

Antifragility

“Some things benefit from shocks.

They thrive and grow when exposed to volatility, disorder, randomness and stressors.” Better than robust. Better than resilient.

While there is no Official Word for those things,
one Author calls them Antifragile.

Imagine if every problem...
every upset... every stressor...
made you **STRONGER**...
made you ***BETTER!***



Member Monday
August 15th, 2022
Coach Donna Stott
Your Coaching Matters



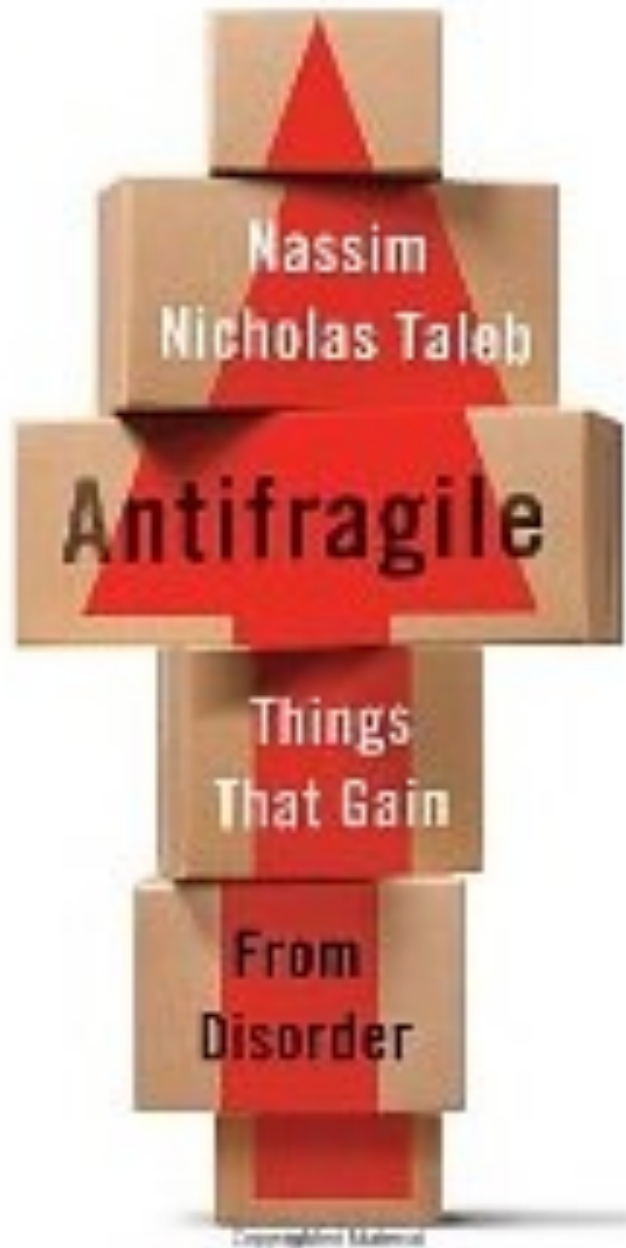
We are
discussing
the Energy
of Physical
Vitality
this month
and next.

When we are feeling “beat up” we are not feeling strong.

When we are experiencing the unexpected as a disaster, we may feel like the world is out to get us.

Physical Vitality really starts with Mental Vitality.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
THE BLACK SWAN

