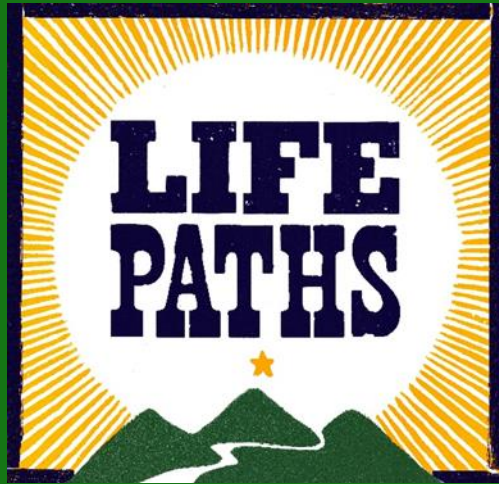


Poly-Strengths and Resilience Portfolios: Factors Associated with Thriving After Adversity



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What do people want from life?



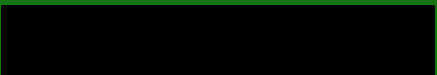
Happiness



Meaning



Love



What do people want out of life?



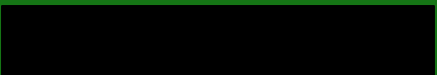
“A CBCL t-score < 60”



“Relatively low
levels of anxiety”



“Not too much
delinquency”



Resilience Portfolios

- The objective of the Resilience Portfolio approach is to identify the best combinations of strengths and protective factors for achieving well-being after adversity.
- Too much research focuses only on whether a strength (or a risk factor) is different from zero—that it is significantly associated with outcomes.
- Need head-to-head comparisons.

Resilience Portfolios

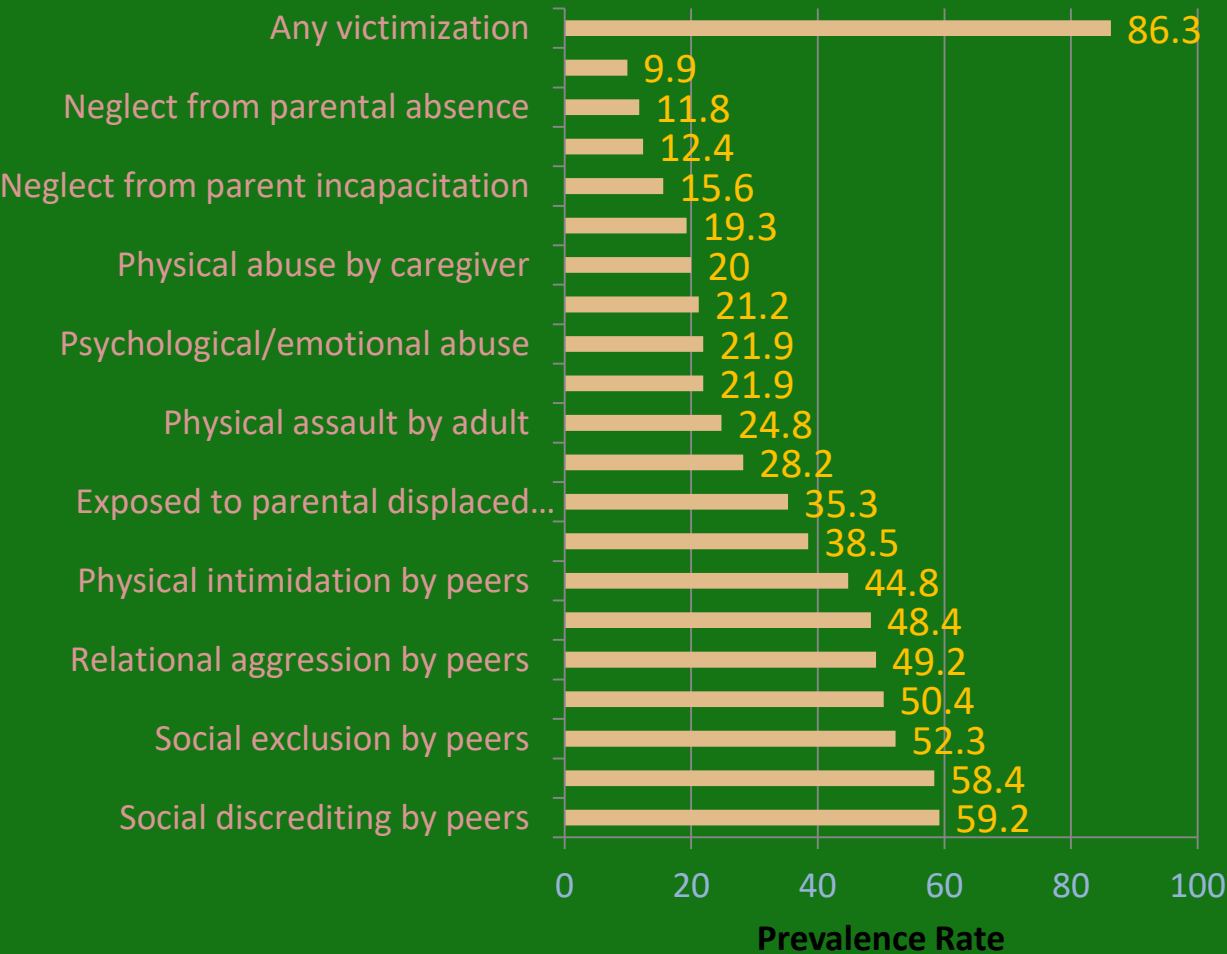
- Although there are many strengths, we focus on the 3 broad domains that prior research has shown make the biggest difference in recovering from adversity:
 - Meaning making
 - Self-regulation
 - Interpersonal strengths

