



Can You Bounce Back?

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Life can be difficult. Sometimes we wonder how we will get through all the challenges we face, especially as we age. These challenges might be the death of a loved one, divorce, financial issues, personal illness or illness of a family member or friend, job loss or retirement, medical emergencies, and natural disasters to mention only a few. Some people react to these challenges by ignoring them or walking away or by becoming isolated. But, we all know some people who never seem to be bothered by life challenges. They always come out on top with both feet on the ground. How do they do that?

[Kendra Cherry](#), MEd, recently wrote that resilient people often have a number of characteristics that help them weather life's challenges. For example, they have a **survivor mentality**. They see themselves as survivors and when things are difficult they keep going until they make it through. She says they also have **effective emotional regulations** and manage emotions in the face of stress. It doesn't mean that they don't experience strong emotions. It means that they recognize these as temporary. Resilient people have a strong **internal control focus**. They are good at **problem-solving** and they have a sense of **self-acceptance and self-compassion**. They treat themselves with kindness during difficult times. Finally, resilient people have a **network of supportive people** around them.

Basically, resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity. Resilience contributes to health by reducing the negative impacts of stress on the body. [Research shows](#) that individuals with higher levels of resilience tend to have lower rates of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular conditions, and exhibit stronger immune system function. They also engage in healthier lifestyle behaviors. Resilience is a protection against the development of mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression.

How can you become one of those people who always seem to bounce back? First, keep in mind that change is never easy so don't be too hard on yourself. The [American Psychological Association](#) offers these suggestions to help a person become more resilient. **Connect** with empathetic and understanding people who can remind you that you are not alone. **Take care of your body. Practice mindfulness. Avoid negative outlets** such as alcohol and drugs. Become a **volunteer** to give you a sense of purpose and self-worth. Develop realistic **goals**. Accept that **change** is part of life. Even though it is hard to be positive when life isn't going your way, becoming an optimistic person empowers you to expect that good things will happen to you.

[Ralph Marston](#) wrote on his website about resilience. "The best thing to do when the worst thing happens is to begin moving forward again. The real essence of strength is in resilience. Drawing upon and exercising such strength will make it grow ever stronger. Make the commitment to bounce back and you end up at an even higher level, an even stronger position than before."

When those life difficulties and challenges occur, follow the advice of the experts. Get back up. Put one foot in front of the other. Move on. Rely on your network to give you the strength to overcome the setbacks. Look forward. You can become a more resilient person able to face the next challenge.