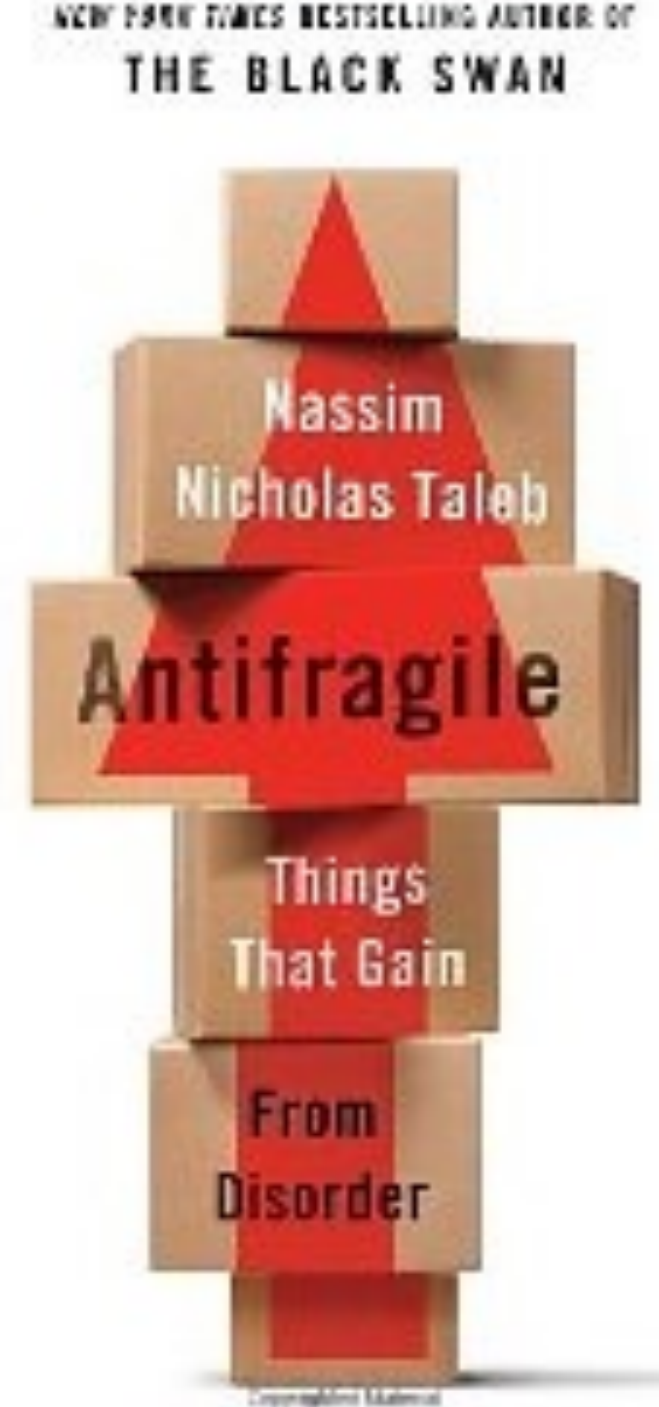


From the 2012 Book Antifragile:

“The resilient
resists shocks and
stays the same; the
antifragile gets
better”

The Author defined this further in a Letter to *Nature* responding to a review of his book:

- Simply, antifragility is defined as a convex response to a stressor or source of harm, leading to a positive result.
- Likewise, fragility is defined as a concave sensitivity to stressors, leading to a negative result.



Antifragility is not being “not fragile.”

It's not robustness, which resists external forces. It's not resiliency in which you recover back to the way you were following trauma.

It's when you THRIVE AND GROW STRONGER from things that affect others with fragility, robustness, or resilience.

Of course, it's to a point... ***but until that failure point***, imagine how strong you could get if every “hit” made you stronger.

