

How the human spirit is resilient



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Writer Steve Maraboli once wrote, “ Life doesn’t get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger and more resilient. ” This quote shows the understanding this writer has for the human spirit and all the amazing things it is capable of. Throughout the book *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah, Ishmael’s life that was once filled with making music and playing soccer with friends quickly became a life of a child soldier. Ishmael shows that he can come back from anything life throws at him and inspires the reader to believe that they too can overcome any challenge with a little bit of hope, courage and persistence.

With a lot of hope Ishmael starts to believe that he can become a normal kid again. In his sessions with the nurse Esther he gets the hope he needs. “ ‘ None of these things are your fault’, she would always say sternly at the end of every conversation... I began that day to believe it” (Beah 165). Ishmael has a hard time adjusting to a normal life once he is taken out of the war. He begins to realize that it isn’t his fault he was robbed of his childhood and had to see so many gruesome things. He was forced to do so in order to survive.

Ishmael starts to trust those who are trying to help him and begins to have less violent outbreaks. He slowly begins to come to terms with the fact that even though he has done terrible things, seen terrible things and had more near death experiences than most, he is alive and that everything he has been through has made him an incredibly strong person. Throughout the book many friends and family inspire Ishmael and keep him strong in his journey. He was very close with his grandmother and her words would come back to him and give him the inspiration to keep going. My grandmother told me that the sky speaks to those who listen to it. She said, ‘ in the sky there

are always answers and explanations for everything: every pain, every suffering, joy and confusion” (Beah 166) Ishmaels grandmother has been through a lot and is very wise; her words help Ishmael through many difficult times. Every time he wants to give up he remembers something his grandmother told him and he is able to keep going. Ishmael’s grandmother has played a huge role in his life and has helped keep his spirits high through the difficult times in the war by being his inspiration.

As Ishmael’s life gets harder the people close to him are able to help him come back from everything he has faced in the war and keeps him going. Ishmael tried to surround himself around kind people like his parents so he could in turn be kind to others and help them in their time of need like they had helped him. Once Ishmael got out of the war and was rehabilitated he started to speak on behalf of UNICEF. “ I would always tell people that I believe children have the resilience to out live their sufferings, if given the chance. Ishmael has come back from so much and this quote shows his belief that other child soldiers can come back as well. When he is at the home for rehabilitation he and the other boys must believe, be kind and trust each other to get better. At first it is hard for them since they have believed it was they against the world for so long, but they begin to put their differences aside and form a strong bond. Ishmaels father helps him get better as well so he can help others. “ ‘ If you are alive there is hope for a better day and something good to happen.

If there is nothing good left in the destiny of a person he or she will die’... Those words became the vehicle that drove my spirit forward and made it stay alive”(Beah 54) Even though Ishmael is alone and has witnessed more

terrible things than 12 year old boys should, he is able to find hope in the fact that he is alive so there must still be good things to come for him. He starts to believe this and find the positive things in his life rather than focus on the hardships he has faced so far, which helps him heal faster and be able to show kindness and hope to the other boys he is with throughout the book.

In the book Ishmael must be very brave in the war so he can survive without letting his spirit die. While in the army Ishmael and the commander form a bond and the commander helps Ismael become a soldier so he can survive “ ‘ Visualize the enemy, the rebels who killed your parents, your family, and those who are responsible for everything that has happened to you’ ” (Beah 112) Even though this quote promotes the violence that Ishmael has been trying to avoid, fighting against the rebels is the only way he can stay alive and fight for his family who cant fight anymore.

These words give Ishmael the will to try after his family’s death, knowing that fighting the rebels will help him come to terms with their deaths.

Ishmael knows it is morally wrong to fight the rebels solely for the purpose of getting revenge for his family but he realizes that he has to release all his hate and anger on the rebels so he can survive and make his family’s death worth something. Ishmael must leave many friends behind but he takes that sadness and anger he has over their death to drive him forward. “ We were leaving our friend, or as my grandmother would put it, ‘ His temporary journey in this world has ended. We on the other hand had to continue. ”

Ishmael and his friends must carry on without their friend, Even though they miss Sadiu they know that if they stay with him they will die. They want Sadiu’s death to mean something and moving forward and staying alive is

the only way they can make his death meaningful. Ishmael must have the strength to carry on while grieving for his friend, because he knows that Sadiu won't be the last of his friends to die and he wants to be with them as long as possible so they can keep each others spirits up through the difficult times.

Throughout Ishmael's life he has to be braver then he thinks he is and must have the willpower to survive and keep his spirit alive. In the book A Long Way Gone Ishmael's life gets much more difficult than he could have ever dreamed of and throughout the book he becomes stronger and more resilient. In everybody's life there are good times and bad times and this book shows that really well and also shows how anybody can overcome grief if they have hope, courage, persistence and are kind enough to forgive life for what happened.

Being resilient is about overcoming any obstacle to achieve your dream; you can't come back from a hard time if you don't have something you need to get to. In my book Ishmael's dream was to get out of Sierra Leone and go somewhere safe out of the war, and his dream kept him going. My dream is to win a gold medal in the Olympics and when I broke my hip my dream of the Olympics is the one thing that I knew I had to get better to do. It drove be to me resilient and forget what was happening, I focused on my dream and am still on the road to go to the Olympics today.