The Poly-Strength Concept

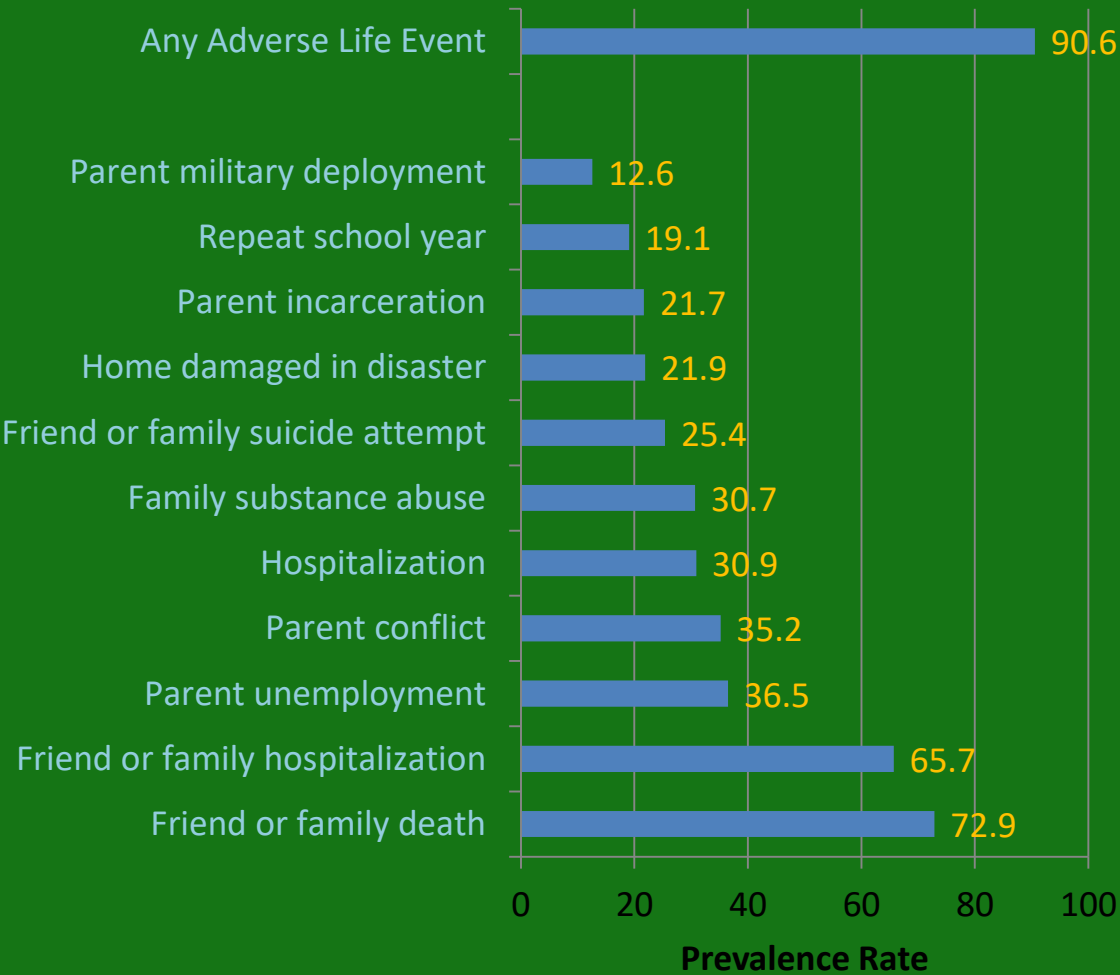
- Everyone has character strengths, but nobody has *every* character strength
- Defined as the number of above-average scores on strength measures ($> .5$ SD)
- Strengths—psychological and social as well as physical—also change as we age.
- Looking to identify the minimum density & diversity of strengths that promote well-being.
- Parallels the idea of poly-victimization.

