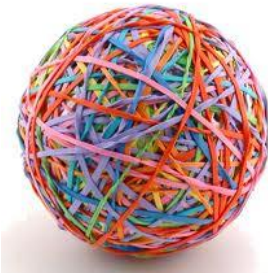


DATE: March 9, 2011

Family Group: Cycle 1 - Victoria

Topic: Resilience

OSISS: Family Peer Support Group



Resilience

We talk about “being resilient” to adversity, to change, to challenges and so on...But what does that mean?

It’s about having the positive energy, tools and strategies to cope with stress and adversity. Call it “bouncing back” to your calm and collected state after the event, and using your new found experience as a card in your back pocket for next time.

Resilience is a process, and not a trait of an individual. The more we work on developing resilience the better we will be accessing it when we need it.

We may never forget how to ride a bike, but we’re certainly not entering the Tour de France anytime soon.

Resilience is like any other skill, it requires practice, focus, support, and maybe even a bit of ingenuity!



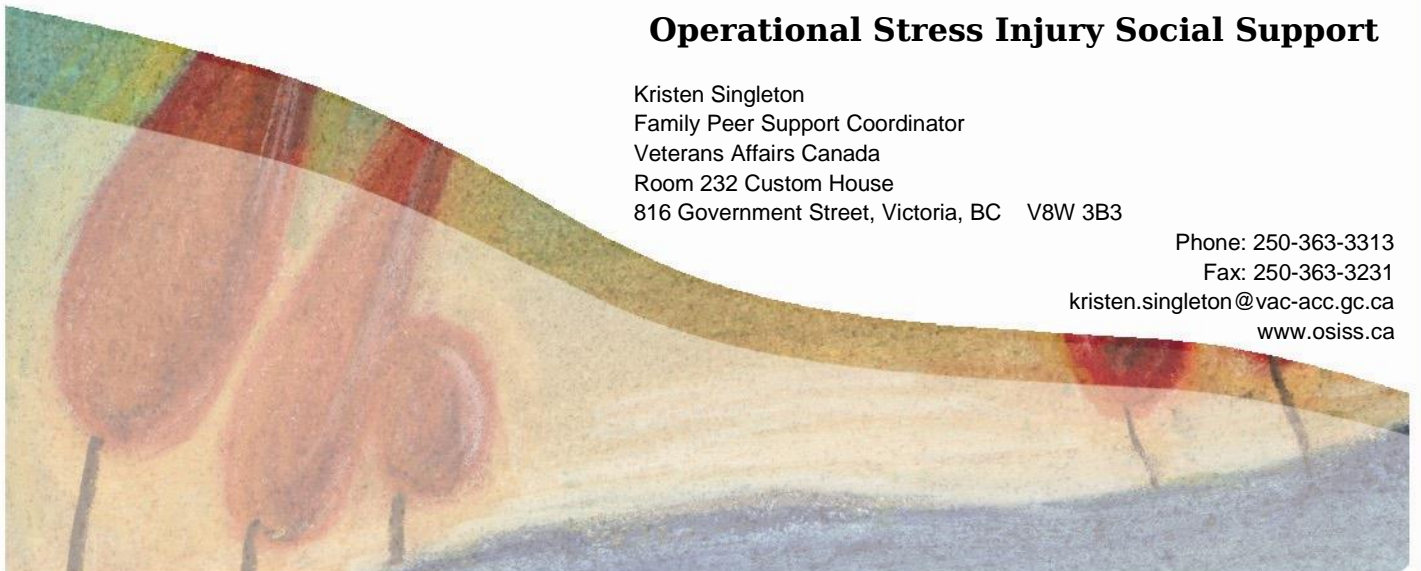
In this issue:

- What is Resilience?
- Resilience vs. Resistance
- Key factors for fostering Resilience
- Building Resilience + Resilience Resources!
- Self-Care in Your Community!

Operational Stress Injury Social Support

Kristen Singleton
Family Peer Support Coordinator
Veterans Affairs Canada
Room 232 Custom House
816 Government Street, Victoria, BC V8W 3B3

Phone: 250-363-3313
Fax: 250-363-3231
kristen.singleton@vac-acc.gc.ca
www.osiss.ca



What is Resilience?

