Resilience: From Program to Process

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This article considers school engagement from a resilience perspective. Despite a 40-year research legacy, only recently have practitioners/researchers engaged in the explicit, prospective facilitation of resilience in school settings. Derived from the book Resilience Education (Brown, D'Emidio-Caston, & Benard, 2000), based on supporting theory and evidence, a process-based model is advanced. As an ever-present part of school participant interaction, Resilience Education (ReSed) is conducted by balancing a global youth development orientation with the specificity of supporting protective factor development. Preliminary evidence suggests high satisfaction and internalization of the model by workshop participants. Discussion focuses on the potentially unique contribution ReSed offers, as well as some pragmatic ways to begin applying it in any school practice. While more research is needed, it is concluded that ReSed offers a promising model of how "resilience" occurs, not solely as an outcome, but as a moment-to-moment learning and development process.

Keywords: Resilience, School Engagement, Youth Development

THE FOUNDATIONS OF RESILIENCE EDUCATION

Resilience education is significant and unique as an interactive human and humane process that supports lifelong learning and development. In this process, a global and holistic view of such learning and development is balanced with the specificity of facilitating three research-based and affective protective factors: person-to-person connectedness, opportunities for participation and contribution, and high self expectations (Benard, 2003; Werner & Smith, 2001). Resilience in Education represents a central part of how my colleagues and I view school engagement. Yet only recently has it been intentionally applied in educational settings. This model of applying resilience in Education (ReSed) was created with colleagues Bonnie Benard of WestEd and Marianne D'Emidio-Caston of Antioch University for the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD) in Berkeley.

In a non-didactic yet directed way, ReSed facilitators develop the "hows" of building a community of support for identifying and working with people's strengths and interests in order to promote learning and development. This is achieved by strategically working with individuals, dyads, triads, small groups, and large groups. Such strategic inter- and intra-personal processes make visible to the facilitator and model opportunities for specific protective factor development and/or support. Moreover, the facilitation of ReSed serves as a model that young people can use to marshal their strengths for learning and development throughout the course of their own lives. This approach is described herein and more fully in the book *Resilience Education* (Brown et al., 2000). Because its focus is on a resilience building process, not a manualized program, ReSed is context acknowledging, yet context independent—participants can apply it in any school, counseling program, curricula, or human service program.

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This article discusses the promise of resilience in school engagement not solely as an outcome, but as a moment-to-moment process orientation. In the following sections, its conceptual, definitional, and applied grounding are described. The article closes with a discussion of the distinct and promising contribution that Resilience Education may offer, as well as recommendations to focus your work on resilience.

Resilience Education Foundations: A Global Orientation Balanced with Protective Factor Facilitation

CERD's view of resilience and its application in education balances a global and holistic view of development with the specific processes of facilitating three key protective factors. ReSed's research foundations are derived from the fields of Human Development, Psychology and Education. While a full literature review is provided in the book *Resilience Education* (Brown et al., 2000), its foundations are briefly described here.

Global resilience orientation. A global resilience orientation is seen as the likelihood that most young people, even those in the highest stress environments, will evolve into thriving adults (Garmezy, 1987, 1991; Rutter, 1985, 1987; Werner, 1989). For example, after following people from birth to adulthood for more than 40 years, Werner and Smith (2001) found that:

> …most of the high-risk youths who did develop serious coping problems in adolescences had staged a recovery by the time they reach midlife...They were in stable marriages and jobs, were satisfied with their relationships with their spouses and teenage children, and were responsible citizens in their community. (p. 167)

In this and other longitudinal studies, approximately 70% of young people with multiple risk factors in youth thrive by midlife. Masten (2001) best captures this global resilience orientation:

> Resilience does not come from rare and special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in their families and relationships, and in their communities. (p. 238)

Theory and evidence suggests resilience can serve as a global orientation because its occurrence is a "normative" part of development in the vast majority of people's lives. When human beings are faced with life challenges, they often manage, adapt, and move on. A focus on resilient development as a powerful global orientation leads to reformulating the basic question from "Which people are resilient?" to "What are the resilient possibilities within each person?"

