

Some Adversity in Life Seems to Help Build Resilience

People who grappled with a moderate amount of adversity in their lifetime reported greater well-being: survey

-- Robert Preidt

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 20 (HealthDay News) -- In life, some adversity can benefit your mental health by strengthening your adaptability and resilience, a new study suggests.

Researchers analyzed data from 2,398 people who took part in a national survey each year from 2001 to 2004. Those who experienced some adverse events reported better mental health and well-being than those exposed to high levels of adversity or no adversity at all.

"Our findings revealed that a history of some lifetime adversity -- relative to both no adversity or high adversity -- predicted lower global distress, lower functional impairment, lower [post-traumatic stress] symptoms and higher life satisfaction," study author Mark Seery, an assistant professor of psychology at the University at Buffalo, said in a university news release.

He and his colleagues also found that people with a history of some lifetime adversity appeared to weather recent adverse events better than other people.

"Although we studied major lifetime adversity, there is reason to believe that other relatively mundane experiences should also contribute to resilience," Seery said. "This suggests that carefully designed psychotherapeutic interventions may be able to do so, as well, although there is much work that still needs to be done to fully understand resilience and where it comes from."

The findings were released online in October in advance of publication in an upcoming print issue of the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

More information

The American Psychological Association has more about [resilience](#).

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