The constructs of resilience and caring have figured prominently throughout my career in parenting education and support. I received my doctorate in human development and social psychology in the nineteen seventies from Loyola University Chicago. I focused on the self-concept in the aged for my master's and on sex-role identity in the aged for my dissertation. I utilized Erikson's (1963) psycho-social stages as a guide for my interview questions. I learned a great deal from my thesis, but one area in particular was the importance and complexity of the parent role over the lifespan. I also found that many of the older adults I was privileged to interview, though from very diverse backgrounds, especially the holocaust survivors, demonstrated tremendous resilience in their lives. I studied resilience, including the work of Dr. Norman Garmezy, (1987) at the University of Minnesota. He wondered why some children of mentally ill parents were able to adapt, develop and manifest competence in their lives. I studied resilience, including the work of Dr. Norman Garmezy, (1987) at the University of Minnesota. He wondered why some children of mentally ill parents were able to adapt, develop and manifest competence in their lives. I appreciated his focus on the protective processes that support a child's adaptation to adversity rather than focusing, as others did, on a child's personal "deficits" or many risk factors. Others studying resilience at the time concluded that it was not about an inborn immunity from stress for only a select few, but more of an acquired immunity. Rutter (1987) described resilience as a lifelong process of developing and refining coping skills that then help buffer the effects of stress in one's life. Werner & Smith (1992) asserted that "Resiliency is not a genetic trait that only a few children possess. Rather it is our inborn capacity for self-righting." I was, and am, encouraged by this notion and Garmezy's study of resilience in children severely affected by trauma and war in Cambodia, as we struggle to help children and families all over the world ravaged by war today.

I took my understanding of parenting and resilience theories/research to my work with midlife and older women in and around the Englewood neighborhood of Chicago where I grew up. It is in the news today as a community lacking the supports needed for individuals and families to be safe from harm and to thrive. Sadly, today Englewood is sometimes referred to as a war zone. While at the organization Southwest Women Working Together (SWWT), I saw a lot of community building and support of mothers, children and families. We see it today as well, though it is rarely reported in the media. I developed an inter-generational barter program between older adults and young families that allowed them to share resources in order to cope with the many challenges in their daily lives. I obtained grants to bring family life education to Englewood school communities. There I applied the skills I developed at Education for Parenting in Philadelphia.

CFLE in Context continued on page 10
Numerous CFLE were elected to leadership positions within NCFR: Tammy S. Harpel, Ph.D., CFLE, President-elect of the Affiliate Councils; Chalandra M. Bryant, Ph.D., CFLE, Member-at-Large for the Inclusion and Diversity Committee; Erica Jordan, Ph.D., Secretary/Treasurer of the Family Policy Section; Jane Rose Muthoni Njie, Ph.D., CFLE, Secretary/Treasurer of the International Section; Pamela B. Payne, Ph.D., CFLE, Chair-Elect, Religion, Spirituality, and Family Section; and TeKisha Rice, CFLE, Students and New Professionals Representative for the Research and Theory Section.

Bridget A. Walsh, Ph.D., CFLE, with Lydia Deflorio, Melissa M. Burnham, and Dana A. Weiser, is co-author of Introduction to Human Development and Family Studies, the first text to introduce human development and family studies as inextricably linked areas of study.

NCFR has added two schools to the list of CFLE-approved academic programs: Winthrop University Human Development & Family Studies undergraduate program, and the graduate Human Services/Family Studies Track, at Warner Pacific College, both recently received first-time approval. Program approval indicates that the school offers appropriate coursework for each of the ten family life content areas required for the CFLE designation. Graduates of CFLE-approved schools qualify to complete an abbreviated CFLE application process, which saves them time and money over taking the CFLE exam.

CFLE program approval for the undergraduate programs at Miami University Ohio, Family Studies; University of Georgia, Human Development and Family Science; Great Lakes Christian College, Family Life Education; and the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, Family and Child Studies (undergraduate) and Family Studies (graduate) were recently renewed for an additional five years.
BOOK REVIEWS

Burnout and Self-care in Social Work: A Guidebook for Students and Those in Mental Health and Related Professions


Social work, a helping profession, has a reputation of being rewarding as we watch our clients exceed their own expectations, recover from trauma, and thrive in their independence and recovery. However, a helping profession can be counterintuitive as social workers pour into others and find themselves empty and burned out. Burnout was first coined in 1975 by Freudenberger. Today anywhere from 47-71% of social workers experience burnout. Several researchers suggest that burnout is more common for social workers under the age of 30. Burnout can be dangerous to social workers as we seek self-medication techniques, no longer find our work rewarding, become less effective at our mission, and may even leave the field of social work altogether. Smullens explores the various manifestations of burnout, helping readers to identify burnout, and warning-signs of burnout within themselves. Each chapter of this book is followed by Questions for Reflection, allowing readers to explore self-awareness in a direct manner in order to prevent the detrimental results of burnout.

Smullens suggests that burnout can present itself through compassion fatigue, countertransference, and vicarious trauma. Burnout can be seen in all of these areas, or a mixture of two or more. Smullens provides real-life examples given by numerous social workers to illustrate how different types of burnout may appear in our profession. Burnout is typically seen in the professional arena. Social workers rarely consider burnout as present in one’s personal, social, or physical worlds. Smullens brings these areas of our lives to the forefront of importance, as these areas must require balance in order for the helping profession to be executed effectively.

After the self-awareness and identification of warning-signs and burnout manifestation have been explored, Smullens leads the readers toward effective and enriching self-care strategies which not only prevent burnout but can alleviate already present symptoms of burnout. Suggested strategies include practicing gratitude, centeredness, mindfulness, and physical exercise. Smullens emphasizes the personalized journey of self-care that must be tailored towards your needs, while still incorporating supervisors, coworkers, friends and family. Next, Smullens suggests that self-care can be provided in a work setting when opportunities for professional growth and internal rotations occur. Case studies of social workers along the way help readers to be inspired through struggles and successes through the journey toward self-care. Smullens empowers readers to care for themselves in their professional world, their personal world, and their social world. Readers are empowered to take time for themselves through self-awareness and self-discipline as social workers work toward creating healthy boundaries and creating a life of their own separate from their helping career.

Burnout continued on page 4

TITLES AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

Introduction to Human Development and Family Studies.
Bridget A. Walsh, Lydia DeFlorio, Melissa M. Burnham, & Dana A. Weiser.
The 8 Keys to END Bullying Activity Program for Kids & Tweens: Putting the Keys into Action at Home & School and The 8 Keys to END Bullying Activity Book Companion Guide for Parents & Educators. Signe Whitson.
Knowing Her Intimately. 12 Keys for Creating a Sextraordinary Marriage. Laura M. Brotherson, LMFT, CST, CFLE.
8 Keys to Old School Parenting for Modern-Day Families. Michael Mascolo.
Guided Imagery Work with Kids. Melissa Dormoy.
Daddy’s Bedtime Adventures. Kida Brino.
Anger Management. A Practical Guide. 2nd Ed. Adrian Faupel, Elizabeth Herrick & Peter Sharp.
Why Can’t I be the Boss of Me? (With manual for parents). B. Annye Rothenberg.
For Review continued on page 10
BOOK REVIEWS

Contemporary Families. Translating Research into Practice


Fruitful dialogue between researchers and therapeutic practitioners continues to be difficult to achieve. Stimulating some dialogue between the two has been nudged closer by this volume. As researchers and practitioners both know, each should and must inform one another’s work. Part of the issue is that old practices change slowly, whether in how professional meetings are organized, how training models are used, or the way specialist publications shut out potential readers. Simply making the effort to read the literature of the other can be taxing. Scott Browning and Kay Pasley identify new factors that should stimulate us toward a quicker pace of meaningful exchange. For one, there is the expediential growth of knowledge. One has only to think of the broad implications of Bio-Psychology thus far for both research agendas and practice applications with individuals and families to want cross-pollination. As the editors suggest, the embrace of Evidence Based Practice (EBP), is also driving professionals in many areas of inquiry to engage with their shadow counterparts. A diverse sample of thirty collaborating authors spread across nine chapters and seven areas of family inquiry make up the body of the book. In each section, authors inform one another’s work. The book’s design makes for good reading and quick comparisons.

The areas covered in Contemporary Families include adoption, foster families, interracial families, families with a special needs child, LGBT families, grandparent headed households, and families with chronic medical issues. A concluding chapter draws research and practice together for readers. Adoption and foster care, special needs children and chronically ill family members have posed problems for generations of families, eager for insights and a way forward. The issues that reflect changes in norms and family structure; interracial and LGBT families, and grandparent headed families, are timely and increasingly important in society. In each pairing of chapters the authors draw on disparate literature and professional experience in showing how research and practice are interrelated.

