

Building Resiliency and Therapeutic Recreation: A Natural Fit

Dr. Teresa M. Beck PhD, CTRS

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<https://www.gvsu.edu/tr/faculty-23.htm>

(Click on faculty; scroll down under my name for link to presentation)

What is Resiliency?

- ▶ Ability to bounce back or cope in the face of adversity
- ▶ Bouncing back from problems and stuff with more power and more smarts (15 year old after a semester of resiliency training)

www.resiliency.com/htm/whatisresiliency.htm

Background of Resiliency Research

- ▶ Increased interest and research last 30 years
- ▶ Helped frame the study of development using a strengths model rather than a deficit or problem oriented model
- ▶ Resiliency and invulnerability are not equivalent
 - Resiliency – ability to spring back from adversity; it does not mean one cannot be wounded – as the term invulnerability implies

Background continued

- ▶ Resiliency, once achieved may not always be present
 - As one's circumstances change, so can one's resiliency
 - Having resiliency includes taking action to address a stressful situation

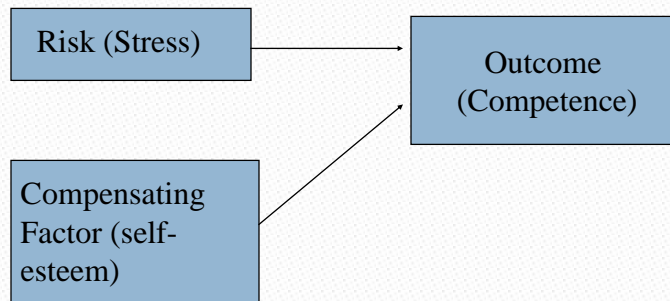
Models of Resiliency

- ▶ Compensatory Model
- ▶ Challenge Model
- ▶ Protective Factor

Compensatory Model

- ▶ Compensatory factor is a variable that neutralizes exposure to risk
- ▶ The compensating factor does not interact with the risk factor, instead it has an independent and direct influence on the outcome.

Figure 1. Compensatory Model



Challenge Model

- ▶ A stressor (risk factor) is treated as an enhancer of successful adaptation if it is not excessive.
- ▶ Too little stress is not challenging enough, and very high levels of stress render the individual helpless
- ▶ Moderate levels of stress, provide the individual with a challenge, that when overcome, strengthens competence

Challenge Model cont.

- ▶ If the challenge is successfully met, this prepares the individual for the next level of difficulty
- ▶ This has been called “inoculation”

Protective Factor Model

- ▶ Protective factor is a process that interacts with a risk factor in reducing the probability of a negative outcome
- ▶ Works by moderating the effect of the exposure to risk, and modifying the response to the risk
- ▶ This model is the most widely studied of the resiliency models

Protective Factory Model cont.

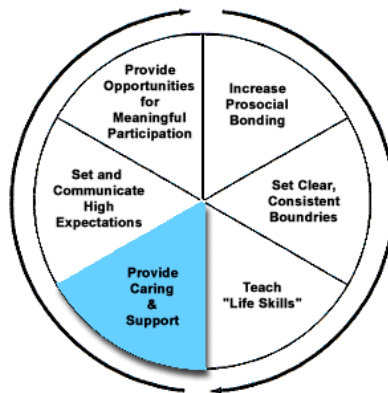
- ▶ Protective Factors
 - Caring and Supporting Relationships
 - High Expectations
 - Meaningful Participation
 - Sense of Purpose and Future
 - Social Competence
 - Problem-Solving Skills
 - Appreciation of Role Models
 - Knowledgeable of Resources

Programming for Protective Factors

- ▶ TR Programs inherently provide these factors
- ▶ We as therapists, need to be more aware of these inherent factors and match them to the needs of our clients to facilitate the building of their resiliency

Resiliency Wheel

Figure 1
The Resiliency Wheel



Adapted from the book *Resiliency In Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators* by Nan Henderson and Mike Milstein, published by Corvin Press, Thoussand Oaks, CA (1996)

