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Practicing Courage with All Your Strength

by Scott Stoner

Resilience is the capacity of a system, enterprise, or a person to maintain its core purpose and integrity in the face of dramatically changed circumstances.

—Andrew Zolli

The *Strength* quadrant of the Living Compass model for well-being focuses on *Care for the Body* and *Stress Resilience*.

One of the core concepts to emerge out of the field of positive psychology is the importance of resilience, a quality that helps people to thrive and to be well. Positive psychologists are studying the question of why some people are able to bounce back and overcome adversity, while others are not.

Their research has revealed two factors that are foundational to our ability to be resilient: spirituality and community. Spirituality provides us with meaning, hope, and a larger perspective in the midst of challenging times. It focuses as a “true north” in life when tough times are threatening to knock us off course.

Having a supportive community to turn to when times are tough is also a foundational factor in resilience. A recent study found that isolation for older people is as great a health risk as smoking. We need the love and support of others always, but most especially when we are in the midst of a stressful time.

Having the courage to nurture our spirituality and to strengthen our connections with others will not prevent us from experiencing vulnerability and adversity at times. We will find, though, that our spirituality and the support of others are key factors in helping us to bounce back and move forward whenever we face unexpected challenges in our lives.

Making It Personal: What are your thoughts about the quote above by Andrew Zolli about resilience? Do you agree that spirituality and community are key factors in resilience? Can you think of an area in your life where you might need to summon up some courage to be more resilient?