

# BounceBack:

Building in Resilience & Protective Factors

*The most beautiful people  
are those who have known  
defeat, known suffering,  
known struggle, known loss,  
and have found their way  
out of the depths.*

*These persons have an  
appreciation, a sensitivity,  
and an understanding of life  
that fills them with  
compassion, gentleness, and  
a deep loving concern*

*Beautiful people do not just  
happen.*

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

*One of the most calming and  
powerful actions you can do  
to intervene in a stormy  
world is to stand up and  
show your soul.  
Struggling souls catch light  
from other souls  
who are fully lit and  
willing to show it.*

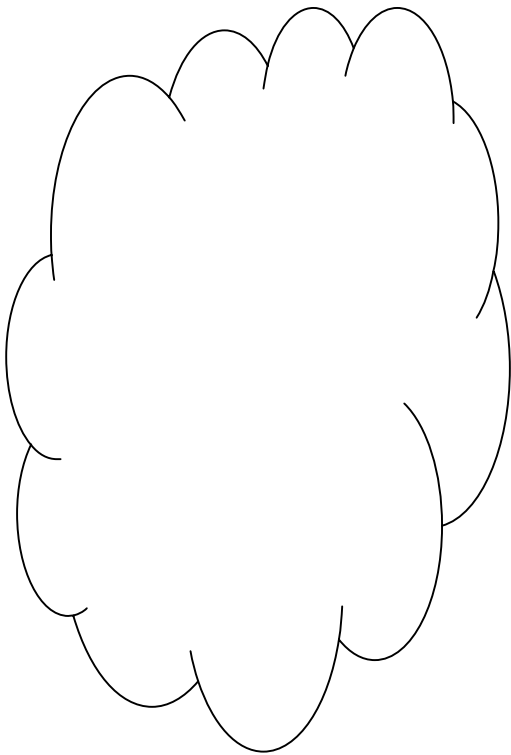
Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Jane Green  
PivotPoint Coaching & Training

My Gem...

# Our Agenda

Welcome  
Why are you here?  
Overview  
What is Resilience?  
What are Protective Factors?  
Making it Real: The Resiliency T-Chart  
Personal Protective Factors  
What's in Your Wallet?  
Emmy and Ruth's Research  
Environmental Protective Factors  
Resiliency Blizzard  
A.P.P.T.  
Questions to Ask  
Resources to Bring Home  
Tools You Can Use  
Closing Round



# Unlocking the Power of **RESILIENCY...**

**“...can be defined as the capacity to spring back, rebound, successfully adapt in the face of adversity, and develop social and academic competence despite exposure to severe stress... Or simply the stress of today’s world.”**

From Resiliency In Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators  
by Nan Henderson and Mike Milstein

**“...is about bouncing back from problems and stuff with more power and more smarts.”**

“Sean” (15-year old high school student)

**“...is an innate self-righting and transcending ability within all children, youth, adults, organizations, and communities.”**

From “The Philosophy of Resiliency In Action, Inc.  
Nan Henderson, Bonnie Benard, Nancy Sharp-Light

## ***What are “protective factors” ?***

“Many adolescents who seem to be at high risk nevertheless do not succumb to risk behavior, or get less involved in it than their peers or seem to abandon it more rapidly than others do.

“A likely answer [as to why this is true] is that there was indeed exposure to and experience of risk, *but that it was countered by exposure to and experience of protection.*”

“Protective factors...moderate, buffer, insulate against and thereby do mitigate the impact of risk on adolescent behavior development.”

**RICHARD JESSOR, PH.D.,  
INSTITUTE OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO**

# ***The Resiliency Chart***

Name of someone (aged 5 – 20) that you are concerned about \_\_\_\_\_

***What helps this person to stay strong?***

***How is this person vulnerable?***

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# PERSONAL RESILIENCY BUILDERS

## Individual Protective Factors that Facilitate Resiliency

### WHAT'S IN MY WALLET???

Pair up with a person you do not know, and sit face to face. Show your partner one thing you have in your purse or wallet that is connected in some way to your personal resiliency, and explain how it connects.