Foster care and adoption are good starting points for understanding how research can inform practice. Foster care tends to be shorter and involves the urgent need for a safe environment for children that may have birth parents. According to one study of the children involved with the child welfare system, almost two-thirds of birth parents need mental health services and over one-half require assistance with substance abuse. Services for dealing with domestic violence, housing and legal issues are also substantial. Children coming into foster care obviously require special skills as well as the warmth and stability of an accepting foster family. Adoption brings a child permanently into a new family context, sometimes with a trail of issues from the child’s past life. Readers come to understand that research on social policy, demographics, and the complexities of special needs children, continues to be important in this dynamic area. Securing foster care or pursuing adoption raises evolving issues such as the dispersion of siblings, war trauma, language barriers, and mismatched expectations. Between research and practice, policy makers, adoption agencies and prospective families can gain a more accurate sense of the process and end point of their engagement. Certain perennial questions also remain. Which foster parents are best suited for a child? Are adoptive parents fully aware of the issues they may face? Are conventional home visits and household regulations, adequate for determining a safe and nurturing environment?

The research and practice section on the LGBT Family was especially interesting because of the critique of assumptions nested in research, and potentially in therapeutic practice. Seventy years on, some still use Alfred Kinsey’s pioneering work for benchmarks. His estimate that 10% of the population was LGBT is more like 3.6% - still over eight million people with additional hard to track variations. Readers are asked to accept that there is a heteronormative approach to research on LGBT families that leaves real families in a disaffirming world. The white middle class nuclear family remains privileged in our society. Just as the Contemporary Families continued next page

Burnout continued from page 3

Burnout and Self-Care in Social Work is a humbling and inspiring read written by a social worker whom has experienced the burden of burnout and the daily challenge to care for herself. Alongside her story are the stories of numerous other social workers struggling with the daily challenges of the profession, providing readers with a sense of belonging and justification. Smullen’s cadence gives readers a personal experience with the book as they reflect with the author at the end of each chapter to identify and combat career-threatening burnout. ❆

Reviewed by Donna Hancock Hoskins and Shelby Edmisten.

Donna has a Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies. She is also a Certified Family Life Educator. She is an Assistant Professor in Health and Human Sciences at Bridgewater College in Bridgewater Virginia.

Shelby Edmisten has a Bachelor’s of Science in Psychology with a minor in Family and Consumer Sciences from Bridgewater College. She is a Family Services Specialist III at the Department of Social Services in Fredericksburg, Virginia.
Mindful Discipline: A Loving Approach to Setting Limits and Raising and Emotionally Intelligent Child


The purpose of this slender volume is to help families create harmony in the home, to support each family member, and, to help children emerge as mature, respectful and responsible persons. My own feeling is that there is no more difficult or important job than parenting; you are producing future adults, citizens of the nation and the world. This book combines the research and theory of mindfulness and neuroscience along with parental experience to help parents gain self-confidence in raising their kids. Shapiro and White believe it is important to combine love and limits with childrearing.

There are five critical elements for children to do well: unconditional love; a way for children to be themselves and thrive; mentorship of children; healthy boundaries; and mistakes (or learning and growth opportunities that enhance compassion and intimacy). The authors combine science, quiet reflection, clinical experience, and their own parenting lessons to offer parents ways to raise happy, resilient, loving and emotionally healthy children. They believe children will thrive and blossom with respect, compassion, and limits. The book combines powerful real-life examples (from clinical experience and scientific theory), with personal experiences and grounded, down-to-earth suggestions for parents.

The audience for this book is wide and varied. All parents of kids from birth to young adults, anyone working with families with children, new parents and parents-to-be, and clinicians who work with families should read this book. The book helps parents find greater joy in parenting. There are specific suggestions that parents can do “in the moment” to be present and to make the home more harmonious and fun-filled. In many ways, the book assures parents that they already know what to do and have the tools to accomplish this. They can give up the anxiety and self-doubt that come from the Internet and information overload. As parents work first on themselves and become more mindful of their own behavior; then they can begin to improve the lot of their children. The book provides a healthy middle ground between rigid authoritarian parenting and overly permissive parenting. Some parents find that they begin almost immediately to interact in new and different ways with their child.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1, A Discipline We Can Feel Proud Of, looks at why discipline matters; how self-discipline develops; mindfulness; the mindful discipline approach; and relationship as a source of nourishment. Part 2, The Five Essential Elements of Mindful Discipline, focuses on unconditional love; space or supporting autonomy; competence and responsibility; mentorship; healthy boundaries; mistakes or the gifts of compassion, humility and forgiveness; the heart of maturity; and the epilogue. Appendices include discipline and the brain, the basics of attachment, qualities and capacities of a healthy, self-disciplined parent.

Mindful Discipline continued on page 9

Contemporary Families continued from page 4

term household initially had a difficult time passing muster in family research (and the Census), so do the ways in which LGBT families construct families. Research suggests that LGBT family formation is less structural and more process oriented. Living contexts are dynamic and adaptable. The usual adage applies; no two families are alike or constructed in the same way.

In the practice aspect of this topic, therapists explore two related themes. First, being an affirming therapist and second, using existing therapeutic models (Family Systems) in working with LGBT adolescents in families. The practice counterpart of heteronormative thinking is pathologizing LGBT families. Practice must affirm the integrity of LGBT families and family members, recognizing that LGBT families and individuals face discrimination, stigmas, microaggression, and internalized homophobia.

News outlets (CNN for one) have recently highlighted the decrease in LGBT teen suicide rates correlating with the extension of legal marriage to the LGBT community (2017). Still, rates of depression, anxiety and suicide, remain high. Interventions can be helpful in charting a way forward for the individual adolescent and their family. Therapists must avoid the inductive trap of being put in alliance with the adolescent. The task is to work with the entire family, working toward the process of acceptance and a revision of the family system which respects and integrates all family members.

This volume is a valuable contribution to the literature of families. The “think outside of the box” ethos is encouraging. This is a good read for professionals and would make a good supplemental text for advanced undergraduates or graduate students. A theory and practice assignment seems like a natural by-product of the book’s approach. ✯

Richard Glotzer, Ph.D., CFLE, is Professor of Social Work, Interim Director of the School of Nutrition & Dietetics, Fellow, Institute for Life Span Development & Aging, at The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio.

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Assessment Methods and Tools: A Way for Reviewers to Evaluate Rigor

by Deborah B. Gentry, Ed.D., CFLE, NCFR Academic Program Liaison, debgentry@ncfr.org

When Academic Program Committee members review materials, primarily syllabi, submitted by academic programs seeking first time approval or renewal, one criteria they keep in mind is level of rigor or cognitive challenge that is evidenced. Course objectives and/or student learning outcomes serve as evidence. Methods of assessing student learning along with any tools (e.g., rubrics, checklists, scoresheets, self-evaluation forms, peer evaluation forms, etc.) that are used to facilitate evaluation contribute more insight. Descriptions and directions for assignments and other learning activities provide an additional sense of the rigor of the course. Furthermore, reviewers look for upper level undergraduate and graduate level courses to feature more rigor than introductory undergraduate courses.

Ideally, all three components (objectives/outcomes; assessment methods and tools; and assignment descriptions and directions) should complement each other. For example, should a learning outcome for a course indicate that, by the end of the course, students should be able to analyze with proficiency, then at least one learning activity or assignment should, in turn, call for students to practice skills related to analysis. Directions should describe expectations for how the students should undertake such analysis. Lastly, if a rubric has been devised to facilitate the instructors’ assessment and evaluation of students’ abilities to analyze and share the results of their work, then the rubric should correspond to those expectations. The focus of this column is assessment methods and techniques, with some examples that are relevant to teaching and learning about individual and family resilience.

Many readers may be familiar with the classic publication by Angelo and Cross (1993) titled Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers. In my view, it remains a worthy reference to consult for basic information about assessment and evaluation, as well as for specific ideas for innovative methods and techniques. However, a new book titled Learning Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty by Barkley and Major (2016) provides fresh new perspectives about how to formulate high quality course goals/objectives and student learning outcomes; develop relevant learning activities and assignments; select or develop corresponding assessment techniques and tools; and review and report results to students and other interested parties. While

Thus, learning objectives identify what we hope will happen, while learning outcomes reflect the reality of what actually did happen…

Part 1 covers these basics, Part 2 provides numerous examples related to teaching and assessing in the cognitive domains of foundational knowledge, application, and integration, as well as the affective domains of “human dimension” and caring. The authors acknowledge these domains or dimensions arise from the work of L. Dee Fink and his Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2013).

Barkley and Majors make this distinction between course objectives and student learning outcomes: “…an objective is a target to aim for, while an outcome is the conclusion of an action. Thus, learning objectives identify what we hope will happen, while learning outcomes reflect the reality of what actually did happen…Thus, we identify learning objectives before we teach, and we determine learning outcomes after we teach…That said, we recognize that you can identify what you hope will be the outcome. Indeed, many accreditation and assessment programs ask faculty to identify learning outcomes in advance. To accomplish this, you may need to state the outcome in ‘future’ terms—a student will be able to—or distinguish between targeted outcome and actual outcome” (p.20).

In keeping with the theme of this issue of Network, a possible resilience related course learning outcome might be: By the end of this course, a successful learner will be able to describe 10 key processes associated with a family resilience theoretical framework as outlined by Froma Walsh (2012). How, then, might student learning regarding this outcome be assessed?

