

## Resilience: Thriving Through Challenges

Adapted by Karen Untz, MS from articles  
first published in *REAP the benefits* January 2003  
Raleigh Employee Assistance Program, Inc.



When under stress, at first we just think about coping strategies that can help us hang on. However, following traumatic world events, our leaders and psychological experts have encouraged us to learn and practice the concept of resilience. **Resilience** is a set of personal characteristics and outlook that go beyond just getting through a tough time. **The principles of resilience include stress management, but go further toward looking at how individuals and groups can deal with adversity and actually turn the adversity into greater levels of accomplishment.**

**Research has taught us that personal and family resilience is an ordinary, not extraordinary occurrence.** Many people show a strong ability to rebound after disasters and such family traumas as divorce, death of a family member, or relocation.

**Here are some suggestions on how to build resilience in your life and family.**

**First, remind yourself and teach your children that change is a normal and often positive part of life.**



Learning to **expect difficulties** and accept change builds the healthy coping skills necessary for resilience.

**Strong, stable and loving relationships** are also important components of developing resiliency. Take time to develop and

nurture your friendships and create a sense of extended family even if you are single. Help your children connect with friends, neighbors, and extended family members. Spend some individual time with your close friends, partner or spouse, and each of your children on a regular basis to keep their relationships with you strong and close.



**Healthy measures of self esteem and self confidence** are also important parts of the resilience recipe. To build esteem and confidence, refrain from unnecessary criticism, and praise your friends, coworkers, partners, and children for their efforts and accomplishments. Also, help those you are close with to discover their special talents and abilities. We all have a special gift or two for this world, and understanding and developing our gifts helps us feel good about ourselves.

**The trait of optimism** is also important in maintaining resilience. When we focus on viewing the world as a positive place, we will learn to find positive things even during difficult times.

### **Take time to assess your personal & professional life.**

We all have challenges to meet. Consider how you can use the difficulties in your situation to clarify your goals and motivate yourself to greater good. We invite you to develop these principles of resiliency to make each new day more rewarding, satisfying, and productive.



**As we strive to become  
our very best selves,  
we will all truly  
"REAP the benefits..."**

**Continue for recommended readings...**

## Recommended Books on Resiliency:

### *A Stake in the Outcome*

by Jack Stack

This is a great book about a company on the brink of bankruptcy that made a dramatic financial turnaround. Management appealed to the employees for help and in turn fostered worker resiliency. A good manual on how to build a culture of ownership among all employees.

### *It's Not About the Bike*

by Lance Armstrong

The inspiring story of Lance Armstrong, a cancer survivor and four-time winner of the Tour de France. After recovering from a near fatal cancer diagnosis he went on to repeat as winner of the most prestigious and grueling bicycle race in the world.

### *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*

by Laura Hillenbrand

The true story of one of the most famous racehorses in history. In 1936, a washed up horse trainer, a jockey blind in one eye, and Seabiscuit, an undersized racehorse with a terrible record came together by chance. The group overcame adversity and the colt began winning major races and setting speed records. (also made into movie)

### *A Beautiful Mind*

by Sylvia Nasar

The true story of John Nash, a math prodigy who became a star of the Princeton math dept. in his 20s. At age 30, he had a schizophrenic breakdown that saw him disappear from the world. At 66, he recovered from his illness, returned to academia, and was awarded the Nobel Prize for economics. (also made into movie)

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