

Building Individual & Family Resilience: Strength Under Pandemic Stress



RTS Webinar – 9/19/20
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Participants will:

- Increase their awareness of mental health challenges confronting individuals & families during the pandemic
- Become familiar with the concept of resilience
- Learn resilience-based strategies applicable to individual & family related challenges
- Implement resilience-based coping strategies to ease pandemic related stresses

The scope and impact of covid-19 pandemic on individuals & society:

- 189,000 Americans died from Covid-19
- Isolated tens of millions of people
- Left 50 million unemployed
- Altered every aspect of American life, from health and work to education and exercise
- Uncertain about pandemic duration, treatment(s), outcome and the future

Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Americans:

- Overall, 40.9% of U.S. adults report at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition (CDC Survey – 6/24-6/30/20)
- 31% experienced anxiety or depression symptoms with 30% experiencing both
- 26% experienced trauma disorders like PTSD
- 13% started/increased their level of substance usage
- 11% report contemplating suicide in the past month
- 63% of young adults (18-24) report anxiety & depression with 25% reporting increased substance use & contemplating suicide
- Black & Latino respondents report higher rates of suicidal thoughts with 15.1% and 18.6%, respectively
- High rates , 40%, of anxiety/depression for Latino respondents
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Primary pandemic Stressors Impacting Parents and Families:

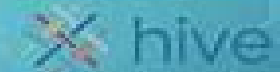
- Education & basic needs – disruption of children’s lives, managing distance/online learning, missing major milestones access to healthcare, food, housing.. (APA Survey 4/24-5/4/20)
- Government response to Covid-19 – 74% of parents with children under 18 vs. 63% non-parents
- Economy and work – 70% of respondents say economy is major source of stress. Similarly, 70% of employed respondents say work is a major source of stress in their lives
- People of color report higher stress - Hispanics (37%), compared with white (32%), Black (32%), Native Americans (31%), and Asians (28%) adults

Common Pandemic Reactions:

COMMON REACTIONS WE MAY BE EXPERIENCING...

- ✓ General apprehension, anxiety and fear of the unknown.
- ✓ Fears around your health and the health of loved ones.
- ✓ Sadness, loss of interest, hopelessness and apathy.
- ✓ Financial and economic concerns.
- ✓ Stress and irritation towards those around you.

APLA Health



Concept of Resilience:

It's not what happens to you but what you make out of what happens to you that makes you resilient.



What Is Resilience?



What is Resilience

- It is generally defined as the ability to “bounce back” to healthy functioning when faced with significant stressors and events.
- Resilience does not eliminate stress or erase life's difficulties. Instead, it gives people the strength to tackle problems head on, overcome adversity and move on with their lives.
- Resilience develops as people grow up and gain better thinking and self-management skills and more knowledge.

Resilience: Core principles

How You Respond

Resilience is all about your response - managing your mind-set and emotions, being proactive and cultivating high self care. When we build resilience we can weather the most severe storms.

Respond don't React

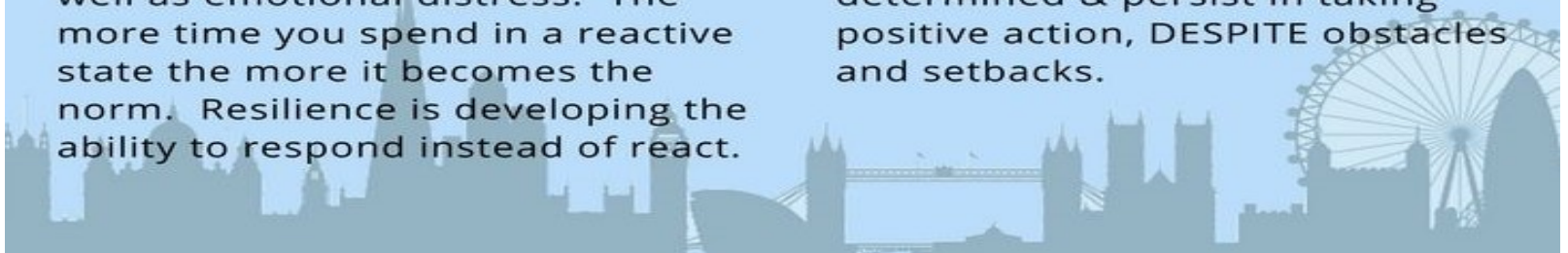
Being in a reactive state is the opposite of resilience. It creates greater risk of physical illness as well as emotional distress. The more time you spend in a reactive state the more it becomes the norm. Resilience is developing the ability to respond instead of react.