Assessment is a process of measuring knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or beliefs students have acquired, most often in the context of the learning they have undertaken during their coursework. Assessment can be carried out at any point during a lesson, unit, or course. Every assessment need not lead to evaluation or judgment that results in points or grades. Sometimes, formative assessment results in meaningful feedback to a student about his or her abilities at the current point in time. A student can act on such feedback when carrying out a future learning activity or assignment that may well be graded. This would be an example of educative assessment. Other types of learning assessment are embedded assessment and authentic assessment. In addition to giving learners feedback on their progress, teachers can assess student progress in order to confirm their current approach to teaching is yielding good results or suggest a change in direction or strategy could be warranted. Institutional and external stakeholders expect teachers to provide evidence related to how well their students are learning. Lastly, learning assessment or classroom action research findings can be widely shared with

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How Do You Market CFLE?

by Dawn Cassidy, M.Ed., CFLE, Director of Family Life Education, dawn Cassidy@ncfr.org

I recently participated in a webinar about infographics. I am interested in learning more about how to create and use infographics because they can be an effective and entertaining way to educate and inform. In addition, I was inspired by an infographic that Deb Gentry, NCFR Academic Program Liaison, created about how to sustain an approved Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) academic program (see insert).

There has been a lot of attention given to promotion of family life education and the Certified Family Life Educator designation via the NCFR website, CFLE and NCFR Facebook pages, Twitter, and the We Are Family Science (family.science) website. However, despite the value of using the internet and social media as a marketing tool, there is still a need for good, old fashion print materials to help spread the word about important programs and resources. NCFR members and CFLEs regularly contact me requesting a supply of brochures about NCFR and CFLE for distribution to students or potential employers or clients. While we have had great success with both the CFLE brochure and the brochure created specifically for promoting family life education and the CFLE credential to employers, it is time to update those materials and I am seeking your help. I have a lot of information to work with but I would like to hear from members and CFLEs. Can you share examples of how you talk about family life education and CFLE? What is your elevator speech? Have you created an infographic or brochure that NCFR could borrow from (with permission of course)? I am looking for information relevant to family life education in general and the value of the Certified Family Life Educator credential specifically. I am also interested in learning more about how CFLE Approved Programs promote their approval.

Family Life Education

Often the first step in promoting the CFLE credential involves an explanation of family life education. NCFR has an existing definition/description of family life education (see What is Family Life Education? on the NCFR website) but it is fairly lengthy. I would welcome examples of how you define or describe family life education. Do you have statistics that support the economic benefit of family life education (reduction in domestic violence, teen pregnancy, divorce, child abuse/neglect, substance abuse, incarceration, debt, etc.)? This type of data would be great to include in an infographic.

Certified Family Life Educator credential

As a CFLE, have you found an effective way to describe what it is you know and what it is you bring to the table? What concepts would you include in an infographic about the CFLE credential? Can you provide a testimonial about how the CFLE designation has benefited you, or, going back to the concept of family life education, a testimonial from someone who has benefited by participating in FLE?

CFLE-approved Academic Programs

Not surprisingly, there is a direct correlation between how much a school promotes their CFLE program approval and the number of graduates that go on to apply for the CFLE credential. In addition to creating printed materials for promoting FLE and CFLE, I would also like to create a piece that CFLE-approved
fellow educators and, perhaps, lead to improvements in the profession through the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). Learning assessment methods and techniques can vary. When Academic Program Committee members review a set of course syllabi, they hope that most courses feature a variety of assessment methods. There are circumstances that warrant the sole use of quizzes and exams, but reviewers hope this is seldom the case within most academic programs. Though a unique example, when perusing recent syllabi submitted from an academic program applying for first time approval, reviewers noted the design for a parenting course allowed students to choose to complete as many as seven learning assessments from a selection of 18 that included creating a website, video, blog, infographic, magazine ad, comic strip, and/or artistic artifact; one-minute write-ups; an article summary; an interview; papers with various foci; and two exams. While a course related to family resilience may well not feature 15 or more learning assessments, it could certainly entail a handful of innovative and challenging ones.

In one chapter of their book, Barkley and Major outline best practices for teaching and assessing for the foundational knowledge domain and then describe ten different learning assessment techniques that could be used in measuring students’ knowledge proficiency. As illustration, here’s a possible knowledge-based learning outcome related to family resilience: Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to highlight the basic assumptions, concepts, and principles of resilience theory. A method of assessing students’ acquisition of knowledge along these lines would be to call upon them to individually create either a concept map featuring these aspects or, alternatively, what Barkley and Major describe as a “Comprehensive Factors List.” A comprehensive factors list is a form of brainstorming focused on recall of information that is done in a list or bullet list format” (p. 101). After 6-8 minutes, the maps or lists would be collected and reviewed by the instructor for accuracy and thoroughness. While this could be a question on an exam, it could also be an in-class exercise.

Best practices for teaching and assessing within the application domain, along with ten different learning assessments, is the focus of another chapter in Barkley’s and Major’s book. Let’s consider this possible application-based learning outcome focusing on family resilience: Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to apply resilience theory to one or more new and different contexts. The authors call this technique “Consider This.” Students would be directed to individually identify a non-family context within which resilience or lack of resilience could be observed (e.g., community, workplace, nature…), then map out or diagram on paper ways different elements of resilience theory could play out in that context. Once done, students would share their applications in pairs. Then, each pair would share with another pair. Each foursome would decide which application to share with the rest of the class. All written applications would be collected for instructor review for insightfulness and plausibility.

Following a similar format as with other chapters in Part 2, Barkley and Major highlight best practices for teaching and assessing within the integration domain in the ninth chapter of their book. If the following were a learning outcome for a course related to family resilience, the authors suggest nine possible ways it could be assessed: Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to integrate resilience theory and practice principles in order to suggest a constructive course of action for key characters described in a case situation. Students would be presented with information about a case (e.g., history of how a situation has developed; key characters, which could include various family members, teachers, family professionals; and a dilemma that key characters are grappling with. Students would be called upon, either individually or in small groups, to integrate all that they have come to know and believe about family resilience (e.g., factors, strategies, sources of empowerment and assistance, etc.) to formulate a positive, beneficial, and workable resolution for the dilemma. Resolutions, accompanied by a rationale, would be prepared in written form and, after sharing with fellow students in some manner, submitted to the instructor for review, evaluation, and feedback.

Though syllabi often feature one or more learning outcomes from the caring domain, devising and carrying out a good quality learning assessment technique to correspond may not be easily accomplished. Let’s consider this learning outcome: Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to exhibit caring and commitment for enhancing levels of resilience among families residing in their community. Barkley and Major address the caring domain in yet another chapter. Besides best practices related to teaching and assessing for this domain, they describe seven learning assessment techniques (LATs) that instructors could consider implementing. One of these LATs is called “Issue Awareness Ad” and could work nicely in the context of a course that focuses on family resilience. It involves asking students to identify and analyze a problematic resilience-based situation impacting numerous families in the local community, then calling upon them to compose and deliver a message that persuades relevant parties of the urgency of the problem and offers strategies for addressing it. The simplest means of delivery could be oral presentation to fellow classmates. Yet, students could be allowed to be more creative. They could create a simulated radio spot, television video footage, or oral testimony to share with policy-makers.

If assessment isn’t among your areas of strength as an educator, there are several steps you could take in order to enhance your knowledge and ability in this arena. Of course, self-study through reading is a strategy. Angelo’s and Cross’s classic book, as well as Barkley’s and Major’s book, are both practical and easy to read. Though providing more difficult and scholarly prose, two other
CFLE Directions continued from page 7

programs can use for marketing their program approval to students (and parents). If you are from a CFLE-approved program, please share your ideas with me. I am also planning to supplement the CFLE Academic Program section of the website with marketing examples from successful programs.

On a related note, a few years ago NCFR created an infographics about Career Opportunities in Family Science (see insert). It is accessible via the NCFR website but we are considering making it available in print for a small fee. If you think this would be a helpful resource for NCFR to provide, please contact me. The infographic would be printed in color on 11 x 17 cardstock.

As professionals in the family field, we all understand and value family life education and support the CFLE credential. The creation of new marketing materials will enable NCFR to reach a wider audience and expand awareness of this important field. I welcome your assistance! ❖

Mindful Discipline continued from page 5

individual, the promise and perils of praise, suggested readings and references.

Some of the exercises are profound and would allow parents to think deeply about their parenting style. The exercise on pp. 20-21, “Setting Our Compass,” urges parents to devise a list of 1-20 qualities or capacities you would hope your child ultimately develops. To keep it authentic, the authors urge you to reflect on what you truly want for your child and not on what you think you should create or list. This authentic list then becomes your North Star when you are disciplining your child. The book also includes a number of figures, helpful lists, charts and graphs which help illustrate author points. For instance, (p. 52) the authors list The Key Principles of Mindful Discipline, which include focusing on long-term development more than short-term compliance; being intentional yet flexible and pragmatic; understanding principles rather than memorizing techniques; using the models away from your child and trusting your intuitions when with her; modeling discipline more than you demand it; trusting differences in style; not sweating the small stuff; and trusting your child’s developmental process.

