

# Happiness?



A key to



# Resilience?

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## Interdependence of resilience and happiness.

- Good news if you feel resilient/happy/both
- Not so good if you feel neither.
- Unless of course we can make 'moves' which enhance our resilience and happiness.



## Plan to share/discuss:

- Understanding(s of) resilience
- Shared features/areas of concern and tension with resilience and positive psychology/happiness building
- Resilience building approaches

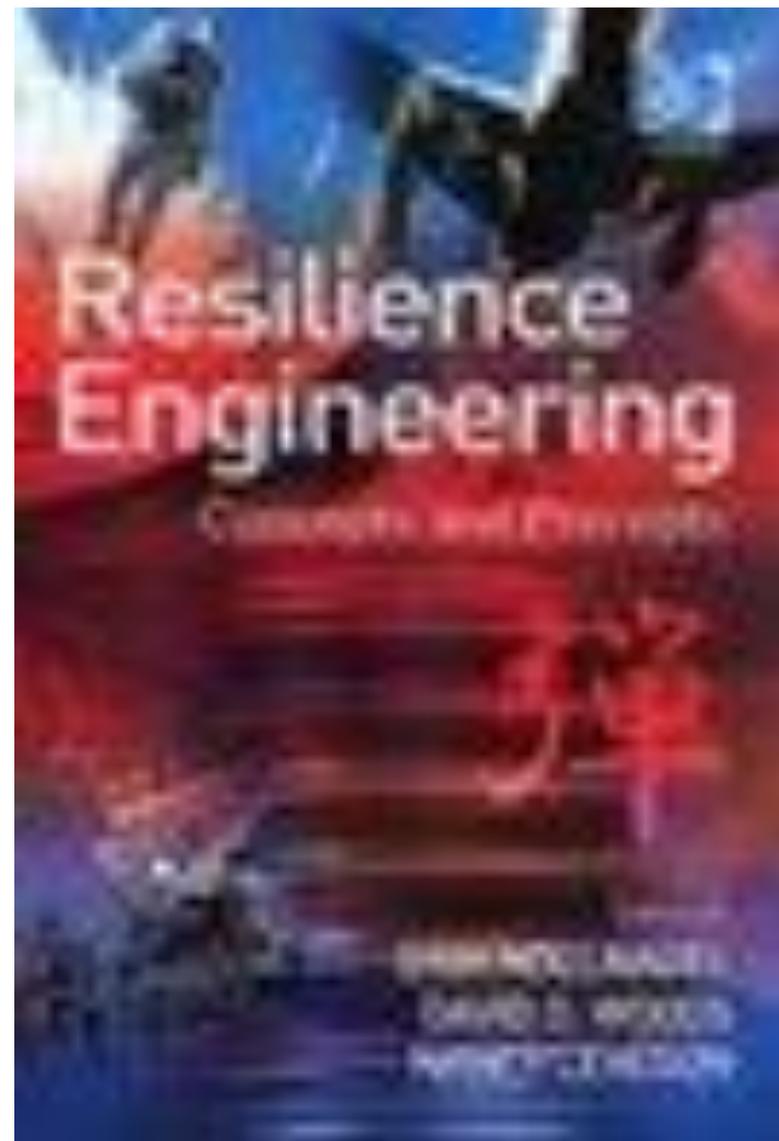


What does  
resilience mean  
to you?

