
Cultivating Resilience in Online Teaching

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Introduction

Who I am

- Classroom instructor, English composition and literature, 27 years
- Department Chair



- Doctoral Student



Area of Interest

- Resiliency
- Community Cultural Wealth Model (Yosso, 2005)
- Community colleges
- Mental health
- Well-being

Resiliency

- **Defined**
- **Importance**
- **Online**
 - The urgency of now
- **In the classroom**
 - Transitioning back to on-ground instruction
- **Conclusion**

Resilient Mindset



“Acceptance, openness, flexibility, optimism, patience, mindfulness, empathy, compassion, resourcefulness, determination, courage, and forgiveness are all part of a resilient mindset. These are all qualities we can train in” (Haas, 2016).

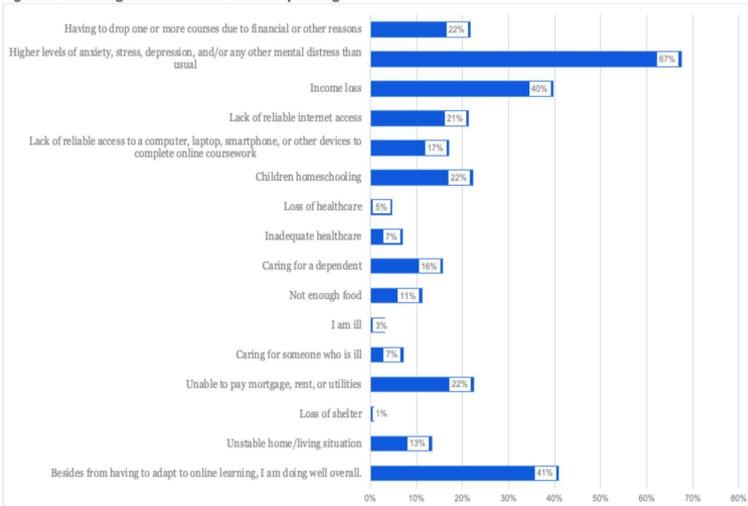
From: Student Senate for
California Community Colleges
Survey Report, May 2020

Today and tomorrow

Student Senate Data

Teaching resilience

Figure 2. Challenges Students are Currently Facing



- Very real threats:
 - Covid
 - Food, employment, housing insecurity
- Anxiety, depression, uncertainty
- Stress

- Can resilience be taught?
- Should resilience be taught?
- How does one include resilience in class?

Resilience as Ordinary Magic:

Masten (2001; 2014) asserts that “[r]esilience arises from ordinary resources and processes,” which she refers to as ordinary magic.

This can be taught.

First, recognize the context.

Collective Trauma & cPTSD

Collective Trauma

- Trauma that occurs societally, such as natural disasters, mass shootings, and **the pandemic**

Herman, (1992); Hirschberger, (2018); Jain, (2019); Saul, (2014); Somasundaram, (2014); van der Kolk (2014)

CPTSD

- Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
 - Chronic and repeated exposure to traumatic events

Herman, (1992); Jain, (2019); van der Kolk (2014)

Post Traumatic Growth

Hanson, (2018); Seligman, (2011); Lyubomirsky, (2007); Tedeschi, Moore, Falke, & Goldberg, (2020)

- A positive outcome and growth after a traumatic event
- Examine adverse circumstances
- Teach coping techniques
- Focus on growth
 - Future thinking
 - Goals - large and small
 - Cultivate optimism

Teaching Resilience



- The Foundation
 - Eat well. Exercise. Sleep.
- Mindfulness
- Gratitude
- Self-Compassion
- Confidence builders, low-stake assignments, and reaching out

The Foundation



- Eat well.
 - Nutrition for a healthy brain and body (Mosconi, 2018).
 - Exercise.
 - Strength for a strong brain and body; physical and emotional immune system edification.
 - Sleep.
 - Naturally, without sedation (Walker, 2017).
-



MINDFULNESS

“Mindfulness is awareness, cultivated by paying attention in a sustained and particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 2016).

- Staying present
- Focusing on the here and now
- Cultivating attention
- Clearing the mind
- Open-minded awareness
- Meditate -ish

Evans-Winters, 2020; Gunatillake, (2017); Fredrickson, 2009; Hanson, 2018; Lyubomirsky, 2007; Williams & Penman, 2011.

Benefits of Mindfulness



It's free!

Adaptable to anyone

Lowers stress, anxiety, depression, irritability

Protects health

Lifts mood

Decrease negative; increase positive

Worry less, focus on the positive

Develops agency: Choice - what to think, what to focus on

- Cultivates
 - Positive habits
 - Positive rebound
 - Emotional agility
 - Sense of well-being
- Increases
 - Happiness
 - Optimism
 - Self-confidence

Evans-Winters, 2020; Fredrickson, 2009; Hanson, 2018; Lyubomirsky, 2007; Williams & Penman, 2011.