Children and Resiliency

- ▶ School Connectedness
- ▶ Peer Connectedness
- ▶ Teacher Connectedness
- ▶ Positive Family–School Links
- ▶ Family Connectedness
- ▶ One caring adult outside the family
- ▶ Community Connectedness
- ▶ Religious involvement
- ▶ Helpful and positive thinking skills and attitudes
- ▶ Social Skills
- ▶ Skills and beliefs related to resourcefulness and adaptivity
- ▶ Emotional Literacy
- ▶ Healthy self esteem: A sense of personal competence
- ▶ Healthy self–esteem: Self knowledge

McGrath and Noble (2008)

Youth and Depression

- ▶ When youth become overwhelmed by adversities they face, the result is often depressed thoughts and behavior patterns
- ▶ Whether young people develop depression or resilience depends largely upon their feelings of powerlessness or capability
- ▶ Feelings of powerlessness can be changed to those of capability – 5 building blocks of resilience

Building Blocks of Resilience

- ▶ Trust
 - ▶ Autonomy
 - ▶ Initiative
 - ▶ Industry (working willingly at a task)
 - ▶ Identity
- ▶ These 5 building blocks correspond to the 1st 5 developmental levels of life (Erikson, 1985)

Paradigm of Resilience

Component	Definition	Building Block
I HAVE	Supports around each individual to promote resilience	Trust
I AM	Encouragement in developing the inner strengths of confidence, self-esteem, and responsibility	Autonomy Identity
I CAN	Acquisition of interpersonal and problem solving skills	Initiative Industry

Grotberg (1999)

Building Resilience in Adults

- ▶ Make connections
- ▶ Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems
- ▶ Accept that change is a part of living
- ▶ Move toward your goals
- ▶ Take decisive actions
- ▶ Look for opportunities for self-discovery
- ▶ Nurture a positive view of yourself
- ▶ Keep things in perspective
- ▶ Maintain a hopeful outlook
- ▶ Take care of yourself

American Psychological Association

Resiliency and Longevity

- ▶ Life's best survivor's are are resilient, hardy, cope well with difficulties, and gain strength from adversity
- ▶ Research into the psychology of aging shows that psychologically resilient adults cope well with an aging body
- ▶ When they lose friends or loved ones, they express their feelings in an open and healthy way

Longevity cont.

- ▶ Work is very important to resilient adults –they are less likely to “retire” because they appreciate the benefits of doing important work
- ▶ People who live longer, blend life–long learning with working and leisure
- ▶ Events experienced as stressful, suppresses immune system functions, thereby increasing vulnerability to diseases and illnesses.
 - Resilient older adults are more stress resistant, less likely to experience frequent anger
- ▶ Resiliency can be developed and increased at any age

Caregiver / Survivor Resiliency

- ▶ Some caregivers are more resilient, hardy, and stress-resistant than others.
- ▶ Hold up well under pressure and even gain strength from the difficulties and strains
- ▶ Common factor is they fully embrace the challenge – instead of complaining, they immerse themselves in the circumstances to be dealt with and let it change their lives

Caregivers / Survivors

- ▶ Find meaning, purpose, and value in difficult circumstances
- ▶ Humans are born with the ability to be made better by life's difficulties
- ▶ Accept and embrace what life has handed you
- ▶ Maintain a playful, curious spirit
- ▶ Constantly learn from experience

Caregivers / Survivors

- ▶ Enjoy solid self-esteem and self-confidence
- ▶ Have good friendships, loving relationships
- ▶ Express feelings honestly
- ▶ Develop open minded empathy
- ▶ Trust intuition
- ▶ Question Authority
- ▶ Deeply resilient people let themselves be transformed by their experiences

