



Sustaining Your Resilience in Stressful Times Part III

TENACITY: The Seven Instincts That Make Us Human

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Did you ever
wonder...



How children learn to speak?



How children
learn to
manage their
emotions?



How children
acquire
knowledge?



How children
master
challenging
activities?



How children
learn to
socialize?



How children
create their
identity?



They are
guided by the
nexus of
genes and
experiences





They are intuitively optimistic and intrinsically motivated to take on the challenges of childhood!

They solve problems through simultaneous intelligence.



They form and maintain relationships through compassionate empathy, genuine altruism, and virtuous responsibility.



They interact with their world
through measured fairness.





Caregivers are the architects of the way in which experience influences the unfolding of genetically preprogrammed but experience-dependent brain development.

- Daniel Siegel
The Developing Mind

Me and
my dad!





When children transition into adult life, their past mistakes, misbehaviors, or problems are of little interest to others.



Success in childhood and adult life comes from harnessing assets and strengths.



For thousands of generations, parents, relatives, and others raised and prepared children to become successful adults, to acquire knowledge and skills that were needed to meet the challenges of their time.



Until relatively recent times in human history, there were no schools or organized institutions, nor were there self-help or parenting books.

How did
they do it?





Our ancestors raised the next generation by drawing upon seven important instincts that evolved over tens of thousands of years in our species.

Instincts

- In complex species, instincts serve a critical role in shaping the developmental course through childhood into adulthood.
- Thousands of generations of children allowed for many genetic mutations, some of which were adaptive.
- Some of these increased the likelihood that babies would survive, even thrive throughout their childhood, and transition successfully into adult life.

Instincts

(cont.)

- TENACITY is composed of seven instincts that I will introduce in today's webinar.
- We consider one of the most important to be intuitive optimism. This is the unspoken belief that if you just keep at a task, your chances of success are greater.
- We would argue that, when it comes to reaching developmental milestones, continued effort nearly always leads to success as long as the task is within the capacities of the child to achieve.
- This instinct is clearly a vital component of self-discipline and a resilient mindset.

Instincts

(cont.)

- Our children are in fact hardwired to learn if we are sufficiently knowledgeable to understand how their wiring interacts with the world around them and create environments in which they can grow and thrive.
- Every society places expectations upon its youth to acquire a certain level of knowledge and behavior in order to functionally transition into adulthood.
- No matter how simple the society, children must harness their instincts to acquire knowledge, develop self-discipline, cope well with adversity, and persist even in the face of failure.
- The instincts comprising TENACITY provide the critical foundation for children in any culture or society to acquire necessary knowledge to move successfully into adult life.

Instincts

(cont.)

- In some species, instincts are fixed patterns of behavior leading to a certain outcome, such as a bird building a nest for the first time or a salmon returning upriver to its birthplace to spawn.
- We believe that, in our species, instincts represent an intuitive way of thinking and/or acting that increase the chances of survival and success.
- In viewing instincts in this way, we appreciate that knowing what to do and doing what you know are not synonymous.
- Ultimately, success is very much dependent on experience.



Today, these instincts are more important than ever in preparing children for tomorrow's successes.

A photograph of a two-lane asphalt road winding through a desert landscape. The road is flanked by low-lying green and yellow shrubs. In the background, there are large, rugged, reddish-brown rock formations under a hazy, orange-tinted sky. A large, semi-transparent white arrow points forward from the bottom center of the frame, pointing towards the horizon. Overlaid on the road is the text "KEEP GOING" in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

KEEP GOING

We call these the Seven Critical Instincts of TENACITY!



TENACITY is defined as perseverance, doggedness, resolution, patience, endurance, and stamina.

Tenacity provides the mental and emotional fuel
driving resilience and self-discipline.

**KEEP
CALM
AND
NEVER
YIELD**



The essential triad of human development: resilience, self-discipline,
and TENACITY.



TENACITY may be comprised of seven instincts, but for these instincts to develop and flourish in children, they require the nurturing and support of caring adults.

These instincts are:

- Intrinsic motivation
- Intuitive optimism
- Simultaneous intelligence
- Compassionate empathy
- Virtuous responsibility
- Genuine altruism
- Measured fairness

Instinctual optimism



- A belief driven by genes.
- A belief that a way will always be found.
- A belief that success will be obtained.
- The glass is half full!

Intrinsic motivation



- Driven by internal reason and inspiration.
- Rewarded by the payoff to the mind.
- Guided by belief, not environmental consequences.

Practical intelligence (simultaneous ability)



- The ability to see all the parts of a problem simultaneously.
- A mental activity by which the child integrates stimuli into groups.
- Stimuli are seen as a whole.
- Each part is related to the others.