Resilience not Resistance

Resistance is inflexible, frozen, stuck & acts as a barrier to change - it holds back progress. Resilient people see the opportunity in change and can thrive in a changing environment.

Realistic Optimism

Being able to create a new vision and see a better future enables the realistic optimist to be determined & persist in taking positive action, **DESPITE** obstacles and setbacks.



Benefits of building your own resilience

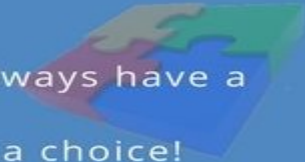


SO WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BUILDING YOUR OWN RESILIENCE ?



You can learn to become aware of what your triggers are so you can learn to **RESPOND** instead of react.

Did you know you always have a choice?
Making no choice is a choice!
Resilience training helps you to develop your decision making & problem solving skills so you feel more confident & in control of what happens.



You can learn to increase empathy through trust. To increase empathy is to gain trust & trust is the basis of all healthy relationships



Being mindful to the present moment is a great help when you are trying to come out of the reactive mode into the responsive mode.

Individual Vulnerability Factors

The Art of Resilience

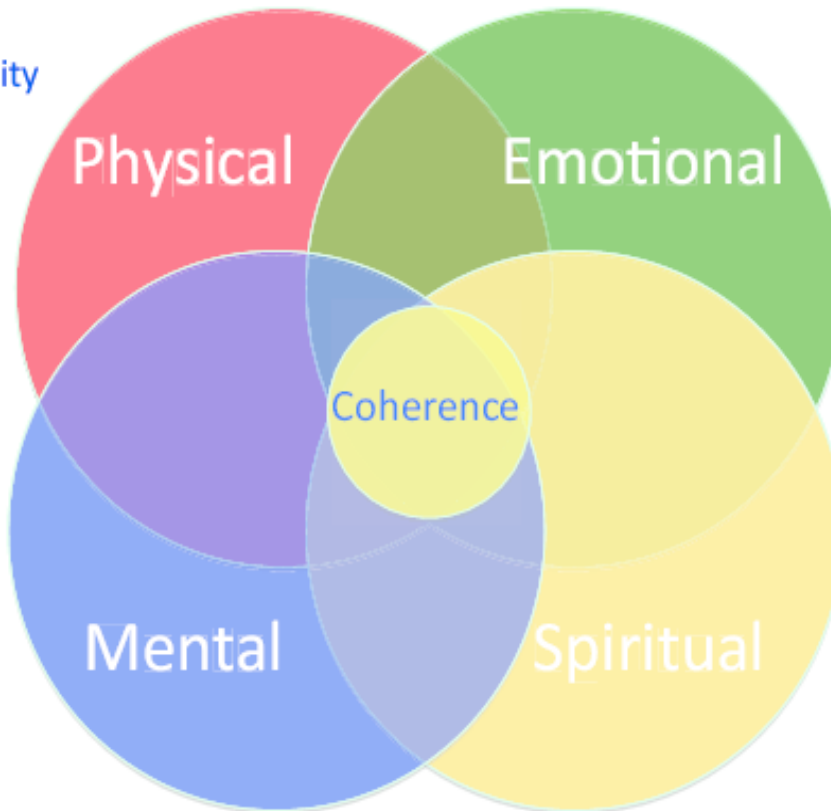
- ▶ Vulnerability factors are individual traits, genetic predispositions, or environmental and biological deficits which may **cause heightened response, sensitivity, or reaction to stressors.**
 - ▶ Cognitive impairment (including FASD)—Early steps
 - ▶ Lack of social support- Social skills
 - ▶ Emotional dysregulation -Distress tolerance & Mindfulness
 - ▶ Ineffective coping skills -Coping skills
 - ▶ Mood or addictive disorders in the person -Screening and early intervention
 - ▶ Poor physical health (pain, nutrition, hormones, sleep) - Wellness behaviors, health education

Resilience: Protective Factors & Risk Factors

Protective Factors	Risk Factors
Individual Factors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feeling of control over one's life • A sense of cohesion with others • Close relationships with competent adults • Connections to prosocial organizations • Tolerance for delayed gratification • A sense of humor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little sense of control over one's life • Poor self-control • Negative emotionality • A need for immediate gratification
Family Factors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good parenting skills • Trusting relationships • Well-defined family roles and responsibilities • Opportunities to learn to deal with criticism, rejection and silence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental and sibling drug use • Poor child rearing and socialization practices • Ineffective parental supervision • Family conflict and marital discord • Domestic violence, abuse and neglect
Community Factors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in school, work and community with a sense of belonging and contributing • A social network of peers • An opportunity to learn to handle challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources • Low socioeconomic status • Communities that lack the ability or resources to reach out to those in need of assistance