What is Resilience?

If we were to give it an analogy, we could call it Fuel in the Wellbeing Gas Tank.

Every winding road on our journey to wellbeing has a fuel cost. Every task, every challenge, every bad day, takes energy and strategy to effectively survive, cope and thrive.

So if that energy/patience/ coping skill is in short supply. The end result can be a deficit of fuel in the Wellbeing gas tank, and without a fueling station in sight; we're at risk of hitting Burnout!

So if someone was considered to be "Resilient"
What would that look like?

They would:

- Have functional tools for problem-solving
- Have access to social support
- Be connected with others, Family / Friends
- Have a positive self identity
- Be able to recognize when they need help and be able to actively seek it
- Be able to positively identify their feelings and express them
- Have the ability to cope with stress effectively with a focus on health and wellbeing
- Participate in their self-recovery and thrive in their new self-discovery
- Have an understanding of what Spirituality means to them
- Have healthy Boundaries built from the building blocks of Self-Identity, Integrity, Respect, and Values.



***"Coming together is a beginning;
keeping together is progress; working
together is success."***

~ Henry Ford

Resilience vs. Resistance

What is Resistance?

Resistance is our very natural approach to change. All the questions come out, who/what/when/where and why! So if we're already stressed to the max and our Wellbeing fuel is low, we do certainly not want to share any of that fuel with *Change!* Change seems to be unaware of the price of fuel these days!

Seeing the opportunities in any change/crisis situation is hard. Would you believe me if I said, "It's supposed to be"? It's there to help us appreciate the possible dangers while looking for the opportunities. It's Instinct! However with positive planning, support, resources, boundaries and good sense of self; there's little to fear!

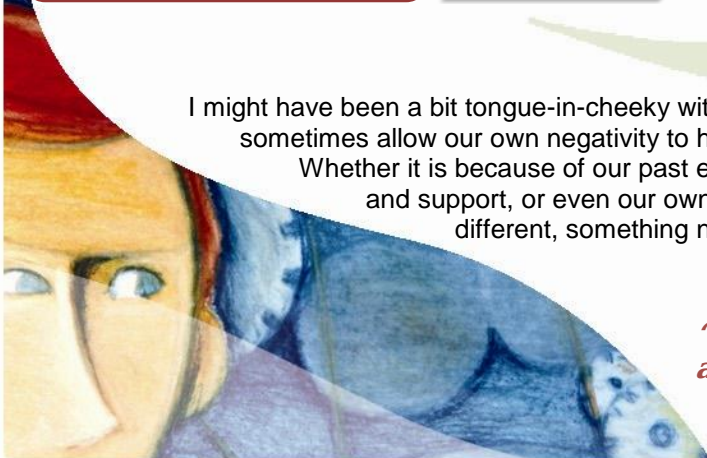
The trick is to listen to the warnings that Resistance tells us and weigh the perceived + real challenges versus the benefits of Resilience!



I might have been a bit tongue-in-cheek with the Resistance boxes 😊. However, we sometimes allow our own negativity to hold us back from taking a chance on ourselves! Whether it is because of our past experiences, current feelings, lack of resources and support, or even our own self doubt that keeps us from trying something different, something new!

"What the world really needs is more love and less paperwork."

~ Pearl Bailey



The Resilience Formula!

Resistance + Resilience = Wellbeing!

Yes! There is a Resilience Formula!



Not preparing, or not investing in yourself in the face of inevitable *Change* slowly drains the Wellbeing fuel tank. Sure you can *survive* a while with little the fuel you have, but you won't have any spare fuel to support the new changes coming your way (and they're coming) Consider it like idling! Wasting fuel and not getting anywhere.

Sacrificing some of the Wellbeing fuel to invest in resilience is a risk. What if it doesn't pay off, what if it's too expensive, and what if another change happens while you're coping with this first change?