The pervasiveness of adversity, & by extension, resilience

Victimization



Adverse Life Events



We are all in this together



- Almost no one is a “zero” on adversity.
- No one is good at every possible strength.
- We need to shift off a deficit lens.
- Myths about passivity and denial among victims are not evidence-based.

Resilience Portfolio Model; Grych, Hamby & Banyard, 2015

RESOURCES & ASSETS:

External resources (what you have)

SES

Caregivers (kids)/Partners (adults)

Safe, stable environment

Community, culture

Internal assets (who you are)

Cognitive abilities

Character strengths

D

A

WANT TO
PREVENT
ADVERSITY?
FOCUS HERE

B

C

COPING RESPONSES:

(What you do) Coping, including
appraisal, regulatory behavior,
meaning-making behavior

F

E

linear or curvilinear

G

linear or curvilinear

ADVERSITY:

Victimization, loss,
illness/injury, other life
events

WELL-BEING:

Physical, Psychological,
Multiple dimensions of
Well-Being

WANT TO MINIMIZE
THE HARM OF PAST
ADVERSITY? FOCUS
ON THESE TARGETS



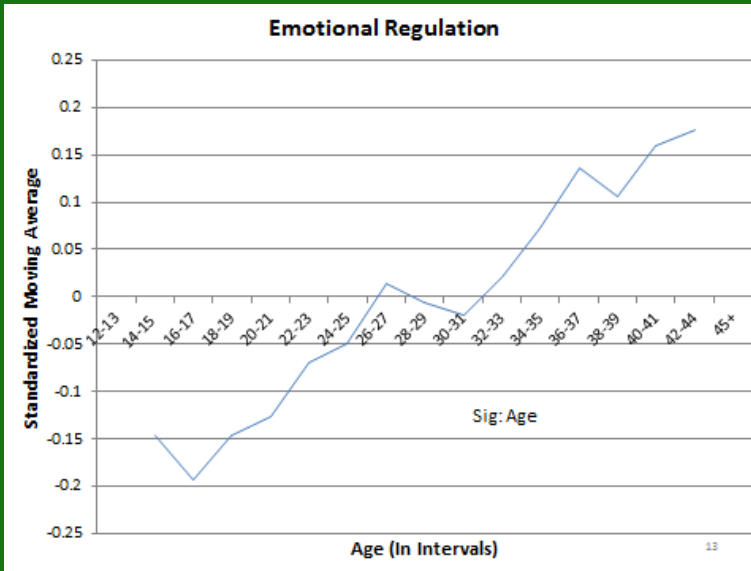
Procedures

- **2,565 adolescents and adults primarily aged 12-50**
- **64% female, avg age 30 (SD 13.2)**
- **Rural communities in southern states**
- **In-person CASI or A-CASI surveys using laptops & tablets.**
- **Largest psychological study ever conducted in rural Appalachia, a population seldom represented in research.**
- **\$30 gift card to participants.**
- **23 separate strengths examined.**

