

The Stuff of Resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back, recover, and develop a stronger capacity to respond to adversities in the future. Resilience is actually less about bouncing back than it is about springing forward to something greater than we were before! This inner wellspring of power we call resilience is a synergistic miracle of faith, love, positivity, and the human spirit.

Some people have a recovery story which is their testimony about how they've overcome tremendous challenges. These amazing stories may include recovering from mental illness, addiction, physical illness, and/or trauma. Recovery stories are like sacred mile markers because they bear witness to the miraculous ones- the heroic people who moved away from something formidable and destructive in their lives.

While a recovery story describes what individuals moved away from, a resilience story testifies about what they're moving toward. People who have a recovery experience usually have an abundant reserve of resilience. Their storehouse of resilient energy is like a power station that can be renewed, replenished, and compounded.

All people, including families and teams, have a resilience story. As part of the human experience; we have all gone through certain challenges and difficulties that might have

otherwise taken us out. Perhaps others would not have been able to get through it as we did. When we take a close look at what brought us through those difficulties, we are looking at the very stuff of resilience.

By telling our "getting through it" story with a resilience perspective, we begin to frame our past and present with a focus on our strengths of character. We tell it with the language of wellness instead of illness; we view ourselves as a victor instead of a victim; and we see ourselves as right and strong as opposed to slight and wrong. We begin to more fully grasp our gifts and greatness for having gone through the experience. This new perspective turns our hearts and minds away from the pain of the past to our untapped potential for today and tomorrow. The word *impossible* becomes *I'm possible*.

Guidelines for Sharing Our Resilience Stories

- Share a little about your struggles in getting through a difficult time.
- Describe when you started to make positive changes
- Identify your strengths, supports, and tools that helped you get through it.
- Acknowledge important people who helped you.
- Share your hopes and dreams for the future.