



The Resilience Cycle Finishing Well...

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In this issue of Emerging Leader we look at 'The Resilience Cycle'. It is the process that ensures we bounce back from disappointment, failure and adversity and become strengthened and improved by it. It is how we sustain leadership excellence and finish well. As one leader shared, "More than education, more than experience, more than training, a person's level of resilience will determine who succeeds and who fails".

The Apostle Paul experienced great adversity (2 Corinthians 11:23-27), yet he not only survived, but thrived! At some point in our lives we will most likely face great adversity. It may come in the form of personal failure, betrayal by others, the loss of a loved one, a health crisis or even through our own sin. Whatever the circumstance, studies indicate that how you and I react to the adversity makes all the difference. As the saying goes 'you either become better or bitter'.

When Crisis and Adversity come your way:

1. Respond, Don't React. When in crisis it is our natural human tendency to react out of fear, anxiety and anger. We want to immediately fix things. Correct the wrongs and convince others of our perspective. Possibly take revenge because it is so unfair. Don't do it, don't react, and don't go to war. Instead, it pays to reach out to God and quiet our soul. Waiting upon God for direction can calm the strident inner voices and find His wisdom for next steps. It's when our soul is quiet that the soft voice of the Spirit can best be heard. What is the right thing to do? Is spiritual warfare needed? What is God saying?
2. Connect not only with God but with what researchers call your ISSN - your Intelligent Social Support Network. An ISSN is a person or persons that care enough about you to support you while sharing the truth in love. They will not shame or reject you. They will help you hear from God. This can be a friend or relative or they could be a pastor or counselor. Make sure they are intelligent (knowledgeable) with a gift of wisdom that will assist you in properly assessing your situation. They are not an ally who is there just to agree with you and make you feel good. They are there to truly help you figure out what is really going on and what you should do about it. The person you connect with should also be a 'safe' person. Someone who will keep your confidence and care about you. They will put your best interest over their own.

3. What are my Learning Points? Gods is always conforming us to the image of His Son. Adversity can refine us. Even if I am not guilty of serious wrongdoing God still has things for me to learn. Behaviors and attitudes than need changing. Skills to learn and understandings to sharpen. If the whole purpose of the crisis was to change something in me or teach me a lesson, what would it be? Resilient leaders learn from their mistakes and the mistakes of others. They use each crisis as a learning opportunity from God. If you're not sure what God may be teaching you, ask your supportive friends (ISSN). But be careful not to slip into self-condemnation.
4. Let Go! Perhaps the hardest thing to do in times of adversity is to let go of the multitude of negative feelings and emotional pain that accompany it. Releasing the hurt of betrayal and false accusation, the fear of the future and the shame of failure, are three of the biggest challenges you may face. If these emotions aren't recognized, dealt with and released, they will influence future attitudes and behavior in a negative manner. Pray for release. Cry out to God. Seek prayer and help from your network (ISSN). Visit with a counselor. Do whatever it takes to be healed. And . . . forgive, forgive, forgive!
5. Embrace Change. Studies show that most people don't learn from their own or other people's mistakes. This is why the recidivism rate of convicts is so high. Resolving your crisis and creating a future requires embracing the changes you have recognized. Work out a plan. Write it down. Memorialize what God has shown you. Let others know of your need to change. God gives grace to the humble and resists the proud. Trust Him for the power to change. Share with your supportive network and ask for accountability. The more we face our need to change the brighter our future will be.
6. Dream Again. The ability to once again be energized by a dream is proof of your healing and resilience. When passion and vision return you know it is time to risk again. God is the God of second chances. No failure or disappointment is too great for God not to redeem. Only we can limit ourselves and the ability to bounce back better than before. Too often leaders resign themselves to failure because they feel unworthy or afraid to risk dreaming great dreams again with God.

