



**THE POWER OF RESILIENCE IN DIFFICULT  
TIMES:  
GUIDELINES FOR PEDIATRIC MENTAL  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**

Sam Goldstein, Ph.D.  
Assistant Clinical Professor  
University of Utah School of Medicine



[www.samgoldstein.com](http://www.samgoldstein.com)



[info@samgoldstein.com](mailto:info@samgoldstein.com)



@drsamgoldstein



@doctorsamgoldstein



**TEDx:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isfw8JJ-eWM>

SAM GOLDSTEIN, Ph.D.







The purpose of life is to  
prepare the next  
generation for their  
future.

MHS

**There are no constraints on the human mind,  
no walls around the human spirit, no barriers  
to our progress except those we ourselves  
erect.**

**Ronald Reagan**



MHS

Resilience is a process  
focusing upon strengths to  
overcome adversity.

## RESILIENCE

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A process leading to good outcome despite high risk



The ability to function competently under stress



The ability to recover from trauma and adversity



“

I'm not afraid about my girlfriends and myself, we'll squeeze through somehow, though I'm not too certain about my math.

---

ANNE FRANK  
JUNE 21, 1942

“







I have lots of courage, I feel so strong and as if I can bear a great deal, I feel so free and so young! I was glad when I first realized it, because I don't think I shall easily bow down before the blows that inevitably come to everyone.”

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ANNE FRANK  
JULY 15, 1942






## PREDICTORS OF RESILIENCE

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 Living above the poverty level Not experiencing a learning disability Easy temperament Competent parents Available parents Warm parental relationship Social relations

## PREDICTORS OF RESILIENCE

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 Education opportunity Organized religious affiliation Higher intellect Learning to problem solve Internal locus of control Sense of self-worth Sense of humor

## MOST POWERFUL PREDICTORS OF A RESILIENT CHILD

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Easy temperament



Consistent family relationships



Competent caregivers



Development of self-esteem



A sense of emotional security

## ANDY'S STORY





## CORONA VIRUS STRESS SYNDROME (CoViSS)

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Unlike the 9/11 tragedy, an unexpected, sudden event, the virus pandemic has evolved at a slow creep until critical thresholds were reached and governments began to act



Even then their actions have rolled out slowly over days and weeks until our country is coming to a halt, much like a speeding train trying to slow down before a downed bridge



Further, the rapid growth of technology in the past twenty years is such that nearly every citizen has access to the web and television instantly on their phones



Cable news stations are devoting twenty-four-hour coverage of the pandemic. For better or worse we have truly become a global village. As with this teen's father I think we are beginning to see some of our children, friends, family and neighbors succumb to these events

## CORONA VIRUS STRESS SYNDROME (CoViSS)

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Spending hours on end watching news channels



Spending hours posting and reposting events related to the pandemic



Buying household products, foods, etc. that far exceed immediate need



Setting alerts on your phone for every news channel



Repeatedly texting friends, family and co-workers about related news events

## CORONA VIRUS STRESS SYNDROME (CoViSS)

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Repeatedly making dire posts on social media



Making the pandemic all you can speak about with others



Ignoring daily responsibilities



Ignoring hygiene, rest and food

## STRESS AND ILLNESS

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Stress and illness have intersecting components. Many studies indicate such a link



Theories of the stress–illness link suggest that both acute and chronic stress can cause illness, and lead to changes in mental and physical health, behavior and in how the body functions



Research indicates the type of stressor, whether it is acute or chronic and individual person characteristics such as age and physical well-being before the onset of the stressor can combine to determine the effect of stress on an individual



A person's personality, genetics, and childhood experiences including possible major stressors and traumas may also predispose their response to an event such as a viral pandemic

## IMPACT OF QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION

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Increased social isolation



Increased problems with school work



Kindles depression and/or anxiety



Health fears



Frustration and boredom

## CORONA VIRUS STRESS SYNDROME (CoViSS)

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If these symptoms fit you, a family member or loved one don't despair



The lesson we learned from 9/11 is that most people over time draw strength from family and friends and eventually return to more normal behavior



However, it never hurts to bring your concerns about yourself to a mental health professional if you experience CoViSS, speak to a friend or family member in whom you recognize these signs



## I SUGGEST FOR YOU

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Limit your news watching to ½ hour per day



Turn off all alerts from news channels on your devices



Exercise



Attend to daily responsibilities



Work if you can

## I SUGGEST FOR YOU

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Keep busy with family activities even if restricted to home



Resist posting or texting bad news



Reassure your children the world isn't ending



Consider a budget for spending if needed over the next 3 months

## GUIDELINES FOR QUARANTINE

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Information is key; people who are quarantined need to understand the situation



Effective and rapid communication is essential



Supplies (both general and medical) need to be provided



The quarantine period should be short and the duration should not be changed unless in extreme circumstances



Most of the adverse effects come from the imposition of a restriction of liberty; voluntary quarantine is associated with less distress and fewer long-term complications



Public health officials should emphasize the altruistic choice of self-isolating

## I SUGGEST FOR THE YOUTH YOU WORK WITH

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Communicate the facts as is age appropriate



Listen for catastrophic thinking



Have parents make time to talk



Offer empathy



Reframe the current stress



Model problem solving



Look into the future



Teach relaxation



Help children think logically

## FIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER A RESILIENT MINDSET

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Teach empathy by practicing empathy



Teach responsibility by encouraging contributions



Teach decision making and problem solving skills that foster self-discipline



Offer encouragement and positive feedback



Help children deal with mistakes

## TEACH EMPATHY BY PRACTICING EMPATHY

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Are we saying or acting in a way that our children will be responsive to hearing us?



Would we want anyone to speak to us the way we speak to our children?



How would our children describe us at various times?



How would we want our children to describe us?



## TEACH EMPATHY BY PRACTICING EMPATHY

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Listen



Validate



Avoid preaching and lecturing



Avoid judgments and accusations



Put yourself in their shoes



Change your negative scripts

## TEACH RESPONSIBILITY BY ENCOURAGING CONTRIBUTIONS

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Provide ample opportunity



Focus on existing success



Build islands of competence



Allow the opportunity to witness concrete examples of success

## TEACH DECISION MAKING & PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS THAT REINFORCE SELF-DISCIPLINE: GROW

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Goal: What's my problem? What do I want to achieve?



Reality: What challenges are holding me back?



Options: What solutions are possible? Which solution is the best?



Way Forward: How can I implement each step of the solution?



How did I do?

## OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT AND POSITIVE FEEDBACK

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Become a charismatic adult



Provide realistic appreciation



Focus on building rather than tearing down



Be available

## HELP CHILDREN DEAL WITH MISTAKES

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The fear of mistakes is a strong roadblock to developing a resilient mindset



Mistakes are opportunities to learn



Model the benefits of mistakes



## THE MINDSET OF A RESILIENT CHILD

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Optimistic and hopeful



Solve problems and make decisions



Feel special and appreciated in the eyes of others



Internal locus of control



Set realistic goals and expectations



Believe you can and set out to solve problems



View mistakes, hardships and obstacles as challenges



Possess empathy





The late singer songwriter Tom Petty wrote in his classic song *Crawling Back to You*, “Most things I worry about never happen anyway”.



MHS

## WHO WE ARE

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Worry is in our genes. It keeps us alert and aware of danger



But worry can also consume us if we are not vigilant and proactive, further complicating challenging situations and times



But so too is hope, optimism, motivation and empathy, the foundations of resilience

MHS

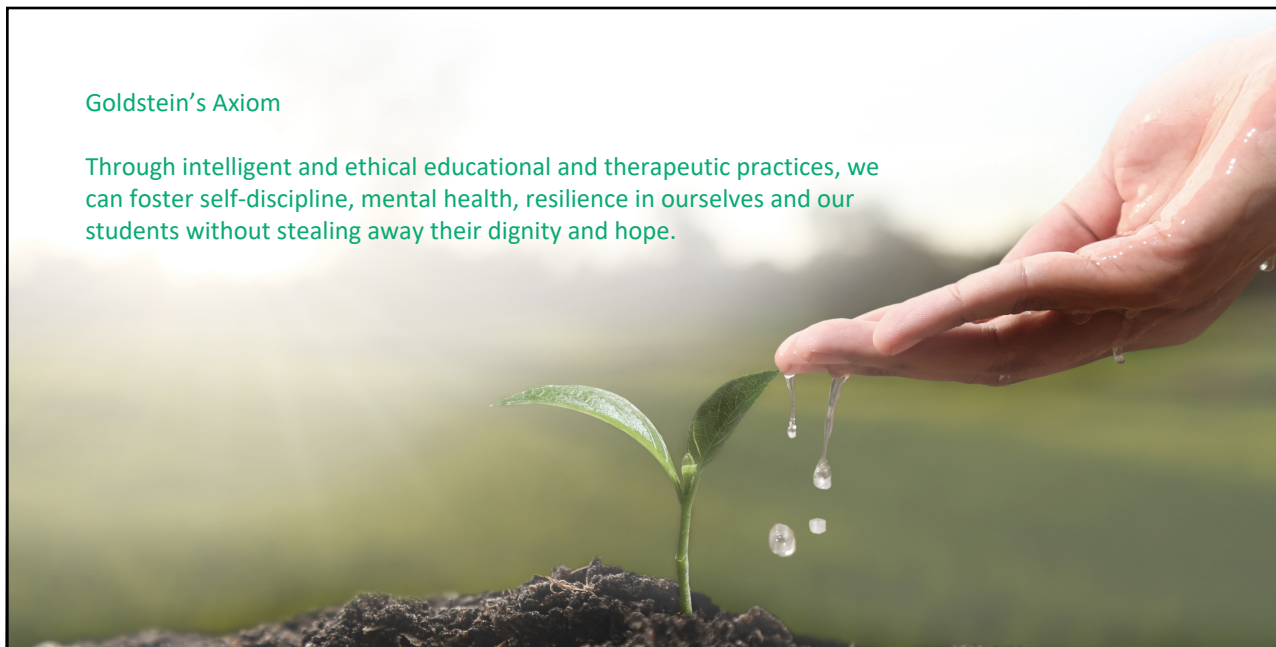


**Resilience is about functioning adequately during challenging times.  
It is a resource we all possess and most certainly must harness in these difficult times.**



#### Goldstein's Axiom


Through intelligent and ethical educational and therapeutic practices, we can foster self-discipline, mental health, resilience in ourselves and our students without stealing away their dignity and hope.














# THANK YOU!


## ANY QUESTIONS?


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 [www.samgoldstein.com](http://www.samgoldstein.com)

 [info@samgoldstein.com](mailto:info@samgoldstein.com)

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