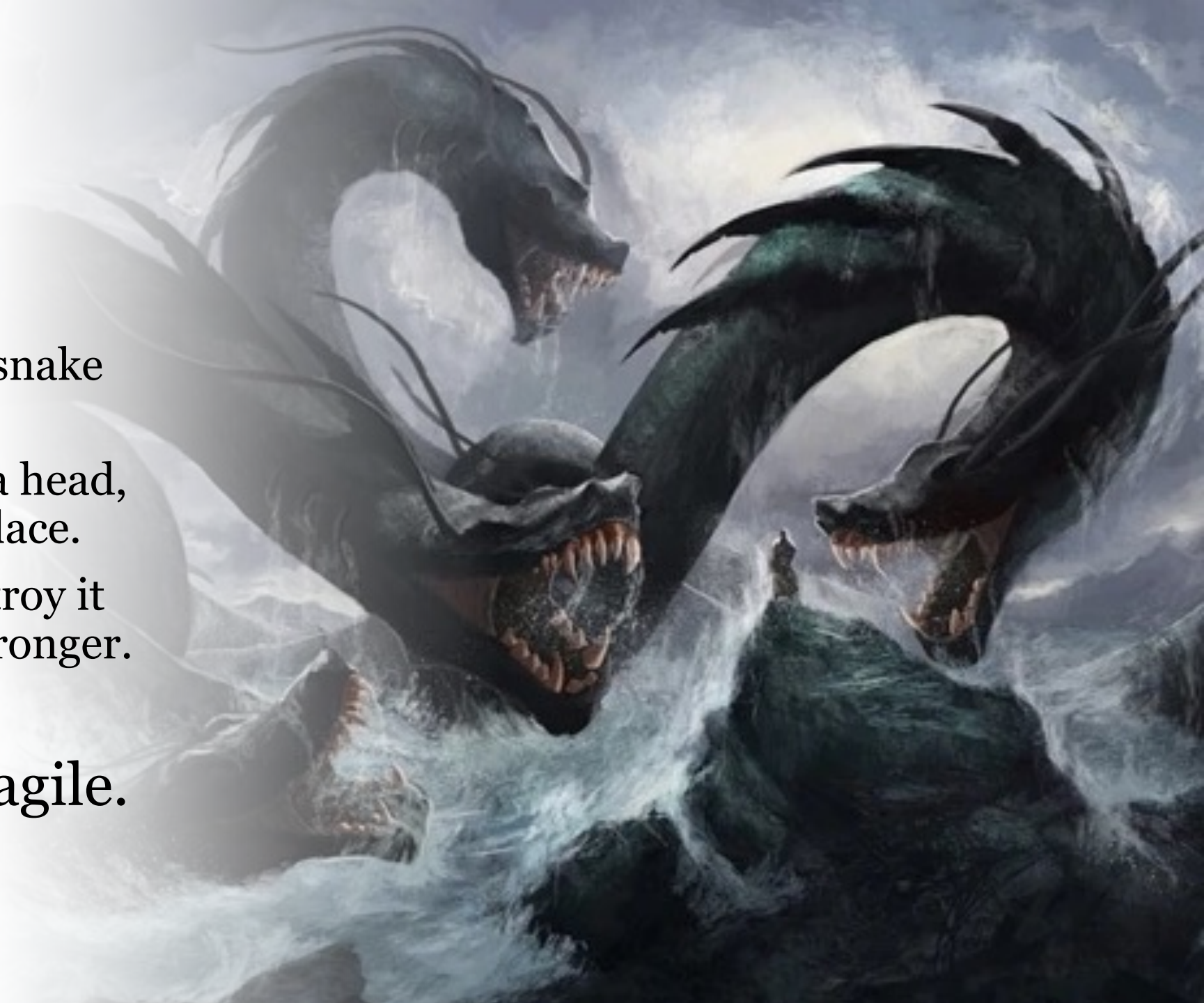
Sounds LUCKY, right?

But it's not Lucky. It's by DESIGN.



Remember Hydra?

- Hydra was giant water snake with many heads.
- When Hercules cut off a head, two would grow in its place.
- The act of trying to destroy it made it stronger and stronger.
- Hydra was antifragile.



In a Ted Talk by Misha Kaur, she uses this example of a Flame in discussing Fragile, Robust, Resilient, and Antifragile

Fragile Flame



How to design antifragile systems | Misha Kaur | TEDxCanberra



Robust to Resilient Flames



Put that flame on TOP
of Kindling and
Firewood and IF that
strong wind knocks it
over, it gets BIGGER.
The more Oxygen you
add, the bigger it gets!



This is ANTIfragile.



Notice that set up didn't happen by Accident. Someone Designed it.

- They looked at likely stressors (the breeze/wind)
- They looked at how to make the flame robust and resilient.
- And they figured out a way – designed it – to be antifragile.

