

James D. Whitehead and Evelyn E. Whitehead, *The Virtue of Resilience* (New York: Orbis Books, 2016), 135 pp.

The Virtue of Resilience by James D. and Evelyn E. Whitehead provides a nice introduction to the subject of resilience, affirming and illustrating the capacity for recovery that is part of our human condition as persons, groups, and societies. Well illustrated with anecdotes of personal, spiritual, and civic resilience, it is approachable and easy to read.

For those interested in helping others, Whitehead and Whitehead make reassuring claims that there are tools to develop resilience, such as the three Rs—recruitability, reframing, and resolve—proposed by developmental psychologist and author Robert Kegan. One imagines that with the encouragement of a supportive caregiver, accompanied by certain personal resources such as commitment, control, and challenge, it is possible for someone with “the distraction of depression and despair” to find ways to forge vital and enduring bonds with others, recast negative experiences, and respond to injury with the determination to pursue their goals without giving in.

Although the merits of *The Virtue of Resilience* are its accessibility and breadth, it came up wanting just as this reader was ready to delve deeper into a given aspect of resilience. Instead, the authors move on to another survey-level exploration of resilience showcased in new contexts and settings. The subjects covered range from social to spiritual to civic and vary in application from imparting knowledge and understanding to furthering the development and practice of resilience for individuals or groups.

The Virtue of Resilience is truly accessible and useful as a reader on the subject, but many of the recommended readings and works cited do not reference the most current research and scientific studies on resilience. Each chapter ends with additional readings for further inquiry, but there is also great variance in the quality and depth of resources offered for further study; they might have been more carefully sourced.

There are merits to this work as a resource, although I would expect that one who reaches for a book on resilience may be seeking some tools or practices to further personal growth and empowerment. Such hopes are raised at the outset, but toward the end, this reader was left to continue searching for a more hopeful option.

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