They also spend time to elucidate the Three States of Consciousness, namely reactive, responsive, and intuitive. Parents need to be aware of the need for special focused time with the child, to allow for child-led time (where the child selects then leads the activity), and, as they get older, the introduction of democratic decision making as well as benevolent dictatorship when parents must make decisions that are in the child’s best interest. Shapiro and White urge parents to think of themselves as mentors and guides to their children. A good way to do this is to develop family structures, routines and rituals; the authors have nice sections on ways to reduce the morning madness/rush, to set the table for dinner, to make chores into connecting rituals, and to encourage manners/consideration.

This is a wonderful book for parents who want to learn new ways to interact with their children on a daily basis. That being said, it can at times seem like a treacly sugar overload for anyone not remotely familiar with the concepts and raised with authoritarian parenting. On the other hand, if you are well-conversant with the concepts, then this book would not give you anything new and would feel too simple. If you have read other books on mindfulness and parenting, this book might not offer new insights. At times, the book might seem utopian and unattainable.

I recommend this book to anyone who is not familiar with these concepts and who might be interested in exploring what Shapiro and White have to offer. Take the book in small doses and think about what it might mean in your own life as a parent. Share the book with other parents and parents-to-be to see what they think of it as well. ❖

Reviewed by Marcie Parker, Ph.D., CFLE, who has her own private consulting firm in healthcare, healthcare reform, mental health and aging in Excelsior, Minnesota.
CFLE IN CONTEXT

CFLE in Context continued from page 1

I was trained by Dr. Harriet Heath to implement her program "Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care" in pre-K-grade 12 classes (Heath, 1995) and to train classroom teachers to implement the program. We taught children about what was involved in caring for an infant and toddler by regularly setting aside class time to observe the same parent and infant over the school year. We used a plan, do, and reflect process. Classes helped children develop caring and empathy skills allowing them to, hopefully, be better parents one day and to better negotiate social relationships and cope successfully with uncaring environments (e.g. bullying) in the present. Research (Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, & Hertzman, 2012) has shown that these classes are related positively not only to social competence, but to academic success. Research (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Brazelton & Greenspan, 2000) highlighting the crucial importance of the parent-infant relationship in the very early years to development and resilience is another reason many of us believe preparing people before they become parents enhances the well-being of their future children, so that they in turn could thrive and better overcome potential adversity in their lives. I also offered a parenting program for school parents utilizing Heath’s (2001; 2010) adult program "Planning: The key to mastering the challenges of parenting." I trained social workers to lead the program for parents at SWWT. My goal has always been to train people on site so that if grant money goes away the program can continue.

In implementing our curriculum, I saw Heath’s caring process as having many similarities to components of resilience, such as developing an ability to plan, set and understand goals; understand needs and feelings; problem-solve; and develop/maintain caring relationships. Henderson and Milstein (1996) have found that “more than any other way, schools build resiliency in students through creating an environment of caring personal relationships” (p. 17). This is why Heath’s model included developing a whole school that cares. Rutter (1984, 2012) emphasized caring relationships to promote resilience. Walsh (2015) also confirmed “The developing brain relies upon the consistent ‘serve and return’ interactions that happen between a young child and a primary caregiver. When these interactions occur regularly, they… build key capacities such as the ability to plan, monitor and regulate behavior, and adapt to changing circumstances—that enable children to respond to adversity and thrive.” The parent-infant visits focused on this connection.

Protective factors include family cohesion, clear communication, routines/rituals and beliefs/identity conveying meaning and hope.

The parenting classes did not stop at the high school level. My parenting projects at SWWT and in Englewood public schools informed my teaching at Loyola. I was supported by Loyola’s President and faculty administrators to design and offer the first courses on Parenting, Sex and Gender, and the Psychology of Women. They felt the University needed to provide young adult students with education and service learning experiences to prepare them to be knowledgeable, competent and loving parents and/or family members, good community and world leaders, good workers and good people. This reflected the Jesuit philosophy of caring for the whole person (cura personalis) and on nurturing “men and women for others.”

As a young professional, the Jesuit social justice legacy meshed well with how I was parented and with my focus on women, gender equity issues and child/parent/family support. At this time, the Family Resource Coalition (FRC) later known as Family Support America, was founded in Chicago. It focused on educating the public about the needs of children, families and the professionals helping them. It also was a national leader and advocate for family friendly social and economic policies. FRC and other similar organizations were influenced by leaders in the field including Bronfenbrenner (1979; 2005) Dunst, Trivette and Deal (1994) and Walsh (2016) who focused on the ecology of human development and on family strengths rather than on deficits.

In preparing for a recent presentation for parenting educators (McDermott, 2016), I researched advances in the study of resilience and found that today the focus is still on “a relational, developmental, systems framework” (Masten and Monn, 2015). Implicit in this concept of resilience as a dynamic process and not just a trait, is the understanding that resilience can grow or decline over time depending on the interactions taking place between an individual and their environment and between risk and protective factors in an individual’s life. We are encouraged to look at family promotive factors fostering competence when significant risk is not present and protective factors fostering competence despite significant risk. The Search Institute’s research on assets is helpful in this regard. “Promotive factors for positive development include internal capabilities, such as problem solving abilities, and external resources in a person’s ecology such as a good teacher or school system (Masten & Monn, 2015, pp. 9-10). Their recommendation was to move from

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Community and In-home Behavioral Health Treatment. Lynne Rice Westbrook.


Cyberbullying Through the New Media. Findings from an International Network. Edited by Peter K. Smith & Georges Steffgen. ✦
focusing on risk to focusing on promise. Protective factors include family cohesion, clear communication, routines/rituals and beliefs/identity conveying meaning and hope. They also include secure attachment and a healthy relationship with an adult during childhood, internal locus of control, a sense of coherence, temperament, and biological/ genetic factors.

There is a growing attention today to the role of genetic and epigenetic influences on resilience in children and adults (Kim-Cohen 2007). From the Harvard’s Center on the Developing Child (2015) we learn that the brain can be buffered by a caring environment. In addition, we learn that activities like mindfulness meditation and exercise can enhance nerve growth. A physically active individual can lower cortisol and sympathetic nervous system responses to stress. Unfortunately, the brain’s ability to change decreases with age, and very early life adversity may make it harder to recover. Often for children, there are windows of opportunity for recovery from stress and offsetting of pathology. Hence, they too stress the importance of at least one stable, caring and supportive relationship between a child and adult caregiver from birth on. They report that researchers have found that those more vulnerable to early stressors according to their genotype may also, under positive rearing situations and environments, be more susceptible to positive interventions than children with a protective allele. Thus, children at greatest risk of developing behavioral problems may benefit the most from interventions.

We must also continue to examine the larger society and macro system including national policies and attitudes towards families that impact the child, family and local community. Seccombe (2002) asserted that “…careful attention must be paid to structural deficiencies in our society and to social policies that families need in order to become stronger, more competent, and better functioning in adverse situations. Poverty is a social problem, not necessarily a personal one and meaningful solutions and ways of coping must be structural in nature” (p. 385). This is important because we learn from the Center on the Developing Child that environmental protective factors can in fact alter gene expression and set in motion positive adaptation to stress.

I was involved in the creation of a Master’s degree in Family Studies in Loyola’s School of Education. Cognizant of the need for collaboration between multiple systems of care to better support children and families, we worked with faculty from Psychology, Sociology, Education, Counseling, Ministry and the Erikson Institute. We also offered coursework to help law students better understand children and families. Prior to and simultaneous with that effort, I worked to be certified as a family life educator at NCFR, which I achieved in 1987. My focus in the Master’s Program was on courses on Human Development, Family Communication and Decision Making, and Parenting Education and Support. With my CFLE credential, in addition to strengthening these specialties, I was better able to offer courses on an introduction to FLE, methods of family education, research in FLE, and human sexuality and interpersonal relationships.

I joined interdisciplinary professional organizations with a global reach to enhance my professional development. I chose the American Orthopsychiatric Association (AOA), NCFR, and the Family Resource Coalition. I met Dr. Joy Segal, a parenting educator and CFLE at an AOA conference. We valued this organization’s focus on prevention and social justice. We worked with Dr. Heath to develop a study group on the Growth and Development of Parents. We were especially influenced by AOA members like Erik Erikson (1998), who was one of few who considered parenthood within a developmental stage (generativity and care). Dr. Segal encouraged me to develop a model Center for Parent Growth and Development at a K-12 school. She worked to support parents at an independent K-12 school for middle and upper class students in Chicago as well as many scholarship students. She believed that all parents could benefit from education and support to help their children and themselves to grow and develop. She also thought it was very important to help parents understand their complex parent roles. We drew upon theories/research on the components of the parent role from Cooperative Extension colleagues (Smith, Cudaback, Goddard & Myers-Wall, 1994) and Dr. Heath’s work on the topic over the years (2017, in preparation).

