



Resilience and Knowing

By Kathy Marshall Emerson, Executive Director
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This afternoon I spent a leisurely half hour shopping with no particular purpose in mind. I came upon a lovely pink hat that would protect me from the sun. I slipped it on and instantly *knew* it fit. The feel was right and unmistakable. That same *knowing* also guides me through life...through really big things like the sudden death of my spouse, through ordinary things like driving in a Minnesota blizzard, and silly things like figuring out how to beat the weeds in my newly seeded grass.

Resilience involves, among other things, a sense of *knowing*. This ability to notice that we *know* is a natural and all too often illusive capacity. When we learn the principles of how we operate from the inside-out, we are really discovering our natural ability to *know*. When we are in a secure, calm and clear state of mind, it is obvious to us that we *know* what we need to do.

Often a part of this sureness is a clear realization that it is time to trust the *unknown*. We can make this leap of faith and wait in ease trusting that an answer will come. At these times I need to mentally get out of my own way...let my thinking take a rest, and let a new insight bubble up. I cannot put a time limit on how long I wait, or stipulate what from the answer needs to come in. At these times we really need to surrender. This letting go is not giving up, rather, it is opening up and getting out of the driver's seat. This is a simple and spiritual process.

Real resilience is our natural capacity to live life successfully, navigating life's twists and turns, ups and downs, by staying in a healthy state of mind. And there is a pivotal point, believing deep in my bones that at all times and in all circumstances I have the capacity for a healthy state of mind. Once we come to hold this view, we can live with grace and effortlessness even when huge challenges come our way.

These days trauma is a very hot topic. The critical thing to remember is that there is no trauma except for human thinking...thinking fearfully and negatively about events in our lives rather than *knowing* in every single, individual moment we are fine. The sense of *knowing* guides us back to a healthful state. Our natural resilience has never left; in fact we are guided back to it effortlessly. We do have to remind ourselves that we understand how we operate, that we have this internal gieger counter that brings us "home" as Syd Banks was prone to say and Sue Pettit so beautifully articulated in *Coming Home*.

The vast multidisciplinary body of resilience research I study is very clear; we have an ordinary magic that can propel us through life given various supports. I also find it helpful to see this divine gift of wisdom and *knowing* in very ordinary ways so I can remember to rely on it in very difficult times. A well-fitting hat reminded me today that I have the capacity of resilience deep in my being. Stressors at work, crises in families, financial disasters, disappointments of the heart, health problems, all of the challenges in life will fall into perspective if we pay attention to what we sense that we *know*. Resilience emerges and there is always a way to navigate life.

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