

Health and Wellness

News You Can Use

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Resolve this year to maintain strong resilience

The concept of resilience has been a trend in behavioral research and wellness for the past couple decades. The term refers to the ability to “bounce back” from difficult experiences. This does not mean, however, that a person does not experience distress — in fact, some emotional distress may be needed in the process of becoming resilient.

The good news is that, according to the American Psychological Association, resilience can be learned and developed through changes in our behavior, thoughts and actions.

10 tips for improving your resilience

- 1. Find purpose.** If you want to be fulfilled, happy, content and experience inner peace and ultimate fulfillment, it's critical that you learn how to find your passion and life purpose. Without a life purpose as the compass to guide you, your goals and action plans may not ultimately fulfill you.
- 2. Embrace change.** Flexibility is an essential part of resilience. By learning how to be more adaptable, you'll be better equipped to respond when faced with a life crisis. Resilient people often utilize these events as an opportunity to branch out in new directions. While some people may be crushed by abrupt changes, highly resilient individuals are able to adapt and thrive.



- 3. Overcome paralysis.** See what you can do to make your situation at least a little bit better and do it. Do not let yourself be paralyzed by negativity. Find things to do to keep you active and to help you release tension, like drawing, writing, meditation or exercising.
- 4. Build stable relationships.** We are social creatures and relationships are crucial for our well-being. Having positive and supportive people in our social circle will always make a difference. In times of hardship, having someone to laugh with makes

a big difference. Resilient people ensure they are constantly building and maintaining their social networks. Your family, friends, colleagues and neighbors can be a great support network in a time of crisis.

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5. Be positive. Research shows that self-esteem plays an important role in coping with stress and recovering from difficult events. Remind yourself of your strengths and accomplishments. Becoming more confident in your own ability to respond and deal with crisis is a great way to build resilience for the future.

6. Be optimistic. Staying optimistic during dark periods can be difficult, but maintaining a hopeful outlook is an important part of resiliency. Being optimistic does not mean ignoring the problem in order to focus on positive outcomes. It means understanding that setbacks are transient and that you have the skills and abilities to combat the challenges you face. What you are dealing with may be difficult, but it is important to remain hopeful and positive about a brighter future.

7. Nurture yourself. When you're stressed, it can be all too easy to neglect your own needs. Losing your appetite, ignoring exercise and not getting enough sleep are all common

reactions to a crisis situation. Focus on building your self-nurturance skills, even when you are troubled. Make time for activities that you enjoy. By taking care of your own needs, you can boost your overall health and resilience and be fully ready to face life's challenges.

8. Strengthen your problem-solving skills. Research suggests that people who are able come up with solutions to a problem are better able to cope with problems than those who cannot. Whenever you encounter a new challenge, make a quick list of some of the potential ways you could solve the problem. Experiment with different strategies and focus on developing a logical way to work through common problems. By practicing your problem-solving skills on a regular basis, you will be better prepared to cope when a serious challenge emerges.

9. Set goals. Crisis situations are daunting. They may even seem insurmountable. Resilient people are able to view these situations in a

realistic way and then set reasonable goals to deal with the problem. When you find yourself becoming overwhelmed by a situation, take a step back to simply assess what is before you. Brainstorm possible solutions, and then break them down into manageable steps.

10. Take the lead in your own life. Try to be proactive about the situations that are not great but that you can change. Everyone has to take responsibility for their own happiness, and unhappiness.

Resilience may take time to build, so do not become discouraged if you still struggle to cope with problematic events. Resilience is not an extraordinary thing but is rather ordinary and can be learned by most anyone. Psychological resilience does not involve any specific set of behaviors or actions but can vary dramatically from one person to the next. Focus on practicing some of the common characteristics of resilient people, but also remember to build upon your existing strengths.

Recipe

Eggplant ricotta bites

Prep: 15 min | Cook: 10 min | Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant
- Kosher salt
- All-purpose flour, for dredging
- 2 large eggs
- 3/4 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
- 2 large plum tomatoes, diced
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- Shredded fresh basil for topping



Directions

1. Thinly slice the eggplant into rounds and season with salt. Pour some flour into a shallow dish. Beat the eggs in another dish. In a third dish, mix the breadcrumbs and parmesan. Dredge the eggplant in the flour, then dip in the eggs and coat with the breadcrumb mixture.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Working in batches, cook the eggplant until golden, about 2 minutes per side, adding more oil between batches, if necessary. Drain on paper towels and season with salt.
3. Toss the tomatoes with the remaining 2 teaspoons olive oil and the vinegar in a bowl. Spoon some ricotta onto each eggplant slice. Top with the tomato mixture and basil.

Source: Food Network Magazine