SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

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1. Having wrestled with a **biblical theology of suffering** (group and individual), including the purpose of suffering; knowing that suffering is not usually a punishment from God, or a result of being abandoned by God.
2. **Worshipping, serving, and loving God for His own sake** rather than our own benefits gained from knowing and serving Him
3. **Ability to forgive others**; regularly practicing true forgiveness
4. Involvement in **regular spiritual practices** such as prayer, bible reading, attendance of Christian worship and fellowship, small groups, and serving in the faith community
5. **Ability to connect** and form close, supportive relationships in the faith community
6. **Ability to receive grace**; accepting human vulnerability
7. Ability to see oneself **valued and loved by God for one’s own sake**, rather than for one’s service
8. Ability to accept and **constructively deal with difficult feelings** such as sadness, anger, confusion, pain, shame, and guilt
9. **Seeking and finding connection with God**, when the emotional connection with God is disrupted; practiced in entering the presence of God, in personal, vulnerable communion with him; awareness of what usually helps to feel connected again, if one has lost the sense of connectedness.

Personal and Interpersonal Resilience Characteristics (The Master Plan)

1. Strong sense of **purpose and meaning, focus on God rather than his provisions**
2. Ability to **actively cope** with distress
3. A posture of **collaborating with the Lord**, both active, and surrendered
4. **Flexibility and adaptability**
5. **Ability to connect well** with others, and deeply with at least a few
6. **Social support** system in place
7. Being part of a **graceful organizational or church culture**

The Recovery Process:

Moving from Victim to Survivor to Celebrant

Recovery from trauma involves moving from an identity as victim to that of survivor and finally one of celebrant. Many people assume that trauma recovery happens when someone moves from being a victim to being a survivor. But those who remain in the survivor stage can often experience a low grade depression and general pessimism about life. Moving on to the celebrant stage allows one to experience genuine, authentic joy. As the necessary tasks of each aspect of the recovery process are embraced and accomplished, the purpose for each stage can be realized.

Victim:

To start the healing process, one must face the fact that a bad thing happened and acknowledge the feelings related to it. The tasks for the victim are to find the courage to tell someone else what happened, honestly and fairly assess what was personal responsibility and what was not, and let go of any shame. As someone acknowledges and shares what happened, they fulfill the purpose of the victim stage.

Survivor:

The tasks of this stage are to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths and resources that have allowed survival and eventual well-being, as well as to forgive and be forgiven for any wrongdoing. The purpose of the survivor stage is to understand that one has lived beyond the time at which the traumatic experience occurred.

Celebrant:

The tasks or challenges of this stage are to continue to take risks, to choose life despite discomfort and unfamiliar territory and to devote time and energy to positive, healthy choices. The celebrant’s purpose is to embrace and live a life characterized by fullness, joy, and authenticity. The celebrant’s life is characterized by grace, forgiveness, and a deeper trust in and intimacy with the Lord and others.

Adapted from Yvonne Dolan’s work in One Small Step www.mmct.org