

The Science of Happiness and Wellbeing
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Failures and Resilience

Welcome to this talk on failure and resilience this is one area which apparently may appear to you that probably it is away from happiness. But the very idea of having this topic to all of you is to let you know that we cannot be happy all the time. And the notion that only success gets us happiness is probably also somewhat false. Neither we can be happy all the time nor we, can be successful all, the time.

Therefore is very important that when we are not successful and when we are not happy how do we bounce back? So the ability to bounce back is called resilience we will discuss in today's topic about failure and resilience. Failure is actually a very important consideration for all of us because we know that without having failure one cannot succeed no one can succeed straight away. And not only that failure also helps us understand our root our threshold, our basic level.

When we succeed we only learn how to fly we get our wings but if we don't fly or if we don't succeed without knowing our route or without knowing our limits why we may falter probably will succeed never. Therefore to remain happy even in failure is important to understand what is resilience? So this is a topic which, we are going to discuss in detail about failure and resilience.

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How does failure make us resilient?

- What does it mean to be a resilient person...?
- What are their characteristic behavior?
- Are they different from common man?
- Why do we fail?



Question is how does failure make us resilient? is it really important? I have just mentioned to you that we cannot be happy all the time neither we can be successful all the time. Now if we have to bounce back after failure and if we do not have the resilience probably we would never achieve success again or will never get happiness, again. So it is very important for us to understand what do, we mean by a resilient person. The following question thereafter will come up that what are their features is it so that everyone becomes resilient following failure or only some people become resilient that's also an important consideration. And are these resilient people different from other sets of people in terms of their characteristic behaviour? These are the notions we will discuss and then finally we will also try to understand why do we at all fail? Do we fail for certain reasons for which we have to blame ourselves and how to get rid of that.

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Keywords

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Acceptance
- Internal locus of control
- Failure



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With these notions I will first give you certain keywords and after that I will give you certain evidence for that. Those keywords the first of all is self-awareness and self-regulation, that is how much I know about myself who am I? And if I know that well I have certain limits for myself will I be able to control those limits in a situation which may invoke some kind of failure from my performance. If I have that then I will be able to regulate it.

So we will discuss something related to self-awareness which is a characteristic feature of resilient people because they know that, they will fail. In fact they know and they set their target based on failure if they are resilient people. But the people who only think about success they set their target based on success. So those who set their target based on success they find it very difficult to bounce back. But those who set their target based on failure they can easily bounce back they consider it as learning experience. We will try to understand their characteristic feature.

So if you can regulate yourself under limited conditions, you will be able to accept yourself as well that you have failed and you will not blame yourself. And you will not develop an emotional glacier for yourself that you have failed and then everything is lost in this world. So acceptance is a very important issue in resilient behavior and if you, know how to accept yourself you will not perceive yourself as the culprit.

So internal locus of control the locus of control means that if something has happened through your outcome in your performance whom do you actually blame? If you blame yourself or if you blame the external agency it depends on your personality, it depends on your way of getting success and failure. So internal locus of control, when you believe that yes you can regulate yourself you can control yourself you know your limits and you can get rid of it, then you have got an internal locus of control.

But after failure if you believe that no others are responsible for your failure, other system is faulty then you would not be able to regulate that because that is external to you. So when we discuss about resilience, we will discuss about internal locus of control and then of course failure.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chetan Chittah • Shot by terrorists with nine bullets • Ready to return to duty – CRPF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanamanthappa Koppad • Buried under 25 feet snow, survived six days under it • Died only after reaching hospital
 <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Photo source in the end</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abhinandan Vartaman • Under captivity in Pakistan • Chose to return to his base in Srinagar instead of visiting home

I will give you certain examples. One such example is a Battalion CRPF Jawan called Chetan Chittah. I decided to give you this example because Chetan Chittah actually got 9 bullets in the combing operations in internal security activity with Naxal movements. He got 9 bullets and one of the bullet could not even be extracted, he was in the hospital for a long time. But the moment he came out of it he wanted to go back to his duty he was never afraid of it in fact in military also it is being said. If a soldier gets a bullet and if he survives or she survives he or she becomes doubly more stronger to face the next set of bullets. So people who are resilient they are never afraid of, they are ready to return to, their duty or ready to return to their activity. This man Mr. Koppad is also a soldier from Indian army he was buried under 25 feet of snow, survived under that for 6 days and due to his sheer resilience he could survive for those days.

He died because of physical ailments and injuries only after reaching hospital we call it great degree of resilience. Otherwise under 25 feet of ice or snow people will collapse by having lack of confidence. Mr. Abhinandan Vartaman is a person from Indian Air Force he this incident has happened only few years back. He was at captivity in Pakistan the day he returned he wanted to go back to his base.


He never wanted to avail his leave even I am showing you these examples just to tell you that well some people are resilient already either by training or by their, mental makeup and by doing that they actually never lose they either learn or they win.

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Resilience

- ...a process of adapting well in face of adversity, trauma, threat or tragedy
- ...an ordinary 'magic' & not an extraordinary behavior
- ...they also experience difficulty but behave differently





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Now, therefore resilience is something it is a process of adapting well in face of adversity the more adverse situation you face, the more you become resilient. If you are facing trauma threat tragedy it will make you harder. We call it as ordinary magic, lot of people ask this question there must be a gene for, resilience. In fact many researchers including genetic researches were done, and nothing has been found for these resilient people.


This is an ordinary magic and not an extraordinary behaviour, you have to develop this mental makeup in order to retain your happiness even in failure. They also experience difficulty in difficult terrain, in difficult situation, in difficult context and difficult life, the face all these difficulties. But they behave differently they do not behave like any other ordinary man they are resilient people.


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The resilient person...

- They either win or learn
- They understand that all failures are temporary
- Their anger is paired with determined action
- They identify themselves as survivors & not a victim
- They find meaningfulness in every effort





So they either win or they learn there is nothing called failure for them so one of the clue or clue for happiness is that you should never feel either. If you fail with a good intent of succeeding you either learn or you win, you understand that all kinds of failures are temporary, all failures are temporary nothing is going to damage you permanently. So their mental makeup is always to win if they are angry out of their failure their internal locus of control works not the external.

That is they believe that it is their fault they could not do it therefore they try to develop this mental makeup by getting rid of their own limits. As I said that resilient people, always set their target based on failure they understand this is their limit that makes them more deterministic. But if you set your target always based on your success you may be enthusiast but once you fail you may not be able to bounce back.

Therefore the anchor of the resilient people is always attached to some kind of determined action. Determination is more important. They always identify themselves as survivor not a victim. If something happens to them they believe that they have survived. They do not blame others, they do not play a victim card. And they find meaningfulness in every effort they know that if they have failed by doing certain activities they would believe that through that process they are not going to gain is learning by itself.

So if there are 10 ways to do a particular work, and there is only one way to succeed, and if they fail, they believe that out of 9 different ways through which he or she can endure failure. This learning has occurred only through this maneuvering that is success must be achieved only after certain learning of failure. So they find every failure is a meaningful act. Now let us try to understand what are their characteristic features.

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The resilient person...

- **They self regulate & set boundaries** [believe that they can change the situation, rather than assuming that it is fixed]
- **They view stress to get stronger** [they continue to see opportunity in all challenges]
- **They cultivate self-awareness** [remain flexible & do not develop emotional glaciers, just to appear strong]

We will talk about certain characteristic feature we will talk about 6 characteristic features of this resilient people. First of all, in the keywords we said that they self-regulate and set boundaries they know that if they are fully aware of their weaknesses, so they regulate themselves in a way so that they can set their boundaries properly. So the belief that they can change situation, rather than assuming that everything is fixed.

They do not act passively, in face of failure they do not believe that nothing is going to happen with me. Everything is fixed so there is no point in trying they never believe in that way they believe that yes they can continue to try and they can change the situation. So their intentional way of changing the situation is also very important. So I think, one of the major way of understanding resilient person is their way of self-regulation and boundaries.

The second way is that they view stress to only to get stronger. As I said the example of Chetan Chittah they developed stress, they got bullets but that made them stronger itself they continue to see opportunity in all challenges. If they face a challenge, if they find a stress they develop a notion that through this they become stronger only. The cultivate self-awareness, remain flexible as I said do not develop any emotional glacier and just to appear strong.

So it is important to understand that what a resilient person is all about. They self-regulate they view stress only to get themselves stronger, and they cultivate awareness self-awareness. So self-awareness and self-regulation as we discussed in the concept is very important for them.

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The resilient person...

- **They practice acceptance** [witness & experience the full range of emotions & absorb lessons, only to bounce back]
- **They consider possibilities** [look at in a different way that they were not considering; maintain a positive outlook]
- **They have strong internal locus of control** [attribute failure to his/her own mistake instead of blaming others]

They practice acceptance, that is they experience full range of emotions they absorb lessons only to bounce back. They do not believe that only success and happiness are important in life. They believe that all emotions the spectrum of all emotions happy, sad, fear, anger, surprise, disgust everything is very important. They can complement their happiness so they absorb lessons and in the process they bounce back once again to their happiness.




They consider possibilities that is, if there is 10 different ways and if they fail they will try to exploit all 10 different ways. And they will maintain a positive outlook they will believe that if I have failed in this way probably there is another way to be successful. Therefore they have a very, strong internal locus of control the internal locus of control I said if they fail they do not blame others they try to only develop awareness and accordingly they develop regulate their own behavior their own mistakes without trying to be overtly defensive.

If somebody feeds some people have a tendency to defend themselves by developing excuses. Now they don't give excuse to anybody they don't , blame others neither they blame themselves like a depressed person, they only try to clarify their position how to get rid of such difficulties and develop a set of behavior which may bring them success.

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...why do we fail?

- Keeping 'success only' in mind vs ability to 'bounce back'
- Inability to aim above mediocrity vs having a goal challenging enough
- Overemphasis on best ideas vs dwelling on alternatives

So the question is why do we fail as I said in the beginning failure is a very important part of success some people fail because they keep success only in mind. I told you that if we set a target, based on success only then we have a difficulty of bouncing back. But if we believe that there is a possibility of failure as well then we would be able to bounce back. The second is our inability to go beyond mediocrity if we believe that well this is our limit we cannot do anything more than that.

Without realizing that even if we have a boundary a limit we can actually go limitlessly we would not be resilient. So resilience does not automatically give us success. Resilient people always get an opportunity to challenge the boundary and within that limit they can actually flourish limitlessly. They do not depend on best idea in life, they always think about alternatives.

That well if the best idea that I consider could not yield me better result I will continue with plan B I will continue with, plan C so resilient person always have alternatives in their mind. So if you look at the Harvard business review they actually come out with very special editions of failure because a lot of companies lot of you must have seen under on after pandemic lot of companies are perished a lot of companies could not sustain.

Because if the company sustain only based on success and profits probably they will not succeed in a situation like this but some of the organizations some of the companies could succeed even they could do better in pandemic. So the Harvard business review HBR actually I have cited certain reasons why they succeeded?

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Need for resilience in daily life...

- When there are failures in my personal life
- When I feel being criticized personally
- When I am challenged in my performance
- When the nature of work is outside my comfort zone
- When my ability to work stretches to my limits
- When I am managing difficult relationship

Now the question is in our personal life when do we actually require resilience. When there are failures in personal life you need to be resilient when you find that, somebody is unduly criticizing you need resilience you should not try to hit back immediately. When you are challenged in your performance you find that well your standard is far below than other standard you need to be resilient.

When you find that you are getting a job which is not part of your capability or comfort zone you need to be resilient. When you find that you have to do work more than what is your limited time energy and availability you need to be resilient. And when you find that your relationship is not going well and you are finding often difficulty in sustaining such relationship you would need to be resilient.

So in daily life we face challenges at every point we face challenges and during those challenges if you can actually become resilient then what will happen? It will give you some extra strength it will give you a tendency to go beyond the boundary, it will help you learn the alternatives, it will help you bounce back without actually feeling a sense of remorse or some kind of melancholy out of it.

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Factors that impede our resilience...

- Risk taking: Seeking risk is critical
- Arrogance: It happens as one hallucinates about his own greatness
- Comfort: It sabotages greatness
- Luck: Failure occurs in pure luck but not in skill-based luck
- Poor self-regulation: Lack of control on energy expenditure

So the factor which; actually impede our resilient behavior is that if you do not seek risk you cannot be resilient. Seeking risk is critical if you only want comfort zone is good for you but nothing grows there resilient people always challenges themselves and try to do something more than what they are already having. Arrogance is something which will not make you resilient because arrogance happens when you think that you are a great person you believe that you are better than others.

But if you know your limits then probably you will remain resilient, arrogance will not get you resilience. If you are comforted always it will sabotage your greatness if you believe in luck always then you cannot be resilient. Luck requires preparedness and opportunity if you are prepared no opportunity you cannot have luck. If you are not prepared lot of opportunity you cannot have luck but the problem is that if you are prepared and not getting opportunity still, not getting any luck you will never repent.

Because it's not pure luck if you have got skill based luck you will never find remorse or you will never repent for that. Because you believe that you have given enough effort, the luck did not come because there are not lot of opportunities. So happy people resilient people always believe that preparedness plus opportunity put together is called luck and, more often they believe on skill based luck rather than pure luck.

And of course poor self-regulation that is lack of control on the energy expenditure that someone who fails they do not know how to spend their energy in a process over a period of time. Therefore some people have got lot of enthusiasm in the beginning but they cannot

sustain it. Resilient people can regulate, therefore they can have self-awareness they have got self-regulation ,which we discussed in the concept paper.

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So many factors that impede our resilience we have just mentioned I am giving you the reference of this lady Arunima Sinha, she is an amputee, one of her leg is not there she conquered Everest and she conquered the highest peak in Antarctica as well it is a great example of what resilience is all about, an amputee. As I said her name is Miss Arunima Sinha and the Prime Minister of the country has given a special mention about in his lecture and also given a special award for that particular resilient behavior it's a lesson for all of us.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spinal tumor, paralyzed waist down• 18 international medal, Paralympics medal
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The most successful boxer in the history• A great mother too
 <small>Photo source in the end</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indian's most revered Olympian• a gallant loser in 1960 Rome Olympics



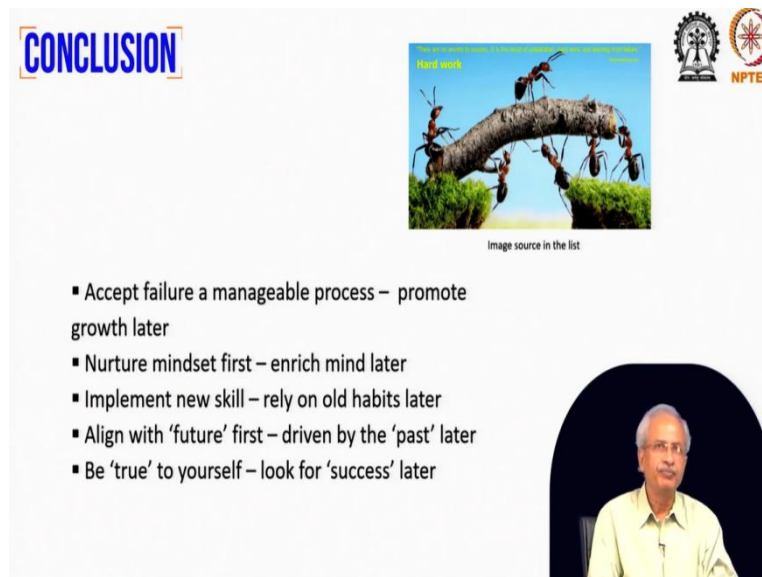
Now we have got more lessons, I have given initially on the lessons from the armed forces. I would like to end it with the lessons from sports as well. Look this lady, madam Veena Malik,

she had spinal tumor, paralyzed waist down got 18 international medal ,got 2 para-Olympic silver medal and probably the one of the finest women athlete we ever got but she is having spinal tumor and paralyzed waist down.

We know this boxer the most successful boxer in our history and is a mother of 2 as well, I mean to children as well she maintains she says that white, by gold we must earn it and she does it, Mary Kom I am referring about Mary Kom. She become world champion 6 times and she is a successful mother as well. Milkha Singh is one of the most revered Olympian he never got a Olympic medal but he is considered to be the most resilient sports person we ever had in our history.

So it is a gallant loser in 1960 Rome Olympics in 100 meter, sprint but we always worship him as the most resilient spokesperson we have in our country.

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CONCLUSION

- Accept failure a manageable process – promote growth later
- Nurture mindset first – enrich mind later
- Implement new skill – rely on old habits later
- Align with 'future' first – driven by the 'past' later
- Be 'true' to yourself – look for 'success' later

Image source in the list

NPTEL

Image of ants on a branch

Image of a speaker in a video inset

In conclusion I would like to say that well we must understand that failure is a manageable process we can think of growth later by becoming resilient. We can create our mindset more often we can look after our mind later. We may have limits of our mind but we do not have our limits for our mindset. We can, implement new skill we can rely on old habits later we can align with future first driven by the past latter and we can be true to ourselves we can look for success later.

If we have these features in our personality we can groom this tendency to develop resilience in a much better manner. So, these are the issues we would like to say that a resilient person will be eternally happy because they do not blame others they do not develop an emotional

glacier for their failure. And they know that every failure is a learning process and through that only success and happiness can be achieved.

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Acknowledgement (photo source)

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OPTION B
FACING ADVERSITY,
BUILDING RESILIENCE,
AND FINDING JOY
BY SHERYL SANDBERG
WITH ADAM GRANT



So there are several books available I have referred about one and I have given some TED talks to you as well for your understanding thank you so much.