

Anne Parker Podcast - DMA

Donna:

Welcome, everyone. I am Donna Adinolfi with Wellnessfyi.com and today we will be discussing resilience. Change, as we know, affects our stress and emotional balance, and of course, exercise, good nutrition, and meditation are great tools. And another approach can be added based on fairly new research and techniques, and joining me today is Anne Parker, Wellness Counselor and Facilitator for Cultivating Resilience through the Power of Your Heart at Miraval Arizona. Thanks for joining us, Anne.

Anne Parker:

Sure, Donna, it is great to be with you today.

Donna:

Well, let's get started. So my first question, Anne, is what makes Cultivating Resilience through the Power of Your Heart unique?

Anne Parker:

Well, I think the first thing is to define what we are talking about as resilience, because most of us think about resilience as how we bounce back, sort of how we respond to the stressors and the things that are unpleasant in our life, and that certainly is a part of resilience. But what we also know is that resilience really is about how we navigate. What kind of energy do we use to just move ourselves through life in a way that we retain a sense of balance, we retain connection to our energy, and we give ourselves mental and emotional flexibility? And so when I talk about resilience, I am talking about not only how we respond or bounce back, but what can we do in the moment, in the midst of the daily stressors, to keep that connection to a sense of balance and foundation.

Donna:

Okay, and in a few minutes we will go a little bit further. But right now I also want to know the benefits of the program, if we can talk a little bit more about that.

Anne Parker:

Sure. Well, the benefits of the program and for cultivating resilience are really to give people a new perspective on what resilience is, kind of what I was just talking about, but also to give people some very practical how-to tips in the midst of what is going on in life. How do I stay resilient? How do I stay connected to my center or my foundation? And this has to do with being very aware of what our emotional state is and choosing what emotional state is going to best serve us given what is going on at the time. Instead of letting our emotions feel like they are just taking us away, how can we notice what we are feeling, acknowledge it, and then make a choice about what kind of emotional state is going to be most beneficial. And one of the things that the research is showing us about this is that emotions are not just sort of ephemeral, subjective experiences. Emotions actually are very complex mind/body processes. And so one of the benefits of the program is helping people understand what is going on in their body and mind in terms of their autonomic nervous system, in terms of the biochemicals in their bodies, and then that gives them a whole new framework from which to be able to relate to their emotional life and make these choices and become empowered about how they can be resilient.

Donna:

On the schedule at Miraval, people can either do this as a class, which is about what, 50 minutes or an hour?

Anne Parker:

Yes, uh huh.

Donna:

Okay, or they could do it as a personal service, correct?

Anne Parker:

That is right. In the class, I spend a lot of time just sort of introducing people to the topic and giving them some basic information and some practical tools. If they want to do an individual consult, it just helps them take all of the information a step further, learn the techniques a little more specifically and personally, but the other advantage of the individual consultation is that we work with a biofeedback tool that I can train people to use. And this is a really great tool because what it does, is it helps us know what is going on in the body and mind and be able to create that resilient state on demand. Many of us, of course, move in and out of these more resilient states naturally; but a lot of times what I find is that when people are in a resilient state they do not really even realize that is where they are. And so the biofeedback tool really begins to help us get some information about what is going on in our body and mind so that we can learn what that resilient state feels like, which then allows us to create it on demand.

Donna:

Okay. And so based on your class, can you share maybe three different tips that our listeners can maybe apply to their life just from our call today?

Anne Parker:

Sure. The first one I would say would be to stay present to what is going on in the now. You know, as human beings one of the things that we always do is look ahead and catastrophize. I always laugh about it as whoever thinks about the best-case scenarios. We are always thinking about the worst-case scenarios. And so if we stay present, what that helps us do is put our energy into what we actually can deal with at the time. And oftentimes what that also then creates is a new awareness of what we are actually feeling. The point of resilience is not to eliminate or suppress negative emotions or negative responses to stress. The whole point of resilience is to be able to be aware when we are having those negative responses and be able to shift them to something that is going to serve us more productively. The second piece of the puzzle I would say for cultivating resilience is to be very conscious about cultivating our connections, our sense of connection. And when I talk about connections that can be certainly connection to self, which can be done in various ways, but also connection to other people, connection to animals, connection to nature, connection to the spiritual, connection to God – anything that helps us feel connected and helps us know that we have a sense of foundation and centering. It is very hard to feel like you have any balance if you do not also have a sense of foundation, and cultivating connections is what helps us do that. And then the third tip for cultivating resilience is to be able to stay open to the unexpected. One of the things that the research is showing us about resilience is the people who are most resilient are the people who are willing to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainties. And, of course, as human beings, most of us what – are geared to wanting to have as much predictability and security as we can, and yet we know that the way life works, we are often confronted with the unexpected. And so staying

open to the unexpected, not automatically interpreting that as something bad but just realizing that the unexpected is how life goes, and then the resilience we have to be able to respond and support ourselves within that unexpected.

Donna:

Right. I often say, I am always certain of uncertainty, so

Anne Parker:

That is right. [Laughter]

Donna:

Those are great tips. And you just mentioned biofeedback earlier for the private sessions, and so I just wanted to wrap this up with one more question. What will participants take home that they can implement into their daily lives? So I, I kind of mean that for both, based on if they are just able to take the class and perhaps if they can do the personal service ...

Anne Parker:

Okay.

Donna:

... because I know they could both benefit.

Anne Parker:

Sure. Well, in the class, I teach a very simple but powerful three-step process for cultivating resilience and shifting our emotional state. And in the consultation with the biofeedback instrument, like I said, it just helps us increase their awareness even more and gives them another tool that is very concrete to help us know what those emotional states are. As I said earlier, oftentimes what we find is that we know we are having an emotional reaction, but being able to identify what it is sometimes is difficult. And so by taking the next step, the biofeedback tool helps us make that identification, which then helps facilitate the shift. So in the class you get a very practical three-step process. In the consult, you are just able to take it a step deeper and further.

Donna:

And is this something that they can also do by phone with you? So let us say they come meet you in December and they want to do it again maybe in February. Can they do it over the phone as well?

Anne Parker:

Absolutely. I am always available for phone consultations and I can do a phone consultation with someone whether they have taken the class or not, depending on what, what they have been exposed to prior. We would orient the phone call to meet them right where they are.

Donna: Okay.

Well, great. Well, that is great information and I really, really enjoyed talking to you today, Anne, and thank you for joining us. And is there anything else you would like to add to the call today?

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Anne Parker:

Well, I think the last thing I would say is just to be aware that stress is a part of life. It is not about getting rid of the stress. It is about how we support ourselves within it.

Donna: Right. And hopefully being in the flow of life and ...

Anne Parker: Absolutely.

Donna:

I have done that before. Well, again thank you so much. I would like to thank our listeners for joining us today. There will be a full transcript on Wellnessfyi.com and Miraval's website is miravalresorts.com and you can also find a lot more information about Anne Parker. She does some other classes and programs and we will be talking to her again in the future. So again, thank you, everyone, for joining us, and have a great day.