Dr. Segal also observed in her K-12 work as a parenting educator that students of all socio-economic statuses faced resiliency challenges. Grotberg (1998) found that socio-economic status had an insignificant impact on the amount and kind of resiliency promoting behavior. Resilience was promoted in children as frequently in lower income families as in higher income families, although the latter used more factors. I applied for and received a grant to develop a Parent Education Initiative at that same independent K-12 school. I drew upon my psychology background and CFLE credentials to provide ongoing education and support for parents.

One of the areas where I provided an in-service for teachers and for parents was resilience (2002). My parent newsletter and materials for professionals on resilience are located at the website for my book, Developing caring relationships among parents, children, schools, and communities (2008). I am grateful to Dr. Joan Comeau of Family Information Services (FIS) for allowing me to publish materials on resilience and other related topics in her FIS materials. In many of my topics e.g. peer-pressure, I

The recommendations from resiliency research for our parenting education and support practice are that we nurture socially competent children and young adults with a sense of their own identity and efficacy, who are able to make decisions, set goals and believe in their future.
demonstrated how Heath's caring model was a useful tool for solving problems. I was happy to share my work with parenting educators and CFLE's and I benefited from FIS for my own professional development. In preparing my materials on resilience, I was influenced not only by the researchers mentioned above but also by Benard (1995) who delineated components to guide our efforts to empower children and families. She described innate capacities for resilience by which we are able to develop social competence, problem-solving skills, a critical consciousness, autonomy, and a sense of purpose. She also described factors helping one become resilient. She highlighted caring and supportive relationships as crucial. Bronfenbrenner (1979; 2005) had long proposed that a child needs just one person who cares deeply for them and provides needed support to help them become resilient. The second factor she identified was positive and high expectations for children coupled with the support to help them achieve their goals. She also talked about opportunities for meaningful participation allowing them to be and feel effective. I also found that my seniors at SWWT and elsewhere who had opportunities to connect and help others had much higher self-esteem, and confidence than those who felt isolated and useless.

The materials on my book website detail Benard's work. I was struck immediately by the similarity between the qualities of the resilience components noted by Benard to outcomes from Heath's model including empathy, thinking critically, creatively and reflectively, internal locus of control, and goal direction. I also looked to international research on resilience and found a very helpful heuristic I have used with parents and others working with children. Grothberg (1998) had identified three sources of resilience (I have, I am, I can) that children draw upon, which were helped greatly by the words, actions and environments people provided them. Children need to feel they have trusting relationships, structure, role models, encouragement for autonomy and access to many supports. She found however, that in some cultures autonomy is less important whereas faith in or dependency on God and others is more important. Children need to feel they are lovable, loving, empathic, responsible, and hopeful that things will be all right. I recall doing a workshop for children in the seventies. There was much talk about war and nuclear threats. One student told me "We will be okay because my dad goes to a peace meeting once a month." Finally, children need to feel that they can effectively communicate, solve problems, manage feelings, gauge those of others and seek help when needed. These theories mesh well with today's focus (Masten & Monn, 2015) on protective factors described above.

Bronfenbrenner (1979; 2005) had long proposed that a child needs just one person who cares deeply for them and provides needed support to help them become resilient.

I worked for five years to develop the Parent Initiative and spent time learning from other parenting educators around the country and internationally (England, Germany, Russia and Australia). This better prepared me to publish my book on caring relationships. I joined the faculty of the School for New Learning at DePaul University, a competency based program for adult students. I developed courses for adult students in the program who were often parents or working with parents and I developed an individualized Master's Program in Parenting Education and Support. I consulted with NCFR colleagues, many of whom were CFLE's who had already developed parenting education and family life education graduate degrees. I found that resilience continued to be a topic of great interest for many. In the field of adult education, advances in neuro-science also inform our work on resilience.

Today, as a new emeritus faculty I have chosen to devote time to advancing the work of the National Parenting Education Network, that I was involved in founding with others in the field in 1995. I have also begun to work again with my colleague Dr. Segal to do focus groups with parents of children in grades pre K-12 to determine what their current concerns are and how they hope we can support them. As one might guess, many parents today are concerned about the sense of uncertainty they are feeling in the USA, the lack of caring, and the family distress they see here and around the world. How do they cope themselves and help their children cope? Ironically, during war or other traumatic events, when families need extra support from all ecological systems they often have even less assistance (Masten and Narylan, 2012). How do parents pass on hope to their children in spite of experiencing so much anxiety and stress? I believe that what we know about resilience will help them succeed. There are many components and qualities of resilience such as hope, faith, persistence, resistance, a sense of humor, creative thinking, and spiritual connection to name a few that will help (Benard, 1995).

I am reminded of Brazelton and Greenspan's (2000) finding that when infants experience many reciprocal caring interactions with a loving adult, they begin to take initiative on their own. They then develop a sense of self, of will, and a sense of purpose. They conclude that "Given a firm early relationship, Inc...
and an expectation of a response, the child won't give up” (p. 18). The recommendations from resiliency research for our parenting education and support practice are that we nurture socially competent children and young adults with a sense of their own identity and efficacy, who are able to make decisions, set goals and believe in their future. In today’s often hostile society, we will need to work tirelessly to construct a caring environment that helps this happen for all children and families.

**Dana McDermott, Ph.D., CFLE** is Associate Professor Emeritus at the School for New Learning at DePaul University. She has worked for several decades in the Chicago area, nationally and internationally in the area of parent and family development. She is currently working on identifying the competencies of professionals providing parenting education and support. She serves as a council member of the National Parenting Education Network where she serves on the professional recognition system committee. She consults with schools and parent groups in the areas of parenting, teaching caring, social and emotional development of children and violence prevention. Her book “Developing caring relationships among parents, children, schools and communities” was published by Sage Press in 2008. *

**Reference**


The Road to Resilience

by Julia Bernard, Ph.D., CFLE

During some of my first CFLE experiences, I was helping a local judge by presenting classes on anger management as well as classes on how substance abuse affects the body. The latter was particularly rewarding as I had the opportunity to share these classes with teens and young adults. Part of the message concerned the damage substance abuse inflicts on the body and how it affects development. Importantly we also shared that the body is resilient, and able to reverse some of that damage if substance abuse is stopped. I used that same image of the lungs of a smoker contrasted with those of a nonsmoker shown in health classes, to illustrate how our organs recover when we adopt healthier lifestyles. The idea was to drive home the message that we are capable of healing.

Under many circumstances, whether it is healing from trauma, illness or emotional wear, the body is remarkable at bouncing back. Individuals and families are frequently capable of some of that same healing. Resilience implies that we can bounce back or overcome turmoil and struggles. Taken from a systems perspective, the individual’s resilience influences other parts of the system, and contributes to family resilience.

In their research with families with children who had disabilities and behavior problems, McConnell, Savage, and Breitkreuz (2014) found that family resilience has more to do with the support a family gets. As families have greater access to accessible and culturally relevant resources, the better they will resist and weather hardships when they arise. McConnell and Savage followed up this research with the notion that resilience in these families really equates to successful adaptation of families to the challenges they faced. That is what we are training our CFLE students to provide, accessible culturally relevant support for families. Our hope as educators is that they go on to work for agencies (or for themselves) in capacities that foster resilience in the families they serve.

As families have greater access to accessible and culturally relevant resources, the better they will resist and weather hardships when they arise.

Ask yourself: How does this family understand what is happening or has happened to them? Do you know what this family believes? The practitioner must understand the family’s organizational patterns; understanding the family’s flexibility and capacity to adapt and change; to respect individual differences, learn about the family’s connectedness, and understand the leadership of the family, as well as assessing and mobilizing social and economic resources both within their extended family, and within the community.

How rigid is this family? Who really runs this family? Who can the family count on? What resources are available in their community? Practitioners must provide clear, open, empathetic, and pleasurable communication. Families who do not enjoy talking to you or feel that you cannot understand them will not follow up with you. CFLEs must collaborate on problem solving with the family. This could include brainstorming, negotiations, fairness, focusing on goals, building on success, and learning from failure.

Most importantly for the CFLE, the person working with this family should take a proactive stance to prevent problems, avert crises, and prepare the family for future challenges. Using a framework like this, allows the family to feel not only supported but also less judged, and willing to bring their own ideas to the table. In large family life education groups, we have the bonus of having many families who can provide support and practical advice for each other as they face similar situations. Some of my favorite CFLE presentations did not focus on me talking, but found me listening to families as they empathized and offered each other suggestions of community resources to cope with anticipated future needs.

While teaching my first CFLE program, I was also a contract therapist for Crime Victims Assistance. I was working with children aged 7-17 who had been victims of a crime; usually emotional abuse, physical abuse, rape, or incest. Because these children were minors their caregivers were also included. This work drastically changed the way I taught my students. When you see the resilience of children who have been victims of the most horrific traumas imaginable, you become a believer in overcoming obstacles. You see resilience at work and you infuse those ideas into your teaching. These children could be resilient because they possessed the right mindset and had access to support, education, resources and community.

