

## The Tenacious Mindset: Understanding and Enhancing Resiliency in Fragile Learners

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## Relevant Disclosure



- My expenses for this conference are supported by the Center for Development and Learning.
- I have developed tests marketed by Multi- Health Systems, Pro-Ed and Western Psychological Services.
- I have authored books marketed by Springer, Wiley, Guilford, Double Day, McGraw Hill, Brookes, Kluwer and Specialty Press.
- I am Editor in Chief of the Journal of Attention Disorders (Sage) and Co-Editor of the Encyclopedia of Child Development (Springer)

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Did you ever wonder . . .




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How Children Learn to  
Speak?



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How Children Learn to  
Manage Their Emotions?



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How Children  
Acquire Knowledge?



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How Children Master  
Challenging Activities?

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How Children  
Learn to  
Socialize?



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How Children Create  
Their Identity?



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They are guided by their genes and experiences.



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They are Instinctually Optimistic and  
Intrinsically Motivated!



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Caregivers are the architects of the way in  
which experience influences genetically  
preprogrammed but experience dependent  
brain development.

Daniel Siegel  
The Developing Mind



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Me and My Dad!




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### Stress Hardiness

- Committed to finding a meaningful purpose in life.
- A belief that you can influence your surroundings and outcome of events.
- A belief that you can learn and grow from both positive and negative life experiences.




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When children transition into adult life their past mistakes, misbehavior or problems are of little interest to others.




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Success in adult life comes from harnessing assets and strengths.




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For thousands of generations, parents, relatives, and others raised and prepared children to become successful adults, to acquire knowledge and skills that were required to meet the challenges of their time.




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How did they do it?

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Until relatively recent times in human history there were no schools or organized institutions, nor were there self-help or parenting books.



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Our ancestors raised the next generation by drawing upon seven important genetic traits that evolved over tens of thousands of years in our species. Today, these traits are more important than ever in preparing children for tomorrow's successes.

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*We call these the Seven critical traits of TENACITY!*



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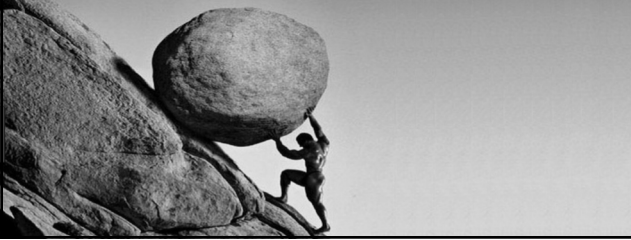
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*TENANCITY!* is defined as perseverance, doggedness, resolution, patience, endurance and stamina.



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A tenacious mindset provides the mental and emotional fuel driving the seven tenacious traits.

**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
NEVER  
YIELD**

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A tenacious mindset may be comprised of seven traits, but for these traits to develop and flourish they require the nurturing and support of caring adults.



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These traits are:

- intrinsic motivation
- instinctual optimism
- practical intelligence
- compassionate empathy
- virtuous responsibility
- genuine altruism
- measured fairness




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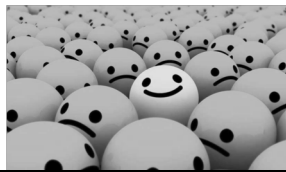
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### Instinctual Optimism

- A belief driven by genes.
- A belief that a way will always be found.
- A belief in success will be obtained.
- The glass is half full!




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### Intrinsic Motivation

- Driven by internal reason and inspiration.
- Rewarded by the payoff to the mind.
- Guided by belief not environmental consequences.




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### Practical Intelligence (simultaneous ability)

- The ability to see all the parts of a problem simultaneously.
- A mental activity by which the child integrates stimuli into groups.
- Stimuli are seen as a whole.
- Each part is related to the others.




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### Compassionate Empathy

Insight combined with:

- Sensitivity
- Tolerance
- kindness




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### Through the Eyes of Others

- Do you practice what you have learned and lived?
- It is difficult to be empathic when you are disappointed or angry.
- Do you make assumptions about the motives of others?
- Do you hold the erroneous belief that if you are too empathic people will take advantage of you?




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## Through the Eyes of Others

Steps to becoming an empathic person:

- Take the time to complete empathy exercise. Consider how you would like other people to describe you versus how they might actually describe you. Act on the discrepancy.
- Use your experiences as a guide.
- Make an effort to put empathy into practice every day.

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## Virtuous Responsibility

Responsible behavior guided by:

- Dignity
- Morality
- Respect for self and others
- Integrity




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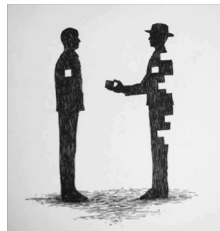
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## Genuine Altruism

Giving of yourself (time and effort) guided by:

- Sincerity
- Honesty
- Truth
- Sensitivity
- Honesty




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### Measured Fairness

- A concept developed in Game Theory.
- Being fair to yourself first than others.
- Knowing when you must put yourself first.




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### The Road to a Tenacious Mindset: Building Islands of Competence

Steps to develop a resilient outlook about success and to nurture islands of competence:

- Examine your assumptions about success.
- Challenge self-defeating attributions.
- List your interests and islands of competence and pursue them.

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### The Lessons of Resilience: Maintaining a Resilient Lifestyle

Exercising resilience on a daily basis:

- Have I truly listened during the past day and attempted to understand the viewpoints of others?
- How have I related to others? Have I practiced empathy and respect?
- How have I responded to stress, mistakes and setbacks? What will I do differently the next time?
- In what areas did I do well? How do I maintain and/or reproduce these positive behaviors tomorrow?
- Do not wait for other people to change first for you to achieve your goals and happiness.

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## Focus on Well Being!

- COMPETENCE in academic, social and vocational areas
- CONFIDENCE or a positive identity
- CONNECTIONS or healthy relations
- CHARACTER or positive values, integrity, and values
- CARING and compassion




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## Questions?

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

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