



**Dear Friends and Clients,**

I've always been fascinated by people who shine in the public spotlight, stumble, and then bounce back from humiliation or defeat. Certainly President Clinton illustrates that one can endure unimaginable embarrassment and then go on to forge another successful path.

Toddlers have the ability to fall but then jump right back up, trying once again to walk. But most of us tend to lose that resiliency as we grow older. In today's long and varied careers, we can expect crises, stumbles and losses. So some successful careers are worth studying not because everything went well, but rather because the person faced problem after problem yet kept going after every defeat.

A few folks – like President Clinton – are extraordinarily resilient from childhood. But the rest of us can cultivate the ability to keep moving no matter how low we might feel, and that is what I'll discuss in this issue.

First, however, I want to mention that there was a glitch in the distribution of my last ezine, and some of you may have read it with missing quote marks or other punctuation. If you want to read a clean version of Ted Leonsis' tips on building a happy life, please know that it, and all my ezines, are archived on [my website](#).

**Warm wishes, Bev**

## **Learn How to Bounce Back-- Things Can Be Better Than Ever!**

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A business friend I'll call Sam is now a very wealthy man, and he seems to be very happy as well. Sam has had several careers and pursued many entrepreneurial projects. Our paths have crossed for close to 30 years, but most often when Sam's career has been in a tough patch.

I have seen Sam when his business has been crashing, his industry has been cratering and his personal life has been in stress. I have watched him fight off the specter of bankruptcy at least twice, and have seen prospective clients and investors tell him "no" time after time.

Although I've had a close view of several of Sam's crises, I don't think I've ever heard him complain or cast blame. When a partner left him in the lurch in the 1980s, I learned from the way he faced the situation. He said, "Bev, these things are just gonna happen. It's important not to waste energy on gettin' angry. We gotta look to the future. We'll just keep trying things until something hits, and it'll all work out." Sam kept focused on his next goals, and in fact things did work out, despite fall after fall.

Sam may have been born with an indomitable spirit, but we all can learn from the way he handles career failures. A key is how Sam talks to himself and others. When things go wrong he doesn't obsess about it, and he doesn't indulge in self-pity. Instead, he faces the facts and quickly starts searching for next steps.

Research suggests that we can indeed become more resilient. My coaching colleague **Mary Jane Reed** often addresses the issue in workshops and client work, so I asked her to share some thoughts. She said, "We can build resiliency not only for ourselves but also for our work teams and families. Although some individuals are wired with resiliency from birth, we are all capable of growing our 'reservoirs of resiliency.'" Here are her tips:

- **Face facts and move on.** Reed says, "resilient people are able to 'face down' reality and not see the world through rose-colored glasses ... Resilient people reflect on the situation and 'create bridges' to the future. They ask 'how can I use this experience to build a stronger foundation, business, career path?' Also, they continually improvise: 'What have I not thought about? What else could I do?'"
- **Plan for the worst.** Reed suggests you think strategically about potential challenges. It can be useful to address questions like, "What if I lose my job? What if I lose my partner? What if our company servers go down?" She says, "If we think through these issues before they happen, we can adapt more quickly to changes and take steps to recover from their impact. We avoid the 'dazed period' when we are immobilized, and we can act quickly. Also, worse case scenario discussions can help your teams perform well when a crisis does occur."
- **Get and stay connected.** "Develop a strong network of positive relationships," Reed says. "These relationships need to be established and nurtured long before times of crisis. Friends and family provide support and acceptance during hard times. And encourage teamwork and networking within your organization so others can benefit as well."
- **Meet the crisis.** Know that hard times are part of life. If you are facing a challenge now, Reed suggests that you:

- **Encourage humor** because it can help you and your organization keep valuable perspective, and laughter helps reduce stress.
- **Take care of yourself** and encourage others to do the same. This includes getting enough ZZZs because sleep deprivation reduces our cognitive functioning and our ability to handle stress.
- **Set short-term goals** and routines even if the “big picture” is hazy. Reed often encourages people who are out of work to get dressed every morning and set simple goals for each day.
- **Reflect** on what is working and what is not working, and adjust accordingly. Take time with friends, family or colleagues to discuss the situation and brainstorm additional options.
- **Take action.** It is important to make some kind of plan and put it in motion, even if you’ll probably change it later.

**Want to hear something interesting?** In addition to providing executive coaching, Bev and her Clearways colleagues like Mary Jane Reed are available to speak about many issues related to your work and work life success. We’ll build a program to meet your needs. Learn more at **[www.ClearWaysConsulting.com](http://www.ClearWaysConsulting.com)** or email to **Bev** directly.

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