

Personal Resiliency Reflections – Mine and Yours by Stacy Aaron

Resiliency is taking on a whole new meaning for me these days. For my job, I often help employees be resilient when facing organizational changes that impact their jobs. In this context, even though their work world is changing, they go home to something familiar and certain. In today's context, there is little familiar or certain.

Work and home have blended into one. There is no retreating to one to balance the other. We try (with varying success) to create new habits and new routines. I've heard of some people blending old and new. For example, one professional gets up, showers, gets in the car and drives around the block a few times as a "commute" then pulls in driveway and heads to home office. Clever!

So, as I've reflected on resilience recently, I'm thinking about it in this different context. Below I am sharing three personal reflections on how I stay resilient in the current environment. Reflection is an important tool we have at our disposal. I hope this helps you reflect on your own situation and guides you to be more resilient in these especially trying times.

1. **I am more resilient than I give myself credit.** It is human nature to focus on the current situation and place more importance on it. Few of us have experienced a pandemic but it is likely that you have faced hardship in your life. I have. We have persevered and come out the other side. We should all draw strength from our past.
2. **I gain a sense of control, where possible, and let go of the rest.** Human beings hate uncertainty, feeling out of control. One way we gain control is through planning and taking action. In today's environment, I'm trying to find the right balance when planning. There are too many factors outside of my control to plan too far ahead. I am not planning a summer vacation. In fact, I am choosing not to think about future travel at all. I am sticking to planning my day and loosely, my week. I can control most activities within this week. So, I make lists for the day, the week, and mostly leave it to that. Meetings are added to my calendar but that is the extent of my focus in the future. Focusing on the very short term helps me feel more in control and capable.
3. **I try to be extra kind to myself and others.** This is not the time for self-flagellation. I don't get everything on my daily list done. I try to exercise or do yoga daily but sometimes, I don't. I try new recipes that sometimes fail. For those of us that lean towards perfectionism, it can be a struggle to see ourselves not reaching our self-imposed high expectations. So, we need to give ourselves a break. Resilience is partially about our attitude in a situation, how we choose to view things. So, I choose to view trying a new recipe as a fun experiment I have time for, no matter the outcome. Also, helping others, even in small ways, helps create that balance we need for resilience – whether it's giving a big tip, donating to a fundraiser, donating a mask, thanking the UPS delivery person or waving to strangers. Focusing some on helping others gives me a broader perspective. This helps my sense of purpose and, in turn, my feeling of resilience.