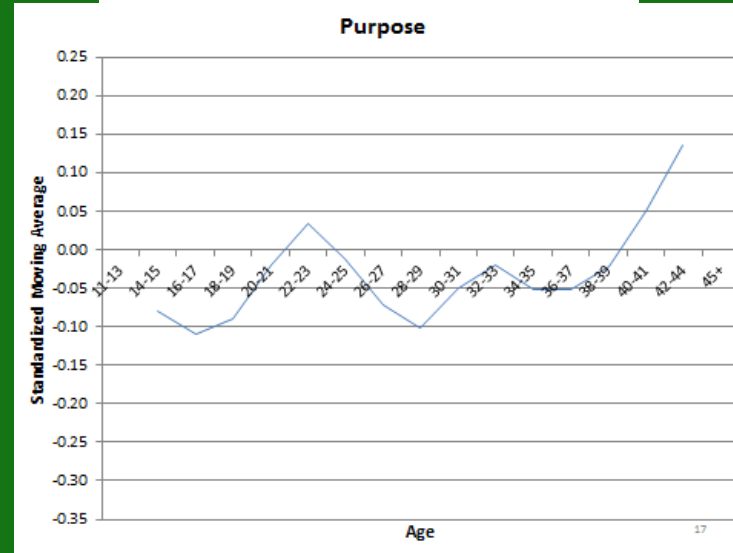


Stepping outside the ivory tower

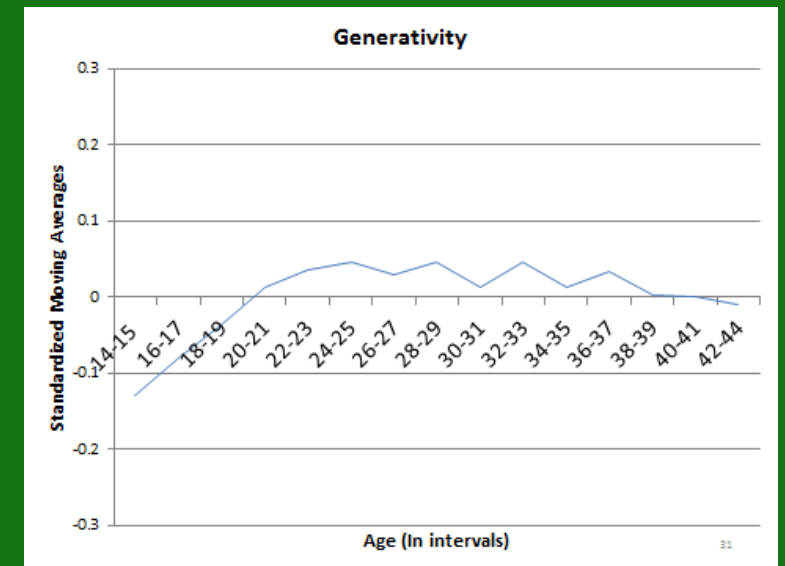