Specific protective factors. As noted earlier, the research literature suggests that three dimensions—connectedness, opportunities for participation and contribution, and high self expectations—serve as the primary protective factors predicting the fostering of resilience by midlife (Benard, 2003; Resnick et al., 1997). Psychobiologically, within each of these specific factors, socio-emotional or affective states may literally create development, learning and thriving (D'Arcangelo, 1998; Sylwester, 1995a). Emotions are not simply adjuncts to learning; they act as the glue between perception, learning, and development. Specifically, emotional arousal causes the movement of peptide chains to the brain, which in turn causes the formation of neural connections in the brain. This literally indicates learning and development (Parasuraman, 1998; Sylwester, 1995b; Vincent, 1990). Connecting this psychobiological evidence with the protective factor evidence, it is theorized that the affective dimensions inherent in these protective factors—a young person feeling connected with an adult, experiencing opportunities for participation and contribution as well as developing high self expectations—create a variety of emotional states of readiness wherein learning and development can occur.

It is important to note that before the educational community began applying such human development evidence regarding protective factors to school and youth development, similar ideas could be

drawn from Education and its foundational fields. Most notably, this is seen in the work of Berger and Luckmann (1967), Belenky et al. (1986), Thayer-Bacon (2000), Thayer-Bacon and Bacon (1998), as well as the applications of Dewey (1897, 1899, 1902), Montessori (1912), and Brown (1972, 1975). The thread binding these philosophers and practitioners is a constructivist and/or a socio-emotional perspective of learning. Within these perspectives, either originating from one's self or in concert with others, information or experiences become meaningful and learned in accord with each individual's emotional ties to that information or experience.

The most direct and significant evidence regarding application of resilience in Education emerges from a now-ended project of the Developmental Studies Center (DSC; Battistich & Hom, 1997; Battistich, Schaps, Watson, Solomon, & Lewis, 2000; Watson, Battistich, & Solomon, 1997). DSC researchers/practitioners focused on the global view of creating a resilient school climate. An example of longitudinal findings from this research is summarized:

> [Results revealed] *higher test scores, higher grades in core academic subjects, more involvement in positive youth school and community activities and less misconduct at school than comparison students.* (Brown, 2001, p. 50)

This evidence provides the strongest support to date establishing a reasonable basis for further exploration of the prospective role of resilience in education and related systems.

A Process-Oriented Definition of Resilience

The literature and evidence from Human Development, Psychology, and Education suggest the following: whether the context is counseling, math, science, history, or otherwise, a school engagement climate focused on learning and development includes both a global view of each person's developmental capacity along with the specificity of focusing on protective factors. Based on the theorized importance of this balance, a process-oriented definition of resilience is offered—*A global orientation toward each individual's capacity for lifelong learning and development that is facilitated individually or interactively by cognitively, affectively, or behaviorally locating and/or supporting the protective factors of person-to-person connectedness, opportunities for participation and contribution, and high self expectations.*

Resilience Education: Translating Theory into Practice

ReSed is designed to become a part of the evolving fabric of school engagement in learning and development activities. As such, the central dimension of ReSed's viability is how its theory and definition is translated into practice. This is to be achieved in two ways: (a) facilitating a caring learning community comprised of the day-to-day and moment-to-moment processes of locating and supporting the three protective factors and; (b) at the professional's discretion, offering subject-specific information—counseling feedback, math, science, history, or any form of subject content—during teachable moments. Teachable moments are those in which there is a perceived emotional state of readiness to receive subject-specific content, which may then become learned.

In CERD's training workshops designed for those working with young people, ReSed is not only discussed, it is experienced—often over a two-day period. The workshop's goal is to develop a resilience-oriented community. It is also to learn how to balance the global development view of resilience with the specificity of supporting the protective factors. By reinterpreting, adapting, and subsequently applying their own training experience from the training workshop to the unique needs of their professional setting, each workshop participant brings ReSed's principles to life. As participants go back into their professional settings, they then have an initial skill set to draw from for supporting the creation of a resilience community.

Within the training workshop itself, two types of facilitation exercises are used. The first is what is referred to in the *Resilience Education* (Brown et al., 2000) book as a "PORTable" approach. The second is embedded within the first—strategic and intentional regrouping or shuttling among workshop participants in individual, dyads, triads, small and large group configurations. More is said about each of these training categories.

Two Categories of ReSed Exercises: PORTable and Group Configuration

PORTable exercises. As noted above, we use an acronym for our resilience building approach—P-O-R-T. It is named as such because it is literally portable—it can be applied in any learning environment. The model includes four distinct elements of the human experience believed integral to supporting resilient development: *Participation, Observation, Reflection and Transformation.* Participation involves authentic, present-focused active engagement of self and with others involved in learning and development activities. Observation involves noting or describing rather than interpreting these experiences. Reflection involves interpreting such current experiences. Finally, transformation involves "…awareness of and responsibility for an act, process or instance of change" (Brown et al., 2001, p. 50).