*Go ahead, throw that wind at me
and see what happens!*

What else gets stronger with stress or under seeming awful conditions or even when damaged?

- Muscles. Stretch and tear them some and they get bigger and stronger. Our physical vitality can make us *more than resilient*. It can make us stronger physically and mentally.
- Weeds... they will come up pushing through cracks and in walls and in crevices.
- People under extreme stress have been known to lift cars up and do things they didn't know they could do.
- Many online games have armor that is designed to get stronger when bashed than it was initially. In real life, some metals react that way. Lead becomes stronger when under pressure. Up to 250 times stronger!
- In computer science, there is a structured proposal for an "Antifragile Software Manifesto", to react to traditional system designs. The idea is to develop antifragility by design, building a system which improves from environment's input.
- Concrete, which is filled with tiny holes, is stronger with pressure on..

Concrete works so well because of its design. It is designed to be Antifragile under extreme pressure.

Hit the edge with a hammer and it may break, but add a ton of weight... More stress... and it gets **stronger.**

Compressive strength of concrete

The reason concrete is used to support buildings and structures is that it has great compressive strength. What this means is that it's very good at withstanding enormous amounts of weight. This remarkable compressive strength of concrete is attributed to how it's made. It consists of numerous aggregate materials (pulverized stones) and a binder (cement in this case), which gives it the quality of adhesiveness.

These stones fill up all the little voids in the (concrete) structure, giving it a solid, compact and strong body.



A concrete cinder block. (Photo Credit : katorisi / Wikimedia Commons)



Challenges to the Ecosystem
causes some Species to grow
Stronger to Survive against
all Odds. Those Species are
Antifragile.

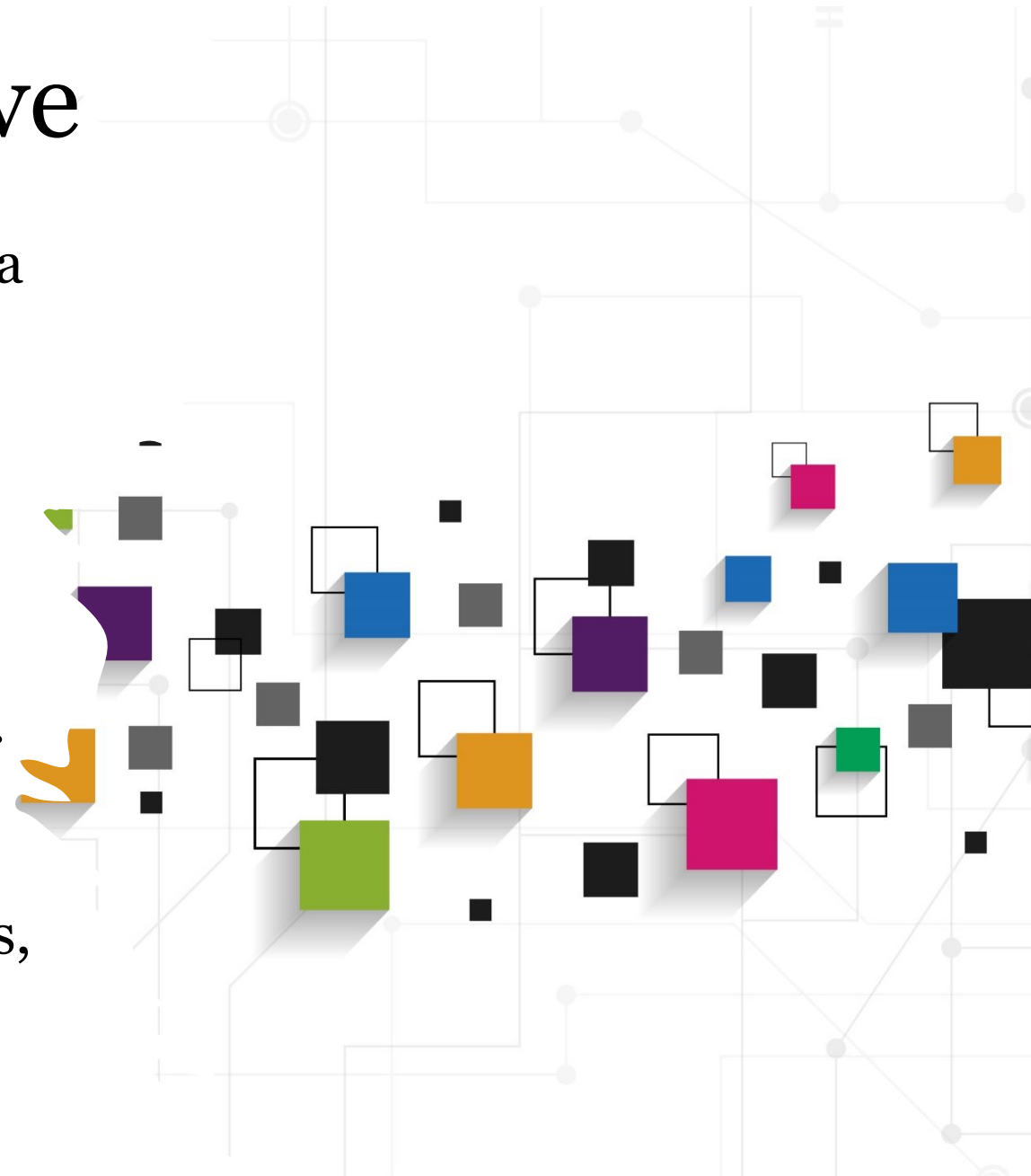
Would humans have developed as we have
without extreme challenges?

