



## Understanding and Applying Resilience Theory in Educational Care

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## Disclosure

My expenses for this talk are supported

I am a compensated speaker.

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)

Knowledge is power.

Sir Francis Bacon

The greatest obstacle to  
discovery is not  
ignorance - it is the  
illusion of knowledge.

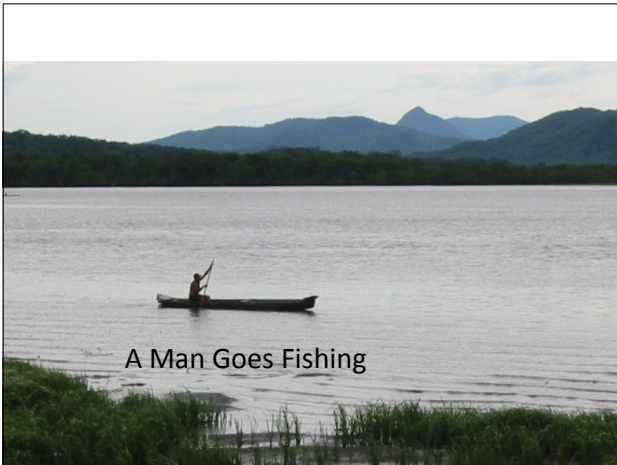
Daniel J. Boorstein

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Caution should be taken in  
jumping to readily onto the  
bandwagon of whatever  
happens to be the  
prevailing enthusiasm of  
the moment.

Sir Michael Rutter

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A Man Goes Fishing

## The Future



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## Questions in Need of Answers

Is there a need for a conceptual process like resilience?  
Is resilience an evidence based concept?

Is there sufficient research to suggest resilience is a powerful antidote for the myriad of adversities children face today?

Is there sufficient research to suggest that resilience theory guide the practices of education, mental health and parenting?

Can resilience be measured?

Can resilience be taught?

Should resilience be the featured theme at a school psychology conferences?

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

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## Survival of the Species

- Salmon and snakes are born with sufficient instincts to survive.
- Bear cubs require at least one or two years with their mother to insure survival.
- Higher primates require three or four years.
- Humans require at least ten years.

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Michael said “a good day is when bad things don’t happen”.

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## My Grandparent’s Future





## My Grandparent's Future



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## My Grandparent's Future



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## My Parent's Future



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### My Parent's Future



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### Moms are Important Too!



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### Our Family's Future



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Through the Eyes of  
Innocence



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Preschool Graduation Part I



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Preschool Graduation Part II



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### Preschool Graduation



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### How Will They Feel in Five Years?



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### How Children Become Failure Avoiders Todd's Story

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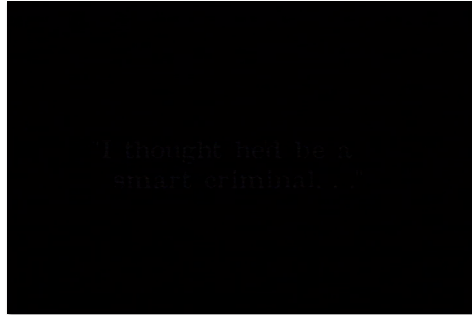
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## 1. Write the letter to Ms. Walter



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### Ryan's Letters To Ms. Walter Part I

Oct 6, 2003  
Dear Ms. Walter,  
sorry for  
behaving in  
the dark. No  
teacher is  
supposed to  
be just  
telling to  
do. I  
didn't write  
quickly so  
I wouldn't  
have as  
much home  
work when  
I got home.  
I felt like  
a real jerk  
I was just  
mad because  
I had to  
stand over  
from

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### Ryan's Letters To Ms. Walter Part II

Dear Ms. Walter,  
sorry for losing  
my mobile. I  
guess I really  
didn't want to get  
organized. I  
know I keep  
losing my and  
I'm not happy  
about it. I feel  
like a complete  
and total idiot.

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Ryan's Letters To  
Ms. Walter Part III

Dear Ms. Walter,  
sorry for  
not writing  
after school.  
I've really  
been really  
not cause  
my mom  
made me  
start the  
because I don't  
want to spend  
time there  
because  
I hate everything  
in it, including  
math, reading,  
science, and  
everything  
else.  
from  
Ryan

Ryan's Letters To  
Ms. Walter Part IV

Believe it or  
not, today's  
was not an  
ordinary day.  
It was worse  
than I didn't  
think was  
possible. The  
day started  
off like an  
ordinary  
day. You  
gave us some  
work, and had  
the rest of the  
day normal.  
But when we  
did our plan, I  
accidentally wrote  
it down on the  
wrong date and  
had to start. I  
missed the bus  
and now my parents  
are M.A.D.

