

*Self-care and resilience:
Practice what to teach*

Brad E.R. Smith, MD, and Chad T. Wetterneck, PhD

Friday, December 11, 2020




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Quick overview of logistics

Our speakers will give a 75-minute presentation.

Following the presentation, there will be a dedicated time to answer your questions.

- Please use the **Q&A feature**, located in the toolbar at the bottom of your screen, to send your question to the moderator.
- The moderator will review all questions submitted and select the most appropriate ones to ask the presenter.



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Disclosures

Brad E.R. Smith, MD, and Chad T. Wetterneck, PhD, have each declared that he does not, nor does his family have, any financial relationship in any amount occurring in the last 12 months with a commercial interest whose products or services are discussed in the presentation. Drs. Smith and Wetterneck each declared that he does not have any relevant non-financial relationships. Additionally, all planners involved do not have any financial relationships.

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Learning objectives

Upon completion of the instructional program, participants should be able to:

1. Describe at least two strategies for building resilience.
2. Assess relevant areas of need in one's professional and personal care and list at least two ways to implement self-care.

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What we'll cover in this webinar

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Resilience</p> <p><i>Brad E.R. Smith, MD</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience as defined by various professions • Assessment of personal resilience • Strategies for building resilience | <p>Self-care</p> <p><i>Chad T. Wetterneck, PhD</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on your own self-care needs • Building / Increasing / Starting a support network |
|--|---|

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Resilience

- Resilience as defined by various professions
- Assessment of personal resilience
- Strategies for building resilience



Please use the Q&A feature to send your questions to the moderator.

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Resilience

- Emerging concept in mental health
- Process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress
- “Bouncing back”
- Ordinary, not extraordinary
- Can be learned



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Importance

- New direction – Instead of focus on pathology, focus on protective factors
- Analogous to preventative health care in rest of medicine
- Comorbidities – Learning resilience skills can minimize risk of developing other pathological coping styles
- Chronic illness is considered a form of trauma in resilience study, and recovery requires resilience
- Similar to other areas of medicine – fix what is broken **and also try to strengthen to avoid future pathology.**
- At every level of care, even inpatient, we have opportunities to maximize the person’s chances of building resilience
- Umbrella, or framework, of how to conceptualize all that we do to assist the recovery process

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Building resilience

- Make connections
- Reappraise problems
- Accept change as natural
- Goal setting, meaning in every day
- Take decisive actions
- Look for self-discovery from stress/trauma
- Positive outlook
- Perspective
- Positive view of ability to overcome (look to past success)
- Take care of yourself

(APA Practice Organization, 2011)

“Blue Zone” lessons (study of 100-year-olds)

- Move naturally
- Stop eating before you are full
- Avoid processed food and meats
- Red wine
- Purpose now
- Self care for stress relief
- Spiritual community
- Prioritize family
- Surround yourself by those who share these values



(Buettner, 2010)

Resilience: The science of mastering life’s greatest challenges

Steven Southwick, MD, and Dennis Charney, MD

- Review of available scientific and popular literature
- Psychological and neurobiological research
- In depth interviews with highly resilient individuals
 - Vietnam POW's
 - Special Forces instructors
 - Civilian individuals who endured enormous stress/trauma

(Southwick & Charney, 2018).

Resilience factors

- **Optimism**
- **Face fear**
- **Social support**
- **Role models**
- Moral compass
- Spiritual/religious practice
- Cognitive and emotional flexibility
- Brain Fitness
- Physical Fitness
- Meaning in trauma

(Southwick & Charney, 2018).

Optimism

- Realistic optimism
- Cognitive restructuring
- “Power of Positive Thinking”
- Limit effect of negative issues
- Mindfulness



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Skills development: Optimism

- Focus attention on positive things we have:
Gratitude, cognitive bias modification, meditation
- Intentionally think positive thoughts and do not dwell on negative:
Power of Positive Thinking, visualization, networking
- Reframe negative events and interpret in more positive:
CBT thought reframing/restructuring
- Behave and take action in ways that build positive feelings:
CBT behavioral activation

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Face fear

- View fear as a guide
- View fear as an opportunity
- Focus on the goal
- Acquire information about what is feared
- Learn and practice skills to master fear (respiratory control)
- Face fear with friends or colleagues
- Face fear with spiritual support
- Get someone or an organization to push you



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Skills development: Face fear

