

EAP Matters

Resilience

Definition: re•sil•ience/rɪˈzɪljəns, -ˈzɪljəns/ Show Spelled [ri-zil-yuhns, -zil-ee-uhns]

noun

1. the power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc., after being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity.

2. ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like; buoyancy.

Also, re•sil•ien•cy.

Ecology: the ability of an ecosystem to return to its original state after being disturbed

Like the tree whose branches bend and sway in a storm rather than crack under pressure, we have the power to remain flexible and strong amid life's challenges...to be resilient!

Resilience is defined as the process of bouncing back and fully recovering in the face of change and stressful situations. Being resilient doesn't mean a person won't experience difficulty or stress. However, resilient individuals respond to stress in ways that help them not only recover, but grow and thrive. This is a measure of adaptability.

Knowing what resilience is, though, doesn't really help us understand how to become more resilient. Is it an 'either we have it or we don't' kind of thing? And if we don't have it, does that mean we're never going to get it? Certainly, depending on our past experiences, some of us are more adaptable and flexible than others. The good thing is that we can learn how to become more resilient and adaptable.

A measure of resiliency is largely based on how prepared we are for any particular likely (or, perhaps more importantly, unlikely) event (consider natural disasters, for instance). Since we are mind/body beings, preparation is both mental and physical. We all have different capabilities, skills, knowledge, motivators and supports which, as a whole, represent our resources. How we choose to develop and utilize those internal (such as self-determination) and external (such as family/community) resources often determines our resilience potential. Successful adaptation in one area of our life promotes positive encouragement, growth, self-empowerment and success in other areas.

Contact your **Employee Assistance Program (320.484.4555 or 800.870.6478)** for help and support with resiliency development or other concerns you may have. Your calls are always confidential.

(Note: some of the information for this article was taken from the "Transforming Lives Through Resilience Education" web link (www.utexas.edu/education/resilience), which offers four resilience education modules.)