



Raising Resilient Children & Young Adults

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Dr. Kevin Elko

Motivational Speaker
and Bestselling Author

Dr. Elko focuses on helping organizations in the areas of leadership, goal setting, and various other motivational topics. He has worked with such firms as Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, LPL Financial, and others, and has consulted with various NFL teams and seven BCS National Championship Football Teams.

Dr. Elko is the author of four books, including *Nerves of Steel* and *True Greatness*, and holds two Masters degrees and a Doctorate from West Virginia University, where he was inducted into its Hall of Fame.

Thriving amid adversity

When an “Epidemic of Uncertainty” occurs, a successful person’s priority is to **Survive**. Once they are secure in their ability to survive, they shift their focus to the next level: how to **Thrive**.

Raising comeback kids

Our world has gone through an incredibly challenging and difficult time. Unfortunately, we know life will continue to bring adversity into our lives. Studies have shown those who are able to embrace and harness resiliency will be the ones to not only survive, but continue to thrive no matter the challenge ahead.

When asked what to talk to our children about during these changing and challenging times, the answer is resiliency.

As parents we teach our children so many skills, yet resiliency is seldom (if ever) one of them. But with all our young people have to face today, I would argue that instilling resiliency in our children should be a major goal of parenting. Think of building resiliency in our children and young adults as a way of laying a foundation of success for their futures.



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Three keys for teaching resiliency



Definition (1)

Definition of resiliency

- Coming back from a setback
 - Setbacks are common and can be a powerful learning tool
 - To win in life, a young person needs to understand and learn from events
 - “When I fall, who I become will catch me” — see challenges and setbacks as opportunities to become better



Development (2)

Encourage yourself and develop your own resiliency

- Having resilient self-talk as a parent — “So what?” “Now what?”
- Being able to come back from your own disappointments
- Sharing those lessons with your child(ren)
- Having faith in yourself as a parent
- Having the courage to be imperfect



Encouragement (3)

Encourage your child(ren)

- Helping your child gain confidence
 - Love, accept and show faith
 - Notice effort
- Differentiate between praise and encouragement
 - Praise is a **reward**. Encouragement is a **gift**
 - Praise **judges**. Encouragement **notices**
- Develop and use the language of encouragement
 - Words like: “thanks” “trust” “I believe you will work it out” “you worked hard on that” are in the encouragement language
- Act in encouraging ways
 - A nod, wink or a smile
- Teach and look for examples of effort after setbacks
 - Without a reward, but the reward of the effort itself

Three questions to ask your child(ren) to foster mindfulness

At the end of your day, sit back and take a few minutes to reflect on these three things:

1. What did I do today that I liked?

Think about what you did well and encourage yourself with those successes. Remember them and allow them to continue guiding your actions.

2. What would I have done differently?

Look back on your actions and consider which ones you would change. Learn from them, and let those lessons inform your actions going forward.

3. What am I thankful for?

Take stock of your opportunities by listing the things you are grateful for. Lift your inattentional blindness (perhaps due to panic or uncertainty). When you spend time thinking about what you're thankful for, you'll start to see that it is everywhere.

“The unexamined life is not worth living.” —Socrates



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