

Promote Resilience in 2016

Resolutions are made each and every year: I resolve to exercise more, eat less, and drive without texting, and so on. Our promises are always well intended and usually aim to improve the overall quality of our life, but they sure can be burdensome in the New Year and for many, the resolution unwinds and leaves uninvited guests of stress, disappointment, and failure.

Looking for a change in your New Year guests? This new year, let's choose to invite resilience into our lives. It is well documented how the stress and pressure of the season's many demands can lead to a bout of the blues, in the very least, and at worst, dark melancholy and mounting anxiety. And for some, the New Year is a season of

painful memories of a love departed and where, even in the company of others, you feel utterly alone. The stress and fear of failure that accompanies many resolutions only compound the difficulty and risk of a stressful time.

A 2014 paper published by the Mayo Clinic recognized that when stress is at its peak, it's hard to stop and regroup. Taking steps to prevent the escalation of stress in the first place, especially during the holidays, can be time well spent. How, you ask?

"Resiliency" is a word that has caught on these days. You hear it in social services, in geo-political debates, why you even hear it used in coach-speak, as in, "The



Special Guest
Michael Yates

team showed great resiliency in overcoming the adversity of



the season." A recent blog by the New Economics Foundation introduced five key factors to bolster resilience and strengthen protective factors, especially during seasonal spikes of fatigue, stress, and anxiety.

The ingredients to help stave off the seasonal blues are simple and familiar: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, and give.

As we lean into 2016, consider inviting resilience into your life by surrounding yourself with positive, meaningful connections and invest time in developing them. Be ac-

tive in motion, in voice, and in choice - go for walks, share a story, and feed the positive influences in your life. Take notice of people and things around you; observe the beauty of this season; and reflect on your experiences to better recognize what is most important to you. Keep learning new things. Reach for that book you've been putting off or pick up that instrument. Go explore. And finally, give to someone your smile, your time, your gratitude. Why, give the gift of being good to you. You deserve it.

To be sure, these ingredients will not work for everyone all the time, but by inviting resilience into the New Year, you just might keep the uninvited guests of stress, disappointment, and feelings of failure out.

If you are experiencing a prolonged sad or anxious state and you are feeling hopeless, help is available. Please contact Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services to find professional, caring staff that will help you get on the road of recovery and resilience today by contacting 865-482-1076. We are here to welcome you and provide you with caring support and hope.

About the author...

Michael Yates is the Director of Development at Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services. Ridgeview is a private, not for profit community mental health center with locations in Anderson, Campbell, Morgan, Roane, and Scott counties. To make a referral or schedule an appointment, call 1-800-834-4178 or for more info, visit our website at www.ridgevw.com.

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