# Images of resilience:



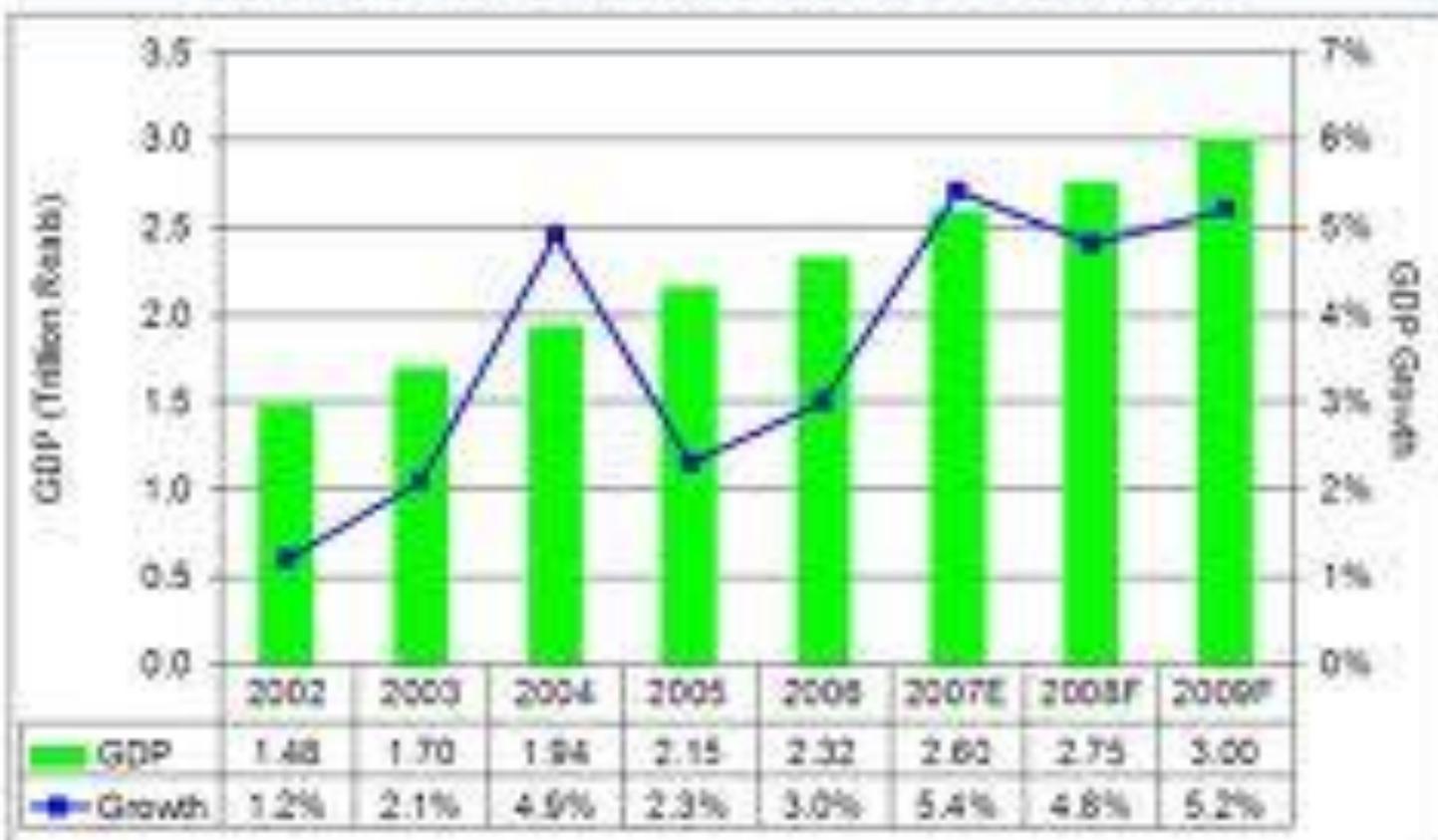




## Brazil's Economy



Increasing annual growth trend and strong near-term forecast











## Portrayals of resilience:

- Physical, natural & or social world?
- Solitary or community?
- Innate or developed?
- Heroes only?
- Whose responsibility?
- Response to or buffer against adversity?



## Resilience in social policy

- Increasingly cited in policy:
- A World Health Organisation report for the European region (Friedli 2009) has made the case for both individual and wider societal public health solutions to increase resilience and improve mental health and well-being.
- But interpretations vary and this can be problematic.



# Public Health policy references to “resilience / resilient” (Dept of Health 2010)

 HM Government



Healthy Lives,  
Healthy People:

Our strategy for public health in England

- Resilience to health emergency x 12. eg:

*Public Health England will build on the current arrangements for emergency preparedness, resilience and response. (p66)*

- Personal resilience x 3.

*Our social and cognitive development, self-esteem, confidence, personal resilience and wellbeing are affected by a wide range of influences throughout life... (p15)*

- Young people’s resilience x 2

*For children and adolescents with mental health problems, central government will support interventions that promote mental health resilience... (p36)*

## Resilience is about...

- Bouncing back/up
- Staying strong
- Looking on the bright side, when its very dark outside
- Doing better than you think you would be doing in the circumstances
- Nurturing potential – not something you are just born with. (*This implies support*).
- (definitions of resilience from communities of practice involving parents of children with disabilities, practitioners and academics – see [www.boingboing.org.uk](http://www.boingboing.org.uk)).



## What is Resilience?

*Good outcomes despite adversity*

“... a class of phenomena characterised by good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development.”

