The Resilient Teacher: You Are NOT An Oxymoron

Kelly Dean Schwartz, PhD RPsych
Carly McMorris, PhD RPsych

School and Applied Child Psychology
Werklund School of Education
If I had a tattoo . . .

"Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her"

Bronfenbrenner, 2005
In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both (Ungar, 2013):

• the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well being, and

• their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways.

Other key factors:

• dynamic process: interaction b/w person and environment

• risk and protective factors: both individual and contextual

• resilient individuals possess personal strengths
The resilient teacher: 4 dimensions

- 259 early career and graduating teachers
- Qualitative and quantitative data collected
- “How would you describe a resilient teacher?”

Mansfield, Beltman, Price, & McConney, 2012
Contexts that support or challenge resilience

- Context matters!
- The ability to navigate access to microsystems of support is critical to resilience
- Friction can also be caused by these same microsystems e.g., COVID-19, e-learning, isolation

Mansfield, Beltman, Price, & McConney, 2012
Since you moved to an online instructional format, what is/has been your greatest concerns or needs as a teacher?

- Information on COVID-19 to share with students/families: 30%
- Need for instructional resources (printable, e-versions): 63%
- Recommendations for online practices with students: 77%
- How to resource parents/families in their role as educator support: 77%
- How to provide emotional/social support to students: 98%
- Self-care and stress management for myself as a teacher: 99%
- Support for students with learning, social-emotional, or behavioural needs: 119%
The resilient teacher is someone who . . .

- Negotiating with these dimensions is what results in resiliency.
- The emotional dimension is key, as it drives how others are embraced or rejected e.g., self-regulation.

Mansfield, Beltman, Price, & McConney, 2012
Evidenced-based online resources

- https://www.teachmentalhealth.org/
- https://www.albertafamilywellness.org/
- https://resilienceresearch.org/
- https://www.anxietycanada.com/
- https://www.commonsensemedia.org/
“If you wish to understand the relationship the developing person and some aspect of his or her environment, try to **budge** the one, and see what happens to the other.”

**Bronfenbrenner, 1977**