In PORT-able exercises, facilitators work with participants to distinguish and differentiate these elements of human experience into the four distinct categories. An exemplar overview of a two-day workshop and its exercise and/or resilience-oriented goals is presented in Table 1. As a brief example here, I distinguish the Observation of an experience such as "you just spoke to me in a high pitched voice," with an interpretation of that experience or Reflection such as "from what you just said I am interpreting this as you being angry with me." PORT exercises are designed to highlight such distinctions cognitively as is noted here. Additionally, by actually participating in or experiencing skill-building PORT exercises, rather than simply talking about them, highlights distinctions affectively. For example, through workshop exercises, participants both sense and learn how to contribute to their own resilient development by experiencing the caring connected relationships inevitably developed during such exercises. Based on the combination of cognitive and affective dimensions of PORT exercises, participants learn how its elements serve distinct, essential purposes in supporting the protective factors of ReSed. This includes the development of ongoing awareness and personal responsibility for communication patterns, identifying resilient capacities, and strengths in how to facilitate resilience. Paradoxically, it appears that by differentiating the elements of the PORTable model, eventually participants reconnect them. Subsequently, an integrated and holistic view of resilience along with the initial skill set to support its facilitation, emerges.

Group shuttling exercises. Be it a counselor conducting group work, an educator with many students, or a school administrator facing competing time interests, using traditional means, one simply cannot meet all people's resilience learning needs. These concerns may be addressed by learning how to effectively shuttle or regroup participants as individuals, dyads, triads, small and large groups. Embedded within the PORTable exercises described above, the specific goals of configuration exercises are the following: (a) to make visible how different configurations affect one's ability to learn and develop, both individually and as part of a group; (b) to make visible multiple opportunities for support and/or facilitation of protective factors; and (c) to learn how to efficiently and effectively facilitate such shuttling as a means of protective factor support, learning, and development.

How do we know how and when to shuttle? There are numerous considerations. At its most basic level, such regrouping is necessitated by a combination of training experience, professional discretion learned through PORT, and ongoing participant feedback. Most importantly, reconfiguration or *shuttling* occurs when the facilitator perceives the resulting new configuration serves the development and/or learning of the emerging resilient community.

More specifically, our facilitators always consider their audience. Exercise order, the level of detail, content, and sophistication will vary. Thus, different group configurations are needed. For example, during workshops such considerations may necessitate an orientation toward "reflection" rather than "observation." A reflective exercise may involve noting individual interpretation and reporting back to a larger participant group. On the other hand, an observational exercise may involve two participants working together to develop their skills at non-judgmental observation. By participating in different working configurations, participants can locate the configurations in which they feel most engaged. To the extent to which such shuttling is made explicit, participants also acquire a portion of the skill set needed to locate and meet his or her own learning and development needs. Shuttling then, to serve participants' needs is the epitome of being responsive to opportunities for protective factor development as they emerge.

Resilience Education Workshop Summary

Based on this model, ReSed workshops model and facilitate a resilience-oriented community through non-didactic yet directed learning. The non-didactic portion is that each person has a unique experience of discovering his or her own resilience and how that may support the principle of balancing the global orientation with specific protective factor work with their colleagues and/or young people with whom they work. The "directed learning" portion of the model is that there is usually a clear learning progression—that facilitators can direct efforts toward—as indicated by the typical order in the PORT-able model.

With professional discretion as to age appropriateness, opportunity, and skill level, ReSed principles are brought to life by using a variety of PORT-able and shuttling exercises. These include some of the exercises used during the training workshop. At the discretion of the professional, it may also include using new exercises she or he develops when working with young people. To the extent that the process and resilience-related principles are made explicit and used by the facilitator, the goal is one of self efficacy—young people or adults using them to develop skills in support of their own resilient oriented learning and development.

Promising Pilot Findings: Positive Attitudes and High Levels of Internal Attribution

Research regarding ReSed is in its earliest stages. In pilot research, participant satisfaction and implementation levels are now being examined. Qualitative and quantitative pilot results from workshops with counselors, educators and administrators suggest promise (Brown & D'Emidio-Caston, 2003). For example, one educator typical of others, noted:

> Personally I have begun to use the vocabulary and strategies in my day-to-day contacts. I've noticed that people are more open to hearing what I say if that "democratic community" is established. Even the brief respites of time to quiet myself and go inside allows me to be more open to what is being taught. With this openness I release judgments that might interfere with hearing what is being said. (Brown & D'Emidio-Caston, 2003, p. 2)

