

7 Habits of Highly Resilient Women

Back in 2002, I wrote an article for *Fitness Magazine* on how to learn to bounce back from anything. From time to time, I reread it and remind myself of these steps. You might benefit as much from the suggestions, based on research with psychologists, as I do. Here's the Cliff Notes version:

1. *Put failure in perspective.* Resilient people keep their failures temporary and specific, viewing disappointments as isolated, short-term scenarios, not examples of luck destined to spill over into every area of their life. Resilient people chalk up setbacks to fleeting causes, not integral flaws. Those who spring back best from difficulties practice a form of selective denial that involves attributing setbacks to circumstances beyond their control but take full credit for triumphs.
2. *Cultivate flexibility.* Figure out a strategy that will work for you and be willing to try something else if your first approach doesn't help.
3. *Take care of yourself.* Eat well, exercise, take time to relax and develop healthy relationships as well as a menu of mood-boosting techniques—calling a quick-witted friend, for example. When you're in a bad place, make sure your routine includes small positive rituals, like starting the morning with the newspaper and coffee.
4. *Don't give into self-pity.* When things don't go your way, you need and deserve time to adjust. Being too stoic can backfire. Eventually you have to deal with the bad feelings. For most people, time turns out to be the best healer, but you can speed up the process by nourishing positive emotions and doing things that help you achieve your goals.
5. *Behave like a person you respect.* Mimic the conduct of someone who has handled misfortune with aplomb. Adapt that person's methods to your own style and situation.
6. *Surround yourself with supportive family and friends* you can count on is essential to getting past trauma. Avoid people who make you feel worse.
7. *Don't dwell on the past.* Being the kind of person who bounces back is something you have to keep working at your whole life but

knowing that you can be stretched to the limit and then regain your former shape is empowering.