

Free

By Salem Habtom

Resilience can appear in many different forms; it can be seen in the person who cries themselves through a difficult process but still reaches the end successfully with that usual comment of 'oh it wasn't so bad' at the end, to the person who never sheds a tear as they put on a brave exterior. Both examples involve resilience.

At one point that was me. My reputation in primary school was that I was known for not crying. It's a very strange thing to be known for when I think about it now. In primary school, where kids are constantly in tears over bruised knees or fights, I became an anomaly! Did this mean I was more resilient than the others? No! The exterior is not always the best indicator of resilience. It is the strength that comes from within that makes one resilient and we are all resilient - no matter what way we present our strength to the outside world.

Spring 2018 was an indicator in my life of the way that I can deal with fear and how my resilience can be adapted in real world situations. April was the date of my first GCSE exam in English Spoken Language. This consisted of a speech that had to be presented in front of the whole class. The day came around quicker than I expected leaving me feeling under-prepared. That was just the nerves trying to get the better of me, as I had been working my whole school life up until this point.

In the build up to it I was fearful. But then I woke up on the morning of it without a worry in my mind. It really was a turning point. I knew it was strange, if there was anytime to be nervous this was it, but it seemed like all the fear had left my body! This feeling gave me freedom - my speech that day went seamlessly as I no longer felt constricted by the same worries that I had felt in the build up. My teacher even told me that it looked like something had taken over me when I gave my speech!

The fear diffusing was a process that came naturally in a way that I could never have imagined. To this day I still can't put my finger on what it was that took away my fearful nature that time, all I know is that I should never let fear control me. During this time, I saw the growth of my resilience. I was once terrified at the thought of the project, but I found that not letting fear overwhelm me released my mind to perform to the best of my ability. It was a liberating turn of events. Letting go of my anxieties was what I had been seeking. Finally, I was free.