

Building and Sustaining Resilience

Recently, I had the exhilarating experience of being in the rain and getting soaked on my morning walk. While I was walking and enjoying the feeling of playing outside in the rain, my grandmother's words rang in my ears, "you're going to get sick if you play in the rain." But I realised her *belief* about that link of cause and effect, made it true for *her*.

Just like we need to build up our physical resistance and our immune system by being exposed to germs and viruses¹, so we need to stretch or challenge ourselves with new life experiences and build our resilience over time. As we build our confidence, and begin to understand that we *can* get through a lot more than we may have thought possible, we also learn to deal with our feelings in response to these experiences. We may also become aware that when we are feeling a certain way, and our energy levels are at a particular level, we can actually **enjoy** the challenges and overcome our fears too. We can also challenge and change our beliefs by getting through experiences and regulating our emotions during these life events.

To become **more resilient**, we need to **build and sustain** it through **practice**.

This strategy helps us "to plug energy leaks and recharge on the go," so we use the HeartMath® techniques "in the moment to ... maintain our composure" ² and if we practice the techniques on a daily basis, we also increase our resilience in general. We can use the Heart-Focused Breathing™ technique. Another technique is **Inner-Ease™**:

1. "Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual.
2. With each breath, draw in the feeling of inner ease to balance your mental and emotional energy.
3. Set a meaningful intent to anchor the feeling of inner ease as you engage in your projects, challenges or daily interactions." ³

If we choose a daily practice, that fits easily into our routine, and is enjoyable and do-able, we will notice over time, that:

- We may react less and respond more
- We are able to get through challenging times and feel less drained by them

¹ Zamosky, L. 2014. WebMD: Is dirt good for kids? Available online: <http://www.webmd.com/parenting/d2n-stopping-germs-12/kids-and-dirt-germs?page=1> . Accessed February 25, 2017.

² Institute of HeartMath, 2014. Building Personal Resilience: A Handbook for HeartMath® Certified Coaches and Mentors. California: Institute of HeartMath. p. 20

³ Institute of HeartMath, 2014. Building Personal Resilience: A Handbook for HeartMath® Certified Coaches and Mentors. California: Institute of HeartMath. p. 44

- We sleep better
- We have more emotional responses available to us in the moment

This kind of daily practice has a positive impact on our heart rhythm and our “heart rhythms directly affect our physical and mental performance.”⁴ The person in the room with the most flexibility and resilience also has the most influence to direct the flow of events and ultimately, the outcome.⁵

So the next time you have the opportunity to play in the rain, to dance like no-one’s watching or to practice HeartMath® techniques enjoy the experiences and the challenges.

To learn more about the **Power of Resilience**, see neuropsychologist Dr Sam Goldstein’s TEDx Talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isfw8JJ-eWM>.

To understand why resilience is important, watch **The Importance of Resilience by HeartMath Institute** at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BU5IZIBIRBc>

⁴ Institute of HeartMath. 2014. *HeartMath® Certified Trainers Leader’s Guide*. p. 34

⁵ *Adapted from* NLP Presupposition: The person with the most flexibility controls the system. See: <http://www.mymotivational-nlp.com/nlp-presuppositions/12-the-person-with-the-most-flexibility-controls-the-system>