

Enhancing Adolescent Resilience & Wellbeing

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Risk, Resilience & Coping

Risk factors (e.g. poverty, illness, abuse)

Risk behaviours
(substance misuse, unsafe sex)

At risk...(vulnerable/face significant adversity)

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Risk

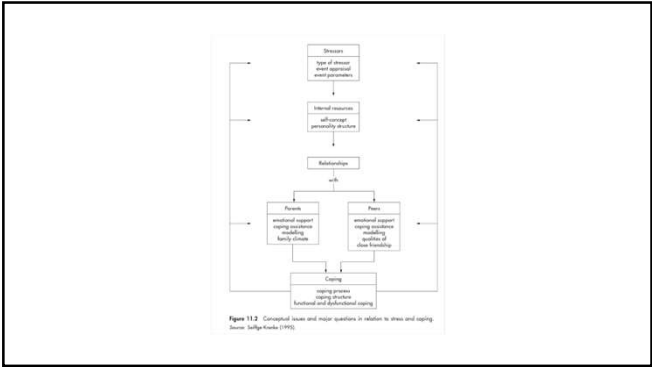
Individual factors	Family factors	Community factors
• Poor cognitive & emotional skills • Poor health	• Parental conflict • Erratic discipline • Disruptive siblings	• Quality of schooling • Lack of role models • Level of substance abuse

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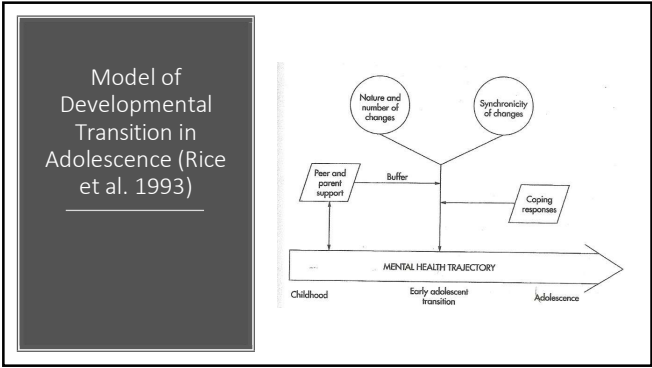
Risk

- Stressors (Compass, 2004):
 - Normative
 - Acute
 - Chronic

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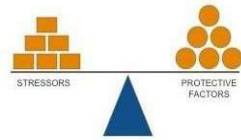
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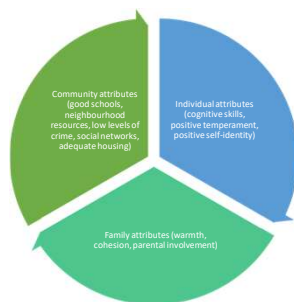
Protective Factors

Individual
Family
Community



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Protective Factors



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Coping

Coping – Processes

- Emotion-focused
- Problem-focused



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Resilience

- Resilience refers to the process of overcoming the negative effects of risk exposure, coping successfully with traumatic experiences, and avoiding the negative trajectories associated with risks (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005).
- "...the flexibility in response to changing situational demands, and the ability to bounce back from negative emotional experiences" (Tugade et al., 2004, p.1169)
- Resilient people "not only cope with the event, they often learn and are transformed by their experiences" (Dunn, Uswatte, & Elliot, 2009, p. 656).

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Resilience

- "It is the study of psychological resilience that seeks to understand why some individuals are able to withstand – or even thrive on – the pressure they experience in their lives" (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013, p. 12)
- Resilience is a multi-definitional construct.
- Resilience research have focused on identifying protective factors to understanding the process through which individuals overcome the adversities they experience (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000).

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Resilience

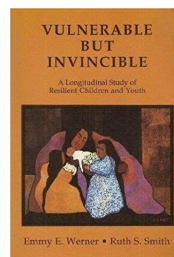
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Competence and Adaptation in Adult Schizophrenia Patients and Children at Risk

Normal Gershon, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

This book is a collection of essays that explore the concept of resilience in the context of adult schizophrenia patients and children at risk. The essays are written by leading experts in the field and provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of research on resilience. The book is divided into two main sections: the first section focuses on adult schizophrenia patients and the second section focuses on children at risk. Each section contains several essays that explore different aspects of resilience, such as the role of family, community, and individual factors. The book is a valuable resource for researchers and clinicians interested in understanding the process of resilience and how it can be fostered in vulnerable populations.



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Resilience

- Emmy Werner (developmental psychologist) – Hawaii- Study began in 1955
- Selected 500 plus children born at risk that year
- Further examined 30% of the children who were at high risk (with 4 or more significant risk factors)
- 2/3 had significant negative life problems, but 1/3 did not! They had positive outcomes! Described as children who... "lived well, loved well, played well & expected well" (Werner, 1973, p. 35)
- What did these children who "made it" despite the odds have in their lives?

