

BUILDING RESILIENCE

Resilience is the ability to face life's difficulties and overcome them. Such difficulties include relationship problems, death, health issues, trauma and financial problems, among others. A good resilience level doesn't mean that you are not affected by stress, nor does it mean you don't feel pain. Resilience is the ability to maintain a healthy stable life despite life's setbacks and to learn from the experiences.

RESILIENT TO ACADEMIC FAILURE

Sometimes students don't realize how tough grade 12, college or university can be. Even though some students may have been straight-A students in junior high school with little studying, courses at this senior or post secondary level require effort. Overconfidence in one's ability can really put students at a disadvantage. For example, if you assume you don't need to attend class because you have never failed anything in your life and have always done very well, then you may be in for quite a shock when you get an exam back with a 'D' grade. This sudden dive may cause distress and you may even feel like a failure. It is important to realize that you will be challenged while in school and it's those "failures" that will prepare you for other obstacles in life. A low grade will not define you, but it is a good reality check! Expectations are greater in grade 12, college and university and high marks are harder to achieve. You must learn to adapt to new ways of studying and learn from your mistakes.

TIPS TO HELP BECOME MORE RESILIENT

- *Lessons to learn.* Recall your experience and determine what you got out of it. What did you do that you could have done differently and how can it be applied to other situations?
- *Humour helps.* A positive attitude helps you to see humour in hectic situations. Instead of getting angry or frustrated, laugh it off.
- *Be accepting.* Know that you can't always change the world. Sometimes you need to change how you are dealing with it. So try to be more flexible and open to change, then you will be able to adapt more easily.

- *Be realistic.* Put things into perspective and don't stress the small stuff.
- *Put yourself first.* If you take care of yourself by doing things you enjoy, eating healthy, getting enough rest and relaxing — you will be better prepared for a stressful situation.
- *Be assertive and take action.* Instead of feeling helpless, get out there and solve problems. Speak up.
- *Relationships matter.* It is important that you always have a good support network — friendships take time and effort but are worth it.
- *Trust yourself.* Know that you are capable and confident.

There is no set of rules or steps to becoming more resilient; it is just part of looking at the world with a positive attitude, knowing everything happens for a reason and that there's a lesson to be learned in everything. Life is full of obstacles and failures, so aim to accept the reality of the situations and consider them learning opportunities.