

**AHWATUKEE
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Resilience strategies big key to bouncing back

By Marlo Archer

Life is rough.

It seems every time we turn around, we're being asked to overcome some obstacle, deal with some loss, find a solution, solve a problem or get out of a jam.

We certainly know some people who fall apart when troubles arise and others who seem to glide gracefully through all sorts of adversity. What makes some people so resilient, so able to pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and start all over again? Are they just gifted with a genetic predisposition toward flexibility and regeneration or have they learned coping techniques that the rest of us could learn, too?

The answer is that the truly resilient people probably started with a goodly dose of adaptability, but that resilience is also a quality that can be learned.

Adults can learn to be more resilient and they can also help instill the ability to recovery from tragedy in children as well.

The Public Education Committee of the Arizona Psychological Association (www.azpa.org), chaired by retired Duquesne professor Al Rizzo and overseen by Tempe psychologist Marlo Archer, consists of psychologists and students, like Catherin Snyder and David Moreno of Argosy University, who volunteer to educate the general public and health professionals.

Their focus in 2004 was to teach people strategies to increase resilience. They con-



Practical Advice

ducted presentations for clinicians as well as laypeople and they assembled a comprehensive list of tips and strategies for building resilience. The entire list can be obtained by e-mailing committee member David Ramstad, assistant training director of the Psychology Internship Program at the Carl T. Hayden Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Phoenix (david.ramstad@med.va.gov), who can e-mail you the list or send it to you on disc. A sampling of the tips is presented here to

help you develop resilience in your family. Give some of these a try and let us know how it goes. You can e-mail feedback to Archer at PEC@drmarlo.com.

Building resilience in children:

- Have a daily routine, balanced between work and fun
- Have a regular family night where children plan the activities
- Be honest with children
- Develop traditions
- Look for the positive side of difficult events
- Take your children seriously
- Display emotion – it's normal
- Give children small tasks they can complete successfully

Building resilience in adults:

- Handle emotions – listen to your inner voice
- Use your intellect – read, study, and increase your knowledge
- Pamper yourself – get a new haircut or go out to eat
- Distract yourself – watch a movie, garden, do a crossword puzzle
- Focus externally – volunteer to help others
- Use humor – jokes, stories, books
- Socialize – visit with friends and family
- Connect with nature – hike, camp, swim, take pictures
- Seek and use treatment – support groups, a therapist

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