

Understanding Trauma, Resilience and Trauma-Informed Care

This training is provided by support from the Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health Behavioral Health Community Impact Fund and Let's Talk, Lancaster.



MODULE 2

Individual Differences, Risk and Resilience

- Individual Differences
- Risk and Resilience Factors
- Building Resilience and Fostering Healing
- Post-Trauma Pathways and Stages of Healing from Trauma

Different people, different responses

- ◆ We all respond to situations and events differently
- ◆ What's traumatic for one person might not bother someone else
- ◆ We respond based on our own experiences, childhood, current level of stress, and other factors
- ◆ Symptoms or reactions might happen right away or be delayed, even for months or years
- ◆ Factors
 - ◆ Life experiences
 - ◆ Childhood & upbringing
 - ◆ Current level of stress
 - ◆ Childhood trauma vs trauma as adults
 - ◆ Risk factors / Protective factors

Culture and Trauma

The following are influenced by cultural factors:

- Risk and type of trauma exposure
- How a person describes their experience
- How distress is expressed
- Which topics are acceptable to discuss
- How a person makes meaning of experiences and heals from trauma

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Gender differences and trauma

Gender Differences and Trauma

Females	Males
Typical trauma: childhood sexual abuse	Typical trauma: witnessing violence
More likely to develop PTSD when exposed to violence	More likely to be exposed to violence, but less likely to develop PTSD
Repeated exposure to sexual and violent victimisation from intimates, beginning in childhood Exposure to violence from strangers and adversaries; sexual abuse and coercion outside family	Exposure to violence from strangers and adversaries; sexual abuse and coercion outside family
Internalising: self-harm, eating disorders, addiction, avoidance	Externalising: violence, substance abuse, crime and hyper-arousal
Likely to get mental health treatment rather than substance abuse treatment	Likely to get substance abuse treatment rather than mental health treatment
Treatment needs to emphasise empowerment, emotional regulation, and safety	Treatment needs to emphasise feelings, relationships, and empathy

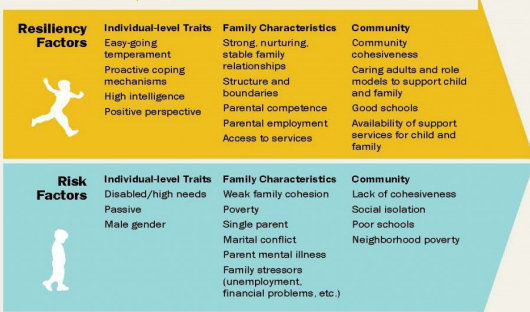
Source: Miller & Najavits, 2012.

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Risk/Resilience Factors for Children

Protecting children from trauma's impact are resiliency factors; at the same time, risk factors, many associated with urban poverty, exacerbate impacts.

What helps a child bounce back from trauma?



What puts a child at greater risk for adverse outcomes?

The Health Foundation of Western and Central New York.
https://hfwcny.org/hfwcny-content/uploads/FINAL_CNY_KidsTrauma_Research_Brief.pdf

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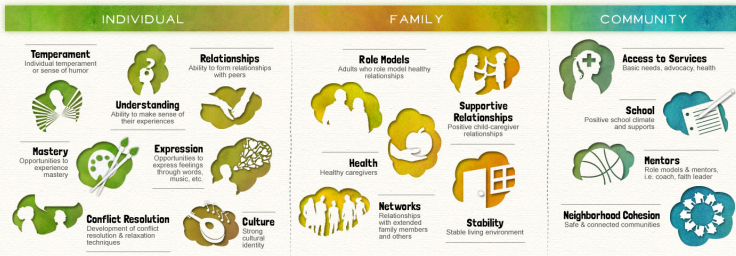
PROMISING FUTURES PROMOTING RESILIENCY

among children and youth experiencing domestic violence

Almost 30 million American children will be exposed to family violence by the time they are 17 years old.¹¹ Kids who are exposed to violence are affected in different ways and not all are traumatized or permanently harmed. Protective factors can promote resiliency, help children and youth heal, and support prevention efforts.