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Dimensions of Resilience



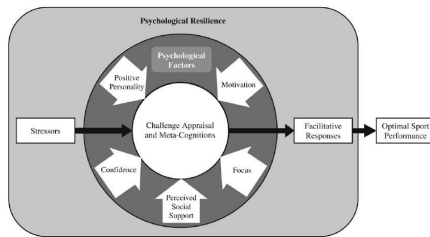
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Resilience

- Trait, process or outcome?
- Personality traits – extraversion and conscientiousness (Cohan & Stein, 2006)
- Adversity and positive adaptation
- Resilience theory/research – predominantly Western psychological discourse (lacking sociocultural context)
- Role of contemporary stress and emotion theory (appraisal)
- Meta-model of stress, emotions, and performance (Fletcher & Fletcher, 2010)

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Resilience



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Promotion of
Resilience in
Young People
(Newman,
2004):

Reduce	Reduce the young person's exposure to risk
Find	Find ways of interrupting the chain reaction of negative events
Offer	Offer the young person positive experiences in order to enhance the strength of potential protective factors. (Christchurch project).

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Threats to Resilience

- Trauma
- Divorce
- Disability
- Loss of a loved one or support system
- Chronic stress
- Too much change

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Resilience



Focus on strengths



Positive psychology:

Posttraumatic growth
Positive emotions (e.g. happiness studies)
Social support and relationships
Sense of coherence (meaningfulness, comprehensibility and manageability)

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Resilience

Major components (Hefferon & Boniwell, 2011):

1) Reframing

2) Experience of positive emotions

3) Participation in physical activity

4) Trusted social support

5) The use of personal and authentic strengths

6) Optimism

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Resilience (Models)

Compensatory

- A protective factor operates in an opposite direction of a risk factor.

Protective

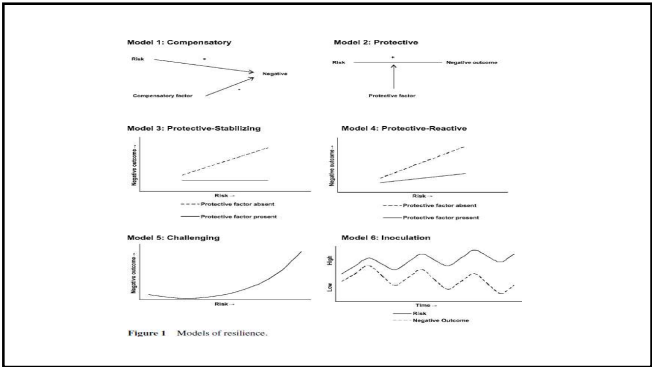
- Assets/resources moderate the effects of a risk on a negative outcome.

Challenge

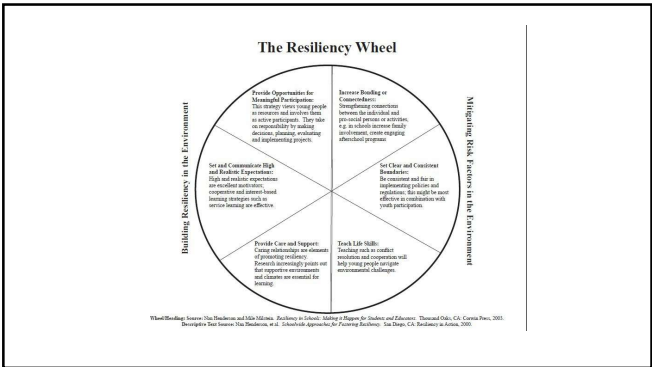
- Exposure to low levels and high levels of a risk factor are associated with negative outcomes, but moderate levels of the risk are related to less negative (or positive) outcomes.

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Exploring Previous Resiliency

- What was your goal?
- What was the outcome?
- What obstacles did you have to overcome?
- What unpleasant feelings and thoughts do you remember having in the situation?
- Who if anyone did you receive external help and support from?
- What specific attitudes and skills helped you cope with the situation?
- How would you rate your resilience in that situation?
- Why wasn't it 100%? What strengths and personal qualities helped you?
- If it wasn't 100%, how could your resilience be improved during similar situations in the future?
- Based on your experience how might you advise someone else to cope with a similar situation in the future?

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Gratitude Jar

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Resilient
Adolescents
(Coleman,
2012)

- Maintains a positive outlook
- Develops realistic goals and works toward them (e.g. self-efficacy)
- Takes responsibility/initiative - learns from mistakes
- Keeps a long term and broader perspective
- Self-confidence

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Parenting
Strategies
(Coleman,
2013)

- Be empathetic (we all want to feel understood)
- Have reasonable expectations
- Use reasonable discipline methods
- Give more decision making as adolescent matures
- Be communicative (think aloud)
- Don't react negatively to negative emotions
- Give more responsibility to your teen
- Model healthy lifestyle

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Improving Wellbeing

There are a whole range of ways that we can improve our wellbeing and resilience.

The New Economics Foundation (Government's Foresight project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing, 2008) has set out **five things** that we can all do to **improve our wellbeing....**

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Connect...

With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

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Be active...

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

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Take notice...

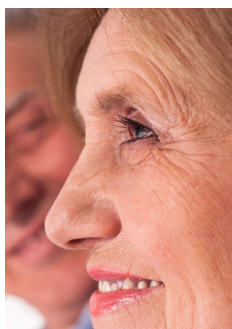
Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.



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Give...

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.



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Keep learning...

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

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