- Exposures to fear: Challenging but manageable steps, prevent neutralizing responses, builds tolerance, creates habituation, generalizes
- Education about what is feared
- Support: Friends, colleagues, spiritual

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Social support

- Tap code
- Be a friend to make a friend
- Support groups
- Group therapy



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Skills development: Social support

- Join/start support group
- Professional networking
- Spiritual practices and community building
- Leisure interest pursuits (sports fantasy league, craft groups)
- Friendships
- Family relationships

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Role models

- Resilient role models
 - No need to be perfect
- Negative role models
- Past experience as role model for self
- How to utilize role models
 - Break skills into simple segments
 - Observe skills in a variety of settings
 - Practice
 - Obtain feedback



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Skills development: Role models

- Identify role models for different aspects of life
 - Professional
 - Parenting
 - Relationship
 - Health
- Select a characteristic and commit to adopt it for the next 30 days
- Re-assess and repeat

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Moral compass

- Ethics and maintaining strong moral compass
- Courage
- Altruism builds resilience
- Practice



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Skills Development: Moral compass

- Compassion training
- Self assessment of values and priorities
- Discuss with person we admire for ethics
- Practice them even in day-to-day situations
 - John McCain in 2004: "Do the duty before me."

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Spiritual/Religious practice

- Higher power of some sort changes perspective
- Prayer
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Physical and mental health improvements
- Different perspective on mental pain



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Skills development: Spirituality/Religion

- Meditate or pray each day
- Read spiritual/religious works
- Physical space for meditation/prayer
- Physically active form – walking prayer, yoga, liturgical dance
- Creative form – music, paint, write
- Groups

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Cognitive and emotional flexibility

- Acceptance (especially of things not able to change)
- Cognitive reappraisal
- Gratitude as a form of reappraisal
- Humor as a form of cognitive reappraisal



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Skills development: Cognitive flexibility

- **CBT:** Practice thought restructuring, challenges
- **ACT:** Accept and be present, choose a valued direction, take action
- **DBT:** Radical acceptance of current situation, assess aspects we can control
- **Humor:** Surround yourself with humor to increase chances of reappraisal and to add flexibility to emotions

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Brain fitness

- Brain plasticity---much greater than imagined
- Brain exercises
- Emotional training---mindfulness, focus, feel but do not become the emotion
- Heart fitness leads to brain fitness
- Training requires practice, practice, practice



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Skills development: Brain fitness

- Brain exercises: Crossword, math, opposite hand for tasks, eyes closed for tasks
- Role playing: CPR training, response to pain in others
- CBT, DBT, ACT skills training
- Mindfulness

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Physical fitness

- Improves mood, cognition, and emotional resilience
- Anti-depressant, anti-anxiety effects, neurochemical changes
- Healthy eating and sleeping



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Skills development: Physical fitness

- Identify core values and goals
- Choose physical activity that aligns with this
 - i.e. core value is strong relationships, then choose hiking with family (rather than walking on treadmill alone)
- Specify one activity that you will add for the next 30 days

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Meaning, Purpose, Growth

- Posttraumatic growth
- Missions of altruism, philanthropy, service, careers following trauma
- Daily goals, “reasons to get out of bed”
- Viktor Frankl in 1958:
 “Deep down, in my opinion, man is dominated neither by the will to pleasure (as proposed by Sigmund Freud) nor by the will to power (Alfred Adler), but by what I call the will to meaning: his deep-seated striving and struggling for a higher and ultimate meaning to his existence.”

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Skills development: Meaning/Purpose

- What is it I already do? (many times we have forgotten how much meaning and purpose our lives currently have)
- What are my reasons to get out of bed? (can be as simple as “to take care of my garden” or can be as heroic as “provide mental health treatment to those whose lives are in the balance”)
- Ponder “what is life asking of me?”
- Identify one area of meaning or purpose you wish to focus an additional 10% on (or add a new area of meaning or purpose)

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Mindfulness-based training

- Modifying Resilience Mechanisms in At-Risk Individuals: A Controlled Study of Mindfulness Training in Marines Preparing for Deployment
- Naval Health Research Center, UCSD, Wheaton College, Georgetown, UCLA



American Journal of Psychiatry
Volume 171, Issue 8
August 2014

(Johnson et al, 2014).

