UF CWC
Counseling and Wellness Center

NURTURING RESILIENT STUDENTS

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It’s Rough Out There

- Anxious
- Confused
- Lonely
- Stressed
- Depressed
- Substance Abuse Use Recovery
- Sexual Assault Recovery

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In the last 12 months, college students*: 

- Felt very overwhelmed by all they had to do 85.1%
- Felt things were hopeless 49.8%
- Felt very lonely 59.3%
- Felt so depressed it was difficult to function 36.7%
- Seriously considered suicide 9.8%
- Attempted suicide 1.5%
- Reported non-suicidal self-injury 6.7%
- Did something they later regretted due to drinking alcohol 33.1%

*American College Health Association (ACHA) National College Health Assessment (2016); survey results from roughly 20,000 participants from 40 different institutions
Students reported the following factors negatively impacted their academics in the past 12 months (ACHA, 2016):

- 31.8% - Stress
- 23.2% - Anxiety
- 20.7% - Sleep difficulties
- 15.4% - Depression
- 14.5% - Cold/flu/sore throat
- 11.0% - Concern for a troubled friend or family member
- 11.0% - Internet use/computer games
“Every emergency, every crisis, reveals unsuspected resources of personal strength... In speaking of the hero born of such a crisis, people often say, ‘I didn’t know he had it in him.’ But most of us, in fact, have a better, stouter-hearted, more vigorous self within us...”

--John W. Gardener
Struggling well

A set of beliefs and attitudes about ourselves that influence behaviors and skills

Dynamic and ever-changing—can be learned and practiced

(Brooks and Goldstein, 2004)
Recover from crisis, loss, and trauma
Navigate disruptive transitions
Manage ongoing stressors
Work on overwhelming challenges
Overcome barriers to success
“Bounce forward” – adapt to changing conditions and new challenges, and be proactive
A Resilient Mindset includes...

- Feeling in control of your life
- Realistic goals and expectations
- Learning from failure
- Empathy and sense of contributing to others
- Good communication skills
- Stress “hardiness”
- Problem solving-skills and behaviors
- Feeling special (not better than)

(Adapted from Brooks and Goldstein, 2004)
TIPS FOR “SUCCESSFUL FAILING”

1) Feel bad.
2) Learn to see the signs of failure on the horizon.
3) Admit the truth.
4) Articulate what you have learned.
5) Fail again.

“Failure taught me things about myself that I could have learned no other way... You will never truly know yourself, or the strength of your relationships, until both have been tested by adversity. Such knowledge is a true gift, for all that it is painfully won, and it has been worth more to me than any qualification I have ever earned.”

--J. K. Rowling
Barriers to Resilience

- Beliefs and attitudes/worldview
- Self-discipline and self-control
- Chronic stress
- Resource and health disparities
- Developmental issues
- Institutional and systemic issues
- Questions about self-importance
How many of you were exposed to this idea in childhood?

“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”

-Viktor Frankl
What messages are students getting from the culture about the nature of adversity?

What messages are we sending students about the nature of struggle?

How do we engage students in ways that promote and encourage the development of resilience?

Which resilience “deficits” are the hardest for you to encounter in your students?
How You Can Contribute

- Incorporate resilience into conversations
- Listen for students’ beliefs about struggle
- Help students identify areas of strength and improvement
- Encourage students to make new connections
- Model the way through open communication
- Treat adversity as opportunity
- Encourage service utilization and reaching out

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Other Ways to Nurture Resilience

Encourage your students to:

- set realistic goals,
- prioritize tasks,
- be intentional in time management,
- build a supportive social network,
- have time set for fun and leisure and
- attend their physical health through balanced diet, regular exercise and sleep routine
Reach Out...

Crisis Intervention

20-min Triage Appointment

Group Therapy

Short-term & limited Individual Therapy

Psychological Testing

Referral to other resources

Referral to SHCC Psychiatry

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More About Services

- Confidential services
- Available to ALL registered UF Students

- Hours of operation
  Monday through Friday
  8 am – 5 pm

Phone consultation
available for students in distress as well as family members who need to consult about their student

24/7

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Vignettes of student struggles provided in conjunction with this presentation are drawn from general themes and issues—including trauma, loss, and suicide—commonly encountered by counseling professionals in college counseling center settings. Any perceived resemblance to actual persons is coincidental only.