

Three P's for Overcoming Adversity

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What I want to talk about today is what you do next—about the things you can do to overcome adversity, no matter when it hits you or how it hits.

The easy days ahead of you will be easy. It is the hard days, the days that challenge you to your very core, that will determine who you are. You will be defined, not just by what you achieve, but by how you survive.

A few weeks after Dave died, I was talking to my friend Phil about a father-son activity...I said, “I want Dave.” Phil said, “Option A is not available. So let's just get the most out of option B.”

We all at some point live some form of option B. The question is, What do we do next?

Psychologist Martin Seligman found that there are three P's—personalization, pervasiveness, and permanence—that are critical to how we bounce back from hardship. The seeds of resilience are planted in the way we process the negative events of our lives.

The first P is personalization—the belief that we are at fault. This is different from taking responsibility, which you should always do. This is the lesson that not everything that happens to us happens because of us.

The second P is pervasiveness—the belief that an event will affect all areas of your life. You know that song “Everything is awesome?” This is the flip: “Everything is awful.” There's nowhere to hide from the all-consuming sadness.

The third P is permanence—the belief that the sorrow will last forever. This was the hardest for me by far, because for so long it felt like the overwhelming grief would never leave.

We often project our current feelings out indefinitely. We're anxious—and then we're anxious that we're anxious. We're sad—and then we're sad that we're sad. Instead, we should accept our feelings—but know that they won't last forever.

Finding gratitude and appreciation is key to resilience. People who take the time to list the things they are grateful for are healthier and happier.

Build resilience in yourselves. When tragedy or disappointment strike, know that you have, deep within you, the ability to get through anything, and I mean anything. I promise you do.

As the saying goes, we are more vulnerable than we ever thought. But we are stronger than we ever imagined.

When you see things that are broken, and you will see things that are broken, go fix them.

Build resilient communities. We find our humanity, our will to live and our ability to love, in our relationships with each other. Be there for your family and friends—and I mean in person. Not just in a message with a heart emoji.

Lift each other up, help each other get the most out of option B. And celebrate every moment of joy.

シェリル・サンドバーグ. 逆境を乗り越えるために克服すべき、3つのPについて. コスモピア編集部(編). 10人の声で聞く! 女性リーダーの英語. コスモピア, 2016