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Being mentally resilient could cut your risk of death;

Coping well in the face of hardship may benefit your body as well as your brain

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If you feel that there is more to cope with as you get older, you're not alone. But new research suggests that those who bounce back better from tough times could enjoy longer lifespans. The new study, Published in *BMJ Mental Health*, showed that adults with the highest levels of mental resilience in older age had the lowest chance of dying, cutting their risk of death from all causes by a whopping 53 per cent.

The study collected information about mental resilience and health from a large study of US adults aged 50 years and above. Over time, the scientists followed 10,569 adults for around 12 years or until they died (whichever happened soonest).

First, they measured their mental resilience and scored them on a scale of 0–12 based on their answers to a questionnaire. The questions established their perceived calmness, perseverance, self-reliance and sense that certain experiences must be faced alone. Then the researchers split the participants into four groups depending on this score. They discovered that, compared to the group with the least resilience, the most resilient older adults were 53-per-cent less likely to die in the next 10 years. According to the scientists, mental resilience is an active process that changes across your lifespan and is influenced by factors such as your sex, hormones and genes that regulate the body's stress response. But having meaning in life, positive emotions and satisfaction with social support can all also impact your resilience, they explain. "Triggering these positive emotions may enhance the protective effects of psychological resilience and mitigate the negative impact of accumulated adversity on mental health in adults," the paper's authors, from Sun Yatsen University, China, and the Karolinska Institutet, Sweden, explained.

In fact, the researchers think that mental resilience could have similar effects to bouncing back physically after illness and trauma, as good coping skills may offset the negative impacts of tough times.