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**Hemispherectomy Family Resilience**

Resilience is our innate capacity to face and handle life’s challenges, whether everyday disappointment or extraordinary disasters.

When you understand the neuroscience of resilience and embrace neuroplasticity, it can assist you to think and cope in a more helpful way.  We can rewire our brain with regard to resilience by combining brain science, relational psychology and mindfulness practices to change unhealthy patterns of coping encoded in your neural circuitry and to develop new ways to respond to pain, stress, pressures and tragedies

Plasticity is the greatest discovery of modern neuroscience, it is growing new neurons, strengthening synaptic connections, creating new pathways and faster processing, altering brain structure and circuitry, it’s organizing and re-organizing functions of brain structures.  The brain changes itself.  It does this naturally as we experience new things new circuitry is created.  As we experience trauma and pain it happens naturally often causing negative effects so this is when we need to be proactive and actively ‘rewire’.  Repeated experiences, repeated neural firings, neurons that fire together wire together.  Without intervention, this is what the brain does automatically, trauma creates certain pathways.  We can actively reframe or utilize techniques to change the automatic to a framework that increases coping!

**Negativity Bias**

The Brain is hard-wired to notice and remember negative and intense more than positive and subtle; how we survive as individuals and as a species.  It leads to a tendency to avoid experience.  WE, as hemi parents, actually don’t have the luxury of being able to avoid the pain or trauma associated with our children’s conditions and experiences. But we do have the opportunity to decide how we cope…..within reason.

Understanding what our, our children's existing coping strategies is important - special note: siblings  - distinguishing between healthy and unhealthy is a great starting point.

**Spirituality and resilience**

A [growing body of evidence](http://melissainstitute.org/documents/SPIRITUALITY_PSYCHOTHERAPY.pdf) suggests that a spiritual outlook can be a major asset in coping with trauma. Psychologists have found that both spirituality and religion provide some of the key elements which attribute to resilience —a strong social support group, the opportunity to infer meaning, and a focus on empathy—that are invaluable in recovering from traumatic events. There are even psychotherapy programs that draw on spirituality.  Not necessarily organized religion but to a value system which incorporates HOPE through spirituality increases resilience.

The evolution of the human brain is a combination of genetic templates inherited from generations of ancestors, our family of origin, conditioning and attachment (nature/nurture) Norms-expectations of culture-society.  Who we are and how we cope….…is not our fault. However, with neuroplasticity…and choices of self-directed neuroplasticity WE can decide who we are and how we cope.  Neuroscience and the neuroscience of resilience, explains why certain exercises and techniques work, assisting you to navigate the storms and struggles of life more quickly, more adaptively and more effectively.

 **5 science backed strategies to build or rewire our brain with regard to resilience**

1. Change the narrative

2. Face your fears

3. Self-compassion

4. Mindfulness

5. Forgiveness