Siobhan O’Neill, MD

Building Connections: Peer Support as a Powerful Resource for Resilience

20 August 2020
What is Resilience?
Poll 1: Resilience

1. Do you have a clear sense of what resilience is?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

2. Is resilience learnable or innate?
   - Learnable
   - Innate
   - Not sure
Resilience

• Capacity to meet challenges
• Adaptation and Flexibility
• Ability to return to equilibrium quickly after stressful experience
• Learnable
Dimensions of Resilience

Physiologic

Emotional

Psychological

Interpersonal: relationships

Group/systemic
Why should we build resilience?
Wellbeing arises from Integration*

- Flexible
- Adaptive
- Coherent
- Energized
- Stable

Daniel Siegel; www.m.drdansiegel.com
Caregivers at Risk

• Burnout and Distress
  – As high as 50% of physicians

• Moral Injury in Healthcare
  – www.fixmoralinjury.org

• COVID-19 is making moral injury worse
Poll 2: Stress

1. Have you experienced burnout or work related distress?
   – Yes
   – No
   – Not sure

2. Are you experiencing more work related stress since COVID-19?
   – Yes
   – No
   – Not sure
Caregivers at Risk

- Substance Use Disorders
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Isolation
- Suicidality
- Completed suicide: physicians >2x, nurses 1.25x rate of general population
How do we build resilience?
Multidimensional approach

• Physiologic: sleep, exercise, nutrition, relationships, breathing & mindfulness practices

• Emotional and psychological: practices that support healthy expression and regulation; education and psychotherapy; relationships, breathing & mindfulness practices

• Interpersonal: building connections and nurturing relationships; engaging supports; mindfulness practices
Mindfulness
Breathing
Relationships

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Welcome and introductions
Barbara Fain, JD, MPP, Executive Director, Betsy Lehman Center

Support for clinicians and staff
Linda Kenney, Director of Peer Support Programs, Betsy Lehman Center
Jacqueline Ewuoso, Program Manager, Betsy Lehman Center

▸ Building connections: Peer support as a powerful resource for resilience
Siobhan O’Neill, MD, Co-founder, Mindframe Consulting

Question and answer session

Reminder:
• Click the Chat button at the bottom of your screen to join the discussion.
• Chat Everyone for general comments or questions.
• Chat Jackie Ewuoso (Betsy Lehman Center) for technical support.
Mindfulness

“The awareness that arises from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally”

-Jon Kabat-Zinn
Mind Training

Mind Training: focused attention, open awareness, kind intention.

Cultivates receptive mind:
Curious
Open
Accepting
Loving

-Daniel Siegel

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Poll 3: Mindfulness

1. Do you have a regular (at least several days a week) mindfulness or mind training practice?
   - Yes
   - No
How do Breathing and Mindfulness foster resilience?

Physiologic: parasympathetic predominance

Psychological and emotional: 
Receptive mind rather than reactive mind
Aware of and open to connection to others
Resonance Breathing

• Purpose: to access and strengthen innate capacity of body to return to state of calm after a stressor (resilience)

• Method: Paced breathing, inhale=exhale, 4-6 breaths per minute

• Result: subjective sense of balance, calm, and wellbeing; improvement in biological measures of stress (increased HRV, lower BP, inflammatory markers)
Relationships

Peer Support is directly related to interpersonal dimension of resilience:

Engages these resilience traits:
Mobilizing supports
Close, secure attachment to others
Collective/shared goals
Peer Support

Multiple expressions: formal and informal

-One to one
-Groups
-Teams
Poll 4: Peer support

1. Are you aware of what peer support resources are available in your institution?
   – Yes
   – No

2. Do you know how to access peer support resources?
   – Yes
   – No
Peer Support

- Establish and maintain a trusting connection and nonjudgmental stance
- Be fully present (receptive mind)
- Listen attentively

In other words: “... paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally”
Peer Support
Peer Resource Groups

Reduce isolation
Increase connection
Build cohesion
Instill Hope
Shift perspective: common humanity
Practice altruism

Yalom & Leszcz
Team Support

The Honor Project

Meaning-centered team intervention to give voice to grief through ritual

Better coping, greater sense of meaning, reduced feeling of isolation

R. Rossi [https://doi.org/10.1093/neuonc/noy148.585](https://doi.org/10.1093/neuonc/noy148.585)
Practice:
Three Good Things

Cultivating positive emotions promotes the development of psychological resilience.

1. Reflect on/write down three good things that happened today- at least one good thing at work.
2. What was your role in making those things happen?
3. What positive emotions did you experience as a result? Joy, serenity, contentment, gratitude, compassion, interest, amusement, inspiration, awe, love.

Presence and active listening on the part of the listeners:
1. full presence and attention
2. eye contact
3. No questions or discussion

Greater Good in Action: ggia.berkeley.edu
Welcome back

How was the breakout exercise? Please send your comments in the chat!
Building Connections

Now more than ever, in this time when we need to maintain physical distance from one another, we need each other.
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Resources referenced in this seminar


Rossi, Rosemary; The Honor Project. https://doi.org/10.1093/neuonc/noy148.585. Team-based intervention to honor grief through ritual and peer support.

Siegel, Daniel; Mind Training and Interpersonal Neurobiology; founder of Mindful Awareness Research Center UCLA: www.m.drdansiegel.com. Many resources to educate and support wellbeing.


Stern, Edwin; Resonance breathing: “The Breathing App” (Available in app stores). Breathing practice to build physiologic resilience. Three Good Things; Greater Good in Action: ggia.berkeley.edu. Exercise to foster positive emotion

Additional resources
