your resilience will increase and your stress levels will decrease.

Consider the following tips to help you improve:

Let your childlike curiosity come out to play. Wonder about things, experiment, make mistakes, get hurt and laugh. Embrace your inner child and take the time to just have fun.

Learn from experience. Assimilate new or unexpected experiences and be changed by them. Ask, "What is the lesson here?"

Maintain good self-esteem. Your self-esteem determines how much you learn after something goes wrong, and allows you to accept constructive criticism. It enables you to receive praise and compliments, and acts as a buffer against hurtful statements.

Have self-confidence. Self-confidence lets you to take risks without waiting for approval or reassurance from others. Know and rely on your strengths.

Foster good friendships and loving relationships. Research shows that people are more resistant to stress and are less likely to get sick when they have a loving family and/or good friendships. Talking with friends and family diminishes the impact of adversity and increases feelings of self-worth and self-confidence.

Have empathy. See things through the perspectives of others, even antagonists.

Learn from life's lessons. Learning lessons in the "school of life" is the antidote to feeling victimized. Resilient people convert what they learn from emotionally stressful situations and apply these lessons into their day-to-day lives.

By strengthening and further developing your resilience, you'll become a more stable and stronger individual who can bounce back from life's traumas.