

GOOD NEWS!



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

HELLO! And welcome to our 2nd Personal Development newsletter. This issue is focusing on Resilience and how you can use it to your advantage.

Resilience:

What is it, and what are some benefits of it?



- Resilience helps to manage stress & bounce back quickly from challenges and then helps people to move forward in their life; therefore, resilience directly impacts people's ability to do well in life – ability to bend without breaking and if bent, to spring back! (Valiant, 1993)
- It helps people be more flexible, builds positive emotions, increases optimism and open mindedness

- Resilient people are more likely to take responsibility during tough circumstances
- Resilient people use resilience skills:

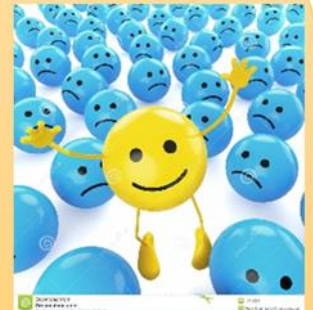
Self-Awareness:

The ability to identify your own thoughts.



Optimism:

The ability to remain realistic and maintain hope even when things seem to be going wrong.



Resilience Skills

Self-Control:

Ability to manage thoughts, emotions, actions and being able to see other perspectives.



Connections:

Ability to develop and form strong relationships, support others and maintain positive communication.



Our Personal Development classes & programs (see list on page 4) may help you build resilience by:

- Fostering positive emotions such as pride, contentment, happiness
- Identifying and building character strengths
- Building resilience (setting boundaries, verbalizing feelings...)
- Developing positive relationships
- Creating a positive physical space

Qualities of a Resilient Person:

- Prepared
- Adaptable (willingness to change if something appears not to be working)
- Flexible (willing to try different things)
- Concerned for the wellbeing of others
- Courage (willingness to take risks, including being unpopular to do what's right)
- Sense of Purpose (Driven by achievement. Does their best to get the most out of life, keep learning, and working towards a satisfying future.)



cartoonstock.com/directory/r/resilience.asp

While you're learning these skills, give yourself permission to:

- ♥ Be Flexible and Open-minded
- ♥ Be Patient and Kind
- ♥ Be Optimistic
- ♥ Live in the Present
- ♥ Know your Limits
- ♥ Learn how to handle Rejection
- ♥ Build Good Relationships
- ♥ Take time alone to Process & Reflect

Resilience is a skill anyone can learn and develop

A true story of Resilience, by Danny M, creator of The Underground Scholars Institute (USI)! May 2017

The first time I got arrested and put into handcuffs, I was eight years old. Two other kids and I were caught with spray cans, and they accused us of stealing them from Home Depot. I remember one cop saying to us, "We're going to take you to the station because we're gonna prepare you for your future". *That really left a mark on me.*

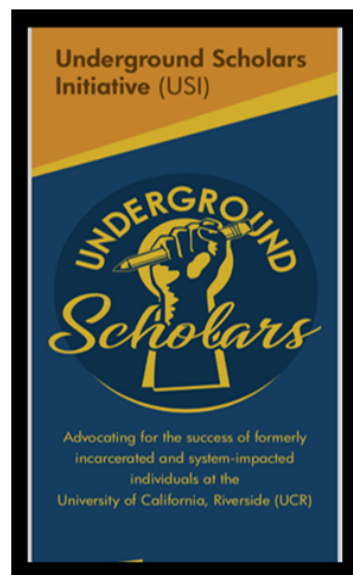
When I was thirteen years old, I joined a street gang. Then I was arrested for kidnapping, carjacking, and robbing a drug dealer.

On my eighteenth birthday, in 1997, I was sent to prison with a sentence of fifteen years and two felonies. I ended up getting transferred to Pelican Bay State Prison's Security Housing Unit, an isolation unit within the maximum-security facility in California. It leaves a mark on you. Incarceration is a traumatic experience.