Compassionate empathy



Insight combined with:

- Sensitivity
- Tolerance
- Kindness

Through the eyes of others

- Do you practice what you have learned and lived?
- It is difficult to be empathic when you are disappointed or angry.
- Do you make assumptions about the motives of others?
- Do you hold the erroneous belief that, if you are too empathic, people will take advantage of you?

Through the eyes of others *(cont.)*

Steps to becoming an empathic person:

- Take the time to complete empathy exercises. Consider how you would like other people to describe you versus how they might actually describe you. Act on the discrepancy.
- Use your experiences as a guide.
- Make an effort to put empathy into practice every day.

Virtuous responsibility

Responsible behavior guided by:

- Dignity
- Morality
- Respect for self and others
- Integrity

Genuine altruism

Giving of yourself (time and effort)
guided by:

- Sincerity
- Honesty
- Truth
- Sensitivity
- Honesty

Measured fairness



- A concept developed in Game Theory.
- Being fair to yourself first and then to others.
- Knowing when you must put yourself first.

The Road to TENACITY: Building Islands of Competence

- Examine your assumptions about your children's choices and successes.
- Challenge their self-defeating attributions.
- Help them find passionate interests and islands of competence and pursue them.
- Listen and learn first before advising. Sometimes they just want to be heard.
- Let them learn from their experiences.
- Be proactive in the face of true problems.
- Take a long-term view.

The Lessons of Resilience: Maintaining a Resilient Lifestyle

Exercising resilience on a daily basis:

- Have I truly listened during the past day and attempted to understand the viewpoints of others?
- How have I related to others? Have I practiced empathy and respect?
- How have I responded to stress, mistakes, and setbacks? What will I do differently the next time?
- In what areas did I do well? How do I maintain and/or reproduce these positive behaviors tomorrow?
- Do not wait for other people to change first for you to achieve your goals and happiness.

Focus on well-being!

- COMPETENCE in academic, social, and vocational areas
- CONFIDENCE or a positive identity
- CONNECTIONS or healthy relations
- CHARACTER or positive values, integrity, and values
- CARING and compassion

(Lerner et al, 2000)

Stress hardiness

- Committed to finding a meaningful purpose in life.
- A belief that you can influence your surroundings and outcome of events.
- A belief that you can learn and grow from both positive and negative life experiences.



May our philosophies keep pace with our technologies. May our compassion keep pace with our powers. And may love, not fear, be the engine of change.

- Dan Brown, *Origin*

Questions?



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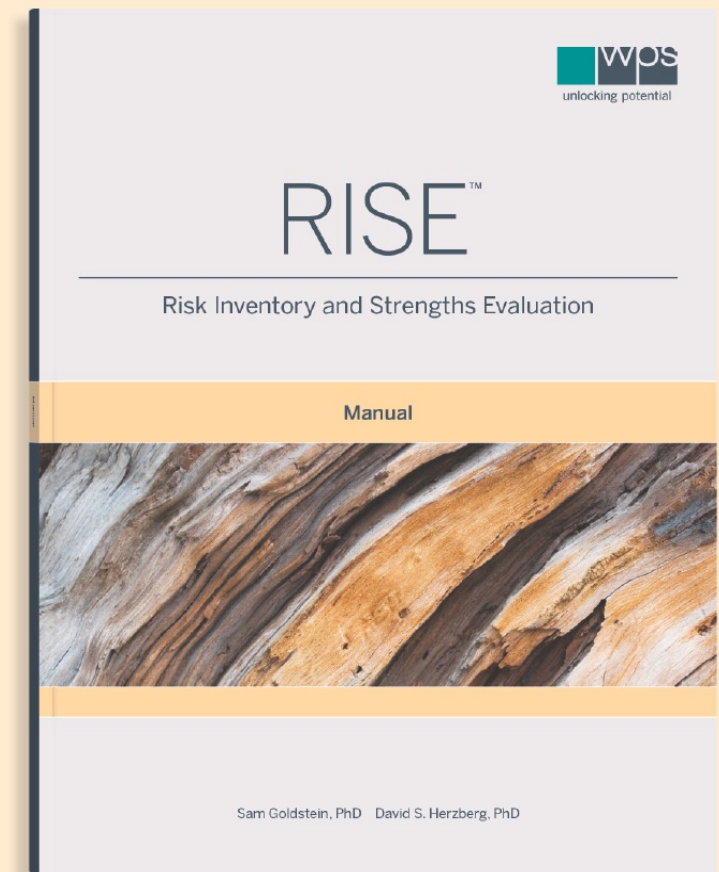
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 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isfw8JJ-eWM>

Every child faces risks and draws on strengths.
Understand both with the RISE.



Get valuable support from
professionals you can trust:

WPS Assessment Consultants



Ann Rogers



Ashley Arnold



Douglene Jackson



Laura Stevenson



Stephanie Roberts

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- **Part 1: Sustaining Your Resilience in Stressful Times: Guidelines for Pediatric Mental Health Professionals:**
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