

A Path to Resilience



Dr. Arielle Schwartz

Being Flexible in a Changing World

"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most adaptable to change"



Charles Darwin

Questions of Resiliency

- What is Resilience?
- What coping strategies and behaviors are associated with the greatest **adaptation** to difficult life events?
- What are the most effective means of integrating these strategies into your life?
- Can I stay open to life knowing that loss and pain happen?

What is Resilience?

Resilience is adapting well in the face of adversity--It means "bouncing back" from difficult experiences.



Resilience is both a Process and an Outcome

- Being resilient does not mean that we don't experience difficulty.
- The path to resilience involves the capacity to respond effectively to difficult experiences.



Resilience as a Process

- **Work through vulnerable emotions**
- **Challenge negative thought beliefs**
- **Explore meaning making**



**A willingness to engage in life
knowing that loss and painful
events happen**



Resilience as an Outcome

- Greater Choice
- Increased emotional freedom-I let go of resentments and hardships
- Greater capacity to accept myself as I am and my life as it is.
- I am able to live in the Present Moment



**“I am not what happened to me, I am what
I choose to become.” Carl Jung**



Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and practiced.



Difficult life events can lead to positive changes:

- Enhanced interpersonal relationships
- Increased willingness to ask for and accept help
- Increased willingness to be vulnerable
- Increased recognition of social supports that had previously been ignored.
- Increased appreciation of life
- Increased ability to “take it easy”
- Newly found interests or passions
- Spiritual discoveries

Factors of Resilience The Hardiness Institute



Challenge

Control

Commitment

Challenge

- Challenge involves a “growth mindset” helps us see challenging experiences as events that we can learn from and grow from.



Control

- Control helps us stay involved in life. Rather than lapse into passivity and powerlessness; you need to believe that with effort, you can influence the course of events in your life.



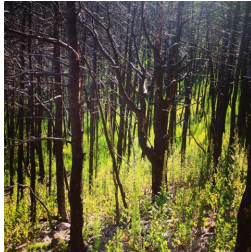
Commitment

- Commitment is the ability to stay involved; staying engaged in ongoing events rather than isolating.



“Courage is not the absence of despair; it is, rather, the capacity to move ahead *in spite of despair.*”

Rollo May



Nurture a positive view of yourself:

- Research indicates the human tendency to focus on the negative.
- A positive approach is a practice that needs to be developed.

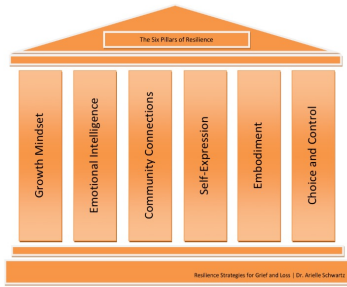


Practice Acceptance

- Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed will help you focus on circumstances that you do have control over and can change.



6 Pillars of Resilience



Growth Mindset:

- Explore how difficult life events have strengthened you. How have you grown as a result of your struggles in life?



Emotional Intelligence:

- Express vulnerable or painful emotions. This allows greater access to acceptance, compassion, and joy.
- Talk about it and write about it.



Community Connections:

- Good relationships with close family members, friends, or others.
- Seek out and actively build your social circle.
- Stay involved (make the phone calls, reach out, go to social events and meetings)



Self Expression:

- Paint, dance, write a poem, make music, listen to music.
- Don't worry that it looks or sounds good for anyone else; It is the process not the product that is important.



Embodiment:

- Engage in activities that you enjoy.
- Take care of your body.
- Get back to basics:
 - Exercise
 - Eat well
 - Relaxation
 - Sleep well



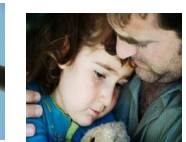
Choice and Control:

- Remain involved and engaged in life. Develop realistic goals and ask yourself what steps you can accomplish each day that help move you towards achievement of your goals.



“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall”

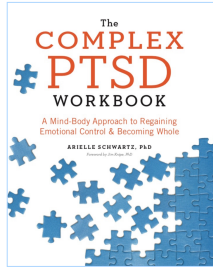
Nelson Mandela



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- Martin Seligman: www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu

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