Antifragile versus Adaptive

Adaptive systems allow for robustness under a variety of scenarios, yet they are not necessarily antifragile.

An adaptive system is one that changes its behavior based on information available at time of planning. Antifragile systems become better even when they don't have that information about what comes up in advance.

The difference between adaptive and antifragile is the difference between a system that is robust under known volatile conditions, and one that thrives **in a previously unknown environment**.



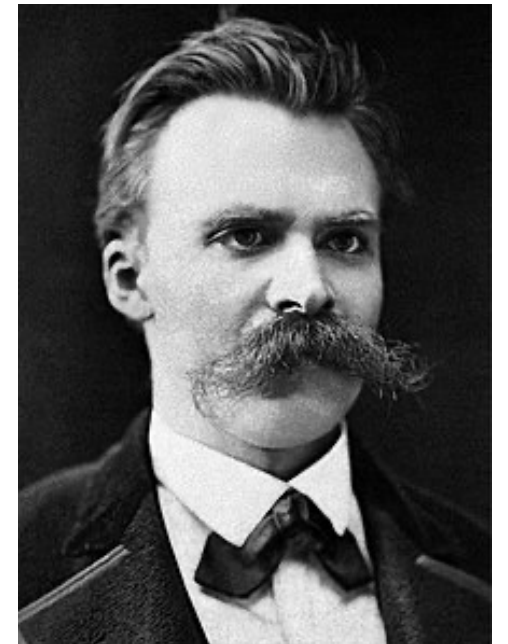


**There are thousands
of examples if you
think about it.**

- Vaccines cause our bodies to react to a virus threat stronger and better.
- Peanut butter was good, but add chocolate and it's even BETTER 😊
- What else?

OF course, it's to a point...
All things can be defeated.

- Muscles and ligaments pushed too hard, detach.
- Concrete can collapse eventually.
- Hydra finally was killed, though it is worth noting...he went out and got the SUPPORT of Iolaus to burn the severed heads before two could grow from it. But Iolaus gets no press 😊
- You might say it took “2 heads” rather than one to figure that out... *“ba-dum-bum-CHING”*



“What doesn’t kill us makes us stronger” said philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche.

I Challenge That

I see disruption or simple change that stops too many people. Not killing them, but certainly not making them stronger.