Research indicates that the #1 protective factor in helping children heal from the experience is the presence of a consistent, supportive, and loving adult—most often their mother.¹²

PROTECTIVE FACTORS THAT PROMOTE RESILIENCY



Get started at www.PromisingFuturesWithoutViolence.org
 National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)
 National Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 77054

Promising Futures: Best Practices for Serving Children, Youth & Parents is a project of Futures Without Violence.



Building Resilience in Children: "Changing the script"

Blame and punishment don't work. Shift to positive discipline.

INSTEAD OF	THINK
Assuming the child is intentionally misbehaving	The child lacks skills
Shaming for lack of skills	How to build missing skills
Criticizing	How to nurture
Blaming	Teaching

SOURCE: Children's Resilience Initiative - www.resiliencetrumpsaces.org

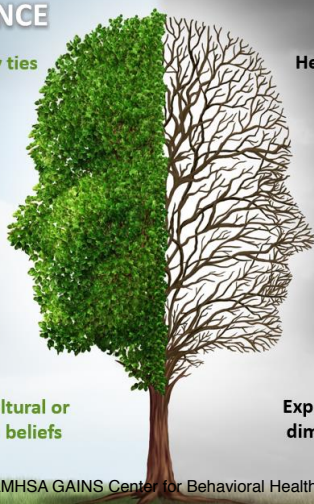
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Risk/Resilience Factors for Adults

RESILIENCE

RISK

- Family ties
- Strong primary relationship
- Connection to community
- Employment
- Biology
- Meaningful activity
- Strong cultural or religious beliefs



- Health issues
- Pre-existing mental health problems
- Severity of trauma
- Proximity to trauma
- Biology
- Numerous traumas
- Experiences that diminish coping capacity

People *think* differently about trauma



What Resilience is NOT

- ◆ NOT just about “grit” or “toughing it out”
- ◆ NOT about just “moving on” or “getting over it”
- ◆ NOT about telling the person lying on the ground with a boot-clad foot on their neck that they need to make their neck stronger
 - ◆ We also need to look at systems and structures.
 - ◆ What has to be done to get that boot-clad foot OFF of the person’s neck?

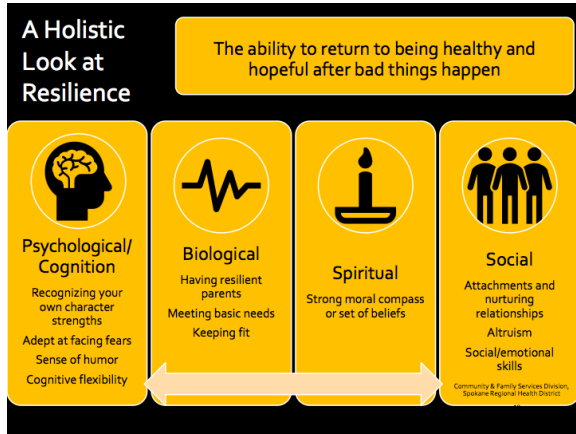
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Resilience defined

- ◆ Resilience is “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of threat.” (American Psychological Association)
- ◆ EVERYONE can learn to be more resilient and we can re-wire our brains for resilience (neuro-plasticity)

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Resilience



Source: Tracey Gendron and Gigi Amateau, "Trauma-Informed Care in Nursing Homes," webinar July 24, 2018, presented by HealthInsight. <http://bit.ly/Hi-TIC>.

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What is needed to heal from trauma and build resilience?

- ◆ Meaningful **connection** with others
- ◆ **Support** from family, friends, church, community, trusted others
- ◆ **Spiritual connections**: a sense of something larger than oneself
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in **social activities**
- ◆ Opportunities to **volunteer/be of service** in the community
- ◆ Structure & a **daily routine**
- ◆ Good **physical health**: proper diet, plenty of sleep, good medical care, low stress, avoid drugs/alcohol
- ◆ Opportunities for **fun, play, laughter**
- ◆ Opportunities for **creative** endeavors
- ◆ Opportunities to be out in **nature**

SAMHSA: Dealing with the Effects of Trauma: A Self-Help Guide

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What is needed to heal from trauma and build resilience?