Quantitatively, regarding overall perception of ReSed at a University of California, Berkeley co-sponsored workshop, out of a potential rating of 4.0, participants rated the workshop on an average of 3.7, with 22 of 25 participants perceiving the workshop as "good" to "excellent." More importantly, it was found that by the end of the workshop, on psychological attribution outcome measures (Kelley, 1967; Raven, 1965), participants had taken on dimensions of ReSed as their own. These early results suggest that changes participants may make with respect to their ReSed practices were attributed significantly more to themselves (internal attribution) than to the group leaders (external attribution). Such attributions indicate an internal locus of control, perhaps as part of incorporating the protective

factor of "high self expectations." Such internalized attributions predict long-term behavioral change (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). These findings have been consistent across additional workshops.

While the preceding pilot evidence is interesting, further research is needed regarding (a) the developed skill and implementation level of ReSed in school environments and (b) the facilitator/ youth impact of ReSed. In addition to the measures noted above, outcomes being examined are similar to those of the DSC research as well as the developed level of "connectedness" described by Resnick et al. (1997).

The Application of Resilience Education

This article draws attention to the potential value of resilience as part of school engagement, learning and development by focusing on its daily opportunities. As the potential contributions are described below, there is an important matter to consider. For those interested in fully implementing the ReSed approach, more than two days of trainings are recommended. Among participating staff, approximately four workshop days spread over two months combined with two additional days in two subsequent years and/or ongoing whole-school change consultation support is recommended. Such additional work usually involves more in-depth variations of the training as described in Table 1.

Table 1.

General ReSed 1.5-Day Workshop Description

Exercise and Group Configuration	Exercise and Resilience Goal
Day 1: Community Building and Introduction to Resilience Education	
1. Dyads and then whole group: Partner Introductions Each person interacts with another to first learn a bit about who the partner is, then later in the whole group, introduces the partner	-Begin authentic present focus and building caring, connected interpersonal relationships
2. Whole group: Develop Norms/Ground rules for workshop participation Facilitator acts as prompter and note taker to develop participatory ground rules	-Continue the above -Helps build resilience oriented community by adding dimension of personal ownership and empowerment for the workshop -Develops group participatory norms
3. Individual: Brief guided imagery regarding individual that participant experiences as fostering an interpersonal life connection Followed by "quick write" to make immediate perceptions explicit	-Continue building authentic present focus through low-risk exercise -Helps make visible potential strengths for the protective factor of high self expectations
4. Whole Group: Relationships, Messages, Opportunities Based on quick write above: Share relationships, opportunities and messages that you experienced in your life Experience is subsequently integrated with brief research presentation	-Link affective experience, relationships and messages with cognitive information regarding resilience -Concept attainment: Foster general understanding of research support for ReSed

5. Individual and then dyads: Individual quick write to connect information above with learning about resilience in present moment Share noted learning with colleague	-Initiate reflective practice using present-focus and continue process of intrapersonal strength location -Moving into dyads, using affective personal stories to begin tying personal experience into research-based dimensions of resilience -Further deepening of interpersonal connectedness
6. Whole Group: Closure to first morning: Introduction to Processing Large group discussion of two dimensions to be made explicit: (a) content processing, e.g., what is being learned about resilience education and; (b) meta processing; what is being learned about how the participant learns, e.g., strength and interest identification	-Same as above -Deepen reflective practice -Make explicit types of learning strengths, individually noted optimal learning context(s) -Explore desired opportunities for participation and contribution available to participants
7. Be Here Now Exercise Identify participant focus in each moment as it occurs; partners face one another. One partner begins by stating "now I" and then the other partner responds with "now I." Continues back and forth for two or three minutes.	-Make explicit authentic present focus -Continue deepening interpersonal connections -Support development of protective factor of high self expectations through skills building exercise
8. Dyads or Triads: See, Imagine, Feel Exercise: Two people sit facing one another If third is present, s/he observes the two. The first nonparticipant makes an "I see" statement, followed by an "I imagine" statement, concluded by an "I feel" statement. The partner responds with similar statements. They continue back and forth for approximately 3 minutes and then discuss their experience. If observer is present, s/he provides and separates observational from reflective feedback. Observer then participates with a partner and new observer until each of the triad members have had an opportunity to participate and observe.	-Learn how to explicitly distinguish between observation and reflection -Learn how to give descriptive and evaluative feedback -Continue deepening interpersonal connections; Supporting high self expectations through skills building exercises
9. Whole group; Mini-Lecture: Explicit Introduction to PORT approach and use of shuttling to facilitate resilient community	-"PORT" concept attainment derived from above exercises and multiple configurations
10. Whole group: Meta processing and end to day one	-Same as similar exercise described above