	<b>Relationships</b>	<i>Sociability/ability to be a friend/ability to form positive relationships</i>
	<b>Service</b>	<i>Gives of self in service to others or a cause</i>
	<b>Life Skills</b>	<i>Uses life skills, including good decision-making, assertiveness, and impulse control</i>
	<b>Humor</b>	<i>Has a good sense of humor</i>
	<b>Inner Direction</b>	<i>Bases choices/decisions on internal evaluation (internal locus of control)</i>
	<b>Perceptiveness</b>	<i>Insightful understanding of people and situations</i>
	<b>Independence</b>	<i>"Adaptive" distancing from unhealthy people and situations/autonomy</i>
	<b>Positive View of Personal Future</b>	<i>Expects a positive future (Optimism)</i>
	<b>Flexibility</b>	<i>Can adjust to change; can bend as necessary to positively cope with situations</i>
	<b>Love of Learning</b>	<i>Capacity for &amp; connection to learning</i>
	<b>Self-motivation</b>	<i>Internal initiative, inner motivation</i>
	<b>Competence</b>	<i>Is "good at something"/personal</i>
	<b>Self-Worth</b>	<i>Feelings of self-worth and self-confidence</i>
	<b>Spirituality</b>	<i>Personal faith in something greater</i>
	<b>Perseverance</b>	<i>Keeps on despite difficulty; doesn't give up</i>
	<b>Creativity</b>	<i>Expresses self through artistic endeavor, or in other creative ways</i>

## THE RESEARCH OF EMMY WERNER AND RUTH SMITH

1. They began studying all the children born on Kauai in 1955 - 700 babies.
2. 1/3 of these children were considered "high risk" due to multiple risk factors at birth.
3. Of these "high risk" children, 70 seemed "invulnerable" to the risk and developed no problems.

Two main reasons for this "invulnerability" were identified:

They were born with outgoing, social dispositions.

They therefore were able to recruit several sources of support for themselves.

4. The other 2/3 of the "high risk" group did develop problems, but the majority were doing well by their mid-30s by their own and others' reports, psychological tests, and community records (5/6 of the original "high risk" group, 166 of 200, had therefore "bounced back").

How did this process of "bouncing back" happen?

They told researchers that **someone along the way reached out with the messages: "You matter" and "It doesn't matter what you have done in the past"**. Sources of this support, other than family members, were most often neighbors, teachers, and informal youth workers.

The person was more important than the program.

The programs that assisted most provided support similar to an **extended family**.

The group that bounced back from having problems also had some kind of competence.

*"Our findings and those by other American and European investigators with a life-span perspective suggest that these buffers [protective factors] make a more profound impact on the life course of children who grow up under adverse conditions than do specific risk factors or stressful life events.*

*They appear to transcend ethnic, social class, geographical, and historical boundaries.*

*Most of all, they offer us a more optimistic outlook than the perspective that can be gleaned from the literature on the negative consequences of perinatal trauma, caregiving deficits, and chronic poverty.*

*They provide us with a corrective lens, an awareness of the self-righting tendencies that move children toward normal adult development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances. "*

Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith,  
*Overcoming the Odds:  
High Risk Children from Birth to Adulthood, 1992*

# 12 ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCY BUILDERS

*Protective Factors in Families, Schools, Communities, and  
Peer Groups that Foster Resiliency*

1. Promotes close bonds
2. Values and encourages education
3. Uses high warmth/low criticism style of interaction
4. Sets and enforces clear boundaries (rules, norms, and laws)
5. Encourages supportive relationships with many caring others
6. Promotes sharing of responsibilities, service to others, "required helpfulness"
7. Provides access to resources for meeting basic needs of housing, employment, health care, etc.
8. Expresses high, and realistic, expectations for success
9. Encourages goal-setting and mastery
10. Encourages pro-social development of values (such as altruism) and life skills (such as cooperation)
11. Provides leadership, decision-making, and other opportunities for meaningful participation
12. Appreciates, develops, and offers opportunity to share the unique talents/gifts of each individual

*(Richardson et al., 1990, Benard, 1991, Werner & Smith, 1992, Hawkins et al., 1992, Wolin & Wolin, 1993) Adapted from the book, Resiliency in Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators by Nan Henderson and Mike Milstein, published by Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA (2003, revised ed.).*

## Resiliency BLIZZARD

1. Each of us will write down on a scrap of paper a sentence that conveys a message we would like to receive more often that would help us to feel more resilient.
2. When we have finished, it's "Blizzard Time"
3. We'll throw our papers in the middle of the group.
4. Then each of us will pick a paper (not your own) and read it aloud to the group (without comment).
5. Then we'll talk about any common themes we heard.

