

How resilience works



The Truth Behind Resilience By Devangini Mahapatra Chauhan Resilience essentially revolves around following life's "what ifs". It is true for those people who not only refuse to give up in the face of strong and sometimes, even growing adversity, but also those who have a strong grip over their weaknesses and temptations that threaten to make them give up. According to Wikipedia, resilience is defined as "the ability to recover from or resist being affected by some shock, insult or disturbance." Also, a notable feature of the resilience is that it has come to be associated with various fields in a variety of contexts.

From depicting a quality of stability in physics, to psychology where resilience has come to be defined as the capacity of people to cope with and stress and catastrophe, this term is now a major trend in the corporate world. Or so says Diane L Coutu in her article titled, How Resilience Works, where she etches the nuances of the use of the term. This paper is essentially a critique of the article.

Where the issue of family strength and crises are concerned, the author has demonstrated that resilience does not necessarily come from the genes and it is more commonly found among children from troubled homes - they seem strong from inside. Resilience itself comes up in diverse ways like humour, an ability to laugh at oneself, etc.

The author has been fascinated by the issue of resilience in one's daily life - and it shows in her case studies and examples she has cited. Even the references of people she has used for professional takes on the subject, demonstrates people who are from various backgrounds, yet by and large, a resilient lot who have gotten where they have through a strong dose of determination.

But is that all there is to resilience Apparently not, if the author is to be believed - she talks of resilience from the psychological point of view, where to start identifying the basic features of this trait, she finds that a sense of humor, sometimes bordering on the black, is not a surprising quality in resilient people.

As she delves deeper into the matter, she comes up with the theory that resilient people essentially have three characteristics; without even one of them they are not completely resilient. These are as follows:

Facing down reality: here, she states that while optimism is a good thing, it should be overdone lest it tampers with one's grasp over reality. This can damage a person's self worth and confidence.

The search for meaning: termed as the second building block, this feature is related to the one above as it strives to find a sense of purpose even in the most terrible of times.

Ritualised ingenuity: this feature completes the trilogy by helping the resilient make good use of whatever it that they may have and give them a sense of having the best at all times.

In her article, Coutu is crisp, precise and very to the point with her perception as well as presentation of the facts surrounding resilience. Also, she has given food for thought and further research in the area. Further, the case studies and examples as well as the references she has cited are relevant and they help tie up all the loose ends.

Sources:

1. Diane L Coutu, DLC. How Resilience Works. HBR at Large
2. Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia. URL: www.wikipedia.com (Accessed on: 30th October, 2006)

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