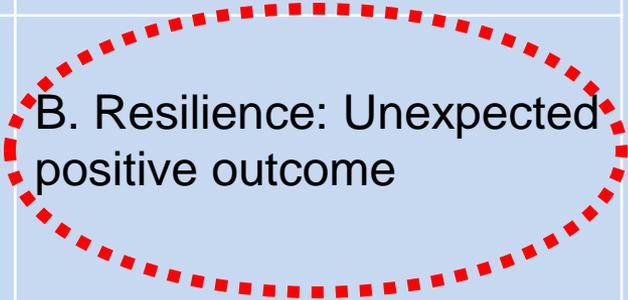
(Masten 2001)



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FIGURE 1: IDENTIFICATION OF RESILIENCE

Outcome	Adversity	
	Low	High
Positive	A. Favourable experience of life	B. Resilience: Unexpected positive outcome
Negative	C. Unexpected negative outcome	D. Risk and vulnerability



(reference and downloadable copy: [www.ucl.ac.uk/capabilityandresilience](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/capabilityandresilience). *Capability and Resilience: Beating the Odds* Edited by Professor Mel Bartley, published by UCL Dept Epidemiology and Public Health on behalf of the ESRC Priority Network on Capability and Resilience (2003-2007). )

*Think of a resilient person and discuss*

In what way are they resilient?

What makes them resilient?



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## Personal resilience

- Individual traits or attributes emphasised by some psychological resilience research (Grote et al 2007).
- Notably, positive self-identity has been identified as a key internal resource that promotes resilience (Skodol 2010).
- Hope has also been a central feature of resilience literature (Dowrick et al 2008).
- Inoculated resilience (Werner & Smith 2001)

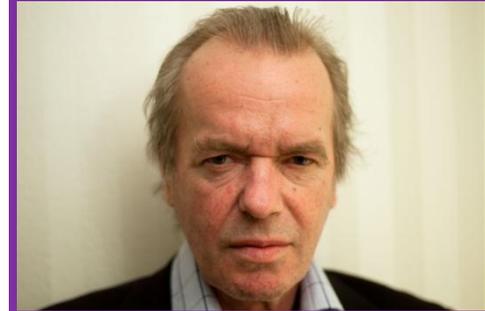


# Martin Amis on inoculated resilience following the death of his best friend Christopher Hitchens

‘...what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.’ Amis gives a bleak smile. ‘I always thought that was all balls; what doesn’t kill you makes you weaker, and kills you later on.’

But later:

“When your lifelong friend, when they die, they leave you something,” Amis said. “They leave you their love of life. When he died, I felt a duty to inherit that love of life.”



Martin Amis 2012 by Maximilian Schoenherr - von Maximilian Schönerr - Eigenes Werk. Lizenziert unter CC BY-SA 3.0 über Wikimedia Commons



by meesh from washington dc - hitchens. Licensed under CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons



## Beyond personal resilience

- Individualisation of health in the name of empowerment has been criticised for concealing the erosion of service provision. (Brown & Baker 2012)
- Arguably asking individuals and their communities to develop resilience could be seen as part of this.
- However if resilience is understood as residing at micro, meso and macro levels this need not be the case.





# What is Resilience?

## *Not just in individuals*

‘Resilience is an emergent property of a hierarchically organized set of protective systems that cumulatively buffer the effects of adversity and can therefore rarely, if ever, be regarded as an intrinsic property of individuals.’  
(Roisman et al. 2002: 1216)





# Newham's Resilience Policy



- Person resilience
- Community resilience
- Economic resilience

■ [www.newham.gov.uk](http://www.newham.gov.uk)

# Resilience and empowerment

WELCOME TO THE HILLSBOROUGH FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP



- Moreover if people are active agents in building their resilience the outcome of increased empowerment may help them to challenge the source of adversity even at macro societal levels.
- EG Hillsborough families campaign.



# Adversities

- Bouncing back (or up) following adversity is a core feature of resilience (Aumann and Hart 2009).
- Resilience only manifest in adversity.
- Adversity in resilience literature commonly includes: poverty, disadvantage, discrimination (Canvin et al 2009)



What are the  
adversities  
around you?

# The emergence of resilience as an orientating concept for PhD study on return to work experiences of people with mental health problems (Cameron 2013)

- Literature review identified 3 categories:
  1. Work can be toxic
  2. Mental health problems can disrupt working lives
  3. Work can support recovery
- Note the paradox between a)1,2 and b) 3.



## Orientating concept - Resilience

- UK policy (DWP & DH 2009) has proposed that people with mental health problems may experience more success at work if they are **resilient** - defined in predominantly individualistic terms, as having the capacity to endure adverse circumstances and maintain emotional stability and well-being.
- Many resilience-at-work tools and programmes have a similar focus on how individuals can be made more resilient to cope with pressures of work (eg Liossis 2009).
- But much resilience theory and research suggest a need to look a resilient environments and systems (eg Kent & Davis 2010)



## The limitations of individual resilience...



*Couldn't we use a winch?*



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## What were the adversities?