## Seven Characteristics of a Resiliency-Building Organization or Program

1. Communicates a Resiliency Philosophy/Attitude
2. Includes All Steps of "The Resiliency Wheel"
3. Uses Forms/Paperwork/Assessments that Reflect Resiliency
4. Evaluation of Process/Intervention is the Norm
5. Attends to Personal (or staff) Resiliency
6. Reaches out for Partners
7. Challenges Cultural/Media Stereotypes Promotes the message: "Every One Can Be Resilient"

# A.P.P.T.

## The Four Most Important Steps To Fostering Resiliency

<b>1. ATTITUDE</b>	<b>The Resiliency Attitude</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “You matter to me...”</li> <li>▪ “I am not going to judge you based on your past...”</li> <li>▪ “I believe in your capacity to overcome...”</li> <li>▪ “What is right with you is more powerful than anything that is wrong with you....”</li> </ul>
<b>2. PERSPECTIVE OF STRENGTHS</b>	<b>Work from a Strengths Perspective</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use “The Resiliency Chart” T-chart, formally and informally Ask: What is on the strengths side of the chart that can be used to intervene with problems</li> <li>▪ Teach people about their strengths: name them, share how they are being used, suggest how they can be used in the future</li> </ul>
<b>3. Create a PROTECTIVE WEB</b>	<b>Use the Resiliency Wheel</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (as a web around each person, family, organization, community—or yourself)</li> </ul>
<b>4. TAKE TIME</b>	<b>Persist: Don’t Give Up!</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Mind these three: TTT; hear their chime: Things Take Time!” –Emmy Werner, Ph.D.</li> </ul>

### You Can Best Help Yourself or Someone Else Be More Resilient by...

1. Communicating the Resiliency Attitude: “What is right with you is more powerful than anything wrong...”
2. Focusing on the person’s strengths more than problems and weaknesses, and asking “How can these strengths be used to overcome problems?” One way to do this is to help yourself or another identify and best utilize top personal resiliency builders listed in The Resiliency Quiz Part Two.
3. Providing for yourself or another the conditions listed in The Resiliency Quiz Part One.
4. Having patience...successfully bouncing back from a significant trauma or crisis takes time.

*Nan Henderson, M.S.W. is an international speaker, writer, and president of Resiliency In Action, a publishing and training company in Southern CA., which she cofounded in 1996 to “redirect the national obsession with risks and weakness to embracing the reality and power of human resiliency.” She has authored/edited several articles and four books on fostering resiliency, including Resiliency In Action: Practical Ideas for Overcoming Risks and Building Strengths in Youth, Families, and Communities and Resiliency In Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators. ([nhenderson@resiliency.com](mailto:nhenderson@resiliency.com); 800-440-5171; [www.resiliency.com](http://www.resiliency.com).)*



## Interventions that foster resiliency: Suggestions from the work of Werner and Smith

1. Engage youth in acts of required helpfulness.
2. Provide bonding similar to an extended family.
3. Be an optimistic, caring leader/counselor/facilitator.
4. Encourage participation.
5. Provide more intensive intervention for those most "vulnerable."
6. Focus on assessing protective factors, competencies, strengths, and sources of environmental support in addition to assessing weaknesses, deficits, and risk.
7. Assure that caring connections continues once a young person leaves your classroom/office/support group/program.
8. Avoid referring to children as "high risk"; always use the terminology "from high risk environments" if identification is needed.

*Today, people come to me bearing their diagnosis: I am a child of a dysfunctional family. I am an alcoholic...an addict. These names are worn like shields, psychological coats of arms... I am certain these names reveal little of our true nature. Beneath the stories, beneath the diagnoses, these are all children of spirit, beings fully equipped with inner voices of strength and wisdom... But their diagnosis prevents them from believing in their own wisdom. I consider it my responsibility to help these individuals uncover the resilient spirit that remains whole and true even now, beneath all these familiar diagnoses."*

Wayne Muller  
How, Then, Shall We Live (1966)

# Questions for Teaching Youth about their Resiliency

by Nan Henderson, M.S.W.

