

PETER DRUCKER CHALLENGE ESSAY CONTEST 2023

**PETER DRUCKER MAY AGREE TO THIS...!  
WATCH THE FLOWER GROW, RIGHT THROUGH  
THE CRACKS**



**Peter Drucker May agree to this...! “Watch the flower grow,  
Right through the Cracks”<sup>1</sup>**

Morning 10:30 AM, Sunday 31st May, 2023

*Wardrobe Chaos: Path to Embracing Chaos*

Maa<sup>2</sup> ( Barges in the room, Echoing her frustration ) Oh my God! Why on earth have you created this mess here? It appears like a whirlwind of clothes and fabric scattered all around.

Me. Ta-da! Welcome to the enlightened mess. You know, Growing up and still to this very day, I employ this unusual habit or strategy of cleaning my wardrobe where in I scatter all my clothes & belongings like a tangled pile on my bed.

Maa: This chaos seems unreasonable and quite an unconventional approach which looks far from being effective.

Me : This practice has almost become like a ritual wherein I empty each drawer and bring everything in disorder at one place creating a complete whirlwind. I, then, start the tedious task of sorting out through the fabric and confusion.

Maa: ( Skeptical yet Curious) Oh wise Ms Intelligent.(with a giggle on her face ) Enlighten me, on this one.

“Yes, it was quite a revelation to me”, I said. What seemed chaotic in the beginning provided an opportunity to me to identify what truly mattered and what to let go off. Through this chaos, I can easily identify items that serve no purpose, the ones that can be discarded or donated. You see, I can easily compartmentalize my clothing and stuff again in a new and improved way.

Maa: ( Raises an eyebrow as if something triggered in her ) So, you are telling me, this tangled, disordered room helps you find clarity?

Me: Oh yes, most definitely! This disoriented, damaged room that you see, provides for a blank canvas, bestowes on me the absolute freedom to redevelop, compartmentalize and reimagine the entire room to my own desired preferences. Do you realize how powerful that is!

As I meticulously fold each piece of cloth and rearrange them in their designated corners. I immensely enjoy the flexibility to design my room in a way that is testament to my own tastes and preferences.

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<sup>1</sup> Katy Perry, Song Resilient, Album Smile, Singer Katy Perry

<sup>2</sup> “Mother” is referred to as “Maa” in Hindi language

This disarray allows me to assess my choices, to determine what's essential. Well, to me it's sifting through setbacks in life and finding the right opportunities.

It's not surviving ; it's about thriving in the face of setbacks. And guess what ? Mr. Peter Drucker also says so.

Maa: Mr. Peter who?

Me: OHH, Maa, You should read about him, his teachings are relevant till date. He was a genius and my current philosophy about Wardrobe Chaos is extracted through his incredible teachings and wisdom.

He too emphasized that Organizations or Entrepreneurs should always search for change, respond to it and exploit it as an opportunity.

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***SETBACKS AND DISORDERS ARE THE BREEDING GROUND FOR IMAGINATION AND REASSESSMENT.***

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Just as the above personal experience of my jumbled room allows me to reassess its layout and design, Organization and individuals likewise can exploit Setbacks as timely opportunities for innovation and growth.

This simple yet effective act of cleaning out of chaos unveils the importance of shedding old orthodox patterns and yesterday's obsolete ideas, and embracing chaos as an effective tool for transformation. Peter Drucker emphasized that the priority of the institutions lies in its capacity to withstand external shocks & blows, being able to cope up and quickly adapt to changes, and extract potential opportunities out of it.<sup>3</sup>

*“A time of turbulence is indeed a dangerous time, but its greatest danger is a temptation to deny reality. It is one of the ripe opportunities for those who UNDERSTAND, ACCEPT & EXPLOIT the new realities”*

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**HARSH REALITIES GIVE BIRTH TO GREAT LEADERS. IT IS THROUGH THEM THE RESILIENCE TRANSCENDS AND BECOMES A SUSTAINING FORCE AMIDST INDIVIDUALS AND WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS.**

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<sup>3</sup> *“Managing in Turbulent Times”*, Peter F Drucker, 1980, preface to the paperback edition.

Amidst the disruption, there lies an opportunity to reinvent or lay down a complete new foundation, one that surely resonates with the changing ecosystem, renewed goals and aspirations of the organization.

My wardrobe chaos theory makes me believe that the chaos, disruptions, and damage actually push us to think outside the box and help us to develop creative Resilience.

TRASH TO TREASURE - Japanese concept called Kintsugi

Maa : Well, you have developed quite an unconventional perspective.