- For some the work tasks or work place (inc stigma)
- The direct impacts of their mental health problem
- The impacts of being on sick leave.



*Hiyori13 via Flickr*



# Assets under threat

- Financial
- Social
- Occupational (doing)
- Personal (identity)
- These assets were under threat, ***but*** they also had the potential to be deployed to support recovery.



*Images\_of\_money via Flickr*



*BLW photography via Flickr.com*



*Identity photogr@phy via Flickr.com*



# Key resilience mechanisms at work

- Self identity
- Experiences of 'working'
- Reappraisal (particularly if above distorted)
- Changes to job/work environment
- Support and understanding

# Self identity

- Positive self identity has been identified as key internal resource promoting the resilience of people adversities (Skodol 2010)
- A self image of being a worker offers an alternative to a passive patient image (Millward & Lutte 2005)

# Self identity

- ... it's always been in the background that I will go... you know, I've never thought that I wouldn't go back to work. (Yvonne).
- it's quite empowering, it feels like I'm doing something positive and not just being a passive sort of like recipient of health care, really . (Penny).

# Experiences of working

- “the natural course of one’s life has a forward lean toward engagement, purpose, and perseverance.” (Zautra et al 2010 p6)
- Highlights how ‘doing’ can contribute to resilience (cf play, leisure & learning in RT, Hart & Blincow 2007)
- Experience of work provided evidence of themselves as competent.

# Experiences of working: Structure, social contacts, 'flow' experiences.

- “I would always need that structure of work. I think it kind of normalises me really ... I like the social aspect of it but I also like the structure of it.” (Mary). *Value of structure & social contact.*
- [...] that's my favourite part of the job, I love soldering and that's what I was brought in to do [...], it's really good . [...] it's got to be spot on, the time just flies by [...]. The [feelings of anxiety and depression] drop. They drop because I'm concentrating more and [have] less time to think of what I'm actually feeling. (Gavin). *Evidence of the power of flow experiences – self forgetting* (see works of Csikzentmihalyi; aslo Wright, Sadlo and Stew, 2007)

# Reappraisal

- Negative self interpretations of efficacy at work may undermine this – pointing to the potential value of reappraisal strategies (Seligman 2005).



# Reappraisal

- my perception is changing in terms of how I see that people see me. That's maybe part of coming out of depression, but ... it's also about ... thinking, 'actually, people do actually respect me and I think that people want me to be successful and can see that I can do things as well'. (Zoe).

## Resilient individuals or resilient spaces and practices?

- Narrow individualised understanding of resilience could reinforce the self-blame felt by many participants and thereby increase obstacles to recovery.
- We found it helpful to consider how the spaces in which people found themselves could be made more resilient, rather than simply considering how individuals could harden themselves to adversity.
- Similarly, it was helpful to consider how a person's roles, routines and activities could support or undermine their well-being. From that adjustments to those tasks, roles and routines can be proposed.



## 5<sup>th</sup> Wave resilience – Challenging adversity

- At a societal level the resilient solution is not simply to ‘harden’ individual workers to the stresses of their work and workplace but to support them to challenge the sources of adversity.
- This is an example of a ‘5<sup>th</sup> wave’ (Hart et al) resilient practice and research task.



# What do we think?

## Our Definition....

“overcoming adversity, whilst also potentially subtly changing, or even dramatically transforming, (aspects of) that adversity”

*Hart, Gagnon, Aumann, & Heaver, 2000*



# Developing resilience

- **If:**
- resilience emerges from complex processes involving interactions between individuals and their environments (Fonagy et al 1994, Rutter 1999, Masten 2001)
- **Then:**
- resilience is something that can be developed and nurtured (Ungar 2001, Hart et al 2007, Luthar and Brown 2007)



## Resilient Therapy (RT) (Hart & Blincow 2007)

- Harnesses selected therapeutic principles and techniques
- Originally developed re children, families & young people
- Now exploring relevance beyond that (adults – communities)
- Developed for use across contexts by different practitioners, including parents and young people.
- Designed to work with people as co-collaborators in the development of the methodology rather than as recipients
- Is user-friendly and readily accessible – you don't need a lengthy specialised training 
- Non-pathologising – 'upbuilding' **University of Brighton**

# Resilient Framework – (Adapted by Cameron, Hart and Arnold-Jenkins, from Hart & Blincow 2007 - for Adult Mental Health)