Four Domains of Resilience:

- Physical Flexibility
- Endurance
- Strength



- Emotional range and Flexibility
- Positive feelings
- Self Regulation
- Relationships

- Attention span
- Mental Flexibility
- Optimistic world view
- Incorporating multiple points of view

- Commitment to core values
- Flexibility and tolerance of others' values and beliefs
- Intuition

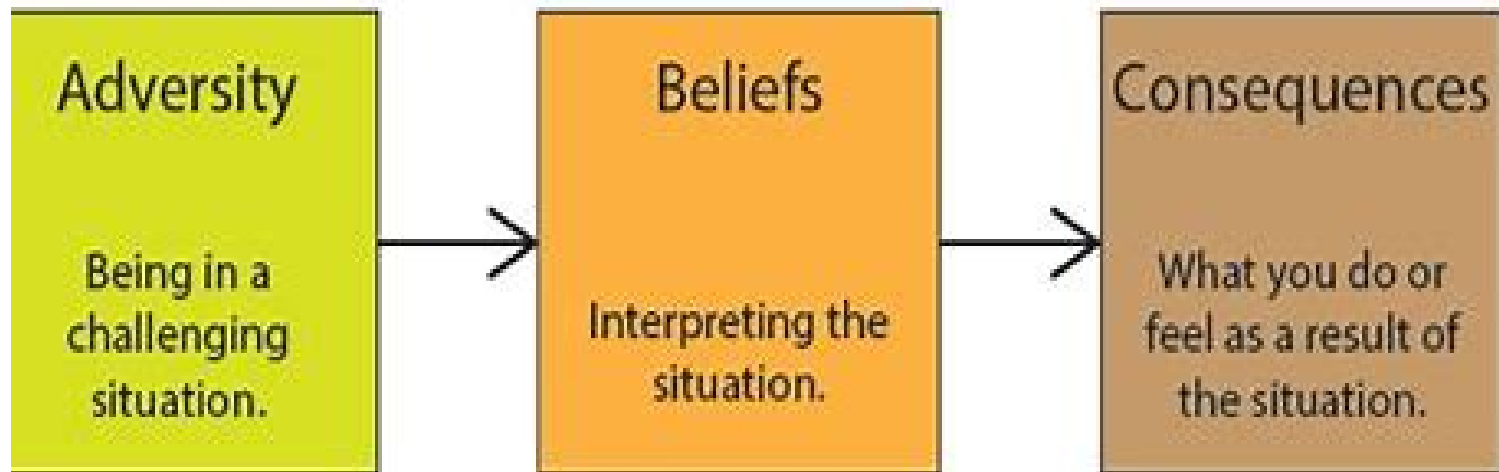
Mental/Mind Domain:

- Understanding one's mindset, belief system and cognitive flexibility
- Use of flexible problem-solving
- Seek challenges
- Keep mentally active
- Utilize help to increase options



Cognitive Model of Resilience:

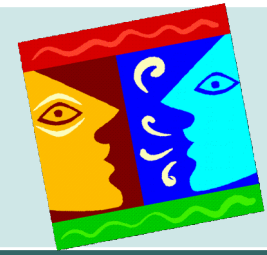
The A-B-C Model of Resilience



Based on the work of Albert Ellis

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Emotional Domain:



- Awareness & understanding of what one is feeling and why: strengths & vulnerabilities
- Employ emotional flexibility with positive feelings towards self, others & adversity
- Self-regulate feelings to minimize reactive stance when dealing with stress/adversity
- Acceptance instead of resistance when dealing with change or stress

Physical/Body Domain:



- Well nourished to enhance physical wellness, endurance & energy/stamina
- Plan for and make healthy food choices & aware of benefits of sleep, rest plus recovery
- Mindful of exercise and engage in enjoyable physical activity

Social/Emotional Domain



- Regularly connect with others (rituals, routines, and traditions)
- Maintain supportive social networks and close family relationships
- Have access to sufficient community resources to weather difficult times

Spiritual Domain:



- Have a positive or optimistic outlook based on belief of being a part of/connected to something greater/bigger than ourselves
- Engage in regular reflection, meditation, or prayer that provide comfort and promote perspective
- Being cognizant of one's own important values & beliefs that provide connection, perspective & context during difficult times