Adding Mindfulness to the Online Class



- Discussion Prompt
- Self-reflection journal
- Consistent journaling
- Mini-research
- Social media and mindfulness
- Five senses
- Where's mindfulness?

steem nensely be difference caring
ner treasure pleased gift thank
value bless grateful respect
give recognition forever greatly
IOW positiv
ress gratefulness happy
are ankful life appreciate attitud
credit now acknowledgement
mire express blessings
regard people moment
firmation change giving love

“First, gratitude is the acknowledgement of goodness in one’s life. In gratitude we say yes to life. We affirm that all good things taken together, life is good and has elements that make it worth living” (Emmons, 2007).

- Affirmation of goodness
- Good things exist in the world
- Emotion
- Attention towards strengths and virtues
- Leads to a rich life

Emmons, (2004, 2007); Fredrickson, 2009); Hanson, (2018); Smith, Newman, Marsh, & Keltner, (2020); Lesowitz & Sammons, (2014); Lyubomirsky, (2007); Seligman, (2011)

Benefits of Gratitude



It feels good!

Creates awareness and openness to goodness

Aides in goal setting

Grateful people tend to be more successful

“Inspires prosocial behavior such as generosity, compassion, and charitable giving . . . magnifies positive feelings” (Smith, Newman, Marsh, & Keltner, 2020).

Promotes higher self-esteem and self-recognition of achievements

Adding Gratitude to the Classroom



- Make a gratitude rock
- Gratitude journal
- Three good things
- Gratitude letter
- Gratitude Portfolio
- Memes
- Thank yourself!

Emmons, (2004, 2007); Fredrickson, 2009); Hanson, (2018); Smith, Newman, Marsh, & Keltner, (2020); Lesowitz & Sammons, (2014); Lyubomirsky, (2007); Seligman, (2011)

self compassion

“Compassion . . . involves the recognition and clear seeing of suffering. It also involves feelings of kindness for people who are suffering, so that the desire to help - *to ameliorate suffering* - emerges. Finally, compassion involves recognizing our shared human condition, flawed and fragile as it is. Self-compassion, by definition, involves the same qualities” (Neff, 2011).

“‘Radical compassion’ means including the vulnerability of this life - all life- in our heart. It means having the courage to love ourselves, each other, and our world. Radical compassion is rooted in mindful, embodied presence, and it is expressed actively through caring” (Brach, 2019).

“Lovingkindness is described as extending friendship to ourselves and others . . . as an inner knowing that our lives are inextricably connected” (Salzberg, 2019).

Benefits of Self-Compassion

- Emotional Resilience
- Motivation
- Patience
- Self-esteem
- Personal growth
- Kindness
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Community



Adding Self-Compassion to the Classroom



- RAIN*
- RAIN Journal*
- Positive self-talk
- Mirroring
- Discussion boards
- Memes
- The Soundtrack of Your Life
- Five Senses, Five Things

*Brach, (2019)

Benefits of teaching English

- Themed classes

But I don't teach English! How can I incorporated resilience techniques into my class?

- Communication Studies/Rhetoric: Speeches on the topic of resilience
- Anthropology: Study different geographical locations and compare and contrast cultural applications, values, weight of resilience
- Athletics: Coaches use resilience techniques to prime athletes towards positive outcomes
- Political Science: Research how governments can cultivate resilience
- History: Identify a time in history when resilience was high or low and examine reasons why
- Mathematics: Create a quantifiable study that incorporates mathematical concepts to measure resilience
- Psychology: Use the DSM to recognize pathologies and research how resilience can be used as treatments
- The Arts: Create a painting/sculpture/musical composition/dance/graphic/film of how resilience can be artistically interpreted

*Adapted from Seligman, 2011.

Cultivating Resilience: Confidence Builders



- Reach out
- Low-stakes assignments
- Revisions; process, not perfection
- Acknowledge hard work, specifically*
- Classroom community
- Relationships

*Dweck, (2016)

Online Classroom Organization

- Have the entire class open on day one
- Predictable, repeated organization
- Clear instructions
- Clear grading rubrics
- Welcoming, inclusive, compassionate syllabus
- Regular and consistent check-ins
- Access to resources



Promotes: Agency, self-efficacy, understanding, cultivates a sense of calm instead of fight, flight, freeze, or fade.*

*Adapted from Zadina, 2014.

CONCLUSION

Resilience can, and should be, taught.

- Greater well-being for students
- Stronger mental health habits
- Access to coping skills and mitigatory interventions
- Increases learning
- Stronger attendance
- Lower attrition rates
- Better and more communication with students

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