

Resilient Living

STRENGTHENING THE MIND AND SPIRIT



FOP Community Educational Series

Sense of Coherence

Adapted from

TURNING POINT

 THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS HEALTH SYSTEM

The 10 Facets of Highly Resilient People©



Global Genes[®]

Allies in Rare Disease

Program Funding Provided by
Global Genes Rare Patient Impact Grant

Recap:

Best Practices for Emotional Acknowledgement

1. Notice when you start to feel overwhelmed.
2. Take a few deep breaths.
3. Name the emotions that are under the surface of your anxiety.
4. Focus on the emotion itself and where it shows up in your body.
5. Take a deep breath and give yourself permission to feel it on the inside without judgement.
6. Tell yourself something supportive like “It’s ok to have this feeling.” “I am not my emotions and have the power to feel them and let them go.”
7. Take another deep breath and picture the emotion lifting and letting go of its hold on you.

How Do You Feel Today?



Happy



Sad



Angry



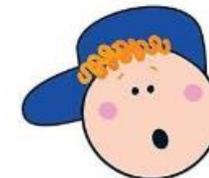
Scared



Silly



Excited



Surprised



Shy



Embarrassed

Recap:

Best Practices for Ability to Self-Calm

1. Be aware of your stress response and actively work to recover in the moment.
2. Recognize fight, flight or freeze and how it's impacting on your body.
3. Calm down from big and little stressors.
4. Stay connected to your breath and to yourself to regulate your nervous system.
5. Close the lid to help the instinctive and rational part of the brain connect and communicate.
6. Regulate your nervous system before you try to help regulate others.
7. Remember you cannot prevent stressful things from happening in your life, but you can bring yourself back from stress reactions and do your best to recover in the moment



Recap:

Best Practices for Self-care

1. Choose behaviors that are safe, fun and rejuvenating to balance the effects of emotional and physical stressors.
2. Emotional self-care varies greatly from person to person
 - Watching TV, reading a book
 - Talking with friends
 - Drinking a cup of coffee in peace
3. There are 3 key areas of physical self-care: exercise, sleep and nutrition
4. Give yourself permission to do whatever it is you need to do. Create a nurturing relationship with yourself that allows for a sense of caring and warmth.
5. It is impossible to do self-care perfectly. Focus on activities that are accessible for your life.



Recap:

Best Practices for Hardiness

Commitment

People who are high in commitment work hard and give their best effort. They have a curiosity about what is happening to them versus feelings of alienation from people or the environment.

Control

People feel that they can influence life events and their surroundings. They have a strong sense that they can make things happen and do not feel like victims of circumstance

Challenge

People see difficult situations in life as a challenge rather than a disaster. They see these challenges as an opportunity to learn, grow and become a better person.



Recap: Best Practices for the Ability to Self-Replenish



1. Self-replenishment includes the things you do to **restore your energy and sense of well-being** when life feels draining.
2. Every person is different: strategies for self-replenishment should speak to your interests, values and needs.
Identify a variety of activities that you can do in different situations or environments
3. Positive interactions are an easy way to get more replenishment.
Using positive interactions to bounce back from challenging emotions is a great way to jump start self-calming
4. This choice to fill or deplete our buckets in an important one that profoundly influences our relationships, productivity, health and happiness.



Everyone has an invisible bucket. We are at our best when our buckets are overflowing — and at our worst when they are empty.



Everyone also has an invisible dipper. In each interaction, we can use our dipper either to fill or to dip from others' buckets.



Whenever we choose to fill others' buckets, we in turn fill our own.

Recap: Best Practices for Non-judgement and self-supporting thoughts

1. Recognize when you are being overly harsh or critical with yourself and others
2. Change your thought patterns and self-talk to be more positive and growth focused
3. Let go of perfectionism
4. Be aware of your inner critic (judgmental thoughts)
5. To have more control over your inner critic, you must be able to see it as separate from yourself.
6. Work to name your critic and call it out.
7. Understand that these thought patterns were created in the past. You are in control and can make room for more positive and supportive self-talk.
8. Use the “Flip-it” exercise as a strategy to create more supportive self-talk



Recap:

Best Practices for Hope and Optimism

1. Optimism is believing a situation will improve with the right time, resources, effort, or support.
2. Optimism does not come easy. Your brain is wired to notice what is unsafe, missing, or going wrong, and it does this as a protective mechanism.
3. A gratitude practice is an effective way to rewire your brain to remember the positives.
4. Hope is the backbone of optimism. It provides the plan and motivation to achieve desired outcomes.
5. Hopeful people have willpower, waypower and follow-through to achieve their goals.





What is Sense of Coherence?

the belief that life is meaningful and worth the struggle...

that there are resources, routines, and rituals to help you handle the chaotic and unpredictable parts of life



Sense of Coherence Background

Based off the research of Dr. Aaron Antonovsky, who studied the resilience traits of Holocaust concentration camp survivors

To have a strong sense of coherence, one must believe that dealing with stressful life events is worthwhile because life is:

Meaningful- Life is a gift and how I respond to life matters. Emotional component that serves as the motivation to search for order and assistance.

Manageable- There are resources out there to help me meet the demands of life.

Comprehensible- Even though the life feels crazy and chaotic, you can seek consistent experiences and find ways to make my world more orderly and understandable.

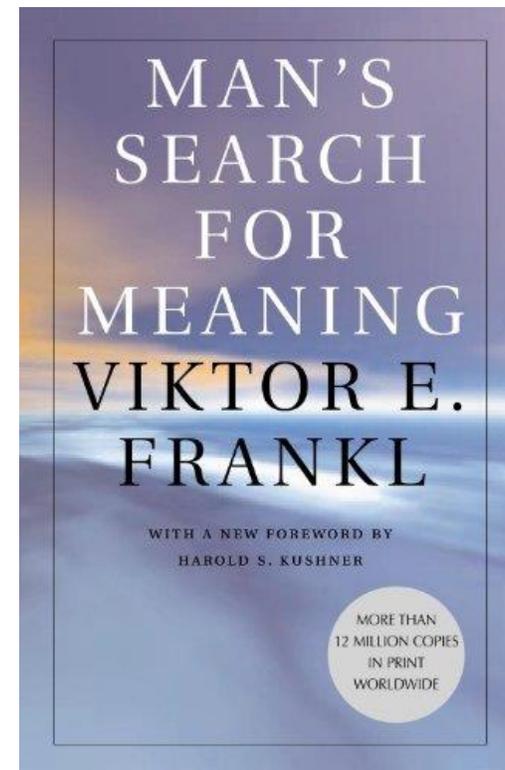
Sense of Coherence in Context

Excerpts from Viktor Frankl's Man's Search for Meaning

(Frankl Quoting Friedrich Nietzsche in his book)

“Those who have a 'why' to live for, can bear almost any 'how'.”

“Everything can be taken from a person but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances.”



Strengthening Sense of Coherence

To strengthen sense of coherence, you must believe your efforts make a difference. The following excerpt is from Dr. Rick Hanson's *Resilient: How to Grow an Unshakable Core of Calm, Strength, and Happiness*.

“Think about the people in your life, including those you don’t know well.

Could you make a difference to someone? Seemingly little things can be very touching. Consider humanity in general as well as nonhuman animals and see if something is calling to you. Not to burden you, but to push back against helplessness and despair.

Take some time to reflect on what you have already done to help others and on what you are currently doing. Imagine how all this has rippled out into the world in ways seen and unseen. **The truth of what you have given rests alongside the truth that there is still so much suffering and knowing the one will help your heart stay open to the other.”**

Action Eases Despair

As you face the enormity of suffering in this world, you might feel flooded with a sense of despair at the impossibility of ever doing enough....

There is a story of two people walking down miles of ocean beach on which thousands of starfish had been washed up by the tide and were now dying in the sun. One of them reached down every few steps to toss a starfish back into the water. After a while, the other said, "There are so many, what you're doing doesn't make a difference." The first person replied, "It makes a world of difference to the ones I pick up."

What does "doing your part" look like?

Think about the people in your life...