We fail to appreciate  
that children are  
genetically endowed

## What Are These Traits?

**The drive to help.**  
**The drive to mastery.**  
**Intrinsic motivation.**  
**Instinctual optimism.**  
**Altruism.**  
**Fairness.**  
**Problem solving.**  
**Social connection.**  
**The drive to acquire knowledge.**

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## Big Shifts in Education

Knowing.....Doing  
Teacher Centered.....Student Centered  
The Individual..... The Team  
Consumption of  
Information.....Construction of Meaning  
Schools..... Networks  
Single Sourcing .....Group Sourcing

With these changes  
comes a new  
appreciation of the  
science of resilience and  
stress hardiness.

33

Is the concept of  
Resilience popular?

The screenshot shows the Merriam-Webster website. At the top, the word "resilience" is entered into the search bar. Below the search bar, there are tabs for "All", "Images", "Books", "News", "Videos", "More", "Settings", and "Tools". The "All" tab is selected. Below the tabs, it says "About 68,000 results (3.61 seconds)".

The main content area shows the word "resilience" in a large font, with a definition below it: "re-sil-i-ence /rē ˈzilyəns/ 4)". The definition is: "1. the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness  
"the ability to recover from or withstand stress or adversity"  
2. the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity  
"tough as resilience in wood and metal"

Below the definition, there is a section for "Translations, word origin, and more definitions".

resilience

[All](#)
[Images](#)
[Books](#)
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[More](#)
[Settings](#)
[Tools](#)

About 68,800,000 results (3.94 seconds)

Dictionary

resilience

**re-sil-i-ence**  
/rə ˈzɪl.i.əns/

**noun**

- the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness  
"the often remarkable resilience of so many British institutions"
- the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity  
"highly resilient to wearability and weather"

Translations, word origins, and more definitions

[illegible]



## Do Children Care What We Think? Part I

to Mrs. Cowdell

Dear Mrs. Cowdell,

I am writing you this letter  
I'm just asking if you  
can forgive me for talking back  
to you. I know who I did was very  
very wrong and I wanted to say  
so. It's just that well it's just that I  
just a kid and kids make mistakes but  
I'm sure you knew that Mrs. Cowdell  
what I'm trying to say is that I'm very  
very, very sorry.

Sincerely  
Drew

## Do Children Care What We Think? Part II

to Mrs. Cowdell

Why I Will  
Never do this again

Dear Mrs. Cowdell,

Mrs. Cowdell here are some  
reasons why I will never do this  
again. I want to get a good  
education and if I keep this up I  
will not be able to achieve this goal.  
#2. Because I love to learn and I  
don't want to lose that opportunity.  
#3. I

I ♥ School!

## Defining Key Concepts

Mid 17th Century origin  
from the Latin **resilient** -  
'leaping back', from the  
verb **resilire**.

## Defining Key Concepts

Websters defines *resilient* (adjective) as:

- (of a substance or object) able to recoil or spring back into shape after bending, stretching or being compressed.

-(of a person or animal) able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions.

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## Defining Key Concepts

*Resilience* is a pattern of positive adaptation in the context of past or present adversity.

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Coping =  
Resilience  
Defining Key  
Concepts

42

## Defining Key Concepts

Is resilience  
inversely related to  
impairment?

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Is there a need for a  
conceptual process like  
resilience?

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## What Do We Know?

In 2006 there were 73.7 million  
children (0 – 18 years) in the  
U.S.

By 2030 that number will  
increase to 85.7 million.

In 2012 15% lived in poverty

In 20013 27% were living in  
one parent homes.

In 2003 36% lived in homes  
with at least one significant<sup>a</sup>  
problem.

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## CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND

An American child was reported  
abused or neglected every 35 seconds  
in 2011 (3 million).

30% of all victims below age 3; 50%  
below age 7.

60% are neglected.

Nearly 600,000 American children are  
in foster care, with 130,000 waiting.

7 1/2 million children are home alone  
after school.

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## Committee for Children

One of every seven children  
reports being bullied in school  
regularly.

