

Resilience, Inc.
P.O. Box 1907
Nevada City, CA 95959



Resilience Inc. Newsletter: May 2, 2016 (Volume 9)

This month's newsletter includes:

A Message from Lori Ashcraft, The Karate Kid?, Ask Emily and Five Ways to Make Mom Feel Special on Mother's Day.

A Message from Lori Ashcraft

Hi Friends,

Can you believe it's May already? I have been waiting for May with great anticipation because Chris Martin and I will be spending the entire month in Singapore with some of our best friends. Since Singapore has roots in the Asian ethnicity, I thought it would be appropriate to share this account I wrote a few weeks ago about my experience with Karate – a Christmas present from my dear bother. I hope you enjoy it. Most of us can relate to times in our lives when we felt alone and different. I hope my karate experience gives you hope and courage.



Lori

The Karate Kid?

Last Christmas my brother, whom I love dearly, gave me a membership to a karate club. Yes, I was as surprised as you might be to hear this. I'm sure the karate instructor was equally surprised when he read the application my brother sent in. It probably read something like this: "My sister is getting older and I want to make sure she can protect herself if the occasion arises to do so. Enclosed is her membership fee. Please teach her self-defense maneuvers."



I was moved that my brother wanted to protect me, especially since he STILL occasionally brings up how I used to punch him when we were little. Honestly, I don't ever remember punching anyone, ever. So a few weeks ago I trotted off to my first karate self-defense class. I sat in the parking lot for about 15 minutes before going in, feeling too old to do this; too slow, to creaky, too unwilling. Then I got out of the car and went into the karate gym. The rest of the class were people in their teens and twenties. They all had their little karate outfits on, black pants and shirts and so forth. Quite unstylish if you ask me. Oh Yes, and of utmost importance were the belts. They had different colored belts on, all of which meant something significant to all but me who didn't have a clue.

I might just be projecting this on to the instructor, but he seemed perplexed to see me. I thought he must be thinking the same thing I was – “oh no!” Anyway, he politely showed me around before the class and then said the worst thing imaginable. He said, “Now, you don't have to keep up with the class. Just do what you can.”

“humph!” I thought.

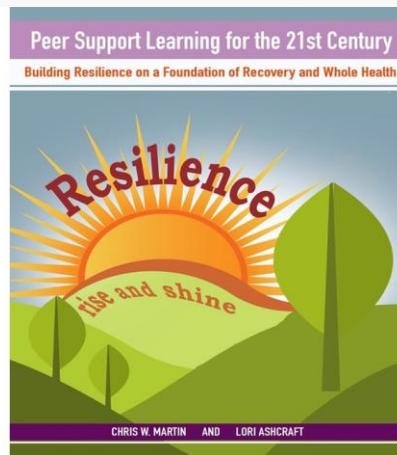
After class on my way home, I remembered all the times the peers I've had the pleasure to work with would say, “I don't want any special accommodations. Hold me to the same standards you hold the other employees.” After “the excuse” the karate instructor gave me, I really understood what they were saying and why they were saying it. I didn't appreciate the instructor assuming that I couldn't learn the moves. I didn't want permission to be a slacker. If I was going to put myself through the agony of showing up for a class where everyone else was young enough to be my grandchild, where we learned to fend off attackers; where we learned to “pop kick”, roll on the floor, escape a bear hug – If I was going to do all of that, I certainly didn't want to be assigned to the role of someone who probably couldn't make the grade.

The second class felt much like I know it feels when a peer goes to work for the first time in a clinical setting. Everyone else seems to know each other. They have their short-cut language filled with “trade” words that meant nothing to me. They were all dressed alike (except for me who wasn't going to buy one of those black baggy outfits). They all seemed to know what to do and went about doing it. They knew I was there but didn't quite know what to do with me. I was different. The instructor counted us and said, “Oh good, ten of you, an even number so we can pair up.” Actually there was eleven of us, counting me, whom he did not count. Once everyone got in pairs, I shrugged and looked at the instructor and he assigned one of the staff to work with me. I wanted to go home so bad.

Fast forward a couple classes, and yes, I am still going back. The instructor does not know my name yet, but he will. I'm getting pretty good at some of the moves. I pay close attention to the demonstrations, which is more than I can say for my teenage counterparts. I have no delusions

about being the star student or teacher's favorite, but I'm going to keep going back until my membership runs out.

If any of this sounds familiar to you – if it sounds like your work situation, know that you are not alone. This is part of what it takes to evolve a new profession like peer support. My recent karate experience reminds me just how hard this can be. So let's just all keep going back, day after day, class after class, until we are recognized as a serious contributor and a force to be reckoned with. And then we will politely bow to the others, like we do in the karate class, an honor the spirit that lives and breathes within each one of us.



The 21st Century is here. We are ready....are you?

Learn more about the Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century - Building Resilience on a Foundation of Recovery and Whole Health Workbook.

Call Resilience at 530-362-7070.

Ask Emily

Hi Folks,

April showers bring May flowers!! I love this time of year – as you can tell because I'm wearing some beautiful flowers....and looking gorgeous I might add. This month we have a question from a new friend, Janus, who lives with Joanna Davis, CEO/President of the Excellence Medical Group in Houston, Texas. Janus is a beautiful 2 year old Labrador Retriever who was recently adopted. As you can see, Janus has made herself right at home and loves her new family.



Dear Emily,

I recently moved in with my new family and really feel like I'm fitting in and adjusting well to my new surroundings. My Mom says that our match is "picture perfect" and that I'm "spoiled rotten." When I first arrived, my Mom took me to the doctor for a check-up. All was well and I was given a clean bill of health. I was given a new heartworm medication and I think it is making my skin itchy. Should I be concerned?

Feeling scratchy,

Janus



Dear FS Janus,

Well....April showers do bring May flowers....and sometimes new medication brings itchy skin. Okay – so I never said I was a poet. Anyway, I recall something similar happening to me when my heartworm medication was changed. Any time we start a new medication it is important to understand the potential side effects, proper dosage and when we should take it. I understand this to be true for humans too. For me, I just needed time for my body to adjust and the itchiness went away. If your itchy skin continues – make sure you scratch right in front of your Mom so that she understands how you are feeling. Congratulations on your new family and have a doggone good time!!

And to all the Mom's out there....Happy Mother's Day!!

Five Ways to Make Mom Feel Special on Mother's Day.

Show Your Love. DOING something for your Mom will show how much she means to you. This will change for every person because every Mom could use a little extra support in different ways.



Create Something. Be creative – make a collage, create your own card. Making a delicious meal for Mom to enjoy is definitely considered creating something!!

Listen Carefully. Pay attention during conversations to identify a gift or treat that your Mom would like.

Write Mom A Letter. Even if writing isn't your thing, a heartfelt letter would mean everything to any Mom. Take some time to think about the things you love, appreciate and respect about your Mom.

Be Your Best. Nothing means more to a Mom than when her kids – no matter what age – are being kind and wonderful.

From the online blog - Thirty Days - a Creative Project for Every Day, by Mique





For more information on our Consulting and Training Services or information on our Peer Support Learning for the 21st Century - Building Resilience on a Foundation of Recovery and Whole Health Workbook and Training Program, call 530-362-7070.

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