Let me share a secret. ANY Wellbeing fuel you lend to Resilience PAYS OFF! Because the rate of return from Resilience is always bigger than the initial investment, and only grows as you exercise your right to learn your own personal ratio of give and take to that Wellbeing tank!

Progress starts with ONE Step and isn't one step forward better than none?

Lending some of that Wellbeing fuel to Resilience has a very high return of investment! AND it has upgrades! The more you work towards finding the right balance between Resilience and Resistance the more you can access from that Wellbeing Tank! *HIGH OCTANE!*

It takes practice to find your right balance. You can give too much and find yourself over-reaching and making yourself too vulnerable to the next incoming *change*. You can give not enough and become frustrated with a poor result.

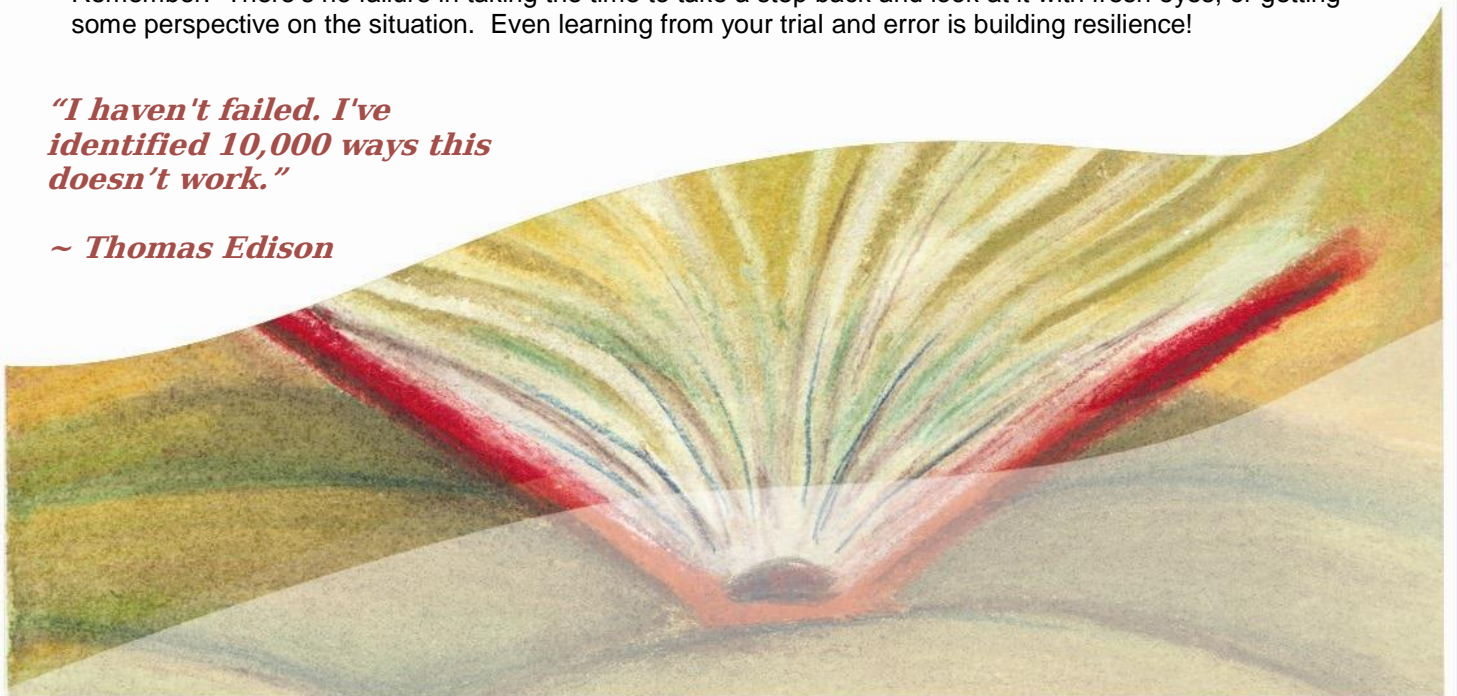
So what's the best ratio for effective Resilience?