	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING & Work	COPING	CORE SELF
RESILIENT MOVES	Good enough housing;	Find somewhere to belong; Help understand place in the world; and that others may face similar situations	Make work & learning as successful as possible;	Understanding others expectations and deciding which to meet, challenge or negotiate	Instil a sense of hope;
	Enough money to live;			Being brave;	
	Being safe;	Tap into good influences; (eg peer support)	Engage mentors	Identifying & solving problems; (reduce self blame and guilt)	Promote understanding of others
	Access & transport;	Keep relationships going; (eg educate/support partners/carers/family)	Map out career or life plan;	Putting on rose-tinted glasses; Reframing/reappraising	Help the person to know her/himself;
		The more healthy relationships the better;			
	Healthy diet;	Take what you can relationships where there is some hope;	Help self organisation	Calming down & self-soothing; Support reflection Not to feel overwhelmed by illness	Help the person take responsibility for her/himself; Self advocacy
	Exercise and fresh air;	Get together people the person can count on;			
	Enough sleep;	Responsibilities & obligations;	Highlight achievements;	Lean on others when necessary;	Foster talents;
		Focus on good times and places;			
	Leisure and work occupations	Make sense of where the person has come from;	Develop life skills;	Have a laugh;	Foster talents;
		Predict good experience of someone/ something new;			

## Foundations/Resilient Roots

<b>ACCEPTING</b> <i>Interpersonal skills Empathy</i>	<b>CONSERVING</b> <i>Interpersonal skills Trust</i>	<b>COMMITMENT</b> <i>Ongoing support issues</i>	<b>ENLISTING</b> <i>Self (eg not passive), Family, Friends, MH profs, GP</i>
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# Resilient Song Time:



- A Co-designed ‘Recovery’ College resilience course for adults with mental health problems and those supporting them.
- Designed and facilitated by peer trainers, a mental health practitioner and an academic.
- Based on the Resilience Framework
  - Continuing on adaptation work
- Interactive 8 weekly sessions programme
  - Discussion, creative activities, map as metaphor (for navigating resilient recovery)
  - Includes session on challenging adversity (eg stigma) – not just coping with it

## Building Resilience for Wellness and Recovery

Resilience can help people successfully get through tough times. Drawing on resilience research, practice and lived experience, this course introduces what resilience is and what it is not. It aims to help people overcome challenges by building on strengths inside them and also in the world around them. There will be opportunities within the course to share resilience tips, tools and experiences

### Learning Outcomes

Students will:

Increase their understanding of what resilience is and what it is not

Identify and try out a number of resilient steps to help them cope with challenges in their lives

Have created their own personal 'resilient toolkit' by the end of the course.

### Aimed at:

This course is for anyone facing tough times in their own lives and/or supporting others to overcome challenges.

### Dates and times

Thursday: 5 Feb, 12 Feb, 19 Feb, 26 Feb,  
5 Mar, 12 Mar, 19 Mar, 26 Mar  
Time: 11am — 1:30pm

### Venue

Bill Buck room, Crawley Library

### Trainers

Sue Servini – Peer Trainer  
Mair Reardon - Occupational Therapist  
Josh Cameron – Senior Lecturer

### Organisation

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

# Resilience in and around your life.

## Consider:

- What resilient 'moves' could be made at these levels
  - Micro (individual)
  - Meso (community/workplace)
  - Macro (society, policy)
- How could a *Action for Happiness* perspective contribute to these?
- What scope is there for resilient practice to transcend resisting adversity and help challenge it?



# Find out more [www.boingboing.org.uk](http://www.boingboing.org.uk)



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## Resilience research and practice

Boing Boing provides opportunities to learn about resilience. We run regular [Resilience Forums](#), produce [books and other materials](#) and offer [training and talks](#) on resilient approaches to life's challenges. Working with children, young people, families and adults exposed to social disadvantage is at the heart of our work.

We use resilience research and practice to find ways of helping people having particularly tough times because it is a source of very useful knowledge about how individuals overcome such times.

While there are loads of academic articles and books on resilience, not enough tell us how to go about using this knowledge to help children, young people and adults to bounce up against the odds. Part of this is working with people individually, but it is also about trying to do our bit to tackle unfair practices by governments and other big players. Our work is strongly rooted in a social justice agenda, and we do not believe that resilience promotion should be about maximising the survival of the fittest.

That's why we have been developing approaches, like [Resilient Therapy \(RT\)](#), and the [Resilience Framework](#), for anyone to use.

## Arts for Resilience



## Resilience Forum

### [Building the resilient school](#)

Monday 20 May  
1.30 pm - 3.00 pm  
A501 Checkland Building  
Falmer Campus  
University of Brighton

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