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Modifying Resilience study, cont'd


- Study of using mindfulness prior to exposure to stress
 - N=281
 - 147 Mindfulness Training, 134 Training as usual
- 8 weeks of Mindfulness Based Mind Fitness Training (20 hrs of classroom plus homework): interoceptive awareness, attentional control, tolerance of present-moment experiences. Outcome: HR, RR, plasma neuropeptide Y, functional MRI, Response to Stressful Experiences Scale all better in active group.
- Stress recovery can be modified in healthy individuals

(Johnson et al, 2014).

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Summary

- Resilience is an important emerging area of study/focus
- Resilience skills can be taught and practiced




RESILIENCE

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Self-care

- Working on your own self-care needs
- Building / Increasing / Starting a support network



Please use the Q&A feature to send your questions to the moderator.

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Assessing your own needs

Please have access to materials for taking notes
I encourage you to share your answers in the chat as well

New challenge phenomenon

Adapting and learning new things takes more time and energy...

- Is meeting these increased needs leaving less attention/time for others?
- How do you react to your own increased demands or stress?

Self care means many things...

Physical: sleep, stretching, walking, physical release, healthy food, yoga, rest

Emotional: stress management, emotional maturity, forgiveness, compassion, kindness

Social: Boundaries, support system, positive social media, communication, time together, ask for help

Spiritual: Time alone, meditation, yoga, connection, nature, journaling, sacred space



Assessing your own needs

- Focus on what you can control
- Acknowledge what you are doing right
- Practice self-compassion
- We all can benefit from therapeutic principles; our clients may come in needing them more than us, but they work for us, too



Overview of a self-care checklist*

- Valuing the person of the psychotherapist
- Refocusing on the rewards
- Recognizing the hazards
- Minding the body
- Nurturing relationships
- Setting boundaries
- Restructuring cognitions
- Sustaining healthy escapes
- Creating a flourishing environment
- Undergoing personal therapy
- Cultivating spirituality and mission
- Fostering creativity and growth

*Norcross & Guy (2007)

Valuing the person of the psychotherapist

You are the one who is trained to notice when changes are needed, to reinforce the changes in others, and provide hope and care...

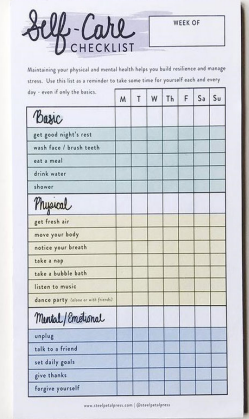
- Who does this for you?
 - Take a moment to identify and write down the names of 1-3 people who know you and your work and could give you honest feedback
- Do you sometimes wonder if you are making a difference with your clients?
 - If you have not done so recently, ask them what has been most helpful for them about therapy

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Valuing the person (cont.)

Take a moment to write a list of coping skills that are effective for you

- How many of them are you doing now compared to pre-pandemic times?
 - Are you willing to share them in the chat?
- How might you track your self-care times and effectiveness?
 - If you keep a schedule, please set a time for your next self-care activity and record how you feel after taking time for yourself



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Refocusing on the rewards

Recall what first brought you into the field

- How would you describe your interests or calling?

Keep a gratitude log

- Daily gratitude can help with toxic emotions, increase mood and feelings of fulfilment, and alter your brain (Watkins & Scheibe, 2018)
 - This takes practice; it does not require actually giving the gratitude to others, but that enhance the effects
 - Write down 1-3 things, from any area of your life, for which you are grateful

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Recognizing the hazards

Clinical work can be isolating

- Create breaks in your day and have time when you can connect with others in person, via text, or virtually
- Who could you reach out to in the middle of your work for support?

Be aware of how your work may affect your homelife

- Do you isolate?
- Continue to be a therapist at home?
- Less emotionally involved?
- Do you have someone you can trust to offer feedback?

Acknowledge that your work is often stressful and that your responsibility for other's lives is taxing work

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Minding the body

- Sleep
- Exercise
- Breaks and stretching between sessions
- Eating
- Use of substances
- Comfort and physical intimacy

Health
A complete state of physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Nurturing relationships

Who nurtures the nurturer?

- List the three most nurturing people in your life

Establishing a peer support/supervision group

- If you do not have a current peer support, who could be a part of it?
- Email, text, or ask someone in a quick message if they have interest in being part of a support group

Mentorship

- Write the name of your favorite mentor and why they were helpful
- Could you benefit from more mentorship?