Start Small! Give yourself a reasonable goal to start with. Check in with yourself, ask those questions about how you feel, and how you're doing. Listen to the Resistance and ask yourself if it's perceived or real and take a minute to reframe your goal.

Remember! There's no failure in taking the time to take a step back and look at it with fresh eyes, or getting some perspective on the situation. Even learning from your trial and error is building resilience!

"I haven't failed. I've identified 10,000 ways this doesn't work."

~ Thomas Edison



Key Factors in Fostering Resilience

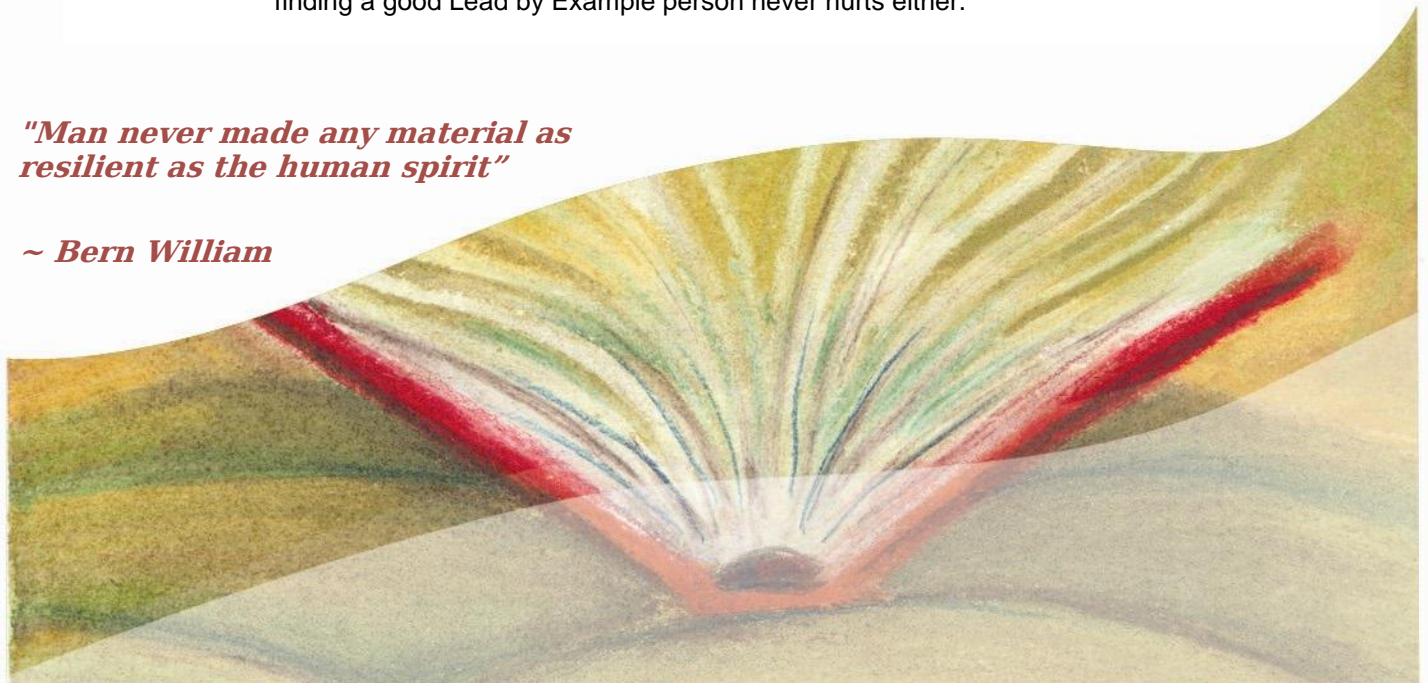
We want to be resilient! It's in our very nature to desire to be well, high-functioning, and at general peace with ourselves, So what gives? Why doesn't it just come naturally? Resilience needs you just as much as you need it. It needs to be fostered and grown in a supportive environment.

What elements help in fostering resilience?

