

# Emotional Resilience

Dr. Paul Epstein

Taken from <http://stress.about.com/od/positiveattitude/ht/resilient.htm>

Emotional resilience refers to one's ability to adapt to stressful situations or crises. More resilient people are able to "roll with the punches" and adapt to adversity without lasting difficulties; less resilient people have a harder time with stress and life changes. There is no cure for the human condition, there is a healing journey and spiritual path and the freedom to choose how to relate to life.

Resilience can be developed with a little effort. If you know what to do, you can become more resilient, even if you are naturally more sensitive to life's difficulties. Contemplative medicine involves living questions, and reflection, exploring relationship and cultivating resilience in response to life's difficulties and transforming stress pain and illness into a journey of self healing and awakening.

## Traits of Emotional Resilience

Resilience is not a quality that you either do or do not possess; there are varying degrees of how well a person is able to handle stress. Still, there are certain characteristics that resilient people tend to share.

- **Emotional Awareness:** They understand what they're feeling and why. [Maintaining a journal](#)<sup>3</sup> can help you explore your inner world and come up with a plan of action.
- **Perseverance:** Whether they're working toward outward goals or on inner coping strategies, they're action-oriented -- they trust in the process and don't give up. Maintain the effort for the long term. and Trust the process. Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Ghandi
- **Internal Locus of Control:** They believe that they, rather than outside forces, are in control of their own lives. While we can't control our circumstances, we can control how we respond to those circumstances, and that makes a big difference in our attitudes and in the course our lives take. Live the serenity prayer. Awareness leads to choice, respond vs react!
- **Optimism:** They see the positives in most situations and believe in their own strength. It's a way of viewing the world where you maximize your strengths and accomplishments, and minimize your weaknesses and setbacks with a positive attitude. Illness as opportunity. Glass ½ full.
- **Social Support:** While they tend to be strong individuals, they know the value of social support and are able to surround themselves with supportive friends and family. While we ultimately face our own challenges, a supportive friend or group can help lighten the load.=and while only you can do it, often, you can't do it alone and you're not alone..

- **Sense of Humor:** They're able to laugh at life's difficulties. Those with a sense of humor about life tend to experience life as less stressful, are able to bond with others during difficult times, and experience the numerous [benefits of laughter](#)<sup>7</sup>. Norman Cousins, Tuesdays with Morrie.
- **Perspective:** Resilient people are able to learn from their mistakes (rather than deny them), see obstacles as challenges, and allow adversity to make them stronger. They can also find meaning in life's challenges rather than seeing themselves as victims.
- **Spirituality:** Being connected to your spiritual side has been connected with stronger emotional resilience, especially if you're internally connected and not just going through the motions of attending services. Seeing with new eyes, learning lessons, pain as teacher.
- **Self-care:** Healthy lifestyle : diet, nutrition stress reduction, yoga, relaxation, and regular exercise have powerful benefits for coping with stress and cultivating resilience. Take care of yourself during stressful times.
- **Cultivate the 7 qualities and intentions in meditation and healing:** Have a beginner's mind, non-judgment, patience, trust, non-striving, acceptance, letting go/by letting be.
- **Do Good, Be Good:** Be Kind, Be Gentle Be Patient Be Compassionate with Yourself!

## Paul Epstein, ND

### Mindful Healing: Mind-Body Integrative Medicine

42 Richmondville Ave.

Westport, CT. 06880

203-226-3923

[epsteinmb@aol.com](mailto:epsteinmb@aol.com)

[www.drpaulepstein.com](http://www.drpaulepstein.com)

“As we are present in our lives and conscious of our power to choose how to be,  
we cultivate greater happiness in everyday life.”

From Happiness through Meditation  
by Dr. Paul Epstein.