

Bulletin for Resilience

Business

Chalice Lighting

Out of our busyness, we are called back into balance, back into ourselves and the silence of present being. But it is not just back into ourselves to which we are called; it is also to the awareness of the continuous presence of the environment around us and within us. We are called to remember our relationships and our dependencies. We are called to once again feel the oneness which sustains our being in balance with creation, and to do so with wonder and appreciation.

Susan Manker-Seale

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Silence – holding ourselves and each other in silent support

Shared Readings

Resilience is a nuanced and fluid concept, being more of a process that leads to relatively positive outcomes over time rather than a fixed trait of the individual adult or child.

Dorothy Scott and Fiona Arney

In the middle of winter I at last discovered that there was in me an invincible summer.

Albert Camus

Go within every day and find the inner strength so that the world will not blow your candle out. *Katherine Dunham*

Man never made any material as resilient as the human spirit. *Bern Williams*

You desire to know the art of living, my friend? It is contained in one phrase: make use of suffering. *Henri Frederic Amiel*

At the center of your being you have the answer; you know who you are and you know what you want. *Lao Tzu*

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. . . . Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. *Steve Jobs*

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Round 1

Under the heading of Qualities Common in Highly Resilient People, you were asked to mark a + (plus) by the qualities you feel at home with and an ↑ (arrow) by the ones you don't feel proficient in and want to work on. Share with the group which you feel proficient in and which you'd like to work on.

Round 2

Share more deeply feelings, stories, and attitudes on resilience in response to the preparation materials.

Round 3

As time allows, share additional thoughts or reflect on what others have shared.

Closing Words

People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Song

The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the leader know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share with the leader the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, or giving advice
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn.

Facilitator Notes for Resilience

Business

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Susan Manker-Seale

Sharing of Joys and Concerns (2 minutes each person)

Silence – holding ourselves and each other in silent support (3 minutes)

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Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

In the rounds of sharing, pay close attention to the allotted time so that all members have the opportunity to share.

Round 1 (about 2 minutes each person)

Under the heading of Qualities Common in Highly Resilient People, you were asked to mark a + (plus) by the qualities you feel at home with and an ↑ (arrow) by the ones you don't feel proficient in and want to work on. Share with the group which you feel proficient in and which you'd like to work on.

Round 2 (about 5 minutes each person)

Share more deeply feelings, stories, and attitudes on resilience in response to the preparation materials.

Round 3

As time allows, share additional thoughts or reflect on what others have shared.

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Preparation for Resilience

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines resilience as “the ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens.” In this session we will learn about ways to develop our resiliency. One of our church members, Anne Lightsey, has gifted us with the materials from an upcoming workshop she is giving on Resiliency, for which we are very grateful. Resilience is sometimes thought to be a trait; however, Anne says that we can best understand it as a process. Resilience is a muscle we can develop and strengthen as we respond to whatever life deals us.

There are several ways to react to life’s setbacks. Al Siebert, author of *The Resiliency Advantage*, states, “People react to life’s rough blows in many different ways. Some emotionally explode. ... Others do the opposite. They implode. They go numb. They feel so helpless and overwhelmed they can’t even try to cope with what has happened. ... Then, there is another group, the people who get through their distress, orient quickly to the new reality, and cope with immediate challenges. They bounce back and often spiral upward, stronger and better than before.” These are the people with resilience qualities.

Qualities Common in Highly Resilient People

1. Read the qualities listed below. For each quality, mark a + (plus) by the ones you feel at home with and an ↑ (arrow) by the ones you don’t feel proficient in and want to work on. You will share with the group which qualities you feel proficient in and which you’d like to work on.
2. As you read, consider which qualities resonate most with you. Pick one or two to focus on and think about the experiences that they call to mind. Decide which of these you would like to share with the group and think about how you will tell the stories and events.

Constantly learn from experience. James Joyce said, “A man of genius makes no mistakes; his errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery.”

- Consider some difficult experiences you have had in your life. Ask yourself: What is the lesson to be learned here? Think of a key lesson you have learned from a stressful experience that you later applied to another situation.

Have good friendships, loving relationships. Talking with friends and family diminishes the impact of difficulties and increases feelings of self-worth, self-confidence and connectedness.

- Think of a time when talking to someone made a dramatic difference to you as you were going through a difficult situation.

Express feelings honestly. Highly resilient people can express anger, love, dislike, appreciation, grief – the entire range of emotions honestly and openly. They can be vulnerable with those they trust and can also suppress their feelings when they believe it best to do so.

- Think of a time when were you able to express your feelings clearly and openly.

Willing to sit in silence. We are masters of distraction: TV, overeating, abusing drugs, gossip, etc. We all react differently; some shut down, others ramp up. Somewhere in the middle is mindfulness, one of the oldest forms of healing and resilience building.

- How well are you able to be mindful? What might you do to improve this quality in your life?

Practice acceptance. Pain is painful, stress is stressful, and healing takes time. When we're in the middle of it, we want the pain to go away. Acceptance is not about giving up, it's about leaning in to experience the full range of emotions, trusting that we will bounce back.

- How well are you able to accept your emotions when you experience a major setback?

Have solid self-esteem. Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. It acts as a buffer against hurtful statements and destructive events. It is based on inner factors such as attributes, values and principles rather than external factors such as job title, income level, physical attributes, and others' opinions.

- Complete this sentence: 3 things I really like about myself are:

Practice forgiveness. There is a strong correlation between forgiveness, hope, and depression. We may not forget what happened, but we can forgive.

- Think of a situation when you have forgiven someone (or yourself), and that forgiveness has enriched your life in some way.

Mentally and emotionally flexible; comfortable with contradictory personality qualities. Being both strong and gentle; sensitive and tough; logical and intuitive; serious and playful, etc. are a few.

- List a couple of contradictory personality qualities you have.

Find purpose or meaning. Viktor Frankl said that to live happily, humans don't require the absence of suffering, but "the call of potential meaning."

- Recall a time when you found and focused on the meaningful parts of a misfortune or struggle you experienced.

Expect things to work out well. Look for the joy. Research shows that people who cultivate positive emotion generally deal much better with adversity.

- Find new things to be grateful for, focus on the good, exercise, meditate, do random acts of kindness. If you already practice some of these, think about how they affect your life. Which other practices might you consider adding to your life?

Much of this information is from *How to Develop Resiliency Strengths* by Al Siebert, Ph.D., author of *The Resiliency Advantage*. Some other general concepts are from *Psychology Today* <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/design-your-path/201305/10-traits-emotionally-resilient-people> and Harvard Medical School, <http://skepticalscalpel.blogspot.com/2011/06/harvard-says-train-residents-and.html>