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## Resilience: Bouncing Back

### WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Resilience is "bouncing back" from difficult experiences such as change, adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or sources of stress — such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors. People do not all react the same to traumatic and stressful life events. An approach to building resilience that works for one person might not work for another.



### EMPOWER YOUR PERSONAL RESILIENCE

- **Make connections.** Good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important.
- **Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.** Highly stressful events happen. But you can change how you interpret and respond to these events. Develop confidence in your ability to solve problems.
- **Accept that change is a part of living.** Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations. Accept circumstances that can't be changed and focus on circumstances you can change.
- **Move toward your goals.** Develop some realistic goals. Do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment — that enables you to move toward your goals.
- **Keep things in perspective.** Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.
- **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** People often find they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle. People who experience tragedies and hardship have reported better relationships, increased sense of self-worth, a more developed spirituality and heightened appreciation for life.
- **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** An optimistic outlook you to expect that good things will happen in life.
- **Take care of yourself.** Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly.

### LEARN FROM YOUR PAST

Focusing on past experiences and sources of personal strength can help you learn about what strategies for building resilience might work for you. Ask yourself the following questions about yourself and your reactions to challenging life events.

- What kinds of events have been most stressful for me?
- How have those events typically affected me?
- Have I found it helpful to think of important people in my life when I am distressed?
- To whom have I reached out for support in working through a traumatic or stressful experience?
- What have I learned about myself and my interactions with others during difficult times?
- Has it been helpful for me to assist someone else going through a similar experience?
- Have I been able to overcome obstacles, and if so, how?
- What has helped make me feel more hopeful about the future?