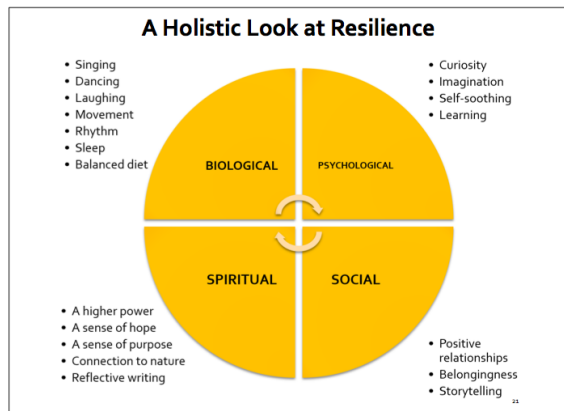
- ◆ Feeling **empowered**, to counteract traumatic experiences where all control was taken away from you
- ◆ Feeling **validated**: needing others to listen to you, to validate the importance of what happened to you, to believe you, to understand
- ◆ Feeling **connected** in supportive, meaningful relationships
- ◆ Feeling a sense of **hope** that things can get better
- ◆ Feeling that your life has **meaning and purpose**
- ◆ Being able to **trust** other people again

SAMHSA: Dealing with the Effects of Trauma: A Self-Help Guide



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
Resilience



Source: Tracey Gendron and Gigi Amateau, "Trauma-Informed Care in Nursing Homes," webinar July 24, 2018, presented by HealthInsight. <http://bit.ly/Hi-TIC>.

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Post-Trauma Pathways

- Resilience
 - Recovery
 - Post-traumatic growth
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- Severe persisting distress
 - Decline
 - Stable maladaptive functioning
 - PTSD
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National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments:
<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/>

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Post-Trauma Pathways

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- Severe persisting distress
 - Body's attempts to adjust are not effective
 - Requires more intensive, individualized supports
 - Decline
 - Initially appear to be managing the strain of the trauma
 - Over time unable to maintain healthy functioning
 - Difficulties may begin months or years after the event
 - Stable maladaptive functioning
 - Poor functioning before and after a traumatic event
 - History of exposure to adversity
 - Vulnerable to continued negative effects
 - PTSD

National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments:
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Post-Trauma Pathways

PTSD: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Symptoms

- Re-experiencing (nightmares, flashbacks, reactions to trauma reminders)
- Avoidance of trauma reminders
- Changes to the stress response system (on alert danger, reactive)
- Negative changes in beliefs about self, others, and mood

Consider cultural factors related to PTSD symptoms.

Post-Trauma Pathways

- Resilience: A positive, adaptive response to significant adversity
 - Adaptable, caring, and supportive relationships
 - A sense of mastery over life circumstances
 - Strong executive function and self-regulation skills
 - Safe and supportive environments
 - Affirming faith or cultural traditions
- Recovery
 - Longer period of disruption
 - Return to earlier level of functioning
- Post-traumatic growth: Positive change or transformation as a result of a traumatic experience



Post-Trauma Pathways

Resilience, Recovery, Growth

Resilience

- May demonstrate resilience in one type of situation but not another.
- Coping skills that support resilience can be developed at any age.
- People do not develop the capacity to positively adapt to adversity in isolation - positive, supportive relationships are essential.

Stages of Healing from Trauma

- ◆ Establish safety: control, safety planning, social support, self-care
- ◆ Healthy relationships: empowerment, validation, compassion
- ◆ Remembrance and mourning
- ◆ Reconnection/integration

“This is something that happened, it was traumatic, but it no longer impacts who I am or what I do in life”

(adapted from Judith Herman, Trauma and Recovery)

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Stages of Healing from Trauma

- ◆ Reconnection/integration phase includes “paying it forward” - a desire to help other people
- ◆ Many human services professionals have trauma histories, but may not have gone through the stages of recovery themselves
- ◆ This may explain high levels of burnout/turnover in helping professions

(adapted from Judith Herman, Trauma and Recovery)

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Summary

- ◆ In Module 2, we’ve looked at:
 - ◆ Individual differences in how people respond to traumatic events
 - ◆ Risk and resilience factors
 - ◆ Building resilience and fostering healing
 - ◆ Post-trauma pathways and stages of healing from trauma
- ◆ In Module 3, we’ll explore:
 - ◆ Trauma Histories and Universal Precautions
 - ◆ Using Trauma-Informed Responses
 - ◆ Becoming a Trauma-Informed Organization

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