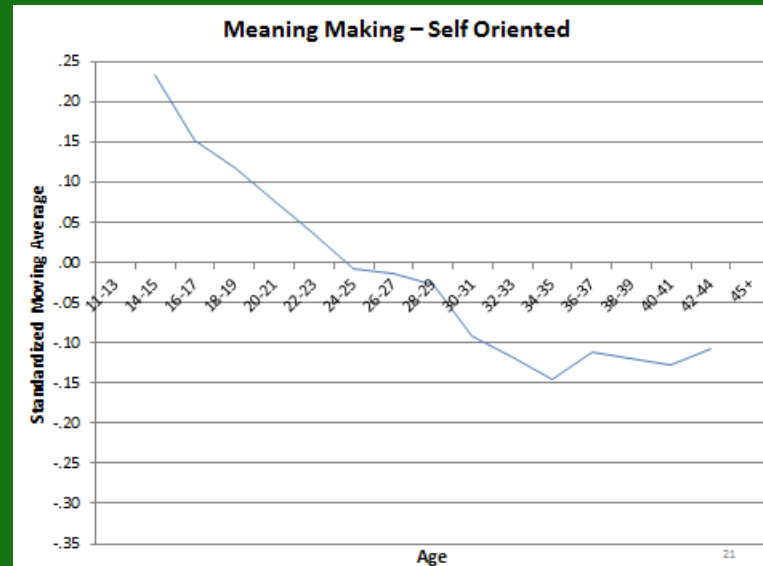
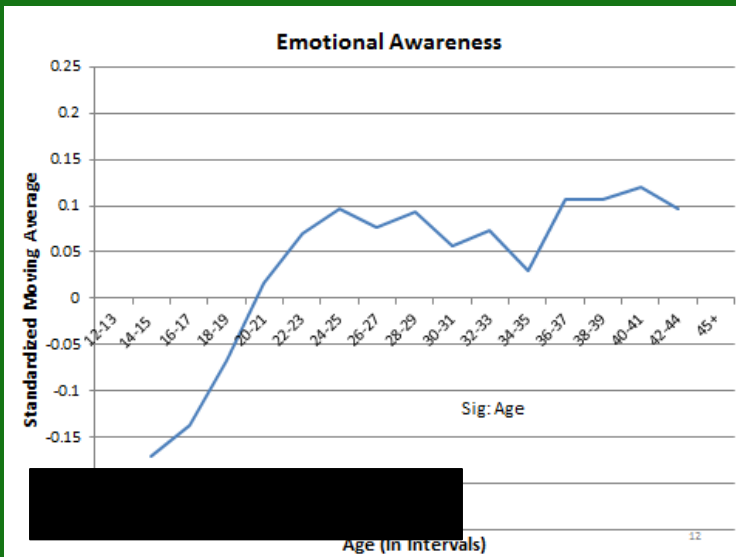
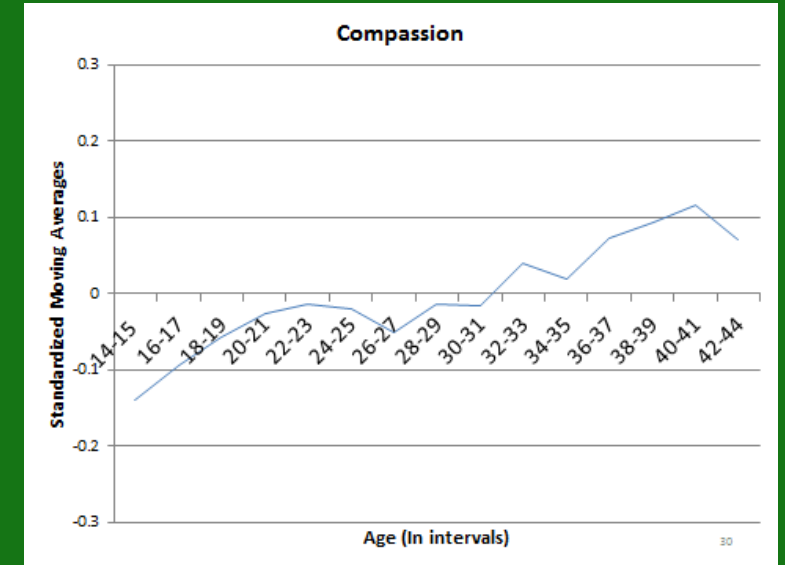
REGULATORY STRENGTHS



