

The Woodson Principles Applied

Here is a list of Bob Woodson's 10 Principles:

Competence, Integrity, Transparency, Resilience, Witness, Innovation, Inspiration, Agency, Access, Grace

Resilience and Learned Optimism enable us to bounce back from setbacks and adversity and to find the hope and inspiration to move forward with grace.

Review the three Woodson principles (*in italics*) below and answer the following questions:

Resilience

In searching for healing agents within toxic communities, study those who are “in” troubled circumstances but not “of” those circumstances—those who have managed to survive and thrive. If 70% of parents have troubled kids, study the 30% who have successful, healthy children to discover the secret of their success.

Describe a time you have demonstrated resilience in your life.

Is there something from which you have to bounce back happening in your life right now?

Who are some people you have seen demonstrate resilience in your life? These might be people you know personally or people in the news.

Has anyone ever helped you when you were facing a setback in your life? Are there other people facing setbacks or adversity whom you could help today?

Inspiration

You can learn nothing from studying failure except how to create failure. Begin your inquiry by recognizing the capacity people possess. People are inspired to improve when they are presented with victories that are possible, not injuries to be avoided. Provide them with the tools for self-determination and help them strive to succeed above all reasonable expectations. Then, look for ways to celebrate even modest improvements.

What inspires you in your life? Is it certain people or nature or music or something else? How is inspiration related to the concept of optimism?

What sort of victories have you participated in or observed that give you optimism and inspiration?

Here is some simple advice that can help you develop a more positive outlook: at the end of every day, before you go to bed, write down three things that went well, no matter how small. Can you think of three things that have already gone right today? What are they?

Grace

Love and respect others, even when it's inconvenient. Look at neighborhoods as filled with people who have potential, not dysfunctional victims. The foundation of grace is radical forgiveness; a refusal to be held back by what used to be a hindrance in your life, real or imagined. Be free of bitterness, regret, and uncertainty about the future.

It's true that not everything goes right all the time. What are some ways to move past these frustrating moments?

Think of a person you have to deal with every day who sometimes annoys you. Can you find one positive aspect of this person to admire and give them credit for? What is it?

Do you have any frustrating traits that might sometimes irritate other people? Would you want other people to focus on your best traits or on your less appealing traits most of the time?

What is one trait you would like to improve about yourself? Are you willing to commit to working to improve it? Or, perhaps, are you going to accept that you are imperfect (like everyone else) and an ongoing work in progress? What do you think?