Factors That Promote Resilience:

Factors that contribute to resilience include

- Close relationships with family/friends
- A positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities
- The ability to manage strong feelings and impulses
- Good problem-solving and communication skills
- Feeling in control
- Seeking help and resources
- Seeing yourself as resilient (rather than as a victim)
- Coping with stress in healthy ways
- Helping others
- Finding positive meaning in your life despite difficult or traumatic events

Traits Possessed by Resilient People:



Traits of Non-Resilient People:

1. **ALL OR NOTHING THINKING** - Things are seen in black or white categories. You think in absolutes, like "always" "never" and see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern.
2. **OVERGENERALIZATION** - You generalize from a specific. If you make a mistake, you might think that you "failed" and or are a "failure."
3. **MENTAL FILTER** - You pick out a negative single event and dwell on it, like a drop of ink that discolors a whole beaker of water.
4. **MAGNIFICATION OR MINIMIZATION**- You either blow things out of proportion or deny something is a problem when it is. Examples: "*I am the worst mother ever*" to "*It's nothing - Not a big deal (when it really is to you.)*"
5. **SHOULD STATEMENTS** - Having pre-conditions on how you and other people "should" be. Judgmental and unforgiving expectations create a lot of anxiety.
6. **PERSONALIZATION** - You are self-conscious and think things are about you when it is just an interpretation. You think if someone is angry it is in response to you, and blame yourself.
7. **PLAYING THE COMPARISON GAME** - Comparing yourself to others and needing to keep up with others to feel good about yourself. "*He is so much smarter than me - I'm stupid.*"
8. **FORTUNE TELLING** - You think that you can predict the future, and convince yourself that bad things will happen. "*I will always have these problems!*"
9. **LABELING** - You label yourself or others by terms such as "*lazy*" "*fat*" "*stupid*" "*loser*" "*jerk*", stating them like they are facts. A label erroneously evaluates self-worth.
10. **EMOTIONAL REASONING or JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS**- Rather than being objective, emotions control your interpretations. "*She did not call me -she must HATE me!*"

Learnable Skills of Resilience:

7 'LEARNABLE' SKILLS OF RESILIENCE

Emotional awareness or regulation	Ability to identify what you are feeling and manage feelings appropriately
Impulse control	Ability to tolerate ambiguity and not rush decision making
Optimism	Optimistic explanatory style - wed to reality
Causal analysis	Ability to view difficulties from a number of perspectives, and consider many factors
Empathy	Ability to read and understand the emotions of others. Helps build relationships with others and gives social support
Self-efficacy	Confidence in your ability to solve problems - involves knowing your strengths and weaknesses
Reaching Out	Being prepared to take appropriate risk - a willingness to try things and view failure as part of life.

Nurturing Family Strength:

WHAT MAKES YOUR FAMILY STRONG?

THE REALITY IS...

Hard Times, Adversity, Misfortune,
Hard Knocks, Bad Breaks, Difficulties, Tough Luck...
Whatever you call it - your family is sure to
face it at one time or another.

THE GOOD NEWS IS...

The risks that you and your children face
DO NOT define your family - Protective factors DO!
Research shows that when these 5 Protective Factors are
well established, family strength & optimal
child development emerge.

Parental Resilience

Exercise Flexibility

& Develop your inner strength

Social Connections

Make a friend

Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development

Learn to be your child's expert

Concrete Support in Times of Need

Ask for help

Social & Emotional Competence of Children

Give your child words to
express how they feel



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Cultivating Family Resilience During the Pandemic:

Family Resilience

Beliefs

Shared beliefs help family members find **meaning** in adversity, cultivate hope and a **positive outlook**. They can be tied to faith or **spirituality**, giving individuals a bigger purpose. They help members see the crisis as a transformative opportunity for growth and foster a “can-do” attitude.

Organization

Refers to family structure, mutual support and **connectedness**. Resilient families possess both **flexibility** and stability – they are open to change, while remaining nurturing and dependable. Their connectedness enables them to establish security and collaboration within the family, and their **social networks** in times of need.

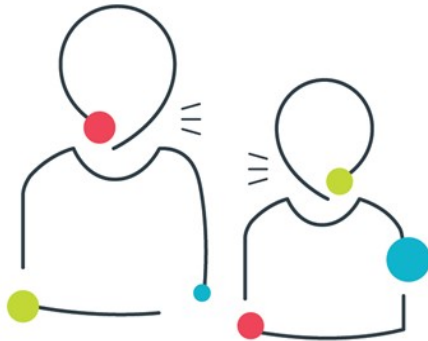
Communication

Communication is open and **clear**, tolerant and encouraging. **Emotions** and opinions are expressed freely, fostering a proactive and collaborative spirit of **problem-solving**. Family members can approach adversity with empathy and resourcefulness.

