

## **Neuroplasticity and Positive Psychology Combined: A Story of Real Human Resilience**

**Barnaby Howarth**

ABC news autocue operator Australia

### **Short Communication**

#### **Abstract**

After having a stroke that nearly killed me, I have just got on with life as best I can, but after the release of “The Brain That Changes Itself” in 2007 and then stumbling across the field of positive psychology while studying a business diploma at university I realised that I was living some significantly ground-breaking scientific revolutions, and my real life experience of these works in action will be an inspiring reassurance of their value in the real world.

The British Medical Journal (White, 2011) reports that he told the Royal Society in London on 31 August, 2011: “We are at an extraordinary moment when the entire scientific foundation for mental health is shifting, with the 20th century discipline of psychiatry becoming the 21st century discipline of clinical neuroscience.” The revolution in mental health has given me the human resilience I needed to get through my adversity - I used to think the resilience I needed to get through the disappointment in my life was an external, mystical x-factor that I needed to slay a fire-breathing dragon to find, but the principles of neuroplasticity - i.e. that repeated small efforts will lead to new pathways being formed in the brain - have given me the reassurance I needed when I felt like I was going nowhere. Indeed it has been the accumulation of these small efforts that have meant I could live the life I wanted. I am not a scholar, nor will I pretend to be - I will simply tell my human story of human resilience and reaffirm the value of these scientific principles.

#### **Biography**

Former Sydney Swan Barnaby Howarth was bashed in an alcohol fuelled gang attack when he was 25 and had a stroke. He has since filmed 2 documentaries in Africa, written a book, climbed Mt Kilimanjaro and played his 100th game of all for his local footy club. In 2016 Barnaby lost his wife to breast cancer and his resilience was tested again. He kept putting 1 foot in front of the other and moved forward and he is now living a happier life and he never would have imagined. He is an autocue operator at ABC News, Australia, and a keynote speaker on resilience and is on an international speaking tour (He has spoken in Calgary, San Diego & Auckland & a South Pacific cruise). On his travels he is sharing his message that "rain falls on the just and the unjust alike, but there comes a time when you just have to get over it and go and play in the puddles."

Citation: Barnaby Howarth; Neuroplasticity and Positive Psychology Combined: A Story of Real Human Resilience; Webinar on Stress and Depression Management; February 12, 2021