Seventy-eight percent of  
children reported being bullied  
at least once in the past  
month.

Thirty-one percent of girls and  
eight percent of boys in grades  
8 - 11 reported harassment  
often.

In 2014 4,599 youth  
between the ages of 10  
and 24 committed  
suicide.

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Is there a need for a  
conceptual process like  
resilience?

**YES**

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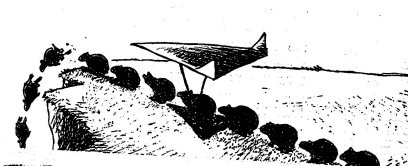
### Resilience Encompasses:

A process leading to  
good outcome despite  
high risk;

The ability to function  
competently under

50

What Factors  
Contribute to Resilient  
Outcomes?



Find the resilient  
lemming.

51

## Factors Within:



The Child



The Family



The Culture

52

## Four Waves of Resilience Research

1. Identifying person and variable-focused factors that make a difference.
2. Identifying and understanding the operation of these factors within systems with a process focus.
3. Intervening individually to foster resilience.
4. Creating community wide programs.

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## U.S. Large Scale Logitudinal Studies

The Kauai Study (698 children born in 1955)

Minnesota Parent-Child Project (190 children born in 1975).

Project Competence (205 children in 3rd -6th grades started in 1977).

Virginia Study of Divorce and Remarriage (122 children in 1971).

Rochester Study (180 children in 1970).

Chicago Study (1200+ children in 1983).

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## Worldwide Large Scale Longitudinal Studies

British National Child Development Study (17,000 children born in 1958).

British Cohort Study (14,000+ children born in 1970).

Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study (1,000+ children born in 1972 - 1973).

Queensland Study (8,500+ children born in 1981).

Lundby Study (590 children born in 1997)

Copenhagen High Risk Study (207 children

## Person Attributes Associated With Successful Coping\*

Affectionate, engaging temperament.  
Sociable.

Autonomous.

Above average IQ.

Good reading skills.

High achievement motivation.

Positive self-concept.

Impulse control.

Internal locus of control.

Planning skills.

Faith.

Humorous.

Helpfulness.

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\* Replicated in 2 or more studies

## Environmental Factors Associated With Successful Coping\*

Smaller family size.

Maternal competence and mental health.

Close bond with primary caregiver.

Supportive siblings.

Extended family involvement.

Living above the poverty level.

Friendships.

Supportive teachers.

Successful school experiences.

Involvement in pro-social organizations.

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\*Replicated in 2 or more studies.

## Todd Reaches Maturity

A Common Outcome

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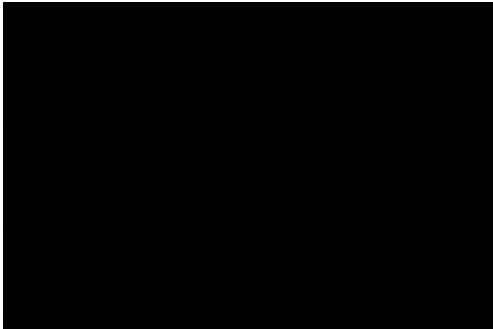
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The idea of resilience  
has different meanings  
for different people,

Howard  
Kaplan

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Alternatively it might be argued that the concept of resilience is useful,

Howard  
Kaplan 61

Does resilience refer to characteristics and outcomes of individuals or does it refer to characteristics and outcomes of more inclusive variables such as gender, intellect, etc.?

Is resilience isomorphic to, partially overlapping, or orthogonal to a variety of other terms that appear to be functionally equivalent to that term?

Is resilience the opposite  
of non-resilience or  
vulnerability?

64

Is resilience defined in  
terms of the nature of the  
outcomes in response to  
stress or in terms of the  
factors that interact with  
stress to produce the  
outcomes?

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What is the relationship  
between resilience and  
the experience of  
distressful life events?

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Is resilience reflected in  
the ability to bounce  
back from, function with  
or caused by adversity?

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Should resiliency be  
defined in terms of  
some overall criterion or

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Which general or  
specific factors are  
equated with resilience?

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How does resilience determine the nature of the factors that place an individual or system at risk?

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Though good studies are available, much of the evidence is based on retrospective, cross-sectional or short term. longitudinal studies with relatively small samples absent controls.

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It is also critical to remember that resilience is never directly measured in these studies.