- **Access to material resources:** (check out the resilience resource page below for ideas)
 - Programs in your community
 - Resilience Toolkits
 - Mood and Motivational Training
- **Access to supportive relationships:**
 - Family and Loved ones who encourage your goal of building resilience
 - Peers in your community who are also geared towards feeding the resiliency fuel tank!
- **Knowing who you are / A positive sense self-awareness:**
 - Having a good idea of your goals, beliefs and values
 - Having a good relationship with your self-identity
 - Knowing how you are feeling, Physically / Mentally / Emotionally / Spiritually
- **Experience / Environment:**
 - Remember your joys! What hobby, activity, or focus filled you with satisfaction and gave you an overall sensation of wellbeing?
 - Having a "Go-To" safe and supportive place to work on your resilience.
- **Cultural and Spiritual Connections:**
 - Getting in touch with your roots, branches, leaves or heck the whole Tree that is YOU.
 - Reaching out to your community to get ideas and supports in what resilience looks like and finding a good Lead by Example person never hurts either.

"Man never made any material as resilient as the human spirit"

~ Bern William



Building Resilience!

+ Beware the Distortions!

Building Resilience can be done in any way that makes you feel better about yourself, others and your current situations; while observing healthy boundaries and preserving your personal values.

It doesn't need to take a lot of time to begin adding a resilience activity into your daily routine.

Even taking 10 minutes of your day to focus positively on yourself will help you in exercising that resilience muscle! Here are some things I do for resilience!

Just for examples of how small an activity can be and still how much you can get out of it!

- Take a 10 minute walk around the block
- Listen to some "Good Energy" music!
- Stretch for 5 mins after being at my desk awhile
- Day Dream / Meditate for a moment
- Say "Hello" to someone I rarely talk to
- Dance my way to the Bustop!
- Laugh!

Knowing that you're going to be faced with the natural resistance to all things that build resilience, will give you the edge to help overcome the **Distortions**; If you find yourself thinking any of the following about your resilience plan, consider it "Check-in Time!"

- **Absolutes! / All or nothing thinking:** Watch out for Always and Never type vocabulary. We're trying to establish that TRY has as much weight as "Do, or Do not!" Take that Yoda!
- **Overgeneralizing:** Understand that not every experience is going to be the same. Both positive and negative. Give yourself and others a chance to support your resilience building!
- **Mental filter:** Try not to gloss over your positive experiences. Positivity works as a better motivator for healthy change than having negativity be your guide!
- **Disqualifying the positive:** "Yeah...but" is a distortion's best friend. Remember we're building resilience here, exercise your right to say "YEAH, AND!" instead.
- **Jumping to conclusions:** Logic, experience, and expectations have a good handle on keeping "fictional conclusions" at bay. If you find yourself jumping ahead, reframe and remember; that we're experiencing a journey, not writing a review! Our Story isn't nearly close to being done yet!
- **Emotional reasoning:** If you feel angry, sad, upset, frustrated because something's not working the way you had hoped with your resiliency plan Take a break, and scale it back a bit. It just needs a bit of readjustment. Every plan has room for re-evaluation.
- **Unreasonable expectations:** Giving yourself a goal that has achievable results will go miles farther than setting a goal that requires you to be perfect from day one.
- **Labeling:** This is the "No Name Calling" rule. Don't bully yourself!
- **Personalizing:** Life is full of challenges, some small...some hard enough to make even just "getting-by" feel like a marathon. It's rough stuff! Knowing that life "isn't out to get you", that you didn't "ask for it" and most certainly it isn't "all your fault" is part of giving yourself a chance to heal, refocus and take that first step in your positive move for joining Change!



Resilience Resources!

Examples of Free resources in your local community

None of the following resources are specifically supported or endorsed by OSISS.

The Following are Resources that are dedicated to assisting you in building your resiliency.

Bounce Back BC!

The Bounce Back: Reclaim Your Health program offers community-based mental health support. Through psychoeducation and guided self-help, Bounce Back provides two interventions to help people improve their mood and quality of life.

The project is led by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), BC Division and funded by the BC Ministry of Health Services. Bounce Back uses CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) based interventions to help patients improve their mood and overall resilience leading to better health outcomes and enhanced quality of life.

