

Fostering Resilience in Families



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RESILIENCE

The word "RESILIENCE" is written in a bold, red, serif font. The letters have a slight 3D effect, with a dark red shadow cast beneath them, making the text appear to float above the surface. The shadow is soft and diffused, extending horizontally and slightly downwards from the base of the letters.

The ability to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges, strengthened and more resourceful

Froma Walsh



Myths About Families

1. The 'Normal' Family

- Filtered by professional values, personal family experience and cultural standards

2. Healthy families are 'problem free'

- Problems are symptomatic of, or caused by, a 'dysfunctional' family

A Family Resilience Approach

- Focuses on family strengths and resources not on weaknesses or 'dysfunction'
- Problem solving → Problem prevention
- Engages families with respect and compassion and brings out best qualities

Family Resilience: An Interactive Process

- Family resilience is an interactive process over time involving:
 - Approach to challenging situations
 - How they manage disruption
 - Strategies for coping
- Families are a resource in promoting resilience, not a liability.

The Impact of Adversity

- Serious crises or persistent adversity can have an impact on the whole family - this mediates how each family member adapts.
- Major stressors or a pile-up of stresses can derail the functioning of the family.
- Key processes in resilience can enable the family system to rally.

The Family Resilience Framework

- Focus on strengths
- Links the symptoms of distress with stressful events
- Guides interventions to target and strengthen key processes

Key Processes in Family Resilience

Beliefs

- Meaning
- Positive Outlook
- Spirituality

Organisation

- Connectedness
- Flexibility
- Social Networks

Communication

- Clarity
- Open Emotion
- Collaborative Problem Solving

Family Beliefs

Meaning

- Shared challenge
- Normalise and contextualise distress
- Recast problem or crisis as a meaningful challenge that is understandable and manageable



Family Beliefs

Positive Outlook

- Hope
- Affirmation of strengths
- Initiative and Perseverance
- Mastering the art of the possible



Spirituality

- A meaning a purpose beyond the families difficulties

Family Organisation

Connectedness

- Support, collaboration and commitment
- Respect for individual differences and boundaries
- Reconnection and reconciliation

Flexibility

- Bouncing forward
- Stability
- Firm but flexible authoritative leadership



Family Organisation

Social Networks

- Whānau, friends, church, community groups
- Role models, mentors
- Information and resources
- Financial security
- Work-family strain
- Institutional support



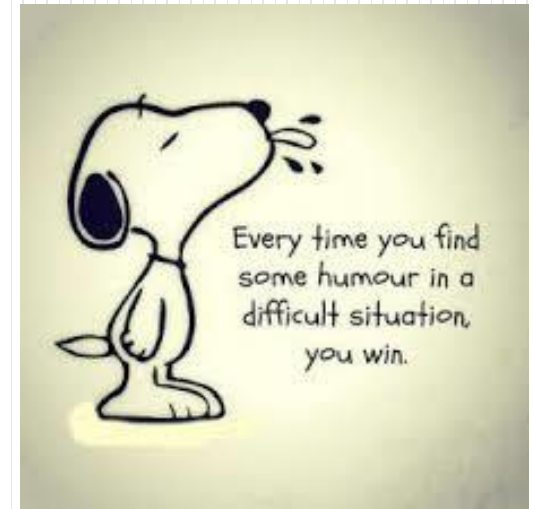
Communication

Clarity

- Clear and consistent
- Guidance

Open Emotion

- Share a range of feelings
- Mutual trust, empathy and tolerance
- Pleasure and humour



Collaborative Problem Solving

- Creative brainstorming
- Shared decision making
- Focus on goals
- Proactive:
 - Strive toward goals
 - Anticipate,
 - Prepare
 - Plan B

**WHEN
ONE DOOR CLOSES
ANOTHER OPENS
OR YOU CAN OPEN
THE CLOSED DOOR
THAT'S HOW
DOORS WORK**

The Family Resilience Framework

Can be adapted to different formats:

- Family meetings
- Family consultation sessions
- Psychoeducation groups
- Multifamily groups
- Family Therapy

Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development.
Masten, 2001

'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, and in their families and relationships and in their communities'.

References

Masten, A. (2001). *Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development*.

Walsh, F. (2003). *Family resilience: A framework for clinical practice*.

Walsh, F. (2006). *Strengthening family resilience*. 2nd ed. New York: Guilford Press.

Walsh, F. (2008). *Using theory to support a family resilience framework in practice*. *Social Work Now*, 39, 5-14 (New Zealand).

HOW RESILIENT
ARE YOU?