I say this:

It CAN make us stronger...

IF we DESIGN it that way, first in our minds, and then in our lives.

If we can anticipate that the unknown **WILL** happen... and **PLAN** for it to strengthen us.

No matter what it is - then yes.

It CAN make us stronger!



We may be experiencing disruption now.

We may be seeing our world with
uncertainty.

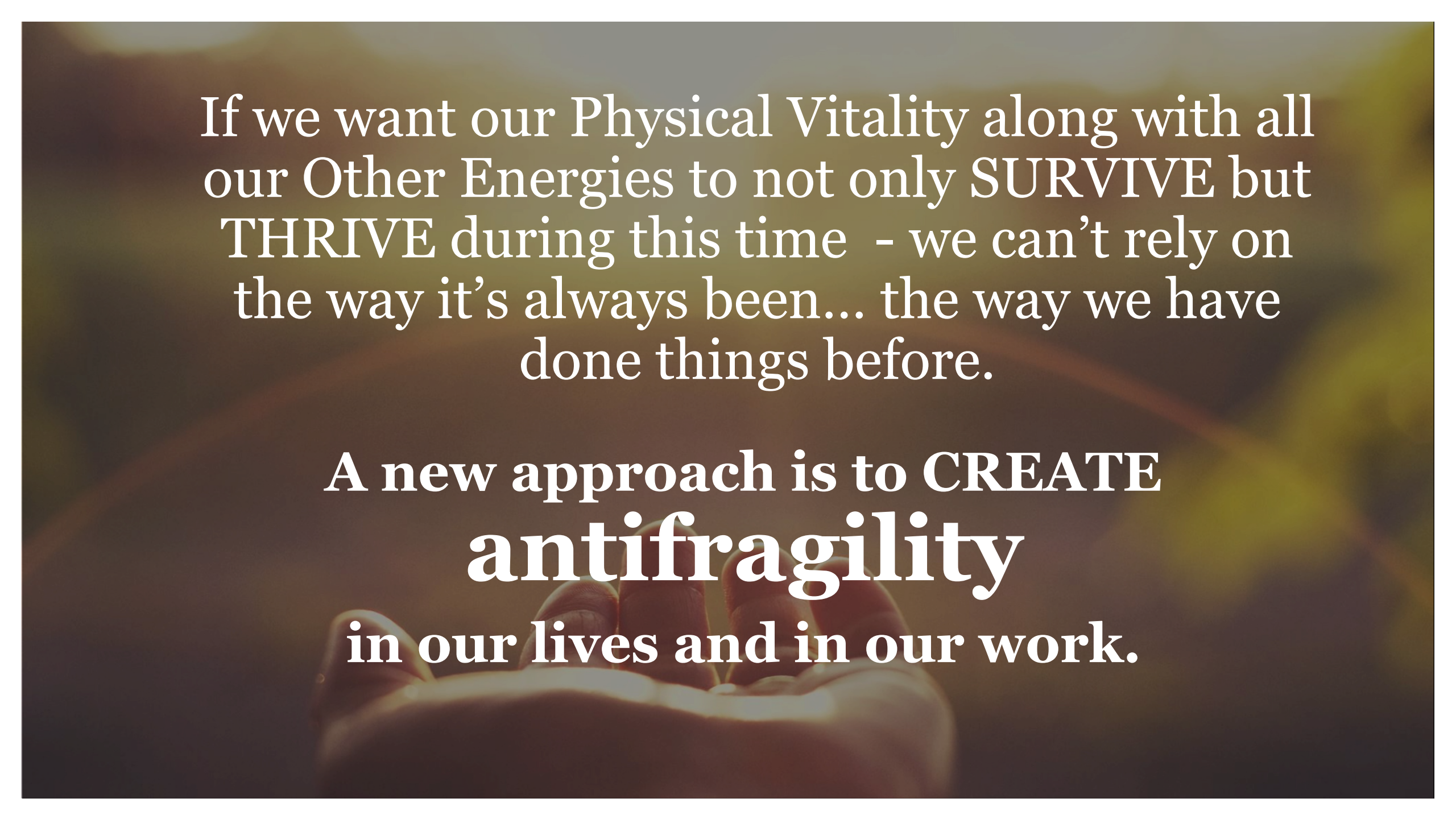
We may be experiencing challenge and
volatility.

