

## **Resiliency in Preventing and Adapting to COVID-19—Confidence©**

**Confidence** is a *state of certainty* about a way of achieving a desired outcome. It comes from the Latin word *fideré*, which means “to trust.” Therefore, **Self-Confidence** is to trust one’s self. Confidence is based upon an ability to flexibly resolve whatever challenges that might occur along the way. Even those that may alter one’s reality. The focus of this post is confidence building. The basic premise is, the more confident we are, the more adaptable we are in creating positive outcomes to adversity and crisis.

I tend to view self-confidence as an essential adaptive skill for personal challenges. For example, the toughest challenge I have encountered is possibly something many of us are presently experiencing as a result of voluntary or mandatory stay-at-home orders—interpersonal family relationships. No therapist is necessary in most cases. These include issues that have always been there but were avoided because of so many outlets for escape. In response to the difficulties I was experiencing at that time, I enrolled in the “est” training (check the Internet) and was ignorant enough to have a one-to-one exchange with the Trainer. Needless to say, it was no contest. It *was* a life-changing experience that opened me to a whole new world about myself that I never knew existed, but still controlled most of my counterproductive behaviors. What I learned was that resolution usually begins with *self-understanding*, because it is the basis for truly understanding others—not only intellectually but also experientially and in-depth. The result has been a mental toughness about the affective part of human existence which allows me freely explore my inner self without fear. Since that *realization*, I have integrated *personal growth* into my life as one of the most powerful adaptive skills for dealing with change, adversity, and personal crisis.

Another adaptive skill which results in expanded confidence is a *shift in perspective*—how we view and interpret our experiences of unexpected and unpleasant situations or encounters with others. It begins with an awareness to distinguish our experience of change from how we *react* or *respond* to it. For example, our present “*involuntary incarceration*” could be viewed as imprisonment and violation of freedom of movement or a shift to an unprecedented opportunity to experience the advantages of remote work; and how to manage it. Advantages include: no traffic jams going or coming from work; avoid being around unpleasant

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people; self-managed pace of work; uniquely designed office space; an optional gym at home; and protection of the environment, clean air, and reduce global warming. For some employees this change may not be an exercise but a condition for employment.

Another common situation, involving a shift in perspective we all experience with others, is “unfairness” of how decisions are made as a result of a major change event. A common reaction is anger followed by inappropriate behavior. If we were to expand this perspective, we could realize that unfairness has been around since the “dawn of humankind” and is unlikely to disappear in our lifetimes. Secondly, realize that no one has the power to *“make us angry.”* The *reaction* of anger is a “choice” that we can control and master. Particularly, since it is so common in our experiences of others. It’s the classic way to escape personal responsibility. The point here is to achieve “emotional calmness,” free of anger, so that the “response” to unfairness is a carefully thought-through course of action. This generic course of action can be applied to numerous experiences in our lives.

Now, Let’s build upon our learning by considering how we might master other situations of unfairness. As we consider such instances, write a list of specifically observed behaviors. Then ask yourself *“Have there been instances in my life where I behaved in a similar fashion?”* Pause. This examination requires discipline and truth-telling at a deep level of honesty, so you might employ a mentor or a highly trusted friend to assist you. Once you get to that level of honesty you might discover the *“true source”* of your anger is within you—and now you can DO something about it for which you have control! As my mother used to say, *“Where there is smoke, there is fire!”* All you have to do is “tell the truth” and the necessity for fairness, for most similar situations, not those which are life-threatening, will begin to dissipate. At the bottom of this process is a nugget of wisdom: *“That which I dislike in others is a mirror-reflection of myself!”* Hence my definition of *self-mastery is the collection of nuggets of wisdom along the road of life.* As we pass these life-tests offered to us daily, our confidence and resilience continue to build.

I suspect that many of us are similar to my situation. My occupation has traditionally involved small and large group gatherings of close interpersonal contact—workshops, seminars, and keynote speaking, primarily in organizations. These will be all but eliminated for the foreseeable future and hopefully make a return when “six feet of separation” and “fear of present and future contaminable viruses have subsided.” I personally feel it will be a sad world when direct human interaction becomes a luxury no matter what its relationship is to profit.

### A Final Story

I remember several years ago when I participated in a Ropes Course in the Utah wilderness. One of the team events, of six participants, was The Trapeze. The facilitator of our team, nonchalantly, said to the team, “the objective of this event is to climb to the top of the tree, mount the platform, and use the rope to pull the trapeze towards you. It will not be in easy reach.” He smiled. “When it comes close enough, jump for it.” He paused, with a serious look of danger. “Any questions?” He ended with s...-e..... grin. We all looked at him like he was crazy. He just smiled and said, “huddle up and decide who’s going to go first.” Then he walked a short distance from the team. In our huddle, everyone looked at me since I had been assigned as team leader. After a “very long” pause, I finally said, “Okay.” I forgot to mention that the tree was very, very smooth and tall, and the platform at the top was one foot in diameter and not tightly secured to the top of the tree. (I learned this when I got the top.) My team members had a look of “I am glad it’s not me,” although they cheered me on. I started to pull the trapeze toward me and it was still a mile away at its closet distance. At the bottom, my team began to cheer, “Jump!” “Jump!” “Jump!” ..... I was frozen. Then the facilitator shouted at me, “Are you going set up camp up there!” That was all I needed; the adrenalin flowed. I jumped, and rest is history. Only two of us, of thirty, successfully grasp the trapeze that day. The success instantly transformed my reality of what I could do or become. No limits! That’s the essence of Confidence.

In summary, I’ve attempted to show that confidence-building is a life-long process of overcoming and resolving difficulties and obstacles presented to us on a daily basis. Every now and again, we encounter a significant crisis that tests our capacity for humility and a reexamination of what is really important to us—a mandatory pause. The question I have for us is, *“Is this simply a pause, change, and get back to business as usual, or at a level of unawareness there has also been a transformation in human consciousness from survival to compatibility?”*

### Reference

A “interesting read” I highly recommend is:

**The Aftermath**—William Guillory, Ph.D., The Center for Creativity & Inquiry, Salt Lake City, UT. (Available from the [wayoftheheart.org](http://wayoftheheart.org) and Amazon as an e-book)

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