

Resilient at the toughest times

<http://archive.gulfnews.com/articles/08/09/16/10245253.html>

09/16/2008 07:31 PM | By Carole Spiers, Special to Gulf News

If you're worried about rising costs and escalating rents you may be tempted to become despondent.

But you might do better to look inward, at those hidden reserves of energy and resources within yourself, which could be harnessed in any such crisis.

Resiliency is probably something you've acknowledged as a virtue, without actually studying it. In the UK, with its history of an unpredictable boom-and-bust economy, resiliency is firmly established as a factor in the field of stress-management, and I have run many training-courses dedicated solely to developing this individual strength.

The more we look into resiliency, the more we appreciate just how much unused potential there is inside each one of us. In fact, it makes our ordinary everyday performance seem like an old computer with a tired hard drive.

Like most good habits, resiliency starts with physical fitness, extending our capacity to confidently manage the excess pressures that can harden into stress, and ensuring that our internal engine will not break down when the going gets tough.

To guarantee this, we need a strong mental resistance to be proof against the inevitable disappointments, failed expectations and missed targets - that we all sometimes encounter. In a truly resilient person, this personal resistance will be reinforced, not weakened, when faced with a challenge.

In fact, resiliency acts as the perfect antidote to what some people have called 'negativism', the downward spiral of defeatism, depression and over-eating that tends to appear during a difficult time in business or work.

Pressure shield

But resiliency is much more than just a shield against excess pressure. It is a key factor in enhanced performance. The resilient mind lifts you into a higher state of thinking, doing and being - a vigorous, questioning mindset that is more conducive to generating solutions.

Now imagine a whole department operating in this enhanced, constructive mode. Can you begin to see resiliency as I do - like a secret vault holding invisible gold?

Look again at those accounts and clients that appear to be problematical. Then add-in your new-found 'resiliency factor' on the plus side and everything looks more manageable and you start to feel more optimistic. The skill is to start banishing negativism from the office, and from your mind.

Even an hour's walk is known to induce a healthy degree of optimism, as well as being a first step towards that heightened physical and mental state you hope to attain as a resilient manager able to encourage resiliency in others.

The day may even come when you were glad you came through this challenging period, if that is what brought out the necessary resiliency, in both you and your colleagues.

By weathering a crisis, your team will have shown it can stand the test of other, maybe larger, emergencies in the future. Perhaps this period of escalating will go down as the standard managerial war-story. "Where were you in 2008?"

The writer is a BBC broadcaster and motivational speaker, with 20-year experience as CEO of Carole Spiers Group, an international stress consultancy based in London.