How to register: Speak with your Family Physician for a referral

Cost: Free!

Location: 17 Locations across BC

Contact: Bounce Back Community Coach toll-free phone number: 1-866-639-0522

More info: <http://www.cmha.bc.ca/services/bounceback>

Here to Help BC!

HeretoHelp is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information. Working together to help individuals and families better manage mental health and substance use problems. Here to help. Providing access to reliable Self-Screening tests, Interactive Toolkits, and Discussion Forums

Cost: Free!

More info: <http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/>

CBT ONLINE – MoodGym!

MoodGYM is an Interactive CBT and IT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Interpersonal Therapy) Training site program designed to help you identify whether you are having problems with emotions like anxiety and depression, and assist with developing the skills that can help you cope with these emotions. Brought to us by our friendly Mental Health Educators in Australia!

Cost: Free!

More Info: <http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au/welcome>

Reaching In, Reaching Out! (Resilience Resources for Parents)

Canada's Resilience Programs for helping parents with the skills and tools to help develop resilient kids! Filled with resources, exercises and programs!

Cost: Free! (materials 7.00\$)

More Info: <http://www.reachinginreachingout.com/index.htm>

“The bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you refuse to take the turn.”

~ Unknown



Self Care in Your Community

*Examples of Free or low cost events in your local community to explore self-care opportunities
None of the following events are specifically supported or endorsed by OSISS.*

For the Love of Writing, For the Love of Self

Wednesday, March 23rd, 2011
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Writing has the power to stop time, cut through the extraneous and take us home to our heart. These evenings will be devoted to exploring the relationship with writing and how it can bring a focus to the centre of our being – that special place inside of us where wisdom, beauty, love and truth reside.

June Swadron has been facilitating creative writing workshops for twenty years. www.juneswadron.com

Everyone is Welcome!

Date: Wednesdays, March 23

Time: 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Church of Truth, Community of Conscious Living, 111 Superior Street

Cost: Free or by donation

Information: Linda at (250) 380-6383 or <http://cotvictoria.ca>

West Coast Women's Empowerment Presents: An Experiential Seminar

Join Chloe Oliver & Treena Norrish, Registered Counsellors & Founders of the West Coast Women's Empowerment Network, for a 90 minute introductory exploration of the 4 Pillars of Empowered Relationship: Safety – Trust - Authenticity - Integrity/Respect

Date: Saturday, March 26th

Time: 2pm sharp

Location: Base Lounge, 1303 Broad St., Victoria

Cost: FREE admission with advance registration by emailing treena@livingradiancance.ca
or \$15 at the door

Information: For more info contact Chloe at 250 588-6084 or Treena at 250 891-1817

MAMADY KEITA Drum Camp

Tuesday, March 29th, 2011 (The Drum Camp runs from March 29th to April 3rd.)

Mamady Keita is considered the #1 djembe teacher on the planet - his method is known as the fastest way to improve your playing in just a few days of training. Experience Mamady's super-human energy and playing ability!

•Beginning drummers are welcome in the "Djembe Rhythms" workshops.

Date: Tuesday, March 29th, 2011

Time: Check Website – Times Change for different classes ☺

Location: Fairfield United Church - 1303 Fairfield St., Victoria

Cost: 15\$ with pre-registration early birds before March 21st (visit the website for more info)

Information: Bessie Nuk 250-384-3786 or mamadydrumcamp@gmail.com

Website: www.mamadydrumcamp.com

Self Care in Your Community...*cont.*

Free or low cost events in your local community to explore self-care opportunities

Links to Self Care Community Calendars

Find what's new to discover on Vancouver Island! Take a look and find a great event that speaks to you and your focus on Self Care!

<http://www.eventsbc.com/> Community events – select your location to see what's happening in your area

<http://www.vancouverisland.com/calendar/> Broken down by island community

<http://www.harbourliving.ca/> Calendars for music, entertainment and local events

Take good care of yourselves!

~ Kristen



“We are not the same persons this year as last; nor are those we love. It is a happy chance if we, changing, continue to love a changed person.”

~ William Somerset Maugham