

Words about Wellness

UNC DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION

The Power of Resiliency



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"Words About
Wellness" is brought to
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Resiliency is a skill set that we cultivate over time. However, our resiliency can be challenged in the face of adversity. It is important to recognize and be aware of our own resiliency. It is an on-going, everyday process that needs to be focused on to expand behaviors that grow our resiliency.

Bryan Sexton from Duke University outlines three key components for resiliency:

1. Humor (Find Humor tool [here](#))
2. Hope (Find Hope tool [here](#))
3. Gratitude (Find Gratitude tool [here](#))

How does humor expand our resiliency?

Humor is a powerful tool as it can have benefits physically and emotionally on you. It helps bring the saying "laughter is the best medicine" to new light. Laughter enhances your mood, grounds you, reduces stress, connects you, and can allow you to let go of negative feelings quicker. Physically though, laughter can facilitate relaxation, improve pain, reduce stress hormones, and prevent heart disease.

What is the impact of gratitude?

Having gratitude can have a positive impact on your mood and also helping to enhance and cultivate resiliency. Actively focusing on gratitude helps to keep positivity in the forefront of your mind. It is easy to recognize the negative in day to day tasks, but by focusing and bringing more awareness to the positives, it helps to train your brain differently.

How is hope related to resiliency?

Expectations and reality play a role in our resiliency as it can be difficult when your expectations do not align with what is happening in reality. Hope can change your outlook as it helps you feel like you have the control to change the outcome. It allows you to look for solutions to problems instead of focusing on the negative aspects of the situation. Even if things do not result in a desired outcome, optimism and seeking out the positive of the situation can help to change your outlook and cope with the situation.

Here are just a handful of strategies for growing your resiliency:

- Random acts of kindness can enhance your mood
- Friendships
- Reviewing 3 good/positive things that happened to you at the end of each day
- Create opportunities to laugh (i.e. funny movie, fun activities, share a joke)

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- Recognize and be aware of simple pleasures (i.e. the smell of coffee, the sound of leaves crunching under your feet, etc.)
- Recognize the silver lining and positives in each day
- Challenge negative thoughts by avoiding personalization, pervasiveness, and permanence of the situation

References:

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