Complexity is growing.

Change is constant.
And in this century, it is *faster* too.

The world is faster.
The winds may blow harder.



A hand is shown from the bottom, cupping a small green seedling with two leaves. The background is a soft-focus sunset or sunrise with warm orange and yellow light rays filtering through. The overall mood is hopeful and nurturing.

If we want our Physical Vitality along with all our Other Energies to not only SURVIVE but THRIVE during this time - we can't rely on the way it's always been... the way we have done things before.

**A new approach is to CREATE
antifragility
in our lives and in our work.**

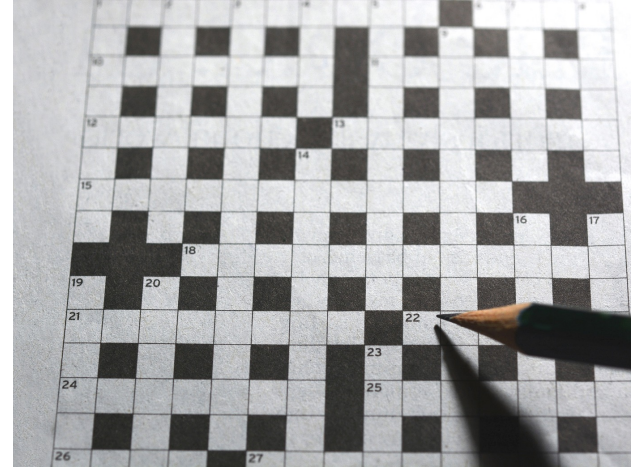


Misha Kaur had some suggestions:

1. Choose NOT to reject or simply live with disorder and change, but instead embrace it. Welcome it. Invite it. Knowing it will make you stronger and better.
2. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Diversify. With both income and investments. Focus on 3-4 sources of business vs one or two. Double those options. If one changes, it won't sink you. Look in terms of what will thrive when others fail. She likens this strategy to a giant Jenga game when you pull a middle block the two outside get more stable. Stronger.

Misha Kaur suggestions continued:

3. Diversify skill sets with hobbies you enjoy that are completely different from your work. Hobbies also keep you from burnout. They give you meaning outside of work. This also keeps you more adaptable to thrive outside your norm.
4. Remember failure is not a negative. Fail fast, fail forward. Be willing to fail so you can learn something new. We learn very little from success, but if we are willing to embrace failure, we learn a lot. Failure creates a feedback loop that can teach you and energize you if you are willing. It makes you better, creating antifragility. She quotes Thomas Edison: *"I have not failed... I have discovered 10,000 things that will not work as a filament!"*





Becoming
Antifragile *BY*
DESIGN
can be a Plan if you
are willing.

- The 1st Key to this concept starts with a decision.
 - *That decision is – No matter what happens, it makes me stronger.*
- The 2nd Key is to ANTICIPATE possible scenarios and have a plan in place. Put kindling and wood under your candle lamp. So, IF it turns over, the light and warmth get bigger.
 - *What COULD go wrong? Let your mind go wild and write down possibilities of what COULD happen and what you'd do about it. This also keeps you from worrying too much, which is paralyzing.*

My Mom used to say

*“Imagine the best,
imagine the worst
and deal with both in
your mind. And
know, it’s likely to
fall somewhere in the
middle.”*



**Antifragility is
an Attitude
more than
anything else.
It's a decision.
So, DECIDE.
BRING IT ON!**

- Will you let the winds of life knock you over?
- Or will you decide they are good and plan for them.
- Decide that they make you stronger, the stronger they blow.
- That they build your core strength even stronger.
- That you WELCOME them.