RESILIENCE:

- “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances” (Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990, p. 426)
- Positive capacity of individuals to cope with stress & adversity
- Ability to “bounce back”
- Used to label 3 different phenomena

Different Phenomena:

- Individuals who experience traumatic events, but recover well
- Individuals who belong to high-risk grps, but have better outcomes than expected
- Individuals who show positive adaptation despite life stressors

Assumptions About Stress

- Stress is normal
- Stress disturbs equilibrium. Coping is used to maintain equilibrium.
- Individuals & families view stressors and resources according to their own perception
- Individuals & families adapt to stress
- Individual & family adaptation is influenced by the perceived stressors, the perception of the situation, & the resources or coping strategies available to deal with the stress
- It is important to take into account the contexts of family stress within community & cultural contexts in which a family resides to understand why & how families are stressed, as well as to understand how families respond to stress.

Family Adjustment & Adaptation Response

- Families engage in active processes to balance family demands with family capabilities as these interact with family meanings to arrive at a level of family adjustment or adaptation

  Family demands are comprised of (a) normative & nonnormative stressors; (b) ongoing family strains (unresolved, insidious tensions); & (c) daily hassles (minor disruptions of daily life).

  Family capabilities include (a) tangible & psychosocial resources (what the family has) & (b) coping behaviors (what the family does).

  Family meaning – Family meanings shape the nature & extent of risk, as well as the protective capacity of a family.

    - Families’ definitions of their demands (primary appraisal) & capabilities (secondary appraisal)
• Family identity (how they see themselves internally as a unit)
• Family world view (how they see their family in relationship to systems outside of their family)

ASSESSMENT
5 Essential Components of Resilience (Wagnild, 2010): Consider how to discover these with your client?

• 1. Meaningful life (purpose)
  • What do I do that others value?
  • In what ways am I needed every day, & by whom?
  • What in my life has the most meaning?

• 2. Perseverance
  • Do I finish what I begin?
  • How often am I defeated before I even try?
  • Do others say I give up too quickly?
  • Am I able to stay focused on my goals, or am I easily distracted?

• 3. Self reliance
  • Am I aware of all the things that I do well?
  • Do others who know me well describe me as a capable person?
  • Can I usually think through a problem & work out a good solution?
  • Can I do what needs to be done in an emergency, or will I fall apart?

• 4. Equanimity
  • Do I see the glass as half-full or half-empty?
  • Do I look back on my life with so many regrets that I find it difficult to move on?
  • Do I tend to create catastrophes from even the small things that happen in my life?
  • Would my family & close friends describe me as an optimist or a pessimist?

• 5. Coming home to yourself (existential aloneness)
  • Am I willing to take a course of action that I know to be right, but which is unpopular with my peers?
  • As I look back at my life, what sets me apart from everyone else?
• Am I comfortable with whom I have become?

PSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACHES TO TREATMENT

Life Participation Approach (Chapey et al., 2000)

Narratives (Pound, Parr, Lindsay, & Woolf, 2000; Shadden & Hagstrom, 2007)

Script Training (Cherney et al., 2008; Hinckley, 2006)

Group Therapy (Simmons-Mackie & Damico, 2009)

Community based activities

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY (DBT; Linehan, 1993)

Key Concepts

• Truth is neither absolute nor relative.
• Never accept a final way.
• Always more than one way.
• Everything is interconnected & interrelated with each other.
• No matter how small, everything has polarity.
• The whole is greater than the sum of it parts.

Core Concept – Validation

• Indicating to the client that his/her responses are valid or make sense & are understandable in the present context.
• Active, direct acceptance of the client & his/her behavior
• Needed in order to teach the client to self-validate
• Helps decrease self-mistrust

“What” Skills

• Observe – “Just notice” without reacting on thoughts, emotions, & urges
• Describe – “Just the facts” labeling only what you know or see without adding opinion or judgment
• Participate – Jump in with two feet, letting go of fear or self consciousness & participating in the moment you are in
“How” Skills

- **Non-judgmental Stance** – it is what it is; no judgment based on good or bad, fair or unfair, worthless or worthwhile
- **One Mindful** – being in the moment focusing on one thing at a time, putting everything you have into that one moment in time
- **Effectiveness** – doing what works; letting go of fair or unfair, right or wrong, anger & vengeance, & playing by the rules

References:
