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How I learnt resilience

Isolating ourselves causes further damage to our already weakened self-worth

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When the small manufacturing business that I ran collapsed and it happened twice in quick succession, I was distraught and overwhelmed. I sought counsel yet it did not help. However, perhaps through some quirk of fate, I survived and in time, as a psychologist said, I 'bounced back.'



What I did right I had no clue of, and this only became clear to me a couple of weeks ago, nearly 20 years after I had exited business and chosen an alternate career, that I had shown resilience by 'adapting well in the face of adversity'.

This explanation I found in a book I recently read called *Resilience from the Heart* by Gregg Braden. He offers several possible reasons how one becomes or can become personally resilient. While the quote I have used may sound impressive and even ideal, what does it actually mean and how did I restore balance in my life?

Braden identifies the following as aiding recovery: Know yourself, have a sense of personal hope, build strong interpersonal relationships and find a personal meaning in life. Briefly, knowing ourselves is our ability to recognise false, untested assumptions about ourselves and seeking clarification from those who can help.

Having a sense of personal hope is to believe, as Kahlil Gibran says, that we are "life's longing to be lived" and we will not be forsaken. We are human and we need human connections. Isolating ourselves causes further damage to our already weakened self-worth.

And finally, finding personal meaning actually means, as Braden quotes Eleanor Roosevelt, 'the purpose of life, after all, is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience.'

Perhaps, unknowingly, I lived these lessons and I have been richer because of them.

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