Me : Exactly, See, there are two ways one perceives things: “ The glass is half full, or the glass is half empty”. Likewise, in chaotic situations, Countries, Organizations or Individuals can see the thriving opportunities coming out of the setbacks, disruptions and the damages. The perception where one is able to trace even a little ounce of opportunity, UNLOCKS a door of triumphs and resilience.

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In a world, which stresses so much importance on perfection, flawlessness & perfect order, You’ll be amazed that there is a concept that is counterintuitive to this approach, it is the Japanese concept called Kintsugi, where broken objects are painted with Gold and put together to form an unusual masterpiece.

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**CHAOS LEADS TO BETTER INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY**

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As in the words of Peter Drucker “Not to innovate is the single largest reason for existing organizations declining”. The two examples of Mega companies, Blockbuster and Toys R Us, succumbed to collapse merely because they relied on methods which did not compel them to innovate.

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The broken the organization is, the better the chances of it to emerge stronger.

Kintsugi is a technique that emphasizes on transforming the broken scattered pieces into wonderful works of art. This technique is synonymous to the Resilience, Instead of eliminating the broken objects, they simply make it a treasure. The technique is truly a manifestation of celebrating your failures and setbacks.

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<sup>4</sup> “The Discipline of Innovation” Harvard Business Review, Aug 2002

<sup>5</sup> “*Innovate or Die: How a lack of Innovation can cause Business Failure*”, July 10, 2019, Bianca Miller Cole, Forbeswomen

It is such a compelling metaphor that even setbacks do not mean that it is the end of the world, but an opportunity to revive back potentially much better than before.<sup>6</sup>

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**DISORDERS AND SCARS CAN BE MADE BEAUTIFUL TOO WITH LITTLE SUPPORT OF INNOVATION AND INSPIRATION**

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This concept steals an opportunity in the brokenness, in the damaged, and makes something useful out of it. It makes a treasure out of simple trash which otherwise was useless. Just as the Kintsugi philosophy ameliorates the broken objects and embraces the scars and brokenness, we certainly can emerge stronger, more resilient and certainly more innovative. There is pearl by *Ernest Hemingway* too,

**“The World breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places”**

Maa ( Finally tries to agree ), Amazed Gold-infused broken objects?That’s truly remarkable! So is Resilience the Golden glue that sticks us together through adversities and setbacks?

Me: ABSOLUTELY, Maa ! Resilience is and will definitely be one of the pillars of a strong economy, it will be the ultimate superpower, bigger than any currency, it will be so instrumental in our abilities to bounce back from calamities, strongly and also with a certain amount of ease.

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**RESILIENCE IS THE NEW CURRENCY<sup>7</sup> : THE VALUE OF EMERGING AND STAYING STRONGER**

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Maa: How would you perhaps quantify such an intangible thing?

Me: Maa, Reiterating as what Mr. Drucker said “ *What's measured, improves.*” By quantifying Resilience, the institutions will be able to gauge its effectiveness, track an individual's progress and strength over time. This can certainly be a yardstick for comparisons and benchmarking, it will help us to ascertain where additional investments or training are required to boost Resilience in any organization.

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<sup>6</sup> “*Kintsugi, or how Japanese pottery could help you deal with setbacks*”, Oct 29, 2018, World Economic Forum.

<sup>7</sup> “*Resiliency is the new currency*”, September 11, 2020, Enguerrand (Engy) Blanchy, Head of APAC SaaS Security and Privacy

As any currency, Resilience shall also be earned, accumulated and invested in another. We need to hone our skills and abilities to diligently accumulate this currency over time, to have large deposits of it in ourselves and to further distribute in times when any contingency arises.

The setbacks are inevitable, as long as we are part of this planet, we certainly cannot predict or ascertain what setbacks we might encounter in future. Resilience proves that it will indisputably be the most expensive asset in future.

<sup>8</sup>Organizations or individuals who possess a high degree of adaptability and resilience will be considered wealthy and will be considered an imperative requirement for any hiring manager. The ability to circumvent through any disorder or imperfections will become the beacon for change, catalyst for innovation and improvement.

We are living in the Modern Age, where the entire landscape changes at the *SPEED of LIGHT*. To stay at the pace of these Creative Setbacks, we can only innovate, grow and imbibe the capacity to adapt to change almost at the same speed with which the changes and setbacks occur.

Talents & skills will take a second seat, or may not even stay relevant, but Resilience and the ability to be more powerful than the setback itself will most definitely be the most sought after.

**The pertinent question here is, in what ways organizations or individuals acquire this currency?**

This is not a day job or even a week's, it might take a few months or years to develop the perspective to view Setbacks as opportunities, our abilities to encash on those opportunities and reserve our deposits of resilient currencies. It shall be built through a lot of determination, tenacity, and courage to adapt to ever changing circumstances and grasping the opportunities that come with it.

