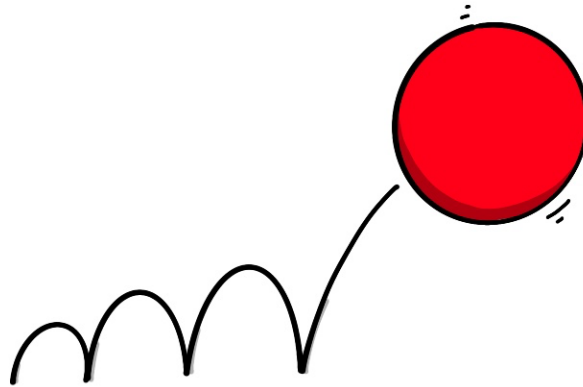


Resilience, a quality to value and develop

20.9.2023, David Fiorucci



Resilience is essential in facing the many challenges and rapid changes presented by the modern world. It enables us to adapt, to learn from past experience and to make positive progress, even when up against difficulties and uncertainties.

But how do we develop resilience? Are present trends in society favourable to its development or – on the contrary – do they tend to prevent or hinder the development of resilience?

A large part of the answer lies with the notion of family and belonging: the social bond as a key to developing one's own resilience.

Resilience refers to the capacity of an individual, a community or a system to face up to disruptions, shocks or crises, and to adapt and recover. In other words, it is the capacity to stay strong and spring back. The term comes from the Latin *resilio*, literally to “bounce back”, hence to overcome and rebuild. This implies not just surviving difficulties, but overcoming them and emerging even stronger, better prepared and able to adjust to new circumstances. Resilience may apply at different levels: to a person, to a community, an organization or even a society as a whole.

It is a dynamic process, as described by Boris Cyrulnik, who has brought the concept of resilience to the fore.

Given the way the modern world is going, resilience has become an essential quality. Here are a few reasons why resilience is so badly needed today:

1. **Rapid and unforeseeable change:** the world is constantly changing; the technological, environmental, economic and social changes we see around us are occurring rapidly and often unpredictably. Resilience enables us to manage these changes more effectively and adjust our approach accordingly.
2. **Increasing complexity:** global challenges such as pandemics, climate change, economic crises and social conflicts are increasingly complex and interconnected. Resilience enables us to develop holistic approaches to these complex challenges.

3. **Vulnerabilities exposed:** events such as the COVID-19 pandemic have laid bare the vulnerabilities of our existing healthcare arrangements and our economic and social systems. Resilience enables us to prepare and plan for future crises.
4. **Global interdependence:** in this age of globalization, events in one part of the world may have significant repercussions everywhere. Resilience means recognizing this interdependence and developing strategies to minimize negative impacts.
5. **Adaptation to climate change:** the effects of climate change are getting worse, resulting in extreme weather events, the displacement of populations and environmental disruption. Resilience is essential if we are to cope with these challenges.
6. **Political and economic uncertainty:** political and economic upsets may have serious effects on social stability. Resilience enables us to manage uncertainty more effectively and reduce the related risks.
7. **Innovation and creativity:** resilience fosters innovation and creativity in finding new solutions to problems. We are forced off the beaten track in coping with unforeseen challenges; necessity is the mother of invention.

How then do we develop this highly desirable quality, this much-needed resilience? Here are a number of points to consider and put into practice:

- **Do good** to those around you (giving help and support) so that you feel useful and are able, in turn, to accept help from others.
- **Shoulder your responsibilities** (make yourself accountable) and so rise to the challenge of events. Don't hide yourself away (head in sand, ostrich-like). Take decisions, be proactive.
- With this in mind, **grow in courage**. To help you, read the article "Management: affirming courage".
- **Regularly take time out to reflect (self-reflection)**. In other words, review the past and focus on positive events, successes and strengths, your strengths. This will enable you to **accept** events that might otherwise destabilize you and throw you into confusion.
- To reinforce the previous point, **give and ask for feedback (feedforward)** to bring to light and thus underscore your strengths.
- As I see it, the essential point is this: **make family your first priority** (sense of belonging). Social ties are the key to resilience. Loneliness, living on your own, is probably the most dangerous aspect of the way our society is evolving.
So don't let people remain in this state. Be proactive: include others in your networks, give them access to the circles you move in and thus develop your own network. If possible, play an active part in voluntary organizations, groups and communities. You might also consider getting involved in charitable work.
To sum up, **look for/find a resource person** and **become a resource person** for others.
- **Have a problem-solving mindset**. The fact that you look for solutions and don't get bogged down in problems creates a positive dynamic and so strengthens resilience.
- **Develop a positive vision of the future**. Imagine the ideal future you would want for yourself and your family, and visualize this image. This positive vision of the future will serve as a compass at difficult times. At such times, project yourself into this ideal future, let it work in your mind for a while and you'll be re-energized.
- **Cultivate a sense of humour**. Humour (not necessarily bad or inappropriate jokes) is a positive force that tends to be underestimated.

- **Look after yourself**, physically, mentally and in terms of your appearance. Treat yourself from time to time (you're worth it).
- Let me end on this: **avoid certain media platforms** which convey only bad news and are demoralizing. Be very selective in the media you expose yourself to, and be very critical as regards their content and truthfulness.

If you are vigilant and consistent in observing these principles, you will develop your own resilience, the resilience of those near and dear to you, and consequently the resilience of the network or organization in which you operate.

Here's to many different positive experiences!