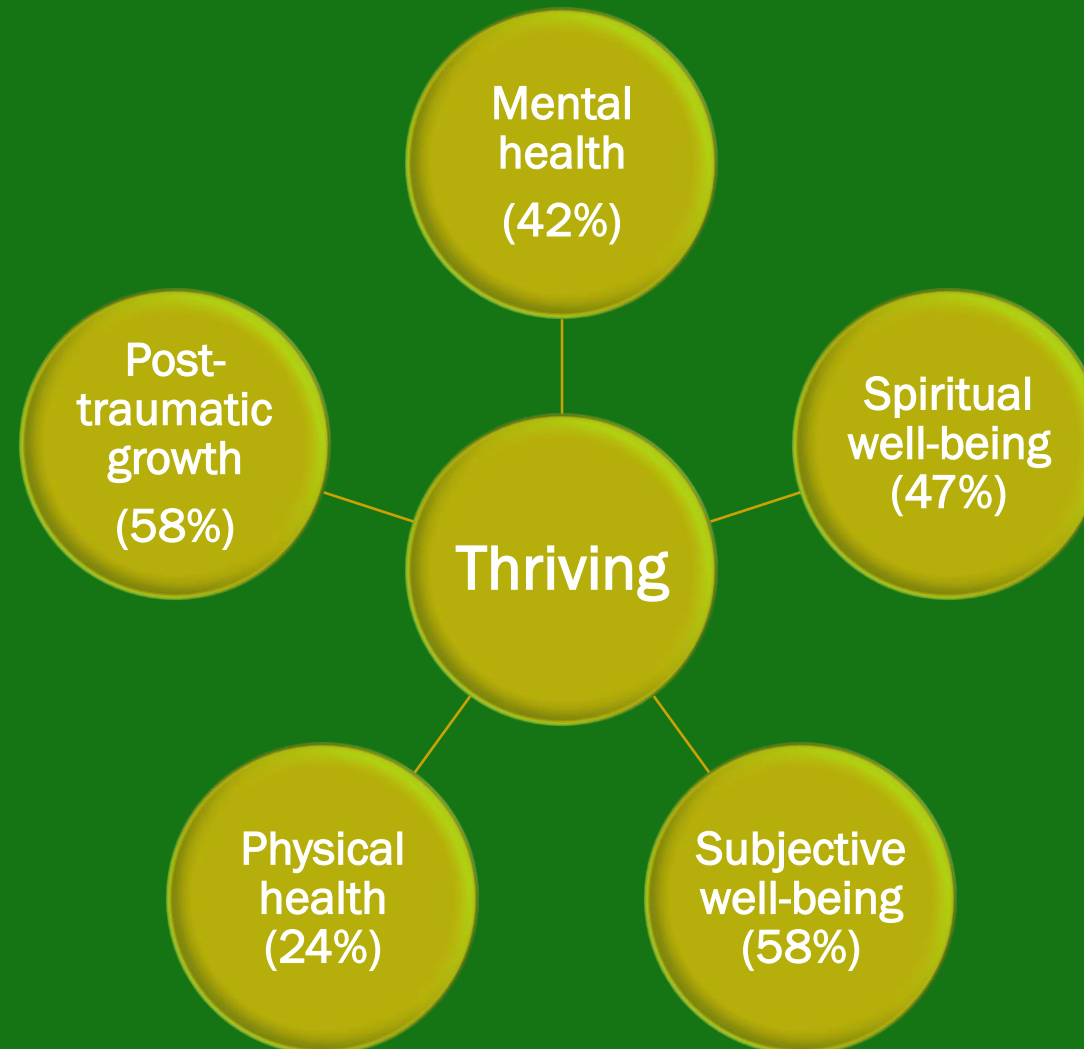
MEANING MAKING STRENGTHS



INTERPERSONAL STRENGTHS



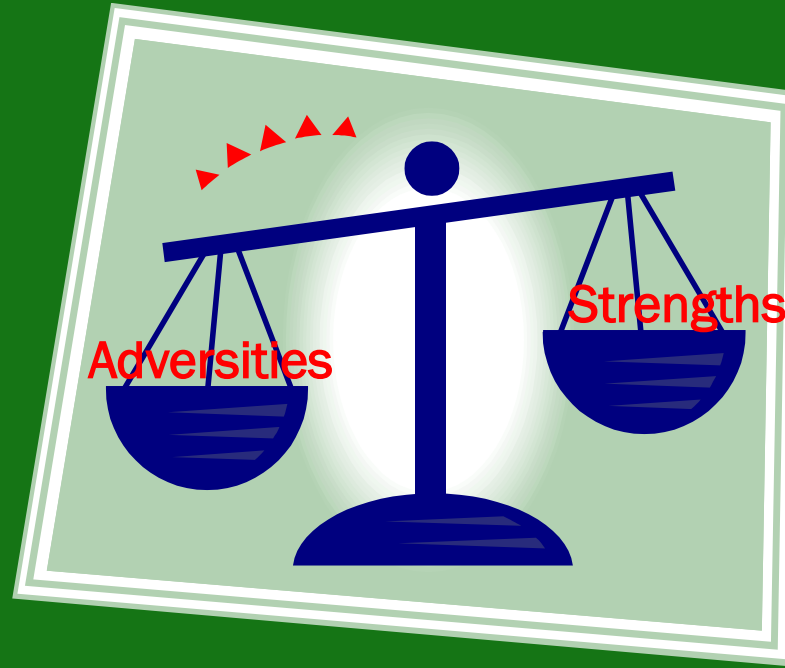
Better Understanding of How to Get to Positive Outcomes



