



HOW TO BUILD RESILIENCE

Resilience is what gives us inner strength to cope with any adversity, disaster or hardship such as Covid-19 pandemic. It is this mental reservoir of strength that we can recall in times of need to support us from breaking or falling apart. Resilient people can bounce back and rebuild their lives irrespective of the nature of catastrophe. While those without resilience are easily overwhelmed by disaster, resilient people sail through and may even emerge much stronger than before.

Resilience is about how we actually react to and cope with emotional and mental stress. It is to be determined, to have grit and be able to persevere. Resilience in schools means that learners can express their emotions constructively without pain, fear, or anger. A resilient learner at school is assertive, able to solve problems, enthusiastic about schooling and empathetic with classmates.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, let us focus on what we can control instead of brooding and complaining about what we cannot change. We have some control. Our control lies in how we react to the things that happen to us. We need to be resilient people and emerge as victors and not victims; looking for opportunities in problems; finding power in every situation; maintaining a positive outlook; and having realistic plans and sticking to them.

Resilience is less about adversity and more about how we adapt to it, Steven Wolin, clinical professor of psychiatry, put it more succinctly as the “capacity to rise above adversity and forge lasting strengths in the struggle” (*The Art of Resilience, Psychology Today, June 2016*).

