

Resiliency

1 What's in the way is the way. **Mark Nepo**

2 We think that the point is to pass the test or overcome the problem, but the truth is that things don't really get solved. They come together and they fall apart. Then they come together again and fall apart again. It's just like that. The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy. **Pema Chodron**

3 You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along. You must do the thing you think you cannot do. ***Eleanor Roosevelt***

4 Withdraw for a while into your own tranquility, loosen from your heart the new fester. Free yourself of the wounded gaze that is not yet able to see you. Recognize your responsibility for the past, but don't allow your sense of yourself to wilt. Draw deep from your own dignity. Temper your expectations to the other's limits, And take your time carefully, learning that there is a time for everything Hurting first, and then for healing too, but that time may not be quite yet.
--**John O'Donohue**

5 Native American Wisdom

Did you know that certain Native American artisans weave small, purposeful mistakes into their blankets? These master craftspeople include intentional slip-ups in their best work. But why? Because they believe that the "mistake" is the very space that allows Spirit to move in and out of the fabric.

Take a moment and let that sink in. Then ask yourself ...What if the mistakes you wish you hadn't made could be openings for Spirit in your life?

--**Caroline Garnet McGraw**

6 The lesson which life constantly repeats is to 'look under your feet.' You are always nearer to the divine and the true sources of your power than you think.

The lure of the distant and the difficult is deceptive. The great opportunity is where you are. Do not despise your own place and hour. Every place is under the stars. Every place is the center of the world.

--**John Burroughs**

7 Experiencing the Labyrinth

The beauty of the world is the mouth of a labyrinth. The unwary individual who on entering takes a few steps is soon unable to find the opening. Worn out, with nothing to eat or drink, in the dark, separated from his dear ones, and from everything he loves and is accustomed to, he walks on without knowing anything or hoping anything, incapable even of discovering whether he is really going forward or merely turning round on the same spot. But this affliction is as nothing compared with the danger threatening him. For if he does not lose courage, if he goes on walking, it is absolutely certain that he will finally arrive at the center of the labyrinth. And there God is waiting to eat him. Later he will go out again, but he will be changed, he will have become different, after being eaten and digested by God. Afterward he will stay near the entrance so that he can gently push all those who come near into the opening.

– **Simone Weil, Waiting for God**

8 Heavy Lifting

A little boy was having difficulty lifting a heavy stone.

His father came along just then.

Noting the boy's failure, he asked, "Are you using all your strength?"

"Yes, I am," the little boy said impatiently.

"No, you are not," the father answered.

"I am right here just waiting, and you haven't asked me to help you."

--**Author Unknown**

9 Cry Out in Your Weakness

A dragon was pulling a bear into its terrible mouth.

A courageous man went and rescued the bear.

There are such helpers in the world, who rush to save
anyone who cries out. Like Mercy itself,
they run toward the screaming.

And they can't be bought off.

If you were to ask one of those, "Why did you come
so quickly?" he or she would say, "Because I heard
your helplessness."

Where lowland is,
that's where water goes. All medicine wants
is pain to cure.

And don't just ask for one mercy.
Let them flood in. Let the sky open under your feet.
Take the cotton out of your ears, the cotton
of consolations, so you can hear the sphere-music.

Push the hair out of your eyes.

Blow the phlegm from your nose,
and from your brain.

Let the wind breeze through.

Leave no residue in yourself from that bilious fever.
Take the cure for impotence,
that your manhood may shoot forth,
and a hundred new beings come of your coming.

Tear the binding from around the foot

of your soul, and let it race around the track
in front of the crowd. Loosen the knot of greed
so tight on your neck. Accept your new good luck. Give your weakness
to one who helps.

Crying out loud and weeping are great resources.
A nursing mother, all she does
is wait to hear her child.

Just a little beginning-whimper,
and she's there.

God created the child, that is your wanting,
so that it might cry out, so that milk might come.

Cry out! Don't be stolid and silent
with your pain. Lament! And let the milk
of loving flow into you.

The hard rain and wind
are ways the cloud has
to take care of us.

Be patient.
Respond to every call
that excites your spirit.

Ignore those that make you fearful
and sad, that degrade you
back toward disease and death.

Jelaluddin Rumi, "Cry out in Your Weakness." The Essential Rumi. Trans. Coleman Barks, with John Moyne, A. J. Arberry, and Reynold Nicholson. Edison, New Jersey: Castle, 1997, pp. 156-157. Used with permission of Coleman Barks.

For Reflection and Discussion

A Does the word “resiliency” resonate with you or do you use different language or images? Can you put “resiliency” into your words?

B Talk about your own experience of adversity and resilience. How have you dealt with adversity? Is asking for help an issue for you? Have you gone to God for help? Has the Internet and social media changed the way you ask for help? Has it helped or hurt you to be resilient or to need to be resilient? Are you more likely to be over-reliant on self-will or “allies in life’s battlefield”?

C What has been the role of resiliency in your personal growth or development? Would you be a different person if you had not faced these adversities? Have you made “mistakes” that turned into “openings for spirit”

D How does All Souls help with respect to your personal resiliency?

-----Mary Beth Hatem, for All Souls Covenant Groups