72

Resilience is inferred  
based on the  
measurement of risk

73

The pathways that lead to  
positive adaptation despite  
high risk and adversity are  
complex and greatly  
influenced by context  
therefore it is not likely that  
we will discover a magic  
(generic) bullet.

74

Resilient children are not simply  
born that way nor are they made  
from scratch by their experiences.  
Genetic and environmental  
experiences loom large as  
protectors against a variety of  
risks to healthy development  
ranging from resistance to  
bacteria and viruses to resilience  
to maltreatment and rejection.

Is resilience an  
evidence based  
concept?  
**YES**

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## Can Resilience Be Measured

In an individual?  
In groups?  
As single or multiple  
protective factors?  
As a cumulative  
phenomena?  
As a predictor variable?

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## Efforts to Measure Resilient Factors in Clinical Practice

Tennessee Self-Concept Scale  
Students Caring For Each Other Scale  
Self-Perception Profiles for Adolescence  
Self-Efficacy Scale  
Self-Description Questionnaire  
Search Institute's Profiles of Student  
Life: Attitudes & Behaviors  
Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale  
Review of Personal Effectiveness & Locus  
of Control  
Community Involvement Scale  
Adolescent Coping Scale

## Efforts to Measure Resilience in Clinical Practice

Devereux Elementary Student Strength Assessment (81 item rating scale).

Devereux Early Childhood Assessment. (45 items).

Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents (60 + item rating scales).

Psychological Resilience Scale (25 items).

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## Assessment of Risks and Strengths Risk Inventory and Strengths Evaluation (RISE)

- Protective Behaviors
  - Emotional Balance
  - Interpersonal Skill
  - Self Confidence

- Risky Behaviors
  - Bullying
  - Delinquency
  - Health
  - Sexual
  - Substance Abuse
  - Suicide



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## RISE Overview

- The first tool to look at these concepts within the context of each other
- Ages 9 through 25 years; Parent, Teacher and Self Forms
- 15-20 minutes administration time
- Norm-referenced T-scores examine broad constructs of risk and strength
- Response validity scores also available
- For educational psychologists, counselors, clinical psychologists and other mental-health professionals working with children, adolescents and young adults (Level C)

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Can attributes and  
behaviors associated  
with resilience be  
measured?

**YES**

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Is there sufficient  
research to suggest  
resilience is a powerful  
antidote for the myriad  
of adversities children  
face today?

**MAYBE**

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**Todd Finds A Path**

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“I think I could do  
this!”

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Can these  
measurements be used  
to assess risk and make  
accurate predictions?

**MAYBE**

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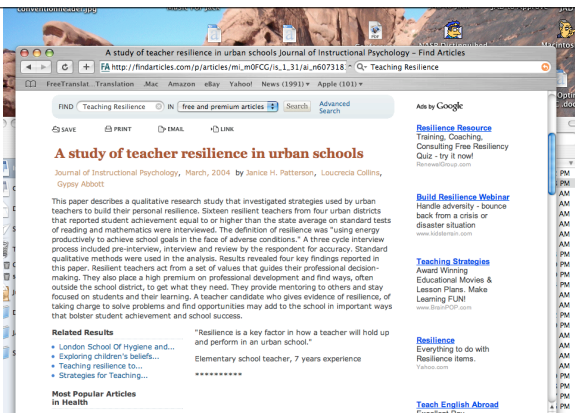
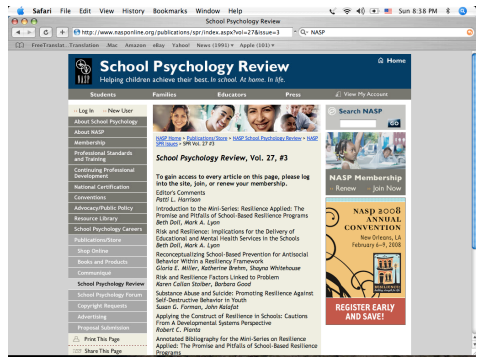
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Is there sufficient  
research to suggest that  
resilience theory guide  
the practices of  
education, mental  
health and parenting?

MAYBE

Do we know what effect  
this will have?