3 “R” in Family Resilience:



R ELATIONSHIPS



- Group activities—games, cooking, etc.
- Connect with teachers and peers
- Give to others in need

R OUTINES



- Eat meals together
- Exercise at least 20 minutes
- Hold family COVID meetings
- Sleep at least eight hours
- Practice mindfulness

R ESILIENCE



- Co-regulate emotions and responses to stress
- Limit media
- Solve problems together
- Create things to look forward to

Promoting Resilience in Children:

8 Ways to Build Resilience in Children:

1. Let them experience disappointment so they learn sadness doesn't last forever.
2. Validate their fears and help them make plans to do things even if they're scared.
3. Let them take (reasonable) risks and experience natural consequences.
4. Encourage them to try new things, make mistakes, and learn from their mistakes.
5. Give them opportunities to make their own decisions and help them problem solve.
6. Tell stories of people who faced hard times, persisted, and grew stronger as a result.
7. Reframe challenges as short-term problems, and opportunities for learning.
8. Remind them that although we can't control everything that happens to us, we *can* control how we respond.

Learn more at www.GoodDaysWithKids.com

The Pandemic and Parenting:

Parenting During The Pandemic

Notice What's Going Well



We could all use a little extra encouragement

High fives and praise go a long way

Plan (a little)



Make transitions easier by talking together about what's happening next

Get Down On Their Level



Sit on the floor and let yourself play / be goofy

Imagination can be a mini-vacation for you too

Give Good Directions



What can my kid actually do in their current mood?

Doing it with them or giving choices might help

Take a Step Back



It's OK to take a few minutes when you're feeling overwhelmed

Choose Non-Reactivity



Notice your emotions before responding

Practice coping-thoughts for when things get hectic

Reset & Move On



We're all going to mess up.

RESET & Move on!

Be Generous With Affection



Give more hugs, kisses, lap sits, & squeezes

Physical touch helps little humans manage stress

Nurturing Couples Communication During Pandemic:

1 CARE RATHER THAN CONFRONT DURING TOUGH CONVERSATIONS.

- Communicate the facts.
- Address your concerns in an objective way
- Reach out and ask the other person for his/her perspective
- Evaluate outcomes

2 FIND YOUR "I WANT" POWER.

Tap into your "I Want" power – it's the ability to find your motivation for an important long-term goal – when your willpower reserves are running low.

3 CONNECT DURING DAILY TRANSITION POINTS.

A kiss, hug, smile, or touch when waking up, leaving for the day, coming back together at the end of the day, and going to sleep.

4 HELP EACH OTHER RE-LIVE GOOD NEWS.

How you respond to the good news is as important for the health of your relationship as how you respond to bad news.

5 REFRAME YOUR THINKING DURING TOUGH TIMES.

Identify solutions that haven't yet been tried (instead of trying the same thing over and over again that isn't working).

6 HAVE HOPE.

The three elements of hope include having goals, feeling empowered to shape your daily life, and identifying multiple avenues toward making your goals happen.

7 PRACTICE EMPATHY.

The ability to understand another person's experiences and emotions is a hallmark of resilience.

7 THINGS Resilient Couples DO DIFFERENTLY

BY Paula Davis-Laack
JD, MAPP

AmericanExpress.Tumblr.com

Coping with Pandemic Stress:

Coping with stress during the **COVID-19** outbreak



It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis.

Talking to people you trust can help. Contact your friends and family.



Be aware that not everything you hear about the virus may be true.

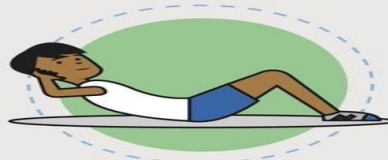
Stay updated and use information from trusted sources, like your health authority, World Health Organization (WHO) or your local Red Cross or Red Crescent.



Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage that you perceive as upsetting.



Draw on skills you have used in the past that have helped you to manage previous adversities and use those skills to help you manage your emotions during this outbreak.



If you must stay at home, maintain a healthy lifestyle including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contact with family and friends at home and remotely.



Deal with any emotions you may have in a healthy manner.

If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor. Have a plan, where to go to and how to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

Your Resilience Meter Post-Webinar:

