

## RESILIENCE: A KEY TO AGING WELL

The baby boomer population is advancing into old age, and with it, the proportion of the global population that may be considered elderly. This generation of elderly are more active and fit than previously seen. And, they can be expected to remain so for much longer than their predecessors. It is a joy to see just how keen they are to fully enjoy their extensive wise years. Yet, as we age, we are more likely to experience unpleasant events; whether those events pertain to physical health, cognitive health, mental health or the loss of a loved one. Each unpleasant event can place an additional strain on our overall sense of well-being.

One article I read recently spoke to the importance of resilience in aging well. It matters more about how we respond to events, than it does the events themselves. This article also spoke to the resilience built into our physical, cognitive and psycho/social selves by the things we do. The built-in resilience was akin to saving money for a

rainy day so that we have the financial reserves to draw upon as needed. In this resilience 'bank', we have the physical, cognitive and psycho/social resources to draw upon if and when needed. They become 'there' for us until needed and they remain available to us until depleted. And, we can keep replenishing our resilience 'bank' so that we always have the resilience reserves to draw upon as needed.

So what does that mean for us? Physical exercise, coupled with healthy eating will do wonders for keeping ourselves as healthy and as resilient as possible. Doing so will build and replenish our resilience 'bank' in the physical domain.

Similarly, we can continue to stretch our brain muscles in order to keep our brains nimble. Doing so will build and replenish our resilience 'bank' in the cognitive domain. This can be as simple as solving crossword or sudoku puzzles each day. It can also be as simple as learning a new language, a musical instrument or dance routine. It can also be as simple as creating something new, solving a problem or building something from scratch.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we can maintain our social networks, as well as build new ones as our interests change over time. Doing so will build and replenish resilience 'bank' in the psycho/social domain.

At the end of the day, we can all live a fuller and healthier life. So, what are we doing to be more resilient in our wise years?