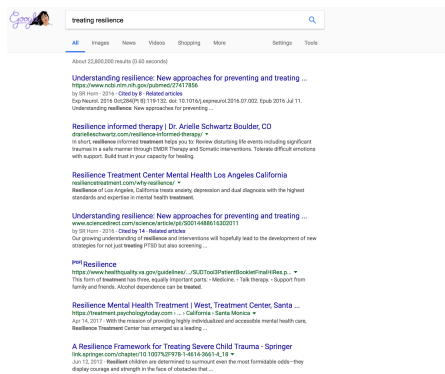
NO

91

Has the promotion of  
resilience as a feel  
good, great hope for all  
that ails humanity  
concept outpaced the  
available data?

YES

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Can skills considered to  
foster resilience be  
taught.

YES

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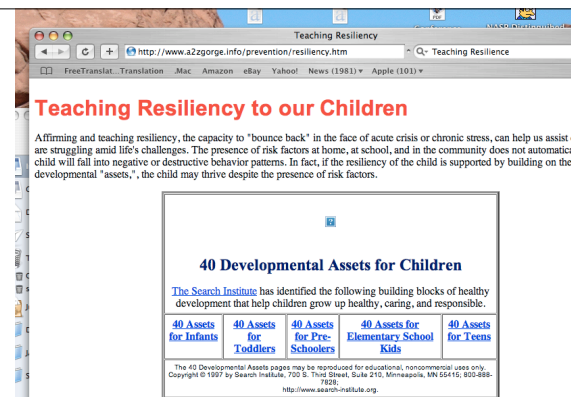
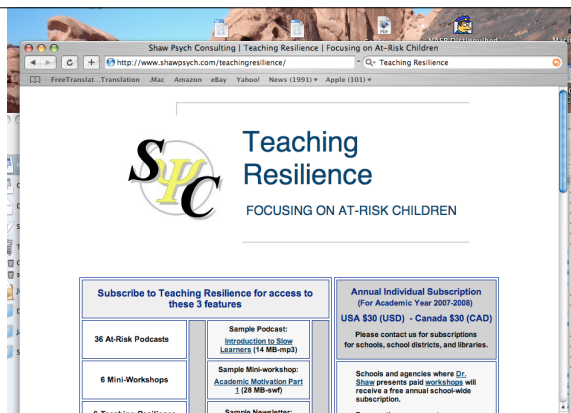
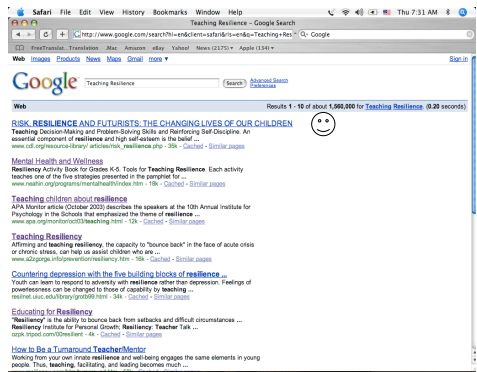
Is there a body of prospective  
intervention research proving  
a cause and effect  
relationship between the  
applied practice of resilience  
as a clinical strategy and  
positive, long term outcome?

NOT THAT I'M  
AWARE OF

98

But some people think  
so. . .

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In the book *"The Resilient Self"*, Stephen and Sylvia Wolin identified the following traits of resiliency.

**Eight Guideposts to  
Foster A Resilient  
Mindset**

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**1. Teach and convey  
empathy**

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**2. Listen, Learn,  
Influence**

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**3. Accept children for who they are conveying unconditional love and setting realistic expectations.**

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**4. Nurture islands of competence.**

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**5. Help children learn from rather than feel defeated by mistakes.**

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**6. Teach children to solve problems and make decisions.**

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**7. Discipline in ways that promote discipline and self worth.**

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**8. Help children develop responsibility, compassion and a social conscience.**

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## Classrooms That Nurture the Mindset of Resilient Students:

Create and perpetuate an intentional culture.

Capitalize on the best ideas.

Manifest a coherent philosophy of learning and teaching for teachers and students.

Make a substantial development to professional development.

Adopt a vision beyond the local environment.

Create connections within and beyond the local environment.<sup>112</sup>

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## Classrooms That Nurture the Mindset of Resilient Students:

Commit to appreciating how the present effects the future and take action with this in mind.

Track outcome overtime at all levels to make informed decisions and policies.

Encourage mentorship in all stakeholders.

Create opportunities for connections for all stakeholders.<sup>113</sup>

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## Classrooms That Nurture the Mindset of Resilient Students:

Create learning experiences that drive intrinsic motivation and self-discipline to replace the status quo in which children are manipulated and controlled by extrinsic forces

Provide competition in the absence of winning.

