

What Is Resiliency?

Resiliency provides the ability to recover quickly from change, hardship, or misfortune. It's associated with elasticity, buoyancy, and adaptation. Resilient people demonstrate flexibility, durability, an attitude of optimism, and openness to learning. A lack of resilience is signaled by burnout, fatigue, malaise, depression, defensiveness, and cynicism.

Resiliency is the product of a broad perspective. You can bolster it with a supportive network of professional and personal relationships, and use it to become comfortable with change. Resiliency taps into your ability to adapt even as it relies on your own knowledge about yourself – your values, confidence, and optimism. And it's a key element to success on all levels and in all aspects of your life, from professional career development and leadership opportunities to the pursuit of personal goals and well-being.

People often have the view that resiliency means being unflappable, strong, or unaffected. Most of us have heard the saying, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." But resiliency isn't simply a matter of "toughing it out." Bearing up under pressure is certainly part of being resilient, but just one part. Marathon runners, for example, have to be tough to endure a grueling 26-mile run, and yet it's often their ability to handle the intangibles (weather, unknown competition, attitude about ability, a slight but nagging injury at the 20-mile marker) that puts them across the finish line and in the winner's circle.

Developing resiliency requires that you pay attention to the complexities of your experiences, listen to your emotions, and be willing to learn from disappointment as well as success.