The 10th dimension... the power of ten

Dr Ed Bonner and Adrianne Morris discuss what it means to be resilient

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A recently published book by Jane Clarke and Dr John Nicholson called Resilience, Bounce Back From Whatever Life Throws At You, considers the personality characteristics that allow individuals to triumph in difficult circumstances. In the current economic climate, which unfortunately fosters a litigious mentality, we observe many traumatised people – yet some seem to weather the storm far more easily than others. What sets these people apart? Using psychometric testing, Clarke and Nicholson have measured individuals’ resilience levels and have coined a new term called RQ – Resilience Quotient – to sit alongside IQ & EQ.

Who is resilient?
Think of individuals such as Barack Obama, Nelson Mandela, Terry Waite and John McCarthy. These individuals were not born with silver spoons in their oral cavities; they have all endured hardship, poverty and/or incarceration – yet each has emerged with head held high and spirit intact to achieve the highest levels of respect.

The 10 skills
Not all of us have this as inborn, but it is possible for any and all of us to develop the skills required to deal more positively and effectively with trying circumstances and emerge sunny side up. What are these skills?

Clarke and Nicholson have isolated some key factors: optimism; freedom from anxiety; taking personal responsibility; openness; adaptability; a positive and active approach to problem solving, a can-do attitude.

To this list I would add: a sense of humour; a lack of self-deprecation; a lack of envy – not focusing on what you do not have; taking credit for what you have achieved rather than focusing on what you have not done well or at all.

The power of positive doing
Norman Vincent Peale may have summed this up years ago by the phrase, “The Power of Positive Thinking”, but in truth, thinking is not in itself sufficient – we also need to do positive things, which include:

1. Taking care of our health by regular exercise and controlled diet
2. Dealing with issues as they arise (avoiding procrastination)
3. Living in the present rather than the past or future
4. Developing interests other than work: staying busy, and being prepared to learn new skills
5. Breaking down indigestible big problems into bite-sized smaller ones
6. Being willing to apologise – we are not always right
7. “Reframing” – turning ill-considered confrontation into reasoned negotiation
8. Avoiding sticking to untenable or unreasonable positions, for example, being prepared to move on
9. Replacing aggression with assertiveness
10. Developing an internal “locus of control”: creating solutions rather than waiting for others to bring them to you.

About the author
Adrianne Morris is a highly trained success coach whose aim is to get people from where they are now to where they want to be, in clear measured steps.

Ed Bonner has owned many practices, and now consults with and coaches dentists and their staff to achieve their potential. For a free consultation, or a complementary copy of The Power of Ten e-zine, email adrianne at alpakoach@yahoo.com or Ed on bonner. edwin@gmail.com, or visit www.thepoweroften.co.uk.