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Caring for Ourselves and Our Students

by Barbara Bartlett, CFLE, Paige Simpson, and Kaylee Harris

Barbara Bartlett

Resiliency happens to be one of my favorite words. Unfortunately, there is not an accurate test that can be administered to an individual that will judge their potential for resiliency. One must first experience adversity before resiliency either shows up, or it does not. Life has been known to toss extraordinary circumstances in the path of many unsuspecting individuals. Some people collapse under this stress, while others, not only survive, they somehow find the strength and courage to thrive. These individuals have developed and displayed resiliency.

I will be honest and admit that I have a personal connection to the word resiliency that has endeared this simple, yet powerful word to me. As a bereaved mother who experienced more than my share of crisis throughout the struggle of overcoming the death of my son, I somehow managed to build a pretty amazing life. Now, please do not get me wrong. This tragedy definitely sent me into a dark spiral that was not easy to overcome. Eventually, I was able to finish school, receive my certification as a Family Life Educator, and went to work for a local non-profit agency as the Work Life Coordinator/Victim Advocate. I also work as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for children who have been faced with adversity.

Having studied factors that promote resilient outcomes in at-risk children who have been faced with adversity leads me to seek support for the children of my clients.

While in the CFLE-approved program at my school, I learned the importance of implementing a strength-based focus when working with clients. Instead of placing emphasis on the problem, we look at what the client is doing that already works, then we move outward from there. Two classes that stand out in my mind that were helpful in preparing me for the challenges in my current career are Family Crisis and Coping Strategies; and Management of Family Resources. The program gave me the knowledge I needed to empower victims with skills such as how to practice decision-making, something they had not previously been able to accomplish. Having learned the potential effects a crisis can have on individuals and families helps guide my steps when working with victims of abuse. Teaching clients how to determine what skills they already use when challenged encourages clients and fosters self-esteem while creating space for their own personal resilience to flourish.

Paige Simpson

“The best day of your life is the one on which you decide your life is your own. No apologies or excuses. No one to lean on, rely on, or blame. The gift is yours—it is an amazing journey—and you alone are responsible for the quality of it. This is the day your life really begins” – Bob Moawad

In my last year of college, I experienced a turning point. I began to see the purpose of my studies, I started thinking about where I would like to see myself in the future, and I applied myself in a goal directed manner. Until then, my college years were extremely tough, because of a combination of lack of focus and long term vision. In 2013, I decided to turn it around and really focus on my studies. My assignments and resulting grades improved dramatically. I was beginning to experience how my attitude could be the difference. I had a meeting with my advisor and we talked about the different options of classes, and when I could potentially graduate. I remember saying that I wanted to graduate in May of 2015 and move into my career. The journey until my May graduation didn’t seem feasible, but I decided to take on the challenge. I was introduced to Impact Lake Charles AmeriCorps and successfully interviewed to intern there.

In my last semester of my undergraduate studies, I worked as a manager of a retail store, interned with Impact Lake Charles AmeriCorps, and maintained 20 credit hours.
Caring for Ourselves continued from page 15

in school. A few individuals doubted that I would succeed; they did not think I could complete this. One thing about me is that I like to prove others wrong; if it seems impossible I do what it takes to make it possible. A month before graduation, I was offered a position with Impact Lake Charles AmeriCorps as the Director of Operations. I was the student who had agonized about finding a decent job, yet here I was not only securing a job before graduation, but being fortunate doing something I felt passionate about. Additionally, I made the President’s list. I can admit that my first few years in college were horrific, and my grades most definitely reflected that. But importantly towards the end of my journey, I made a remarkable comeback. Challenging work pays off in the end; put your mind to a challenge, and you are so much closer to achieving it.

I learned that resilience is a strength you achieve by overcoming adversity and it tends to make one stronger than before. Resilience is so powerful and liberating; it makes you feel as if you can take on anything that comes your way. Learning about resilience throughout my Family and Child Studies coursework was engaging and I could relate it to many aspects of my life. I had some amazing professors teaching these courses. I ended up switching majors and going into Sociology with a concentration in Family and Child Studies.

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If you believe that your clients and their families can overcome anything, you can help them through those problems. Sharing these experiences with my students (without any identifiers), allowed them to gain a better understanding of the concept of resilience. My stories become their inspiration to use in conceptualizing how they can help, and at the very least inspire hope.

Today, I also practice and teach Trauma Informed Care (TIC), giving students the ACEs study. I hope that they go into their communities with greater empathy. I hope that they do not only ask “What happened to you?” but that they can also say “I am sorry that happened to you, and I am glad you are here and able to share your story with me.” I hope that they adapt each of their skills in ways that benefit the families they serve.

It is my hope that we continue to share stories of resilience, so that we continue to believe in the inspiring healing capacity of the human spirit. ✊

Julia M. Bernard, PhD, LMFT, CFLE, HS-BCP is a graduate of Family Studies at Purdue University. She is an Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Program Coordinator of Human Services at the East Tennessee State University. Prior to that appointment, she taught at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, LA. She is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice, a Clinical Fellow in the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, and a Board Certified Human Services Practitioner (through the National Organization for Human Services). She is the Vice President of Membership for the Southeastern Council on Family Relations.

References

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for their ability to bounce back, seemingly unphased after a traumatic or life-altering event. But what about adults? Honestly, I have often thought of adults as less able to cope with fresh traumatic and life-altering situations. Learning about resiliency in class was so eye opening for me. This particular class is all about counseling theories and how to apply these theories on a personal level with your clients.

One important takeaway from our time discussing resiliency was what I now see as the key to flexibility during life changes and the ability to work through deep wounds of trauma. The key to resiliency, not only for children but also for adults, is for a counseling professional to recognize the past trauma, feel sincere empathy for their client, and help their client to process their emotions. It is important for the client to feel that they can be vulnerable in the counseling context.

Another point that was emphasized was how vital the emotion of empathy is when working with clients. Empathy and recognizing past trauma go hand in hand.

Learning about resilience has given me a greater appreciation of our minds. How humbling it must be for victims of trauma and difficult life-altering situations to move past the hurt that they have experienced. But what happened to them. Working through trauma and difficult life situations is a sign of such strength in the client and is ultimately such an important part of the ability for the client to display resilience.

This makes resiliency all the more valuable. Clients who display resilience typically lead fulfilling lives and are thus able to defeat the grip of fear, insecurity, and anxiety caused by the past trauma.

Barbara Bartlett, CFLE, graduated from McNeese State University with a B.A. in Sociology and a concentration in Family and Child Studies. She is pursuing an M.S. in Mental Health Counseling at the University of Louisiana at Monroe. She is a Work Life Coordinator for a nonprofit agency, empowering victims of domestic abuse.

Paige Simpson is a graduate of Sociology with a concentration in Family and Child Studies at McNeese State University. She currently serves as the Director of Operations for Impact Lake Charles, AmeriCorps.

Kaylee Harris is a student at East Tennessee State University studying Human Services with a minor in Family Studies. She works at Little Bucs, a daycare on campus, as a student worker for her Academic Performance Scholarship. She is a member of the Human Services Student Organization.

Resilience Resources
A collection of resources including organizations, websites, journal articles, books, tip sheets, etc. suggested by the authors of articles in this issue of Network.


BOOK REVIEWS

Starting with Character. Activities for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos


Starting with Character by Cathy Waggoner and Martha Herndon, explores the important foundational character traits to which children need to be introduced in order to ensure their successful future. The authors begin by explaining not only traits that children learn through imitation and modeling, but ones that should be deliberately taught to them such as honesty, integrity, and respect, among others. Following an overview of child development, the authors discuss why the encouragement of a good character is extremely important for children at a young age. The first few years of a child’s life (infancy to age three) is a developmentally crucial time frame for many reasons, especially regarding character in terms of forming meaningful relationships (especially with adults). The development and maintenance of meaningful relationships demonstrates healthy socioemotional development during these years. Although there has been controversy surrounding whether or not children are able to develop and build character at such a young age, many researchers contend that these “fundamental building blocks of moral development” do actually begin in the first few years of life by “emotional experiences, social referencing, and the influence of significant relationships (Waggoner, C., & Herndon, M., 2016).”

The authors articulate that, as adults, it is extremely important for parents, educators, and caretakers to encourage and support the development of character in young children. Furthermore, they state that one of the most influential ways to accomplish this is through modeling good character to them at all times. Research suggests that children observe and absorb behaviors that adults demonstrate. Additionally, positive character development can be encouraged through effective communication of expectations.

The authors suggest that consistency and structure are necessary for children and adults help create routines that lead to positive behaviors. The authors also recommend that building blocks can be used to help children understand the importance of one’s actions. Throughout this book, we are introduced to activities that are developmentally appropriate for children and that also teach and encourage lessons about situations and repercussions that may result from certain actions. These activities are not only fun ways for children to learn, but they present key ideas that will instill the necessary morals in children early in their development which will hopefully follow them throughout their entire lives.

