

# [ WHAT MATTERS AND WHAT COUNTS ]

## Being Resilient Matters

How to really thrive  
in tough times

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ILLUSTRATION BY ROLLIN MCGRAIL

*"Each difficult moment has the potential  
to open my eyes and open my heart."*

— Myla Kabat-Zinn

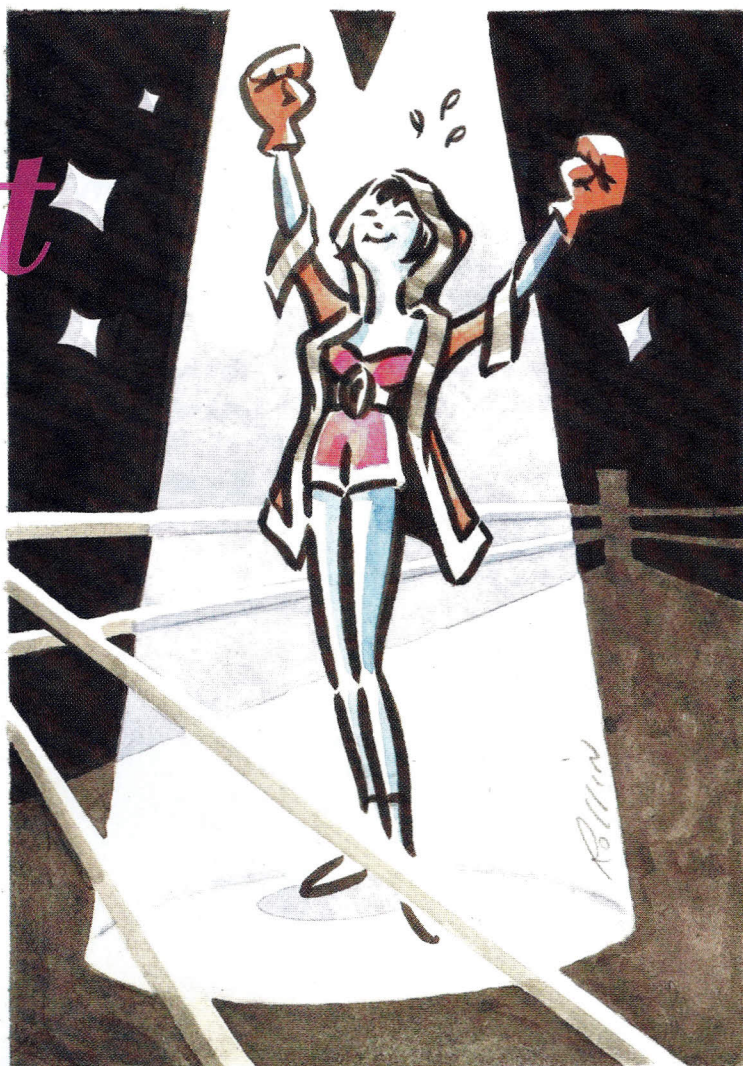
There are times when life is laid back and easy and we can simply savor our moments, and the blessings that fill our days. Then there are times when life throws a hard punch to the gut and we are—at least momentarily—down for the count with wind and will knocked out of us. The question is: What is it that we draw upon, deep within us, to rise to whatever occasion or challenge life sends our way?

Whether it's a financial, physical or personal crisis, within us there lives an inner resourcefulness available if we are willing to seek it out. And, all around us, there are outer resources that we can tap into to support us along the way.

To live fully, we need to accept all circumstances—joy and sadness, ease and uncertainty, and vibrant wellbeing and pain. In the book *The Beethoven Factor*, author Paul Pearsall Ph.D. marvels at how Beethoven wrote and conducted his "Ode to Joy" after he went deaf. Pearsall reflects on what it is that allows us to thrive even in the throes of such adversity. According to him, thriving is defined as "reconstructing life's meaning in response to life's most destructive occurrences." He contrasts it with a state of emotional and spiritual fatigue he refers to as "languishing."

We don't need to wait until times of crisis force us into action. We can learn to really thrive rather than just survive by continually cultivating optimism, positive energy, trust, hope and a sense of connection. Making time to notice what is working in our lives can shift a pessimistic mindset to a more optimistic one. Taking time to recall the ways we have successfully coped in the past can energize us and reinforce our sense of possibility and hope. Spending time appreciating how we support and are supported by others each and every day can build a sense of trust and deep connection. It's not just about rebounding in times of crisis. As Pearsall says, it's about "conducting our daily life as an ode to joy."

In order to become a "thrifer," we must be still for a while and step out of the frenzy of reactive "doing" long enough to listen to our wise inner



voice. Only then can your choices become appropriately responsive, taking into consideration the very essence of your self. Ask yourself: Which practices awaken your resilience and fortify your hopefulness? Who are the people who support and encourage you? Where are the places that heal and recharge you? What are the possibilities, alternatives and choices that are open to you now? You might want to keep a journal to both capture and process your reflections. You'll know you are on the right track when you experience a sense of relief, perhaps even excitement, when you're filled up by what you decide to do rather than feeling drained. ▼

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[ Check out Minx's blog on [vivemagazine.com](http://vivemagazine.com) for more coaching tips and to interact with other Vive readers. ]