

ARE YOU HARDY?

Any story that starts with “In my day...” will no doubt lead to a lecture on how older houses, older cars, and older generations were made of sterner stuff. After all, most grandparents and great-grandparents alive today likely lived through at least one war and one major economic crisis, often surviving through sheer will and determination to become the hardy people they are today. But what does it really mean to have a “hardy personality”?

Researchers at PsychTests looked at the impact of three key traits that have been the subject of numerous studies since the 1970s: Commitment, Control, and Challenge. Studies conducted by stress resilience pioneers Salvatore R. Maddi and Suzanne C. Kobasa revealed that a person’s ability to cope with a traumatic event or hardship was a matter of perception: According to Kobasa, hardy individuals have developed three essential traits that not only allow them to survive difficult experiences, but in fact help them thrive thereafter:

- Commitment: People with a hardy personality commit themselves to whatever task they take on, no matter how minor. They have a sense of purpose, whether it’s work, family, community, or a specific aspiration.
- Control: Hardy individuals act with intent. Rather than viewing themselves as victims of their circumstances, background, or fate, they are proactive. They believe that they have the power to change their life for the better.
- Challenge: When experiencing a setback, hardy individuals view these difficult circumstances as temporary. The only constant in life is change, so while things may be difficult now, they believe they will get better eventually. An obstacle is merely a challenge to overcome, and while it may significantly test their skills and emotional fortitude, in the end they will come out stronger and wiser.

The study also indicates that a hardy personality can have a positive impact on an individual’s physical health and potential for success. “We often choose to tiptoe around conflict situations, take the easier or familiar road, complain when we hit our first obstacle, and wallow in self-pity when things go wrong in our life,” explains Dr. Ilona Jerabek, president of PsychTests. “The interesting thing about hardiness is that every obstacle and hardship we face makes us wiser and tougher. Going through tough times can be to our advantage. We learn to be resilient and we learn new information and skills that will help us get through the situation...and any other hardship we may

face in the future. As the saying goes, what doesn't kill you will only make you stronger." (Source: PsychTests)

YOUR NATIVE PLANTS

Google calscape.org, enter your zip code, modify search terms to get exactly your plant preferences, and the site will show you which native plants are best suited to your zip code.

GRAMMARJAMMER

Did you know that the word "gullible" isn't listed in the dictionary? Go ahead, look it up.

SWAMI SEZ

"Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy." (Roger Wilco)

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