Setting boundaries

Be explicit about your professional expectations and limitations

- Have clear policies on extra sessions, late appointments, telephone/email contact, payment, and other areas

Changes to your case-load and type of clients may help you reduce demands

- If you have clients who need “crisis” sessions consider working at 90% capacity to account for these needs
- Know which client presentations are most demanding for you
- Learn to say “no” to clients, referrals, and administrators

Setting boundaries (cont.)

Establish an identity apart from being a mental health professional

- Have some friendships with those outside of your field

Protect your time with family and friends

Restructuring cognitions

Identify the cognitions that trouble you

- I'm not _____ enough; I'm an imposter; I've run out of compassion

Accurately identify objective data and principles for all

- There is no such thing as a perfect case or perfect therapy
- You are responsible for what you can control; that includes:
 - Demonstrating your skill, following your values, providing the client with the care they need within ethical limits or referring them out

You are not immune to emotions or problems

- You are human; you shouldn't have everything figured out by now

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Sustaining healthy escapes

Breaks during the day and time with others socially at work

Longer breaks and disconnect from work are recommended

- Give responsibility to coverage
- Truly allow for time away
- Write down one place you can realistically escape to in the next 6 months

Ask yourself "How Do I Play?"



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Creating a flourishing environment

Conduct an environmental audit of your work environment

- Look around you right now – write down one thing that makes you smile or provides positive sentiment; what one thing would you change?
- Consider vision, sound, touch, or smell to enhance your work area

Take 1-5 minutes before each session to focus solely on your breathing; center yourself

Discuss with administrators and other leaders how to create self-care

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Undergoing personal therapy

Write out 1-3 benefits of therapy

- Write out 1-3 reasons why you don't do it
- Challenge these reasons

Consider...

- An annual or biannual satisfaction checkup with a valued mentor, trusted colleague, or former therapist
- Other personal development activities
 - Creative arts & expression



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Cultivating culture, spirituality, and mission

What defines your identity?

- Write 5-10 titles, relationships, or cultural areas that contribute to who you are
- What do you do to connect with them?

Assess your thoughts on Nature, Spirit, God, or a higher power

- How do these areas contribute to your purpose

What is your personal mission?

- How would others describe it?
- Example of the Retirement Party

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Fostering growth and creativity

Commit to continuous improvement and life-long learning

- Diversify your skills
- Be committed to studying culture and diversity

Stay connected to one or more professional organizations

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Starting a peer support network

Everybody needs a support network

- Who are colleagues you value that you can reach out to?
- Who are your trusted social supports?
- Phone or tele-meetings may not be the same, *but they are better than nothing at all*
- Identify whether it would be healthy to expand your peer support network past your current work environment
 - Confidentiality, opportunities to learn from others with diverse backgrounds

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Starting a peer support network (cont.)

What medium will you use?

- In-person, phone conference, video conference
 - Advantages and disadvantages for each

Establish a set time and schedule

- Recommend at least once a month
 - May take time to establish and gain momentum
- If you are setting this up, make sure you do what works for you!




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Summary: Three take-aways

- 1. Resilience can be built**
- 2. There are ways to engage in self-care and building resiliency**
 - Try engaging in 1-2 areas and building from there
- 3. Peer support can enhance your ability to cope**

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Time for questions and answers...



Q&A

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Where to get additional information...

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Self-care resources for psychologists

April 2014, Vol. 45, No. 4

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2014/04/self-care>



www.societyforpsychotherapy.org

AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

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VISTAS Online

ACA Knowledge Center
counseling.org/knowledge-center/vistas
703-823-9800 x281 | 800-347-6647 x281

www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/vistas/creative-counselor-self-care.pdf

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About the presenters...



Brad E. R. Smith, MD
Medical Director, Oconomowoc Campus, and Eating Disorder Recovery

Dr. Smith is board-certified in adult psychiatry and forensic psychiatry, specializing in the assessment and treatment of eating disorders and other complex or multiple mental health diagnoses. Dr. Smith has lectured to professional and community audiences around the nation on eating disorders and a wide range of mental health topics, including peer-selected presentations for the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) annual meetings.



Chad T. Wetterneck, PhD
Clinical Director, Trauma Recovery

Dr. Wetterneck is a licensed clinical psychologist, who developed the adult trauma recovery programs at the residential, partial hospital, and intensive outpatient levels of care. He has published over 75 peer-reviewed manuscripts and a book, mainly on the topics of anxiety, diversity, and intimacy. In addition to his position with Rogers, Dr. Wetterneck holds adjunct faculty appointments at Marquette University and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

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