

Factsheet

WHY AM I DOING WELL?



1 True forgery

« People are bound to be in a bad way after something like that!” **False!**

We’ve seen that after a trauma most people display normal behavior. In a few people, we observe pathological states or considerable manifestations of stress.

« Anyone who isn’t in a bad way after such violence is in denial or isn’t normal! » **False!** Keeping going long after a trauma indicates very good adaptability and stress resistance.

2 It’s experienced

“

When the shots started, I was at the other end of the room. I didn’t try to look or to show myself. I lay on the ground, on my stomach to protect my vital organs. I focused on my breathing and waited. It’s sad and painful, but I’ve gone back to my normal life now. I’ve moved on. I feel safe here now.

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“

I heard the deafening noise of the explosion in the building opposite. I let the emergency services know and ran down the stairs with my first aid kit in my hand. I was focused, on the alert. I wanted to help. With the help of passers-by, we got three injured people out of the building, and we reassured them while we waited for help. I was devastated, but proud to have helped.

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3 Know-Science

Faced with trauma, the body is in a state of alert. This alert is activated repeatedly in life when confronted with significant threats. It’s a normal reaction to an abnormal situation. Following a threat, these physiological reactions switch off, and the organism goes back to its normal state. It’s the normalization of stress. The person adapts to their experience and adjusts. Traumatic events don’t trigger traumatic effects in everyone. This may be linked to the nature of the event, but also to the person’s capacity and adaptation.

Some people have less capacity to resolve issues and to make sensible, effective decisions, to integrate the event in their memory. They therefore run more risk of developing post-traumatic disorders.

4 My shrink says to me!

Your abilities

Like everyone else, you have the capacity to adapt to solve problems and make decisions. This facilitates tolerance to stress, autonomy and self-awareness. Just like a sportsman, the more you train, the more you build your resilience. This adaptability depends on your experience (background history, parents, childhood, work), your expectations, your values (what's important for you), your beliefs and your environment.

The reed folds, but does not break

Faced with trauma, your experience, adaptability, resistance to stress and resilience comes into play. This protects you both physically and mentally. You try to cope with the situation, to calm yourself internally, to manage your emotions, accept or avoid stress and find help or support. Your background (personal, family, social, educational) is an unsuspected reserve of internal resources.

Good evolution factors

Faced with adversity, your capacity for resilience is decisive, and includes a variety of skills and resources. Some factors can help, such as managing to act in accordance with your values and beliefs, not turning in on yourself, being supported by loved ones, being recognized as a victim, or trying to find meaning to the trauma in your life. These factors are good ingredients for boosting your resilience.