

Resiliency in Preventing and Adapting to COVID-19—Personal Responsibility©

Probably the most challenging resiliency skill, in practice, during the present COVID-19 crisis is **Personal Responsibility**. Particularly, at a time where we are all dealing with more unanswered questions than accurate information. In spite of this situation, we can focus our attention and actions on those activities that provide some means of expanding *our* resiliency in terms of prevention and adaptation. Personal responsibility means that we have the power to transcend being victimized by any circumstance, condition, or event we encounter. Even in an environment of confusion, overwhelm, and anxiety about the future. Without explaining the justification of this assertion, let's examine its power.

We begin by defining personal responsibility. It is a *predisposed mind-set* that views oneself as the *source* of the events, circumstances, and conditions which exist in one's life. This definition assumes **ownership** of *our* sphere of experience as well as the influence and impact we have on others. Based upon this definition, I pose the following statements, for your consideration, as a basis for adopting the mental fortitude (resilience) to address your personal challenges involving the COVID-19 crisis or *any* adversity you may be facing:

Personal Responsibility, in action, is synonymous with:

1. **Self-Determination** with respect to resolution of an adversity;
2. **Ownership** of the circumstances of an adversity;
3. **Accountability** for the consequences and results of the resolution of an adversity; and
4. **Success**, in spite of unfairness and/or unreasonableness involving an adversity.

Driving this framework are competent, creative, and resourceful individuals. The major objective of this discussion of personal responsibility is to underscore the challenge and corresponding power of this concept as stated above; particularly when dealing with adversity. Let's apply these concepts to a recent situation.

I recently received a call from one of my consulting clients, Natalie Watson. (fictitious name) She shared, in working from home, that an issue had arisen between her

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and her manager, who was also a temporary home commuter. I asked her what seemed to be the problem. She said that the amount of work she was responsible for was overwhelming. “Then why don’t you tell him; I don’t understand the problem,” I replied. “It goes much deeper,” she said. “He thinks I’m his slave.” I asked if those were his words or hers. “Mine,” she responded. She indicated that it was her job to ensure that all reports were perfect, so she either typed them herself or approved them. When she got behind for a special client, he got angry and told her, “You need to get your act together.” I asked her what she thought the solution might be. She replied, “more remote part time help.” After more discussion, I asked if I could go straight to the point that I was thinking.

She said, “Of course.” “I have a saying,” I stated, *“Anyone experiencing overwhelm, more often than not, is really dealing with their own self-importance.”* “What!” she exclaimed. “Are you talking about me?” “Yeah,” I said guardedly. “That’s insulting, Bill. I’ve been using **your** list, Self-Determination, Ownership, and Success.” I suggested she add Control to her list. “Looks like you’re confusing personal responsibility with control.” Then I suggested that we take a break, to let my remarks sink in. When we resumed, she agreed to have a conversation with her spouse about the issue of control.

We met a week later. She asked, “What do I have to do to get things back to normal? I need my job.” “You have to take responsibility for your part in whatever creates a disconnect between you and your manager.” She said, “I only try to make sure that the stuff he needs is perfect. That’s why he gives the important projects to me to do personally.” I suggested to her that once she discovers the truth about *her* involvement **first**, the problem would slowly dissipate and she would be open to selecting, mentoring, and seriously utilizing others. I asked, “What did your spouse say about control?” “Confirmation,” she replied. Then I said, “It’s hard to admit that trying to make life easier for some else can sometimes be a cover to maintain control of the process. I assume you’ve heard the expression, *‘If you want it done right, do it yourself.’*” Needless to say, she’s on course to resolving this situation, triggered by working virtually.

In a similar manner, I recently read a post on the Internet about a series of women who decided to confront areas of discrimination they uniquely experienced. The post is titled, *These 13 Women Battled Workplace Discrimination—and Won*. Some took years to decide to take a stand. However, they all had, in common, the **courage** to take personal responsibility to confront the unique issues they faced. Some started their own companies and some moved to higher deserved positions

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within their organization. While the article focused on *how* they all achieved success, one of the women interviewed emphasized a *realization* she had about what kept her tied to the organization and her position. It was the area of discrimination to which *she* was most sensitive and vulnerable. Once she realized the impact of that issue, she stated that her career path was clear. I am convinced that similar realizations probably occurred for them all.

UPDATE: In recent conversations with Natalie, she speaks more of her "career" rather than her "job." This phenomenon often occurs when an individual resolves a major "self-limiting pattern" in their Lives--both personal and professional. It results in a "nugget of wisdom" instead of a "quick-fix band aid" to a specific incident.

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Next Resiliency Skill: Realistic Assessment



Bill's Resume 2019
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Dr. William A. Guillory is a dynamic transformational speaker, and conference and seminar facilitator. He speaks about subjects that are at the forefront of our thinking, such as *Creating Culturally Compatible Living and Working Environments*; *The New Leadership for the 21st Century—The FuturePerfect Organization*; *The Age of Human Potential—Creating Human Capital*; *Diversity—The Unifying Force of the 21st Century*; and *Maximizing Your Personal Performance through a Mind-Set of Equality and Success*.

Dr. Guillory is an authority on diversity, leadership, high performance, creativity and innovation, and quantum-thinking. He has an in-depth understanding of the process of personal and organizational transformation as it relates to creating culturally inclusive and compatible living and working environments. Bill's published books include *Realizations*; *It's All An Illusion*; *Destined to Succeed*; *The Roadmap to Diversity, Inclusion, and High Performance*; *The Guides*; *Empowerment for High-Performing Organizations*; *The Business of Diversity*; *Living Without Fear*; and *The Living Organization—Spirituality in the Workplace*. His most recent non-fiction publications include *The FuturePerfect Organization—Driven by Quantum Leadership*; *Tick Tock... Who Broke*

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the Clock—Solving the Work-Life Balance Equation; Animal Kingdom—A Diversity Fable; and How to Become a Total Failure—The Ten Rules of Highly Unsuccessful People (a tongue-in-cheek book about success). His most recent fiction series is **The Pleiadians, The Hunt For The Billionaire Club, The Consortium, and The Aftermath.**

Prior to founding the consulting firm Innovations International Inc., Dr. Guillory was a physical chemist of international renown. He has lived, studied, and lectured in England, France, Germany, Austria, Japan, Switzerland, Poland, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Greece, and China. He has authored over 100 publications and several books on the application of lasers in chemistry and was Chair of the Department of Chemistry at the University of Utah. Dr. Guillory received his B.S. from Dillard University in New Orleans, his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, and was a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow at the Sorbonne in Paris. His distinguished awards and appointments include an Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship, an Alexander von Humboldt appointment at the University of Frankfurt, a Ralph Metcalf Chair at Marquette University, and the Chancellor's Distinguished Lectureship at the University of California at Berkeley.

Dr. Guillory has presented over 4,000 seminars for leadership groups in the United States, Canada, Mexico, South America, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Africa, Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Austria, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland. He has facilitated seminars for more than 400 organizations, including NASA, The EPA, Amgen, the Navy, AEC of Saudi Arabia, Sandvik of Sweden, Brambles of Australia, The National Institute for Science and Technology, Merck & Co., Eli Lilly, Amoco, the American College of Health Care Executives, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Qualcomm, Sandia National Laboratories, EDS, Texas Instruments, Diagnostic Laboratories of Hawaii, Procter & Gamble, Dow Chemical, The Department of Health and Human Services, The Department of Agriculture, Los Alamos National Laboratory, ChevronTexaco, Pacific Northwest Laboratory, Bank of America, and many other Fortune 500 organizations.