

## **From Personal Power to Facing Fears**

The fuel of gratitude reminds us of power so this would be a good time to look at how the recovery path of personal power leads to the resilience step of facing fears. You may remember that we hinted that resilience is renewable energy. The amazing thing about resilience is that it comes from resources which are continually replenished. No one's going to turn off the power if you don't pay the bill. In fact, the more you use it, the brighter and stronger it gets! When resilience is activated, it doesn't risk depletion; instead, it grows exponentially just by the act of using it – consolidating strength, expanding flexibility, and boosting resolve. All of this power that comes from making choices, focusing on strengths, and using empowering language gives us the energy and courage to become self-directed. This same power is what we can draw upon to face our fears as we move into resilience.

The one thing that may cause a power shortage is pain. As many of our readers know, we have not been left out of the “painful experience” category. We have had our share of pain and suffering just as you have. So facing our own pain and trying to learn from it has been well, painful. Shadow boxing is not for the faint of heart. The first thing we realize may come as a surprise – pain is on our side. This may be hard to believe, but it is trying to take care of us. It's warning us to not repeat something that hurt us. The challenge for us is not to be intimidated by it, but to learn from it. What is it trying to teach us? How can we use this to get stronger?

Pain does not usually travel alone; it runs in a pack with a constant companion called fear. When pain and fear join forces we've got a mounting challenge that grows exponentially and synergistically. Together the fearsome duo bears down on us and no matter how fast we run they always seem to be gaining on us. The other two traveling companions that we don't want to overlook mentioning are *shame and guilt*. We'll talk more about them later, but for now let's take a light hearted look at the two main players, pain and fear.