



The Resilience Prescription

Physician: Dr. Dennis Charney

Refills: Unlimited

Patient: You

1. Positive Attitude

- Optimism is strongly related to resilience.
- Optimism is in part genetic, but it can be learned (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy).

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Reward circuits, converse of learned helplessness

2. Cognitive Flexibility Through Cognitive Reappraisal

- Traumatic experiences can be re-evaluated by altering the event's perceived value and meaningfulness.
- One can receive a benefit from stress and trauma: one can reframe, assimilate, accept and recover. These skills can be learned.
- Failure is an essential ingredient for growth.

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Memory Reconsolidation, Cognitive Control of Emotion, Memory Suppression

3. Embrace a Personal Moral Compass

- Develop a set of core beliefs that very few things can shatter.
- For many, faith in conjunction with strong religious and/or spiritual beliefs is associated with resilience.
- Altruism has been strongly related to resilience. Survivor Mission.

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Neural Model of Human Morality, Altruism and Human Evolution

4. Find a Resilient Role Model

- Role models can be found in one's own life.
- Imitation is a very powerful mode of learning.

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Neuronal Imprinting of Human Values

5. Face Your Fears

- Fear is normal and can be used as a guide; facing your fears can increase your self-esteem.
- Learn and practice skills necessary to move through the fear.

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Extinction, Stress Inoculation

6. Develop Active Coping Skills

- Resilient individuals use active, rather than passive, coping skills.
- Minimize appraisal of threat, create positive statements about oneself, seek support of others and act.

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Functional Neuroanatomy of Fear Mechanisms

7. Establish and Nurture a Supportive Social Network

- Very few can "go it alone"; humans need a safety net during times of stress.
- Considerable emotional strength accrues from close relationships with people and organizations.

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Cognitive Neuroscience of Human Social Behavior

8. Attend to Physical Well-Being

- Physical exercise has positive effects on physical hardiness, mood, and improves self-esteem.

Neurobiological Mechanisms: Effects on neurogenesis, cognition, regulation of emotion, immune function, etc.

General Principles (we underestimate capacities of Mind, Brain, Body)

9. Train Regularly and Rigorously in Multiple Areas

- Change requires systematic and disciplined activity.
- Concentrate on training in multiple areas: emotional intelligence, moral integrity, physical endurance.

10. Recognize, Utilize and Foster Signature Strengths

- Learn to recognize your character strengths and engage them to deal with difficult and stressful situations.