Resilience

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What it is and where to find it!

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Definitions of Resilience

- The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.

- the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity.

- Psychological resilience is defined as the role of mental processes and behaviour in promoting personal assets and protecting an individual from the potential negative effect of stressors.

Resilience & Stress

- Stressors arise from the environment an individual operates in, are mediated by the processes of perception, appraisal and coping, and, as a consequence, result in positive or negative responses, feeling states, and outcomes.

- This ongoing process is moderated by various personal and situational characteristics, including positive affect (Schaubroeck, Ganster, & Fox, 1992), self-esteem (Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1995) and self-efficacy (Schaubroeck & Merritt, 1997)

Resilience is not constant

- While an individual may react positively to adversity at one point in his or her life, it does not mean that the person will react in the same way to stressors at other points in his or her life (cf. Davydov et al., 2010; Rutter, 2006; Vanderbilt-Adriance & Shaw, 2008).

- If circumstances change, resilience alters" (Rutter 1981p. 317).

Risk and Resilience in HAS

- Over two decades suggests that there is one superordinate or **overarching construct that is implicated in conferring vulnerability in HAS contexts, and that is high and ongoing pressures to achieve.**

- These pressures come from multiple sources: parents, schools, peers, and values in the larger subculture (Luthar et al 2019)

Risk

- Two studies, one in the US and one in Norway, have shown that it is not family level of affluence, or even neighbourhood affluence that connotes elevated risks to adolescents (Coley, Sims, Dearing, & Spielvoge, 2017; Lund, Dearing & Zachrisson, 2017).

Risk NOT related to parental Affluence

- Risks are associated with school level affluence, it would appear that having a high proportion of schoolmates from high income families that connotes high risk, rather than one's own family income (Luthar 2019)

Risks : I Gen

- Jean Twenge
- https://youtu.be/UA8kZZS_bzc
- Containment

Risks: Envy

- The negative ramifications of being highly envious. Envy of others, especially with regard to physical appearance, is clearly linked with several indices of maladjustment

- Girls in HAS Vs Inner city school felt significantly more envious of peers whom they felt surpassed them across the realms of popularity, attractiveness, academics and sports (Lyman & Luthar, 2014)

Risks: Perfectionism

- Girls far too focused on achieving and being "exceptional".

- Prone to presenting an exterior image of self-perfection, particularly on social media.

- Tend to shy away from taking chances on investment in relationships that are critical for bringing them comfort, support, and affirmation of their true selves.

- Result is an underlying sense of anxiety, self-criticism, and conviction that no matter how hard they try, they will never be successful enough, attractive enough, popular enough, or admired enough.

Risks: Criticism

- Resilience research has recurrently shown (Luthar, Crossman, & Small, 2015), that 'bad is stronger than good', wherein harsh, disparaging words can have much stronger effects than words of affection or praise (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Findenauer, & Vohs, 2001).

- Research has shown that as compared to feelings of trust or good communication with parents, perceived parent criticism shows stronger links with diverse adjustment indices (Luthar & Barkin, 2012).

Risk: Pressure

- Chronic exposure to pressure has many untoward psychological complications and consequences.

- Limits satisfaction with achievements (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

- Tendency to be internally controlled that provides the fuel for the urgent and relentless striving for self-oriented perfectionism.

- This pressure can become overwhelming when co-existing with frequent daily stressors, setting the stage for elevated anxiety, depression, acting out behaviors, as well as substance abuse to provide relief from distress.

'They just need to get out more'

- We tend to think the kids aren't active enough but as they apply these same underlying traits to their sports they either get more stressed or quit

Achievement

- Findings showed that the highest levels of adjustment problems among children were those who felt that both their parents were high on achievement emphasis.

Parent's Issues

- Staying present
- Anxiety levels
- Work stress
- Relationship issues
- Unaware of our own stress signatures
- Beliefs about doing rather than being

Solutions

1. Emotional engagement: Even after controlling for parental relationships

2. Exposure to caring adults

3. Students who have a clear sense of <u>mattering</u> is an essential element of a psychologically healthy school

Parental Influence

- The lowest levels of adjustment problems, or the healthiest profiles, were seen among those who reported that both parents had middle to low emphasis on achievements relative to:

- *integrity, kindness, and decency.*

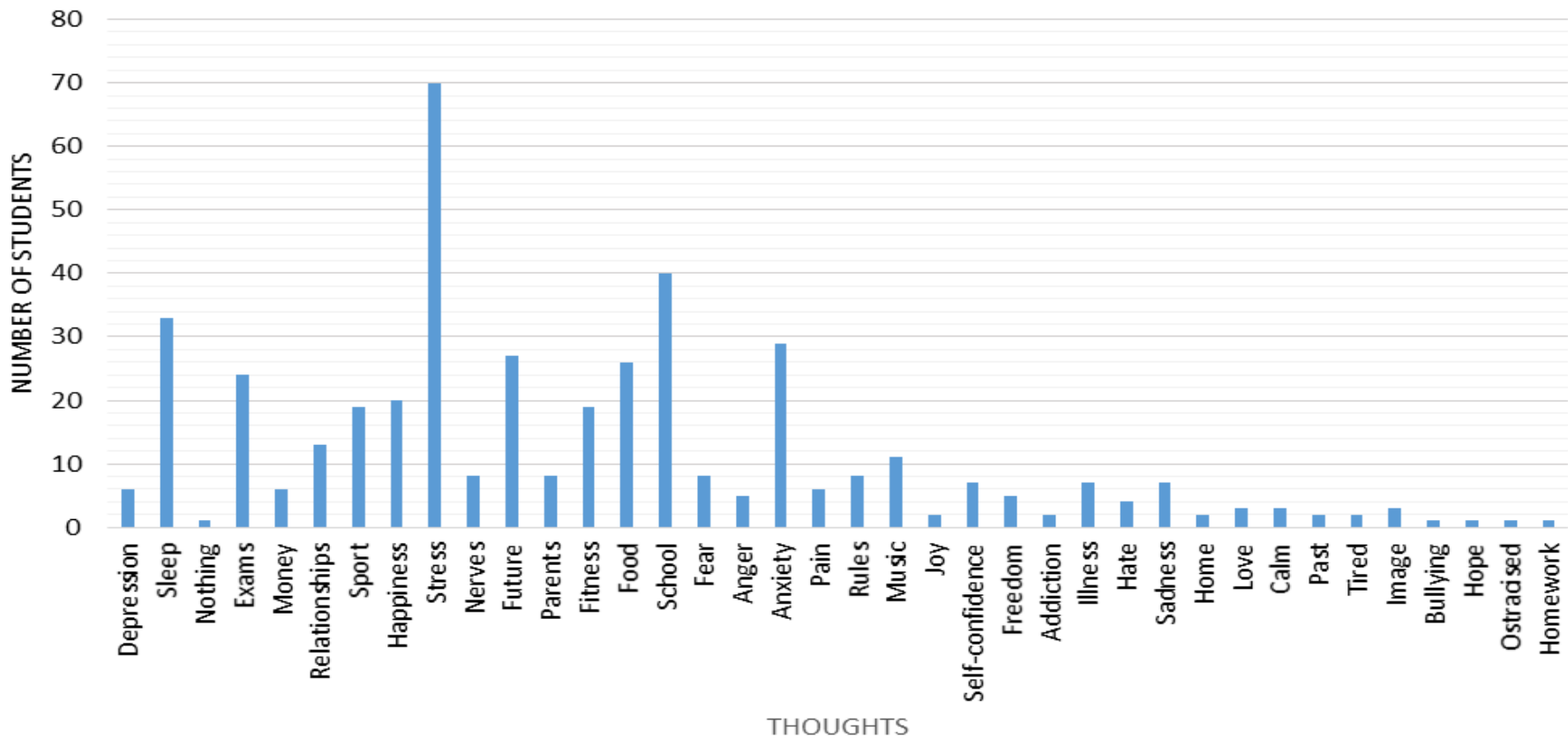# Ideal Mindful & Resilient School Community
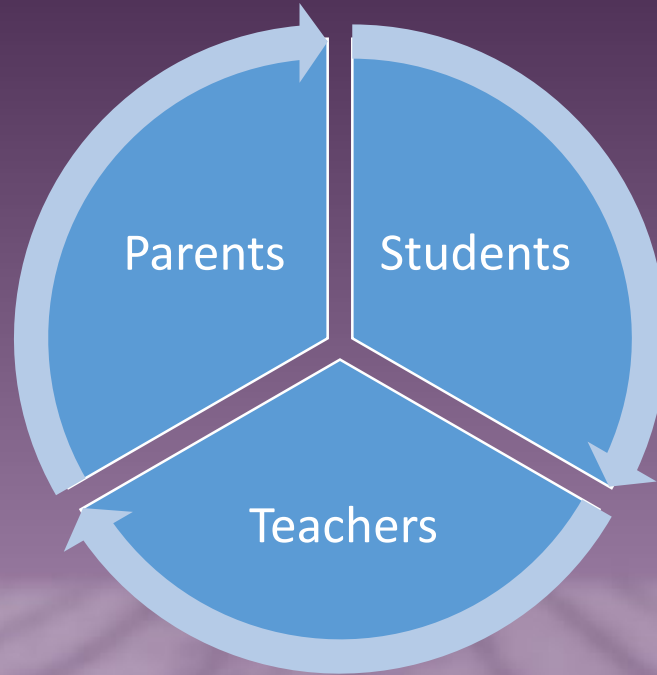
SEL

Evidence for SEL

- Better academic performance
- Improved attitude and behavior
- Fewer negative behaviors
- Reduced emotional distress

- Durlack, Weissberg et al 2011

Vertical Development

What is Mindfulness?

- 'Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgementally'

Jon Kabat Zinn

- ' Paying attention to our actual experience, not the story (narration) that comes from that experience, or the emotions generated by the story'

Mindfulness benefits for students

- Focussed attention
- Increased levels of resilience
- Decrease in anxiety/depression levels
- Stress reduction
- Sleep
- Awareness
- Decrease in SHC's

Mental & Physical Resilience

- Repeated empirical studies show the mind drives energy and information flow through the brain.

- This neural activation with mental effort and intentional focus of attention in particular ways creates different pattern of brain firing than would happen naturally.

- This builds resilience activates genes, changes enzyme levels that repair ends of chromosomes and alter epigenetics. (Siegel)

Direction

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- While considering positive, non-academic aspects of students' development that warrant attention, arguably, the research points us to focus on constructs such as altruism, prosocial behaviour, integrity, and compassion (Luthar, 2017):