THE MASTER KEY TO SOARING JOY

By Francoise E. Netter

It is called “honing resilience” and it unlocks spiritual and psychological fulfillment.
All of us ultimately seek joy, ease, love, safety and peace. We may seek it in diverse ways and call it by different names but those desires are universal and at the foundation of most philosophies and religions. So if we seek all that is joyous why do we need to “hone resilience?”

Resilience is the key to not only achieving these goals, but also to sustaining them. If life is supposed to be joyous, then why does it so often feel challenging, chaotic and downright difficult? The answer is simple and yet complex.

If you grew up in the West, you were probably taught to fill your baskets of desires by pursuing external things. In a capitalist consumer society, we are taught by example that if we accumulate and control certain outer conditions, we can achieve the joy that we are seeking. However, all of this striving and grabbing keeps us stressed and frustrated most of the time.
The interesting dynamic in adversity is that some people appear strong externally, but when they experience loss or difficulty, they wilt and lose their strength and resiliency. Others, who appear fragile, become hardened and defensive and armor their vulnerability. Some rare individuals are able to create something lucid, new and extraordinary from pain and hardship.

Alice Herz-Summers, the oldest holocaust survivor who died at 110, was such an individual. She was a well-known musician in Czechoslovakia when World War II broke out.

The Nazis arrested her and her five-year-old son and sent them to Theresienstadt but allowed her to play piano as part of a propaganda campaign for the Red Cross.

While most of the Jews were sent to Auschwitz and other death camps, she and her son survived on the “food” of her music and resilient attitude and not only did they live through the horrific conditions, but both Alice and her son became world-class musicians after the war. Her interviews on YouTube and the 2014 academy award winning short documentary about her life, The Lady in Number 6, are nothing short of inspirational.
Strength

THROUGH ADVERSITY

This ability to turn adversity into strength is what the ancients call alchemy. It is the stuff that creates resiliency and greatness on every level. Unfortunately, with the apparent ease of technology, we are under the illusion that everything can be handled with the flick of a finger.

Children growing up today are given a false sense of security and so many New Age philosophies propagate the illusion that life “should” be easy. It is not our desire for joy, ease, beauty and fun that we must curtail, but rather how and where we look for them.

The ability to turn adverse conditions into opportunity invites us to shift our attitude.

So often we find ourselves struggling against outer conditions that we can’t seem to change, when the change we seek is actually right under our noses. We are so accustomed to looking externally for solutions that we seldom look at our own internal state, attitudes, thoughts and beliefs.
Holocaust survivor Alice Herz-Sommers ‘honed her resilience’ and endured the Nazi death camps through the joy of music.

In Western society, we often put emphasis on how things look externally. Through that approach, we have forgotten our own inner wellspring of knowledge. Yoga and many other philosophies remind us that we may have it a bit backwards. The control we are seeking is within us, not external to us.

Honing resilience summons us to that place internally where we can reflect and shift our perception and beliefs. It allows us to strengthen our core so that when circumstances appear out of our control or blindside us, we are not only able to survive, but in the process we transform ourselves.
Six Steps
FOR HONING RESILIENCE

I teach in all of my seminars that awareness and understanding are the first two steps in taking action and making changes.

For the next couple of weeks, observe your reactions to life and notice what fosters your resilience. As with most of us, I have an overdeveloped inner critic, so I suggest the following steps that you can apply to your own personal or professional situation:

“Life is very much like flying a plane. Pilots are rarely on course in their flight plan and must make constant adjustments.”
Refrain from judging the things that upset or throw you off your “center” and instead embrace a stance of loving compassion for “losing it.”
Pause, breathe and become reflective. Is this new or a trigger from the past? What do I have control over? What can I do? What can I change? What do I need to let go of?

This adversity may last five minutes or it might go on for weeks or longer.
Journal, pray, meditate or speak with a trusted friend or counselor.
From this place of inner reflection, create an action step. It may be to simply breathe and move on or there may be various outer actions that need to happen.

Know that life is very much like flying a plane. Pilots are rarely on course in their flight plan.

They arrive at their destination by constantly correcting their course.
Keep your vision clear and always make room for adjustments.

In my own experience, the more I identify with what’s wrong with my life, the more life seems to corroborate that belief and visa versa. For the next few weeks, take a few minutes daily to reflect on both your desires and your attitudes. Look within to see if you can shift a negative thought or belief and see where cultivating your resilience can assist you. Then watch as your life begins to transform, slowly but surely, toward greater joy.

Please feel free to comment on this article and email me your questions and experiences.
Françoise E Netter, M.A., is an author, educator, conference presenter, performer and Yoga and Movement For The Mind® certification trainer throughout the United States, Mexico, and Europe. Her work has been featured on television, radio, on several CDs and in magazine and newspaper articles including *The New York Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The San Jose Mercury News*, *The Boulder Daily Camera*, and *Health Club Magazine*. Her book, *Movement For The Mind— Dance That Awakens Inspiration, Wisdom & Healing*, offers individuals of all walks of life an opportunity to integrate their creativity physically, mentally and spiritually and apply it practically both professionally and personally.

Through her company, Body/Mind Dynamics Inc., she teaches her philosophy of movement and body/mind approach as a path towards mental health, physical well-being, emotional growth, and spiritual integration.
Her expertise allows each participant to contact his/her own inner state of creative awareness, choice and purpose.

To find out about the Movement For The Mind 2015/2016 Practitioner Certification Training Program, graduate credit workshops for Educators, booking a workshop in your area as well as ordering books and other life-enhancing products contact Françoise at: fenetter@yahoo.com and www.bodyminddynamics.org
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