Under Pressure: Stress to be the Best

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Sources of stress

- Social expectations and social media
- Relationship problems/social isolation/lack of belonging
- Excessive screen time
- Overprotective parenting
- Worries about climate change, changing economic conditions, politics
3% of young women and 2% of young men in the United States will experience severe forms of social anxiety.

Over a entire lifetime, as many as 12% of people will experience a severe form of social anxiety at least once, with women reporting higher rates of the disorder than men.

Culture matters! In China the rates are less than half of those in the United States.

Asher, Asnaani, & Aderka, 2017; Guo et al., 2016; Schneier, Johnson, Hornig, Liebowitz, & Weissman, 1992
Has hospital use for mental disorders changed?

- 75% Increase in ED visits
- 65% Increase in hospitalizations
- -24% Decrease in hospitalizations for other conditions

Visit cihi.ca for more detailed information about youth and mental health in Canada.

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WHAT IS RESILIENCE?
Is this resilience?

“You can’t stop the waves but you can learn to surf”
--John Kabat-Zinn

But…it’s easier to learn to surf if you have a surfboard, a coach, and a lifeguard
The failure of the rugged individual

- Despite an abundance of healthy eating and weight loss programs, two-thirds of American adults are overweight or obese; in Canada 62% of men and 46% of women describe themselves as overweight or obese.
- Hospitalizations for mental health and addictions problems are rising steadily.
- Prescriptions for mental health problems are increasing.
- While the rate of divorce has declined, so too have the number of new marriages.
- Days absent from work is rising quickly.
- Young people are living at home with their parents for longer and longer periods (failure to launch).
When problems are few, we can rely on ourselves to solve our own problems.
When problems are many and complex, we need lots of resources to cope effectively.
Video: Todd Sampson
Resilience is…

- In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is our capacity, individually and in groups, to *navigate* our way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain our wellbeing, and...

- Our capacity individually and in groups to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided in meaningful ways.

A Dozen Resilience Resources

1. Structure/routines
2. Consequences/accountability
3. Intimate and sustaining love from others
4. Lots and lots of supportive relationships
5. A powerful identity
6. A sense of control
7. A sense of belonging/culture/spirituality/life purpose
8. Rights and responsibilities
9. Our basic needs are met
10. Positive thinking
11. Physical wellbeing
12. Financial wellbeing
HOW DO I BUILD RESILIENCE?
Adult Resilience Measure-R*

On a scale of 1 (does not describe me) to 5 (describes me a lot), answer the following questions:

- I cooperate with people around me.
- Getting and improving qualifications or skills is important to me.
- I know how to behave in different social situations.

*www.resilienceresearch.org © 2019 by Philip Jefferies, Ph.D., Lisa McGarrigle, Ph.D., and Michael Ungar, Ph.D.
My family have usually supported me through life.
My family knows a lot about me.
If I am hungry, I can get food to eat.
People like to spend time with me.
I talk to my family/partner about how I feel.
I feel supported by my friends.
I feel that I belong in my community.
My family/partner stands by me during difficult times.
My friends stand by me during difficult times.
I am treated fairly in my community.
I have opportunities to show others that I can act responsibly.
I feel secure when I am with my family/partner.
I have opportunities to apply my abilities in life (like skills, a job, caring for others).
I enjoy my family's/partner’s cultural and family traditions.
Finding the resources we need for success depends on the quality of our social, built, and natural environments.
Serendipity?

Design?
Level of Functioning

- Optimal
- Expected
- Sub-optimal

Resource Availability/Accessibility

- Well resourced systems
- Poorly resourced systems

Time

- Acute Stressor/traumatic event
- Chronic Stressor

Levels and Effects:

- Optimal
- Expected
- Sub-optimal

Effects:

- Post-traumatic growth
- Minimal impact
- Unaffected
- Recovery
- Avoidant
- Hidden
- Maladaptive

Resource Availability:

- Well resourced systems
- Poorly resourced systems
Principle

When a resource is unavailable, inaccessible, or potentially harmful, we cope as best we can with what we have.
Level of Functioning

- Optimal
- Expected
- Sub-optimal

Resource Availability/Accessibility

- Well resourced systems
- Poorly resourced systems

Time

- Acute Stressor/traumatic event
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- Post-traumatic growth
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Resource Availability/Accessibility
Four Strategies for Better Resilience

1. Change yourself—But what changes are the right ones?
   
1. Personal exploration/development works, when stress is “light”
Four Strategies for Better Resilience

1. Change yourself (if that’s enough)
2. Make the best use possible of the 12 resources you have
Can your environment absorb stress for you?
Four Strategies for Better Resilience

1. Change yourself (if that’s enough)
2. Make the best use possible of the 12 resources you have
3. Change your world to have more of the 12 resources
Four Strategies for Better Resilience

1. Change yourself (if that’s enough)
2. Make the best use possible of the 12 resources you have
3. Change your world to have more of the 12 resources
4. When all else fails, change what you want