Provide extrinsic reinforcement for effort not control.<sup>114</sup>

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## Classrooms That Nurture the Mindset of Resilient Students:

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 <sup>115</sup>

Lerner et al, 2000

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## Classrooms That Nurture the Mindset of Resilient Students:

Foster opportunities for intrinsic  
control.

Minimize external consequences  
to control.

Enhance self-discipline.

Set limits in autonomous ways.

Provide opportunities for students  
to develop and strengthen basic  
cognitive processes.

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## Todd Fulfills His Goal

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“This person loves  
me.”

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The Mindset of Effective Educators



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Effective educators focus on the self-esteem and the social-emotional lives of children.

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Effective educators recognize that they have a lifelong impact upon student's capacity to be resilient.

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Effective educators understand the mindset of resilient children.

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Effective educators are not misled by the overt behaviors of children.

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## Coping Behaviors of Children

Quitting and avoiding  
Cheating  
Rationalizing  
Clowning and immature behavior  
Controlling  
Aggressiveness and bullying  
Passive/aggressive behavior  
Complaining of boredom  
Rushing

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Effective educators are knowledgeable about frameworks for understanding the components of self-esteem, motivation, and resilience.

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Effective educators appreciate the importance of identifying, reinforcing and displaying each child's island of competence.

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Effective educators develop and implement strategies for reinforcing self-esteem, motivation, hope and resilience in children.

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To be a *charismatic adult* and nurture hope and resilience, we must understand and reinforce the components of a *resilient mindset* in children and teens.

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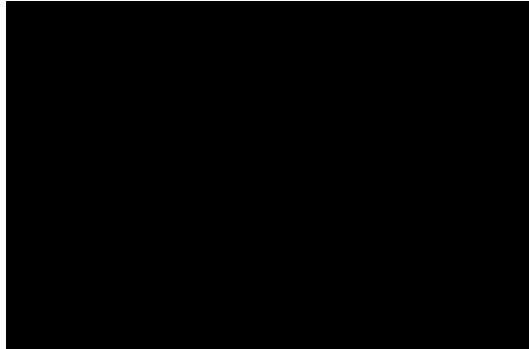
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## In Their Own Words

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## Conclusions

An early history of developing competence along with supportive, consistent care serves as a powerful and enduring buffer throughout childhood and increases probability of resilience.

The pathways that lead to resilience are complex.

There is a great need to map the interaction of person and environment factors.



## Conclusions

Longitudinal research needs to be on a large scale and gene-environment focused.

We require a broader cross-cultural perspective.

We need to know more about individual dispositions and temperament as well as sources of family support.

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Only then will we begin to know what makes the young of our species survive and thrive despite life's adversities.

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Eric Werner

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Adopt a learning to swim mindset!

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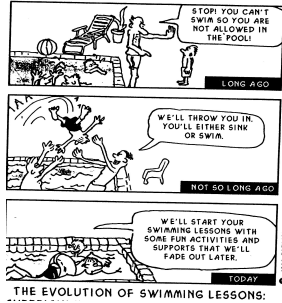
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## A Learning to Swim Mindset



## It Must Never Come to This!

No, so called parents  
I hate your fuckenguts

Rob  
You lied and said that  
you would spend time  
with me.

Kathleen  
Same with you

## Or This!

DEAR GOD,  
I wish I could be  
better in School.  
Can you help me.

## Goldstein's Axiom

Through intelligent and ethical educational practices develop self-discipline and build educational proficiency in all children without stealing away their dignity and hope.

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## Questions in Need of Answers

Is there a need for a conceptual process like resilience? YES

Is resilience an evidence based concept? YES

Is there sufficient research to suggest resilience is a powerful antidote for the myriad of adversities children face today? MAYBE

Is there sufficient research to suggest that resilience theory guide the practices of education, mental health and parenting? MAYBE

Can resilience be measured? YES


Can resilience be taught? MAYBE

“The secret of education lies in respecting the student”

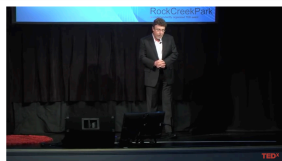
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The Power of Resilience: Sam Goldstein, Ph.D. at TEDxUConnPark  
TEDx Talks

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