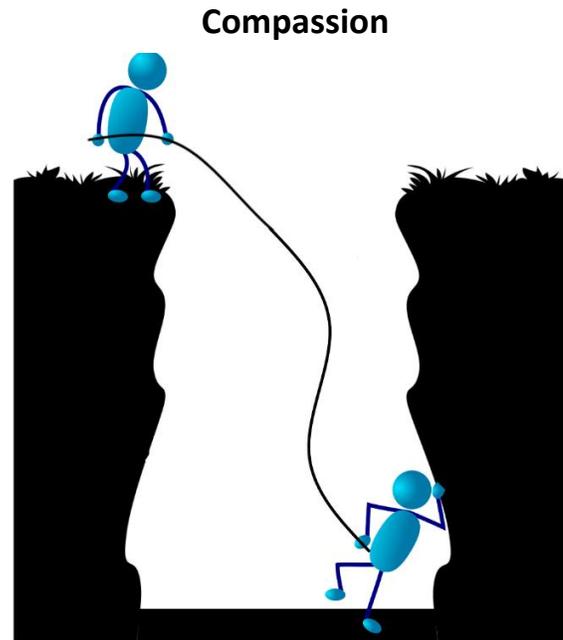
Could you make a difference to someone? What have you done recently that makes an impact (small or big), even if it is not easily seen or acknowledge by others.



Helping Others: Compassion vs. Empathy

Compassion: is feeling concern for another's suffering and having the desire to help and act. The motivation is to help from a place of strength and resources without taking on the other person's pain, suffering, or emotions.

If someone fell in a hole, the compassionate response would be to stay up top to make sure your ability to help does not get compromised. You would then do your best to help from a place of strength and resources.



Empathy: is sharing in or trying to experience the suffering or emotions of another person. The motivation is to try and understand what it is like to be in their situation.

If someone fell in a hole, the empathetic response would be to jump down in the hole to try and understand what it's like to be them and to let them know they are not alone in their suffering. You try to experience the emotions of the other person.



Practices for Practicing Compassion

Compassion promotes positive boundaries and a strong sense of purpose and impact. It also promotes feelings of warmth and kindness towards others without all the negative side effects of trying to feel their pain and suffering.

Best practices for setting good boundaries & encouraging a compassionate response versus an empathetic one:



Bubble method When you are in a helping position and start to feel overwhelmed by another's situation or stressful energy, picture a bubble surrounding you. Imagine the bubble is so strong that any attitudes, emotions, pain, or stress can't get inside, so you can have the strength to either a) keep helping them or b) get others involved.



Wish yourself and others kindness with the "Loving Kindness" Mantra/Meditation When you have done what is within your control, it might still feel like you should do more. It is important to realize where your helping role and realm of control ends and to wish the best for yourself and the other person, despite any unknowns.

Getting In Touch with Core Values

Your sense of coherence is strengthened when you are aware of your core values and what inspires you to keep going, even in the dark or difficult times. It's about figuring out your "WHY," so you can figure out "HOW" you are going to get through the challenges on your plate.

From the following list of core values, which one or two mean the most to you? Try to circle just a couple or write in your own. Ask yourself the following questions to help you decide.

- Who am I at my best?
- Where do my beliefs and my strengths overlap the most?
- Which values do I like to use as a guide to get me through difficult situations?
- What is an example of a time when you used your core values and it made you feel stronger?

Authenticity

Accountability

Compassion

Curiosity

Faith

Generosity

Growth

Honesty

Hope

Kindness

Respect

Teamwork/Collaboration

Transparency

Sense of Coherence and Growth

↑ belief that dealing with stress is worthwhile

Trying to solve problems is worth it

A challenge is a stressor to be met rather than a burden

The End Goals!

***Recall that life is meaningful and how you respond to the challenges of life matters.
Do your part to uplift yourself and others.
Seemingly small things make a big difference.
Trust that your efforts make an impact.***

You have the potential to make an impact on the world just by being grounded in your values and by choosing to live bravely and compassionately in the face of your challenges.

Reflections:

Meaningful	Manageable	Comprehensible
<p>What makes your life and your work more meaningful?</p> <p>What is your reason for “why do I do this?” that will help you get to the “how do I do this?”</p> <p><u>Helpful mantra:</u> Even when I don’t have the answers, I make an impact on the world just by living bravely and compassionately in the face of my challenges.</p>	<p>Where and how can you get help?</p> <p>Can you speak to a caring friend, family member, coworker, or counselor about your feelings?</p> <p><u>Helpful mantra:</u> It’s okay to not be okay. No one can keep it together all the time. The important thing is that I seek help.</p>	<p>What are some routines, rituals, or values that help ground you and put things into perspective?</p> <p>What or who helps you stay calm and hopeful?</p> <p><u>Helpful mantra:</u> A good life is about being kind, engaged, and okay with my best, even when things don’t work out as planned.</p>