

HOPE FOR CHANGE
GREY OWLS COMMITTEE
NEWSLETTER

The Lifers and Long Term Committee is introducing a new sub-committee called the Grey Owls. This sub-committee will be composed of individuals age 50 and over interested in having mature conversations on certain issues. Send all request slips to the Attention: Anthony Brown, HFC Treasurer and Grey Owls founder.

The Power of Resilience and Wisdom

Incarcerated senior men and women sit at the center of life's oldest paradox: For many the closer we come to death, the more our emotional well-being seems to increase. After a lifetime of losing loved ones, suffering defeats, and experiencing physical decline, we as older adults still manage to take life's punches in stride. Resilience with aging is what gives us seniors an edge with wisdom. How we have adapted to the aging process speaks to the incredible resilience and wisdom. And it begs the question: what can youth learn from us?

Resilience is the ability to quickly recover from stress, whether physical mental, or emotional. Research indicates that resilient people have greater connectivity between areas of the brain linked to emotions; the prefrontal cortex is involved in decision-making and emotional control.

Ways to Build Resilience

- Develop a problem-solving attitude
Accept new challenges with the knowledge that you might fail. If or when you do, try to focus on bouncing back and learning from your mistakes.
- Spend Time
Focusing on your own well-being is key to aging gracefully. Work to actively build a positive self-image
- Surround Yourself . . .
With people who believe in you.

- **Put Your Situation Into Perspective**

Supporting and helping others through their challenges can benefit your own state of mind.

- **Build Confidence**

By challenging yourself with activities that push your comfort levels without threatening your own state of mind.

- **Build a Resilient Body**

To support a resilient mind by following a healthy diet and engaging in an active lifestyle.

As the United States recovered, the Baby Boomer generation grew up. Born between 1946 and 1964, they would go on to become the largest living adult generation in the United States, influencing everything from the Civil Rights Movement to Social Security reform. They witnessed the Korean and Vietnam Wars, the assassination of a president and a Cold War that hung a shadow of fear over everyday life. The fact that we have seen and experienced so much explains why 90% of seniors have experienced at least 1 traumatic event during their lives. It also helps explain their impressive resilience and wisdom.

To make it this far in life means seniors have accumulated a lifetime of experiences ranging from challenging to traumatic. Their ability to understand the Big Picture, see the Silver Lining, and not Sweat The Small Stuff allows them to feel more content and less psychopathologic than other population groups.

Attaining Wisdom:

And yet, even with this rich experience, a senior's resilience can become brittle. Negative perspectives and a resistance to growing old can work against them. We become overwhelmed with loneliness and sorrow, losing spouses and friends, seeing family members less, and disengaging from activities can be discouraging experiences for anyone.

Keeping the brain engaged is the key to Building Resilience. By seeking out new challenges and activities, seniors can take their resilience to the next level by developing wisdom. Wisdom is more strongly associated with life's satisfaction.

Wisdom allows people to understand and, more importantly, accept their reality. Ultimately, wisdom is what allows seniors to make sense of the paradox. It guides and protects us through the fear and hardship of life, comforting to the very end.

Concluding Thoughts:

Everyone of us will confront several challenges in our lifetime. How we choose to deal with these experiences will determine our future path and affect our sense of well-being. Resilience is earned over time by exercising a lot of patience. Wisdom comes with experience in the face of adversity. It is important to understand your limitations - what you can and cannot accomplish - by doing the best with what you have. The earlier we train ourselves to think this way, the richer our lives will be. Most of us did have access to resilience of older adults, whether they were our own relatives, neighbors, or other people in the community. When younger and older generations share their experiences, they work together to build a better community and a better tomorrow.

Resilience is the capacity to bounce back from the effects of stress (or) adversity. The following general strategies will help build your resilience:

- Recognize that loss and challenges are a common part of life. Facing difficult and painful situations directly and openly will make them easier to deal with.
- Recognize that change is also a common part of life. Adapting to and managing change is a form of resilience.
- Maintain an optimistic outlook, looking for and expecting the positive is a choice with clear benefits.
- Set goals for yourself and take active steps to achieve them
- Build open, supportive relationships with people who have a genuine capacity for caring.
- Be disciplined about self-care. It takes a regular investment of time and energy. Keep things in perspective. Remember that life is a journey with ups and downs; this helps make the challenges easier to deal with successfully.

We have been attempting to have our first Grey Owls meeting but encountered scheduling conflicts. We have recently resolved these conflicts and look forward to having our first meeting shortly. Thank you for your patience.

Grey Owls Chairman, Anthony Braun

Revving Up Your Resilience

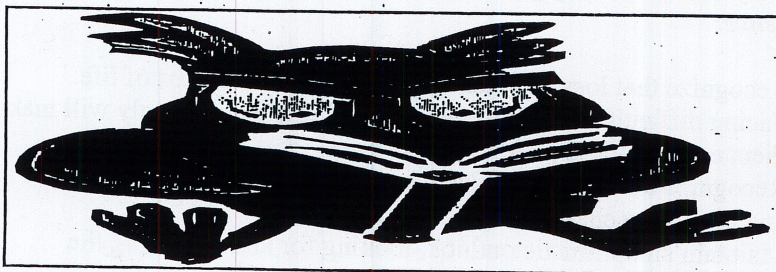
Resilience is a source that keeps you going, not by toughening it up or going emotionless. It's about adjusting and adapting to a challenged environment either internal or external. It's about going head up without challenges. However, we have to obtain and use the appropriate tools in order to own these challenges.

Prime example, "It's easy to go with the flow, but it takes strength to go against it." We have to live by what we believe in and what we're trying to achieve, which is acquired by our levels of strength..

Also we must not be afraid of change, anything is possible when revving up your resilience. Especially when we're determined on getting past the finish line of what we're trying to achieve. You are what you think.

By Co-Chair: David Marks

Sources: This entire article is taken from the Psychiatric Times, #33, May, 2022, Special Populations by Rashami Parmar, MD; www.psychiatrictimes.com



Grey Owls - Mission Statement:

We aim to address certain issues pertinent to the more mature members of the elderly community. Through wisdom, fortitude, and resilience, we will seek to advance the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being of our members and in doing so benefiting our immediate community.

DISCLAIMER: The material provided in this newsletter is for information purposes and sourced. The Grey Owls cannot offer any legal advice.

GREY OWLS Est. 2020 a Subcommittee of the
Lifer's and Long-Termers Committee
Founder: Anthony Brown, Co-Founder David Marks
Co-Founder: William "Cool Pop" Abbott (Deceased)


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Since 2011