Adversities and strengths accounted for 1-19% of the variability in well-being, while strengths accounted for 23-49%.

What Helps Balance The Scales? Mental Health (Trauma symptoms)

Poly-victimization***
Financial Strain*



Poly-strengths*

Emotional awareness**

Emotional regulation***

Purpose*

Optimism**

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

*These interpersonal strengths
somewhat reduce the effects of these
adversities on mental health*

What Helps Balance The Scales? Subjective Well-Being

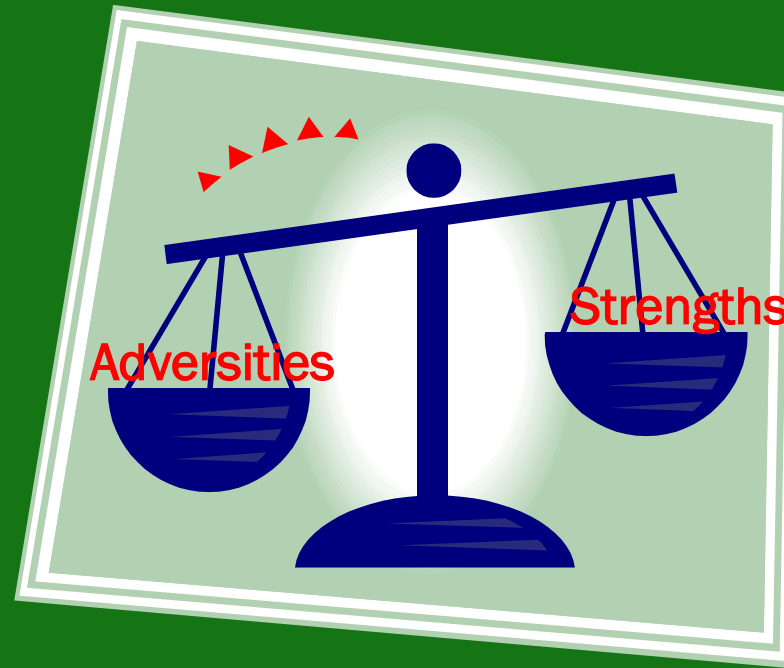
Poly-strengths***

Endurance**

Purpose***

Optimism*

Generativity***



Financial Strain***
Adverse Life Events*

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

What Helps Balance The Scales? Post-traumatic Growth

Financial Strain***



Poly-strengths***

Endurance**

Emotional awareness**

Emotional regulation*

Coping***

Purpose***

Religious Meaning
making***

Compassion**

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

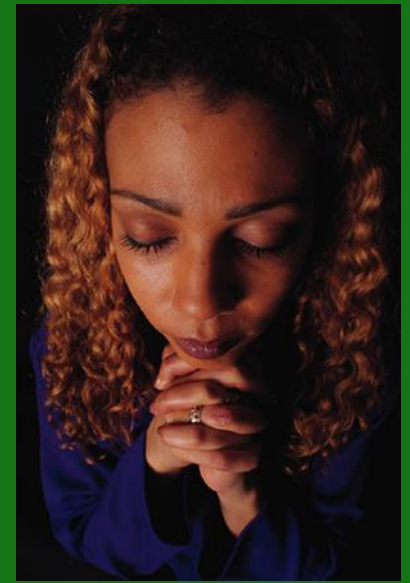


• Mindfulness meditation improves:

- Compassion
- Emotional awareness
- Emotional regulation

Spirituality & religious involvement improve:

- Purpose
- Social Support



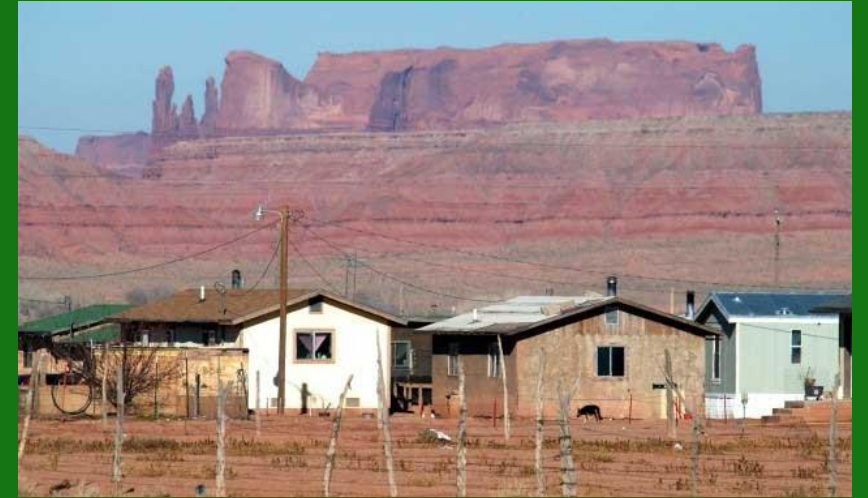
Volunteering improves:
Generativity
Community support



- Regular exercise (actually most routines, even sleep!):
 - Endurance
 - Optimism

Abstract principles
Warning signs
Debunking myths

Creating Cultures of Safety & Respect



Narratives matter in communities, schools and other settings. How does a group define themselves? Who needs to be at the table to craft or change a master narrative?

We've Only Just Begun



Other possible candidates for key strengths:

Recovering positive affect

School climate

Relational accountability

Future orientation

Impulse control

Free resources:

Scales, narrative and strengths-based resources at <http://lifepathsresearch.org>

Resilience Portfolio Interview can be found there, under tab for Educators and Therapists

The VIGOR, a new strengths-based safety plan for domestic violence:

<http://thevigor.org>

Psychology Today blog: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-web-violence> (includes blogs on basic therapy and communication skills)

Letter to My Teenage Daughter About Sexual Assault

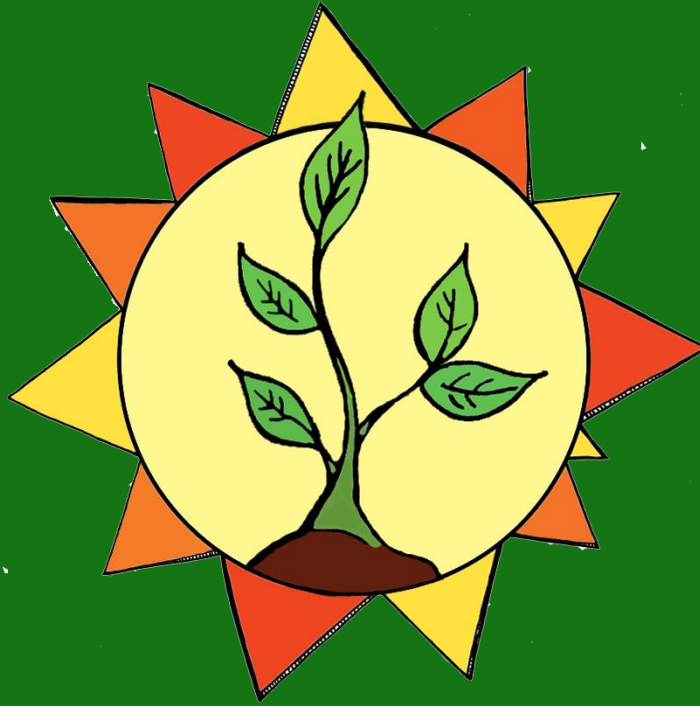
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-web-violence/201609/letter-my-teenage-daughter-about-sexual-assault>

Letter to My Teenage Son About Sexual Assault

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-web-violence/201609/letter-my-teenage-son-about-sexual-assault>



Thank You!



ResilienceCon 2017: April 17-19 in Nashville
<http://resiliencecon.org>