This book presents ideas to parents and educators of young children that explain the importance of appropriate behaviors and lessons that should be instilled in children early on. It is important to understand that children are easily influenced by their surroundings; therefore, what we teach them in the first few years of their lives will help to mold them into who they will be and the morals to which they will adhere. We are not only introduced to important activities that will help to produce good character, but it also presents to us the important information that parents and educators need to understand about development and how to promote it in children.*

Reviewed by Donna H. Hoskins, Ph.D., CFLE and Taylor Childress. Dr. Hoskins is an Assistant Professor, Health and Human Sciences, at Bridgewater College. Taylor Childress is currently a senior at Bridgewater College with a major in Family and Consumer Science and a concentration in Child Development. Taylor has been involved with the Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) for two years at the local level.

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*Thanks to Emily Taylor for assistance with research and writing for this review.
Family Resilience

by Carolyn S. Henry, Ph.D., CFLE, and Kristopher M. Struckmeyer, M.S.

Family resilience addresses how some families successfully navigate significant risk (Henry, Morris, & Harrist, 2015). Over time, families experience changes that may disrupt family functioning, presenting challenges to the short- and long-term competence (or adaptation) of families (Hawley & DeHaan, 1996). This research update highlights recent developments on how families can be resilient despite significant risk.

Family resilience perspectives integrate ideas from family stress theory, family systems perspectives, and individual resilience (Hawley & DeHaan, 1996). Early approaches focused on identifying qualities of resilient families. Later, scholars moved away from assuming families were resilient or not resilient toward recognizing family strengths that can be developed to address adversity. In turn, family stress theory based models of family resilience emerged for Certified Family Life Educators (CFLEs) and other professionals to use with families experiencing significant risk (see Weber, 2011 for specific models).

A common thread among prominent family stress models is how family stressors (or demands), resources (or capabilities), and perceptions of situations are critical to understanding the degree of disruption (or risk) to on-going family dynamics (Patterson, 2002).

Some models highlight contexts of family resilience including (a) ethnicity (McCubbin & McCubbin, 2013) or (b) aspects of the context that families can control and those beyond their control (Boss, Bryant, & Mancini, 2017). Others focus on how family strengths can be utilized as resilience processes.

Family processes are the ongoing family beliefs, organization patterns, or interactions such as communication and problems solving, that involve family strengths which can be mobilized to address adversity (Walsh, 2016). Scholars in helping fields published summaries of contexts or processes associated with family resilience to assist helping professionals recognize and mobilize these strengths in families (e.g., Benzies, & Mychasiuk, 2009; Black & Lobo, 2007) along with distinguishing tradition vs. resilience-oriented approaches professionals can use to address family risk (Simon, Murphy, & Smith, 2005). Collectively, current family resilience approaches emphasize promoting research or professional practice that focuses on the processes or indicators of resilience, or both (Patterson, 2002).

Noting that recent advances in the study of individual resilience outpaced those in family resilience, *Family Relations* published a special issue on interdisciplinary and innovative approaches to strengthening family and individual resilience (see Criss, Henry, Larzelere, & Harrist, 2015). In this special issue, Masten and Monn (2015) called for further research on Patterson’s (2002) idea that over time, families’ adaptation to adversity fulfill basic functions for society and their members such as providing a sense of identity and belonging and protecting vulnerable members. Also, these authors distinguish between promotive and protective processes. Promotive processes help families function competently without significant risk and can become strengths to call upon for protection during and after significant risk.

Examples of ideas from other articles in the special issue of *Family Relations* follow. In families with early adolescents, family economic pressure decreases parental prospects for positivity and children’s positivity in emerging adulthood. Yet, parents exhibiting high positivity, despite economic stress, contribute to youth positivity in late adolescence both directly and through increased positive parenting; positivity in late adolescence predicts positivity during emerging adulthood (Neppl, Jeon, Schofield, & Donnellan, 2015). Parents hold potential to increase their child’s positive mood by exhibiting more positive emotions through warm and supportive parent-child interactions; children exhibiting more positive emotions are more likely to have higher socioemotional competence and fewer behavioral and emotional problems (Bai & Repetti, 2015). Parents who use positive behavior support, social support, and anticipate their child’s needs and reactions to daily routines hold potential to lower the risk for conduct problems in their children (Vanderbilt-Adriance et al., 2015). Maintaining or adapting family routines and rituals are critical to family adaptation to adversity (Harrist, Henry, Liu, & Morris, forthcoming). For example, parents in low-income families can decrease their daughters’ internalization of stress by holding

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Family processes are the ongoing family beliefs, organization patterns, or interactions such as communication and problems solving, that involve family strengths which can be mobilized to address adversity (Walsh, 2016).

family system from the individual family members to the family-ecosystem interface (Henry et al., 2015). For example, an individual family member who has a strong ability to connect and is part of a well-functioning couple subsystem in an overall family system that is flexible, might readily work toward the reallocation of family responsibilities to arrange medical and social services for a child with a chronic illness requiring regular intervention.

Family vulnerabilities are challenges or demands beyond the stressor(s) that heighten the probability of negative outcomes (Henry et al., 2015). Examples of vulnerabilities might be limited financial resources, alcoholism, other health issues (beyond the focal stressor), and recent family structural changes. Some qualities are context specific, heightening risk in one context and offering protection in another (Henry et al., 2015). For example, family flexibility can allow families to adapt and modify ongoing family dynamics (or afford protection) while excessive rigidity might stifle the family’s ability to adapt to meet the demands of a crisis.

Family adaptation describes the abilities of families and their members to function competently in both the short- and long-term despite significant risk. Individual family members progress in their development according to their capabilities, subsystem relationships (e.g., parent-child, sibling), and the overall family system interface in ways that help the family fulfill basic functions such as providing for members, providing a sense of connectedness, or protecting vulnerable members. While practitioners may wish for families to thrive, a more realistic goal is often that families function adequately.

Family situational meanings arise as family members interact with each other to create shared meaning about situations (Patterson, 2002). When a stressor occurs, such as a family member being seriously injured in a car accident, families develop different situational meanings like “thankfully Taylor is alive and can have a good life despite the wheelchair” or “our family will never be the same now that Taylor is wheelchair bound.” Situational meanings interface with how risk, protection, vulnerabilities, and adaptation occur and are influenced by the family adaptive system known as the family meaning system.

Both risk and resilience interface with on-going family dynamics known as family adaptive systems (FAS; Henry et al., 2015). FAS emerge through family interactions to regulate patterns of emotions, control, meaning, maintenance, and stress response in family systems. A family with a strong sense of connectedness (the emotion system) sharing the belief that family members can handle together what they find difficult as individuals (the meaning system) has resources to afford protection during significant risk. Or, a family with one primary decision-maker may be vulnerable when the individual is unable to fulfill this role due to illness or absence (the control system). Family tasks such as providing food, clothing, shelter, and safety are orchestrated through the maintenance system. Significant risk can disrupt any of these systems. Thus, the...
stress response system provides the mechanism through which families can restore or create a new balance in the disrupted systems.

Both family risk and resilience occur within family ecosystems. For example, rural communities may provide fewer options for a family member with dementia than urban communities with greater arrays of services. Federal policies may vary over time, which can affect service funding and availability, and enhance or limit a family’s accessibility of services when needed. Thus, it is critical to recognize both protection and vulnerabilities in the ecosystems of families facing significant risk as well as how ecosystems interact with family adaptation, situational meanings, and FAS.

Implications for Family Life Education. Education and case management are areas of prevention and intervention. CFLEs can provide to families with significant risk. Specifically, by “providing research-based information or materials, support-group opportunities with open-sharing and peer support, or skill building sessions that teach goal setting and problem solving” (Myers-Walls, Ballard, Darling, & Myers-Bowman, 2011, pp. 360-361), CFLEs can help families address specific risks and build capacity for resilience. In communities experiencing or expecting increases of immigrant families, educational materials or programs might increase a professional’s understanding of cultures or customs that differ from the dominant population. Or, in a medical setting, CFLEs might assist in preparing a summary of key resources for families responsible for assisting a family member with a progressive or chronic health condition. In religious groups, CFLEs might work to assist families in recognizing signs that an aging parent needs help and how to lay the groundwork for this situation.

The FRM provides a basis for educators to consider how risk, protection and vulnerability, and adaption occur in context with situational meanings, the broader family adaptive systems, and ecosystems. By targeting aspects of the model for particular educational or case management efforts, CFLEs can tailor a program to focus, for example, on realigning specific FAS to accommodate new demands. Or, the focus might be on building family promotive capabilities (e.g., emotion regulation, communication skills) that can be mobilized to address potential risks when families experience change. Finally, in preparing education and materials as resources to promote family resilience, CFLEs can ask the critical question of which levels of the family system do I wish to reach? Because family resilience involves interactions between multiple system levels, targeting individuals and their family members can often be a promising strategy.

Carolyn S. Henry, Ph.D., CFLE is Masonic Chair and Professor in Human Development and Family Science at Oklahoma State University. She emphasizes advancing the conceptualization of family resilience through integrating ideas from individual and family resilience to serve as a basis for professional practice and research. Her current research focuses on selected aspects (fathers’ behaviors, mothers’ behaviors, and family system qualities) of family emotion and control systems and adaptation in families with adolescents. Dr. Henry has been a CFLE for over two decades.