*These questions can be used in a large group discussion. However, depending on the characteristics of the group, often it is more effective for students to pair up or work in groups to answer each question and then come back for a larger group discussion.*

1. If resiliency is defined as “the ability to bounce back from, and successfully overcome risks and adversity,” why are you a “resilient” person?
2. What are some of the struggles, challenges, difficulties you have faced in the past (or currently face). Go into as much detail as you feel like sharing.
3. Share how you overcame these difficulties...
  - A. What did you DO?
  - B. What BELIEFS about yourself and others guided you?
  - C. WHO helped you?
  - D. HOW did they help?
  - E. WHAT else helped you?
4. How can you use these same things now or in the future in dealing with problems (or the current problem)?  
What can you do that worked in a similar situation in the past?  
Who can you go to for support or more information?  
Is there a way to maintain a greater access to these individuals?  
Is there a place or another kind of resource that would help? How can you access it?
5. Can you connect the personal ways you have overcome problems to the list of resiliency builders that research studies have shown help people overcome problems? (Share both individual and environmental lists of resiliency builders.)  
Can you think of other times/ways you have used your resiliency builders?
6. What would you tell another kid who was going through your situation?  
or  
What advice do you have for other kids going through some of the problems and difficulties you have gone through?
7. What advice do you have for adult trying to help kids to be “resilient”?
8. How well are adults providing the six environmental resiliency builders (refer to part one of The Resiliency Quiz) or to The Resiliency Wheel? What are adults doing well? What do adults need to do better?
9. What barriers do you think stand in the way of kids being more resilient (in your school, or family, or church, or community)? What ideas do you have about how to change these barriers?

*"Those of you who are teachers or guidance counselors... many of the resilient found school to be the only systematically safe place they encountered. While they hardly went to choice schools (since many were poor), the contrast with home was extreme. "That my subjects vividly recalled gifted teachers many decades later indicates that educators can...be profoundly important. "*

Gina  
O'Connell Higgins,

*"To plumb resilient potential effectively, you need to explain and amplify the past and present strengths of the traumatized, clarifying the adaptive strategies that keep them farther from the bottom rather than focusing on why they are not closer to the top. "*

Gina O'Connell Higgins,  
Resilient Adults

## **ADVICE FOR TEACHERS AND HELPING PROFESSIONALS**

*from the book Resilient Adults by Gina O'Connell Higgins*

**"Facilitating resilience is more a matter of orientation than explicit intervention."**

- Hold a broad developmental view of growth and change, realizing that there are always untapped degrees of freedom to mobilize.
- Focus on how human beings self-right, not on their floundering.
- Catalogue their capabilities with the exquisite concern we normally reserve for their weaknesses, i.e., how have their strengths emerged over time and why?
- Why is this person not doing worse?
- Let them know about their own strong overcoming--any scrap of it--and let them hear it often.
- Do not overlook the phoenix for the ashes.

**Help young people create an inventory of the characteristics and dynamics of their caregivers that they have emulated.**

- With children/adolescents: encourage and help them to secure their continued access to these surrogate figures.
- Surrogacy is the polestar of resilient overcoming; help young people understand how the surrogate helps shape their sense of possibility and how relationships

continue to be a source of faith-renewing sustenance.

**Establish genuine self-regard for students and communicate this regard clearly.**

**For teachers/school personnel:** *"Many of the resilient found school to be the only systematically safe place they encountered."*

*"Subjects in this study... strongly recommended that those of you who touch the life of a child constructively, even briefly, should never underestimate your possible corrective impact on that child...the surrogates of the resilient were generally available for only small amounts of clock time, and some faded after a limited developmental exposure. **Yet their positive impact persisted for life.** "*

Gina O'Connell Higgins, Resilient Adults

# The Resiliency Quiz

by Nan Henderson, M.S.W. (reprinted from [www.resiliency.com](http://www.resiliency.com)) ©, 2004, 2007 Resiliency In Action, Inc. (Copies can be made for educational purposes only) **I developed this quiz for anyone—teens, adults, elders—to assess and strengthen the resiliency building conditions in their lives. Use it for yourself or use it as a tool to help others you care about build their resiliency.**

## PART ONE:

**Do you have the conditions in your life that research shows help people to be resilient?**

People bounce back from tragedy, trauma, risks, and stress by having the following “protective” conditions in their lives. The more times you answer yes (below), the greater the chances you can bounce back from your life’s problems “with more power and more smarts.” And doing that is a sure way to increase self-esteem.

