

ACEs in Alaska (ACE-Adverse Childhood Experience) By Jan Adasiak

Part 5: Resilience. You can make progress in recovering your sense of psychological well-being—but it doesn't come all at once.

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Resilience is all about doing a kind of homework. Practice is needed. Resilience is built bit by bit.

Noticing or being aware of something is the first step to making changes and feeling like the following may be one of the first things you notice: “I hear myself saying the same things to my kids that my mother/father said to me. I didn't like it then and I don't want to fall into doing the same to my child.”

There are often many feelings of shame when you first acknowledge all the hurtful things that have happened to you, and perhaps how you may have perpetuated these things out of habits learned at home.

It helps to have someone to talk to: a friend, an exercise buddy, a therapist, a pastor. You can even talk to your dog.

Rehearse some “I statements” rather than “you statements” to use at home with your family. In this way you take ownership of your feelings rather than blaming others.

Engage in a yoga or Tai Chi exercise routine. You saw some children and their comments about how Tai Chi helped them in lesson 4.

“Just Breathe” is a wonderful short film about young children who use breathing to calm themselves. On-line address is

<https://amysmartgirls.com/short-film-just-breathe-helps-kids-with-emotions-1b4f91dac5ad>

It is also on YouTube.

Attend a Bible study and enjoy some new light shined on a passage or story that always puzzled you.

Take pictures of your family and friends doing things you all enjoy. Post them where you can see them often (isn't this what refrigerator doors were made for?) and practice positive feelings of enjoyment and gratitude when you look at them. Share those feelings with the people in the photos.

Make a menu of things you find that help you return to your calm center. It could be picking berries or singing songs. It could be knitting or sewing. It could be going for a walk or getting out the caulk and working on the boat. It could be sitting quietly in prayer.

Next time, in Part 6 of ACEs in Alaska we will learn how you, your church and your community can learn from others who have already discovered the ACEs phenomenon and are implementing ways to understand it and bounce back from it.

Questions? Whenever you have questions, please e-mail me, Jan Adasiak, at adasiakjan@gmail.com and I will answer them as best I can.