I was in my cell twenty-two and a half hours a day. I could only talk to people through the vent or the toilet. The hardest thing was understanding that the place was built to break you. Mentally, physically, and spiritually. Through the wall, a guy incarcerated since 1977 [for 20 years], convinced me to start reading books. **That had a very big impact on me.** I read Charles Dickens, *The Grapes of Wrath*, Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and more.

Through a GED program, I received my diploma then started taking correspondence courses through a community college. After 14 years, I came home with 48 college credits and luckily **was accepted at UC Berkeley!**

Again, luckily, I met Steven who served time in prison in his teens and twenties just like me! Both of us were struggling since we were feeling uncomfortable around the young UC Berkeley crowd! Together, we recognized a lack of resources for formerly incarcerated students on campus. So, in 2013, we created the Underground Scholars Initiative to **support students impacted by incarceration.**



One of the results of incarceration for people coming home is having to live with the stigma of being the boogeyman, being the bad person, being the animal. People coming home should be able to access some type of help to cope with what they went through. I was resilient enough to overcome the trauma that solitary confinement imposes on an individual and use it to my advantage. I want to be a resource for people - to be able to **put people in positions to excel after incarceration.**

USI was started by the formerly incarcerated and system-impacted students at UC Berkeley, which is a **student run organization.**

If interested, there are USI chapters at CA college campuses: UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UCLA, UC Merced, UC Riverside, UC San Diego, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz

Newsletter Participation Wanted!

You matter! We want YOU to share your thoughts too. If interested, submit a short self-improvement related poem, success story, drawing, etc.
Send it to Schools – Personal Development Newsletter

(It must be appropriate for school. Printing depends on available newsletter space.)

DEUCE Is Poem, by student: J.Hall

I know she would want what's best for me,
Which is living my life to the fullest
totally drug free.
I wish I could've stopped when she was still
here,
But when it came to my sobriety, I was never
sincere!

DEUCE is for people who search for recovery
Since I've been incarcerated, I've made this
discovery.
That the life that I had no longer exist
And the things of my past, I no longer miss,
Except for my mother, who I know is gone,
doesn't give me the right to do what is wrong.

"A Process", by student: J. Casino, May 2022

I once let go
With life, I was never pleased.
Into chronic use,
I failed to teethe.

This smoke, these toxins;
All I could do was wheeze.
Gasping for air,
I found myself unable to breathe.

Through lies and deceit,
15 years have gone by so fast.
I lay here crying;
My hands filled with broken glass.

From bloodied wrists,
To the shattered dreams.
I'd engage this high,
By any and all means.

Now 31 years old,
Incarcerated for a time.
I honestly ask myself,
"How could I commit this crime?"

But with hope so clear,
And sobriety for which I yearn;
I check all of my options.
I'm finding help at every turn.

Classes: Commitment to Change, DEUCE, Parenting; **Teachers:** Ms. Aster, Ms. Barbara, Dr. Dorothy, Ms. Monika, Dr. Roxanne; **Programs:** AOD: Lacreena, GPS: Janna, MAT: Phillip, **Office:** Doña

English Resources:

- Suicide Crisis Hotline: 1(800) 833-2900
- Mental Health Access: 1(888) 678-7277
- Homeless Hotline: 211
- Send an inmate request form for:
 1. Game Plan for Success (GPS)
 2. Medical Assistance Treatment (MAT) - Phillip
 3. Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) - Lacreena,
 4. The Chaplain for Spiritual Help

Recursos de Español:

- Línea para Prevenir el Suicidio: 1(800) 833-2900
- Línea de Acceso de Salud Mental: 1(888) 678-7277
- Línea para Crisis de Vivienda: 211
- Mande una solicitud de recluso a:
 1. Programa Plan para el Exito (GPS)
 2. Tratamiento de Asistencia Medica (MAT) - Phillip
 3. Consejeros de Abuso de Drogas y Alcohol (AOD) - Lacreena
 4. Capellan para Ayuda Espiritual

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