Kristopher M. Struckmeyer, M.S., is a doctoral candidate in Human Development and Family Science at Oklahoma State University. His dissertation focuses on the impact of implementing a caregiving education program through the Cooperative Extension service on family caregivers in rural Oklahoma. Kristopher’s other research includes examining discrepancies between care recipient’s self-assessments and caregivers’ proxy appraisals of their care recipient’s well-being.

References

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The Road to Resilience: Its Achievement and Maintenance

by SaraKay Smullens, MSW, LCSW, BCD, CGP, CFLE

According to Dictionary.com resilience is “the ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like (italics mine).” According to the Grammarist, “resilience” and “resiliency” can be used interchangeably as nouns that refer “to the ability to recover quickly from illness or misfortune (again, italics mine).”

In my experience, and perhaps in yours, however, resiliency is not achieved quickly or readily. It takes time and work—often a lifetime to feel that you are really getting it right. Therefore, in this sharing, I add what life has taught me about resilience, defining it as the ability to endure until you are able to recover from loss, depression, adversity, etc. al. Put in another way, it is a fierce determination, when hit by life's inevitable blows, to survive – to never give up.

The development of resiliency, as I see it, is a process that has played out in my own life against the backdrop of my own writing. In fact, writing has been essential in both achieving and maintaining resilience, a valuable self-care strategy in navigating our complex and troubled world. When writing about something important to me, my thoughts take on a life of their own, both consciously and unconsciously. These thoughts guide me toward understanding and resolve. In other words, I am working on my topic without even realizing it.

Even as a child, I longed to achieve resiliency, but I did not know it; and I surely did not know how. I vividly remember the time my kindergarten teacher asked our class to put our heads on our desks, close our eyes, think about our happy and lucky lives, and then share our thoughts. I did not dare share what came to my mind, for it was the violent arguments between my parents, arguments that in time would deplete my mother and destroy her mental and physical health. I quickly dried my eyes and listened to the other children’s happy thoughts, feeling what I know now was despair and loneliness.

Predictably, in a first marriage, although I purposefully married one whose education, opportunities, and socioeconomic background were the opposite of my father, I married one where the dynamics of my mother’s hell would repeat themselves. However, I was far, far more fortunate than my mother, in every way. I had both education and a profession to build upon. Also, I had years of intensive therapy that helped me to understand the choices I had made and why. In other words, I was beginning to achieve a reliable “emotional sense of direction,” which I see as essential to the development, integration and maintenance of resilience.

... perhaps it is most accurate to define resiliency as the art of finding and nurturing one’s individual Self. This is how each of us, as the artist of our own lives, may find our own ways to both achieve and internalize resilience, as well as make sure that it is maintained.

My first published work, Whoever Said Life Is Fair?: A Guide to Growing Through Life’s Injustices, grew from the decision to divorce in 1975 at age 35, with two young daughters, ages 4 and 7. I had tried to avoid this decision for years. However, when one lives in a state of constant humiliation, disrespect, and fear there is a price to be paid. As the years passed, I experienced a growing emotional deterioration.

My divorce, always under the threat of contest, was sought in the only state in the US with the following three archaic intact legalities: no “no fault” (which meant after two lawyers could not help me, it was necessary to turn to what was referred to at the time as “a gutter lawyer”), no equitable division of marital property (which meant that savings, investments and property acquired before as well as during a marriage remained in the name of the one who acquired it and did not have to be shared), and no alimony. My book grew from a journal where I tried to discover how those I had watched face unfairness, injustice, betrayal, cruelty, and connivance survived, while others I had known fell through the cracks of life.

I concluded after reflection that those I knew personally who survived have what can best be described as dignity, and that the state of dignity births resilience and begins with love. Dignity is a combination of pride, the knowledge that you matter, and humility, a just assessment of your strengths and limitations. For children to begin to develop dignity, someone, not necessarily a parent, must show them that their lives and well-being are important and become a reliable presence during formative years.

About the same time my first book was published, I remarried, and “the three of us” (my young daughters and I) grew into a blended family of six with my husband, Stan, and his two children, ages 9 and 12. My second marriage brought new exploration involving the role of love in resilience. I wondered — since most parents love their children the best way they know how — why do so many children lack the resilience necessary to face the disappointments, injustices and unfairness in life? I examined notes from all of my cases through the years and concluded that for most the culprit was invisible cycles of emotional abuse, which are always present in physical and sexual abuse, but also exist independently. This review led to five defined, invisible cycles,
which without intervention grow in danger and intensity with passing generations: abandonment/rejection, emneshment, rage, complete neglect, and overprotection/overindulgence and became the focus of my second book, Setting Yourself Free: Breaking the Cycle of Emotional Abuse in Family, Friendships, Work, and Love (Smullens, 2002).

My third book, I now understand, is an exploration of the vulnerability of resiliency, once achieved. It grew from deep concern about the heightened rate of societal, professional and personal burnout that destroyed existing resilience, causing depletion. I watched as committed professionals left mental health and related fields, depriving our most vulnerable families of the quality help of those trained and dedicated.

This led to a 6 year study of the personal, professional, social, and physical toll of burnout and an exploration of its primarily causes: compassion fatigue, countertransference (in this definition, dealing with impossible people and impossible circumstances) and vicarious trauma. My findings were based on a study of existing research as well as a qualitative case study conducted two years prior to publication of my work. Drawing from over 200 prospective candidates, 40 were selected to complete an anonymous, extensive questionnaire. These responses pointed to the exact problems of burnout and the blessings of the self-care strategies that restore and protect resiliency.

Because of those who participated so generously, my published work, Burnout and Self-Care in Social Work: A Guidebook for Students and Those in Mental Health and Related Professions, was able to offer authentic voices of those on the front lines of social work and mental health practice, which I see as relevant to each of us, whatever our field or concentration. For example, when asked about activities that lessen stress, one questionnaire respondent wrote: “I (avoid) hanging out with people who are in a miserable space. Misery loves company, but I don’t love staying miserable, so I have reduced a lot of friendships and stick to people who don’t just withdraw from my energy but can offer reciprocal positivity.” In the words of another questionnaire respondent, “I really think everything I have tried has ‘worked’ in that I learned from the experience. If I did not get ‘relief’ then that was something learned and I moved on.”

Interestingly, the literature concentrates on myriad care strategies, but neglects the unique Self in each of us. With this in mind, to restore and preserve resiliency, I encouraged readers not to fear thinking outside of the box to adopt those activities (and the attitudes that support them) that are individually meaningful, energizing, and fulfilling — as writing, for example, has been for me. Emphasis was placed on finding direction in one’s personal (including spiritual), social, professional, and physical lives that put one more in touch with themselves, offer a way to express and find relief from difficulties and frustrations, and encourage positive, creative connection with others.

In sharing these explorations with you, I see that perhaps it is most accurate to define resiliency as the art of finding and nurturing one’s individual Self. This is how each of us, as the artist of our own lives, may find our own ways to both achieve and internalize resilience, as well as make sure that it is maintained.

SaraKay Smullens, MSW, LCSW, BCD, CGP, CFLE whose private and pro bono practice is in Philadelphia, is recipient of an NASW-PA Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizing her longstanding client advocacy, the codification of five invisible patterns of emotional abuse, and a psychoeducational model to address it. A former Family Life Education Director for Philadelphia’s Jewish Family Services, SaraKay is founder of the Philadelphia initiative, the Sabbath of Domestic Peace, which identified clergy as “the missing link” in addressing domestic violence. SaraKay has published in peer-reviewed journals, blogs for The Huffington Post, and is the best-selling author of Whoever Said Life Is Fair?: A Guide to Growing Through Life’s Injustices; Setting Yourself Free: Breaking the Cycle of Emotional Abuse in Family, Friendships, Work, and Love; and her latest book, now in its second printing, Burnout and Self-Care in Social Work: A Guide for Students and Those in Mental Health and Related Professions.

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**NCFR WEBINAR**

**Practical Skills for Family Life Educators to Invoke, Evoke, and Provoke Cultural Engagement**

**Marcy L. Peake, MA, LPC, NCC, CFLE**, Director of Diversity and Community Outreach Initiatives in the Western Michigan University College of Education and Human Development and faculty member in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

**Thursday, July 20, 2017, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm CST**

Family life educators work in a variety of environments that require knowledge, skills, and dispositions to engage diverse populations and create learning spaces that are anti-oppressive for all families. Since families are unique both within and between cultural groups, family life educators can best prepare by learning practical skills that invoke an understanding of their own cultural selves, evoke awareness of societal and individual biases, and provoke cultural engagement with families served.

Webinar activities will provide skill building for family life educators and lend themselves to replicable activities they can use with families when applicable.

$40 for NCFR professional members ⊤ $20 for NCFR student member ⊤ $80 for nonmembers

Classroom licensing rates available ⊤ [https://www.ncfr.org/events/upcoming-ncfr-webinars](https://www.ncfr.org/events/upcoming-ncfr-webinars)
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