Organizations and individuals who shall prioritize this resilient currency will undoubtedly hold much significance in future years. The ones that foster a culture of resilience among the staff are more likely to not succumb in the face of any setback. It should rather be pursued collectively as a team rather than individually, which will help achieve innovation, problem-solving attributes, and ability to bounce stronger.

Can you visualize, take a moment and think about the massive & impressive impact if the Resilience currency is adopted universally?

What will transpire if organizations and institutions start to put a premium on the ability of the individuals and organizations to emerge stronger after turmoil and disorder.

Maa, This will create a revolution, and individuals shall become more resilient, capable of weathering storms and recover from calamities.

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<sup>8</sup> "*Peter Drucker and The Things That Changed*", Backpage by Reuben Abati, Thisdaylive.com

*The Phoenix Effect : We are the STORM*

Maa: (With a proud smile) you know, in our days, we were tough as nails! We encountered setbacks head on, and resilience came quite easy to us.

Me: Oh, MAA! I Second that and that was remarkable. But the state of affairs have changed drastically. It's a whole new ball game altogether. GenZ feels that they are often categorized as “Snowflakes<sup>9</sup>” due to being more damaged and more fragile. However, what we often forget is that our generations have closely witnessed our parents’ resilience amidst the 2008 financial turmoil. In my opinion, that crucial event would have had a dramatic effect on their lives, and must have made them more resilient, more realistic in approach and better equipped to face future hurdles.

It is survival of the fittest, where being resilient is as important as breathing oxygen. Our Generation has become the *AVENGERS of RESILIENCE!*

Maa : ( Raises an eyebrow, & chuckling) You do have a very far fetched vision. But how do you plan to stay resilient amidst the ever changing dynamics ?

Me: Well, We are into a new world flooded with fierce competition, new technological advancements, digital realm & power of AI is rapidly growing & where ambition runs high. We all are fighting and striving to be the best version of ourselves, the most innovative of all. The power of technology and connectivity is at our fingertips, the digital space is developing like never before, the ability to innovate has become more accessible.

Take for example, Covid-19 Pandemic has given a critical blow to Millennials and GenZ. But to my surprise, our generation continued to exhibit astounding Resilience and showed a consistent commitment for a better future.

The Deloitte Global Millennial Survey 2020, conducted in two parts, threw light on the effect of the Pandemic on the GenZ.<sup>10</sup> The data revealed that the pandemic had a considerable toll on GenZ, wherein nearly 30% of GenZers and 25% of Millennials cited losses, being laid off, and placed on unpaid leave.

Irrespective of these setbacks, the silver lining cannot be overlooked. Reportedly, the stress levels were reduced, Job loyalty escalated in numbers, and Youngsters shouldered more responsibilities to make a positive impact on the society.

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<sup>9</sup> Gen Z know they're stereotyped as 'snowflakes'—but they say watching their parents cope with 2008 financial crisis made them tough and realistic, BY ORIANNA ROSA ROYLE, January 23, 2023

<sup>10</sup> Pandemic Reveals Resiliency of Gen Z, Millennials, *Michele Parmelee, chief people & purpose officer, Deloitte Global*

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**WE CERTAINLY KNOW , THAT STAYING RESILIENT IS TOUGH BUT NOT STAYING RESILIENT HAS FAR MORE SERIOUS RAMIFICATIONS.**

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We simply need to take essentials out of every setback, and take detours on our journey in case of adversities.

Well, taking notes from Mr. Steve Maraboli,

**“Life doesn’t get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger or more Resilient”.**

Maa: Oh my my... Your Genz is truly inspiring and our generation can learn a thing or two.

Maa, what I truly believe is that Resilience and courage transcend generations. We definitely have inherited a lot of learnings & wisdom from the past generations too.

Maa ( Laughs slowly) oh my resilient supergirl, it’s better these learnings reach far and wide, so that others can take this perspective too.

*Worry not, Maa.* All this I will have in black & white and I am sure on a mission to share the priceless principles of Peter Drucker’s to the anecdotes of our chaotic wardrobe conversations, LET’S START WITH THE PETER DRUCKER CHALLENGE’ 2023 ( planning in my head)

And so on and forth, the discussions and the fun banter continued between me and my mom, Katy Perry's “Resilient” being played in the background.

“ I know there’s gotta be rain  
If i want the rainbows  
And i know the harder i climb  
The harder the wind blows

But do you know, the darker the night  
The brighter the skies glow  
Cause I am Resilient  
I am Resilient ...”<sup>11</sup>

( Sound slowly fading away)

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<sup>11</sup> Katy Perry, Song Resilient, Album Smile, Singer Katy Perry