**HOW RESILIENT
ARE YOU?**

Resilience at Work

- ▶ Illinois Bell Telephone (IBT) Project
- ▶ Landmark study on how people handle stress at work
- ▶ 12 year study funded by Illinois Bell and the National Institute of Mental Health
- ▶ Followed 450 male and female supervisors, managers and decision makers at IBT through the deregulation of ATT

<http://www.hardinessinstitute.com/?p=776>

Illinois Bell Telephone Project

- ▶ 1 / 2 of employees in sample lost their jobs
- ▶ 2 / 3 of sample broke down in some way
 - Heart attacks, depressive and anxiety disorders
 - Substance abuse
 - Divorced, separated or acted out violently
- ▶ 1 / 3 of employee sample was resilient
 - If they stayed at IBT, they rose to the top of the "heap"
 - If they left, they started companies of their own or accepted strategically important employment in other companies

Roots of Resilience

- ▶ Three resilient attitudes which constitute “hardiness”
 - Commitment
 - Control
 - Challenge

Commitment

- ▶ View work as important
- ▶ Warrants your full attention, imagination and effort
- ▶ Stay involved with events and people around you even when the going gets rough
- ▶ See withdrawal from stressful circumstances as weak
- ▶ Sidestep unproductive alienating social behaviors

Control

- ▶ Try to positively influence the outcomes of the changes going on around you
- ▶ Do your best to find solutions to workday problems
- ▶ Determine which situational features are open to change and gracefully accept those outside your control

Challenge

- ▶ See change as instrumental in opening up new, fulfilling pathways for living
- ▶ Face up to stressful changes, try to understand them, learn from them, and solve them
- ▶ Embrace life's challenges, not deny and avoid them
- ▶ This expresses optimism toward the future rather than the fear of it.

Other Hardiness Research

- ▶ The higher your hardiness level, the milder your physiological arousal to stress (as measured by blood pressure, heart rate)
- ▶ Hardiness studied as a predictor of leadership behavior (role modeling, helping bring out the best in others, etc.)
- ▶ Nurses high in hardiness take fewer sick days and show less depression, anxiety, and burnout.

Attitudes Influence Resilience

- ▶ Courage and Motivation
- ▶ Denial and Avoidance
 - If you stop thinking about it, it will go away
 - Dwell on things which one has no control over
- ▶ Catastrophic Reactions and Striking Out
 - Overreact to change that decreases sense of support
 - Overpersonalize workplace changes

Individual Skills and Abilities

- ▶ Insight
- ▶ Independence
- ▶ Creativity
- ▶ Humor
- ▶ Initiative
- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Values Orientation

Implications for TR Practice

- ▶ TR Treatment approaches
 - Increases independence
 - Increases creativity and initiative
 - Increases social skills and ability to build relationships resulting in social competence
 - Builds self esteem and self confidence
 - Develops problem solving skills

Implications for TR Practice

- ▶ Leisure Education Approaches
 - Meaningful participations
 - Sense of purpose and future
 - Knowledge of resources and community connectedness
 - Values Orientations and insight

QUESTIONS?

Resources

- ▶ Fergus, S & Zimmerman, M. (2005). Adolescent resilience: A framework for developing healthy development in the face of risk. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 26: 399–419.
- ▶ Grotberg, E. (1999). Countering depression with the five building blocks of resilience. *Reaching Today's Youth* 4(1, Fall): 66–72
- ▶ Maddi, S.R. & Khisgaba. (2005). *Resilience at work: How to succeed no matter what life throws you*. New York: MJF Books.
- ▶ www.ibrarian.net/navon/paper/Helping_Kids_to_BOUNCE_BA_CK.pdf
- ▶ *The Illinois Bell Telephone Study: How Hardiness Began*. <http://www.hardinessinstitute.com/?p=776>
- ▶ *The road to resilience*. American Psychological Association. <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

Resources Continued

- ▶ www.resiliencycenter.com
- ▶ www.resiliency.com (*Resiliency in Action*)