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Day 2: PORT in Closer Detail and Application in Your Professional Setting

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11. Small groups: View brief video; describe or note observations without evaluation	-Reinforcing importance of separating observation and reflection -Make explicit identification of intrapersonal observational strengths -Deepen connectedness through small group configuration
12. Small groups: Content and meta-reflection in present moment	-Reinforcing role of interpretation and distinction between content and meta-reflection; -Make explicit location of reflective strengths -Deepen connectedness through small group configuration
13. Triads: Transformation: Present and Future Applications: One case/situation in your professional environment where application of PORT may be possible	-Concept attainment: Noting application in specific work environment -Further develop high self expectations, by identifying realistic opportunities for change in work environment -Preparation for application of strengths based focus outside workshop
14. Whole group: Closure; content and meta-processing	-Make explicit final concept attainment: -Learning about the process of ReSed, intra-personal strengths and optimal learning configurations, a resilience-oriented caring connected community has been developed -Offer closing opportunities for deepening connectedness using participatory and contributory options, and how these can be continued outside this workshop.

The Potential Contribution(s) of Resilience Education to Learning and Development

First, once learned, it appears that the ReSed process orientation may become commonplace. Our work is generally focused as a support to existing learning and development activities. As such, ReSed is not a stand-alone program, but rather can be integrated as part of nearly any school learning or development program. It is not an academic standard, but indications are that ReSed can lead to sup-porting the attainment of such standards.

Second, the psychobiological research suggests that the emotions developed when focused on protective factors create literal opportunities for learning and development. As people emotionally experience the protective factors, content specific information offered during that time can become learned through the creation of neural brain connections formed due to that emotional experience.

Third, ReSed may make a unique contribution because a most delightful aspect of the PORT-able approach is its' mutuality. For example, the development of caring, connected relationship(s) for the

purpose of learning and development by definition includes the building of relationship(s). Given the intended, recognized, and appreciated goal of mutuality, ReSed may also prevent facilitator burnout by supporting the professional development and health of the helper.

Practical Steps for Promoting Resilient Development

Overall, the supporting psychological, development and educational theory and evidence suggest that it is time to expand efforts to promote youth resilience. As a practical guide, in efforts to do so—to bring about the "ordinary magic" to which Masten (2001) refers—several pragmatic steps may be taken.

In general, work to strike a balance between a global orientation toward resilience and the specificity of focusing on the protective factors through ongoing processes and professional assessment. Specifically, learn how to make these factors visible and supportable to the facilitator and with young people. This may be achieved by drawing dimensions from the PORT-able approach such as focusing on being presently engaged and becoming aware of verbal and non-verbal cues, and regularly providing descriptive rather than evaluative feedback. The goal of making explicit such observations is twofold: (a) to clearly note what is going on for you right now and (b) to clarify your thoughts or interpretations from those of others, or what is referred to in psychological terms as developing a clear boundary differentiation. In the service of modeling or facilitating development of a specific protective factor, share observations with those with whom you work as descriptions, not only determinations.

Another practical step involves adding regular and targeted opportunities for reflection as described above and in Table 1, item #6, to your toolbox. This helps you make explicit for yourself and to hear from others their interpretation of the same thoughts or events. Additionally, the regular availability of non-judgmental processing may also help build the kinds of caring connected relationships known to support resilient development. Embedded in these practices is the importance of learning how to shuttle between individual and various group combinations.

Finally, one may want to use these process options before determining what resilience-supporting changes to make. This stepwise approach to resilience building allows the facilitator as well as those they serve to accomplish this goal—to support resilience-oriented change in real time, as part of an ongoing process. In so doing, decisions can be made by determination rather than by inertia or default.

CONCLUSION

As conceptualized, developed and implemented by CERD, ReSed draws from the best human development, psychobiological, and educational evidence to implement a development focus. The ReSed orientation has the potential to enhance school engagement. This change is toward a sophisticated affective and humanistic form of school engagement—one that is directed, yet youth supporting and focused. It does not replace other scholastic quality standards, but as learned through the ReSed process, can come to represent a higher level of quality—lifelong quality—in learning and development. ReSed offers a promising hope because those using it seek to strike a manageable balance between a global orientation toward resilience and a development process specifically connected with its protective factors. As a process and not just another program, ReSed provides counselors, educators, or administrators an opportunity to support a youth development approach. This is humanely managed school engagement.

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