Answer yes or no to the following. Celebrate your “yes” answers and decide how you can change your “no” answers to “yes.” (You can also answer “sometimes” if that is more accurate than just “yes” or “no”.)

		Yes	No	S
<b>1. Caring and Support</b>	<i>I have several people in my life who give me unconditional love, nonjudgmental listening, and who I know are “there for me.”</i>			
	<i>I am involved in a school, work, faith, or other group where I feel cared for and valued.</i>			
	<i>I treat myself with kindness and compassion, and take time to nurture myself (including eating right and getting enough sleep and exercise).</i>			
<b>2. High Expectations for Success</b>	<i>I have several people in my life who let me know they believe in my ability to succeed.</i>			
	<i>I get the message “You can succeed,” at my work or school.</i>			
	<i>I believe in myself most of the time, and generally give myself positive messages about my ability to accomplish my goals—even when I encounter difficulties.</i>			
<b>3. Opportunities for Meaningful Participation</b>	<i>My voice (opinion) and choice (what I want) is heard and valued in my close personal relationships.</i>			
	<i>My opinions and ideas are listened to and respected at my work or school.</i>			
	<i>I volunteer to help others or a cause in my community, faith organization, or school.</i>			
<b>4. Positive Bonds</b>	<i>I am involved in one or more positive after-work or after-school hobbies or activities.</i>			
	<i>I participate in one or more groups (such as a club, faith community, or sports team) outside of work or school</i>			
	<i>I feel “close to” most people at my work or school.</i>			
<b>5. Clear and Consistent Boundaries</b>	<i>Most of my relationships with friends and family members have clear, healthy boundaries (which include mutual respect, personal autonomy, and each person in the relationship both giving and receiving).</i>			
	<i>I experience clear, consistent expectations and rules at my work or in my school.</i>			
	<i>I set and maintain healthy boundaries for myself by standing up for myself, not letting others take advantage of me, and saying “no” when I need to.</i>			
<b>6. Life Skills</b>	<i>I have (and use) good listening, honest communication, and healthy conflict resolution skills.</i>			
	<i>I have the training and skills I need to do my job well, or all the skills I need to do well in school.</i>			
	<i>I know how to set a goal and take the steps to achieve it.</i>			

## PERSONAL RESILIENCY BUILDERS

### Individual Qualities that Facilitate Resiliency

**PART TWO:**

People also successfully overcome life difficulties by drawing upon internal qualities that research has shown are particularly helpful when encountering a crisis, major stressor, or trauma.

The following list can be thought of as a “personal resiliency builder” menu. *No one has everything on this list.* When “the going gets tough” you probably have three or four of these qualities that you use most naturally and most often.

It is helpful to know which are your primary resiliency builders; how have you used them in the past; and how can you use them to overcome the present challenges in your life.

You can also decide to add one or two of these to your “resiliency-builder” menu, if you think they would be useful for you.

*Put a + by the top three or four resiliency builders you use most often. Ask yourself how you have used these in the past or currently use them. Think of how you can best apply these resiliency builders to current life problems, crises, or stressors.*

*(Optional) You can then put a T by one or two resiliency builders you think you should add to your personal repertoire.*

+	T		
		<b>Relationships</b>	<i>Sociability/ability to be a friend/ability to form positive relationships</i>
		<b>Service</b>	<i>Gives of self in service to others or a cause</i>
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		<b>Perseverance</b>	<i>Keeps on despite difficulty; doesn't give up</i>
		<b>Creativity</b>	<i>Expresses self through artistic endeavor, or in other creative ways</i>

## Recommended Reading & Viewing: Fostering Resiliency

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