

## 7 Steps for Building a Great Life – Even When Times are Tough

Professor Timothy Sharp

No matter who you are or what you do you will, at some stage in your life, be forced to face adversity. Resilience is that very special thing that allows some people to face tough times more effectively, to bounce back more quickly and to more easily find solutions to difficulties and problems.

The good news is that resilience can be learned; it can be developed. Once you know the strategies that make up resilience you can practice them and just like any other skills, the more you practice them the better you get; the more resilient you become the more able you are to get through those difficult times and enjoy the good times.

The exciting new science of positive psychology is not, despite some common misconceptions, just about trying to be happy all the time. It is about boosting positive emotions as often as possible but it's also about flourishing and thriving despite what's going on around us.

In this short article, I'll present you with a number of simple but powerful strategies, tried and tested on thousands of clients who've been through The Happiness Institute's programs, for building a great life even when times seem tough.

1. First, clarify who you are and what sort of life you want to lead; despite what's going on around you, don't lose sight of the end goal
2. Second, make sure you take care of yourself and do what you need to do to keep up your health and energy; so eat well, keep active and ensure you get adequate sleep and rest
3. Third, foster hope and optimism; face the cold, hard realities (if they exist) but keep things in perspective and actively search for positives that will help you create a better life now, and in the future
4. Reach out and ask for help (if you need it); no one can do everything on his/her own and if we've done the right thing by building positive relationships then we should not be afraid to appropriately utilise our social supports on occasions



5. As well as asking what needs to be fixed, don't forget to also ask what's actually still great; what, for example, are you really good at and are you using your strengths, your inner attributes and best qualities, to tackle challenges and to build the sort of life you want to lead?
6. Don't forget to have fun; humour, among other things, is a fantastic way to get through difficult times and to enhance positive emotions
7. And finally, stick at it; achieving happiness requires nothing more than practising a few simple disciplines each and every day. So practice and persevere and in time, you'll reap the rewards of your efforts

There you have it, seven practical strategies for building resilience and for creating a great life. Put these into practice (by which I mean doing more than JUST reading them) and I guarantee you'll enjoy more happiness and more success in your life...so go to it!

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