

We all face rejection, heartbreak, neglect and failure. That is just how life is. Life is not fair and no one said it was going to be! Some of us suffer in silence never letting anyone know how much we are hurting or how low we feel. We are sometimes shattered into a million tiny pieces by disappointment and people we trusted who have let us down, we feel that our vocal chords literally disappear and our hearts are swollen with hurt. Not able to communicate, not able to say I need help or support.

Others rage against the unfairness of the world, speak out and rant about everything that is wrong and how cruel the world is. Spilling negativity into each conversation and interaction. Neither of these strategies serve us.

The key to coming out of a downward spiral is faith, the belief that you are doing what you have been called to do, what you bring to the world is valuable and unique. You have survived all the previous bad days, you have managed in a whole range of situations...this one is no different! Your success rate to date is 100%, when one door closed it often lead to a different, better door. You know this to be true (if you are honest). Either you win or you learn!! No bad situation lasts forever. You have to believe that you have the capacity and tenacity to triumph. This is the only differentiator between those who keep going and those who quit!

**'Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm' - Winston Churchill**

Self-talk is essential in breaking out of the blues, neuro scientists have proven that we say between 300 and a 1000 words to ourselves each minute, so be careful how you talk to yourself, remember that you are listening. Speak words of encouragement and kindness to yourself. Learn how to nurture that innocent spirit inside, remember that there is something timeless and precious inside you, your soul. Do not allow your circumstances to define your success or your happiness. Happiness is a choice.

Gratitude is another essential ingredient for combating negativity and defeat. What do I have in my life that I am grateful for? How many things do I currently have that I take for granted? What talents have I been blessed with (*and yes, we all have those too*)? What is precious to me beyond the material things in my life? The sad thing is that most people only appreciate what they had when they have already lost it. To truly feel grateful we need to take time to reflect and this reflection often brings peace and comfort into a situation. By being grateful instead of negative or defeated we often bring new opportunities, people and experiences into our worlds.

Which brings me to another crucial element of resilience. Time. Sometimes we need to sulk, feel sorry for ourselves and wallow in our misery. We need to acknowledge these emotions (because we are human) but we can't stay there. Have a cap on how much time you are going to take to go through something and DECIDE, (yes, it is a choice) when you are going to get up, regroup and try again. What am I going to do about this situation? What can I change? What influence do I have? You are **not** powerless, this is the main flaw in our thinking when we start being negative. We float easily into a victim mode, taking away our own accountability and also our power. Only you can change things, only you can make things better for YOU. We can't wait for others to change, the economy to change or any other external force to magically change! Taking action (even very small ones) creates positive forward momentum.

There is another essential component to time when it comes to resilience and recovery, you need to take a break when you need it. Sometimes it is going to feel like you can't afford relaxation or time out but sometimes it is the most productive and self protective thing you can do. Conserve your resources, use the time to plan for a better future and get back to yourself and the true essence of who you are.

Which brings me to sleep. Sleep is NOT a luxury, the modern world is so busy glorifying "busy" that sleep has become an old fashioned notion. We all need sleep, we all need different durations of sleep and the world's population is generally sleep deprived. When you don't sleep well you are tired, being exhausted and stressed makes you more prone to depression and illness and also less able to deal with even the most basic challenges that present themselves. Sleep is essential to your well-being so start making it a number one priority! When you sort out your sleeping habits or problems a lot of things magically fall into place (I speak from experience!)

Find support, I am not talking about someone that you can MOAN to...I am talking to someone who can help you formulate better strategies, help you decompress safely and someone who has your back. The worst feeling you have when going through a challenging period is that you are alone. Find someone you trust, someone who has gone through something similar to tell you what they have learnt, to build you up and to support you. It is essential that you have someone in your corner. Ironically being there for someone else, helping others through tough times can actually improve your state of mind and make you feel useful and caring. Support is a two way street!!!! You can also get these benefits from volunteering or being of service. It gives you a huge serotonin boost and will help us to create a better, more caring world. There is always someone who is worse off than you. Remember this in your challenging times.

Find something in your life that brings you joy. Be it a hobby, spending time with friends, children, a spouse/partner or with a pet, a piece of music, a favourite book or a place that makes you feel peaceful and safe. Immersing yourself in something that brings you joy can change your mood completely and instantly. For me it is as simple as a bubble bath at the end of a hard day. Find your magic reset button. Find that thing that makes you smile (even when you really don't want to or really can't!)

Playing and creativity are under-rated abilities for "grown-ups" but in being open to new, wacky ideas we often come up with the best solutions, no one fails at playing, we all play in our own unique way and no one judges that. Why does that change, why do we become scared of trying something new or being different as we age? Our lives are simply us, playing, trying things out and if they don't work trying something else, don't let anyone judge how you play. You only become a failure when you label yourself as one. Your life is not for anyone else to understand, approve of or judge! Stop expending energy on trying to secure the good opinion of others or their approval. This is about you. You get one shot!

My challenge to you (and to myself), start making what you want, need and love a priority. Stop letting fear, discomfort or procrastination derail you. Release your inner victim and play!

Till next time, goodbye.