Resilient Families: Communication Cultivates Adaptability Within Family Systems

Welcome, your facilitator will be: Samson Teklemariam, LPC, CPTM
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Resilient Families: Communication Cultivates Adaptability Within Family Systems

Presented by
Karyl Elizabeth Sabbath, PhD, LAC, LIDC, ICCS
Polling Question 1: Let me learn about you…
Please share what your primary role is in your agency:

A. Nurse
B. Peer Recovery Support
C. Counselor
D. Doctor
E. Social Worker

Webinar Learning Objectives

- To identify how social connections impact clients’ abilities to positively manage stress.
- To identify how communication is directly linked to adaptability and building resilience in family systems.
- To create linkages within your own communities, encouraging resilient outcomes and recovery support for families.

Family Stress
Primary disruptions known to cause family crisis ~

• The coming apart of the family due to the death of a member
• The addition of new or returning family members
• The sense of shame, which may result from infidelity, substance use disorders, or nonsupport; and
• A combination of the above, which could include suicide, imprisonment, homicide or mental health disorders  

A family's COPING CAPACITY is related to four factors ~

1. The number of previous stressors the members have faced in recent years
2. The degree of role change involved in coping
3. The social support available to members, and
4. The institutional support available to members  

Resilience is the ability to overcome serious hardship

Therefore, let's consider RESILIENCE as a path for creating the capacity to cope in the face of stress!
“Resilient Families” ~ is an outcome of adaptability

… Resilience cultivates stability by constructing a rhythm in family life through routines and rituals … and with a confidence to manage change

[McCubbin & McCubbin, 1988; Galvin & Brommel, 1999]

• Science tells us that some children develop resilience, or the ability to overcome serious hardship, while others do not.

[Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University]

• To understand the development of resilience, visualize a balance scale or seesaw.

• Protective experiences and coping skills on one side counterbalance significant adversity on the other.
Resilience = when a child’s development tips toward positive outcomes — even when a heavy load of factors is stacked on the negative outcome side.

Learning to cope with manageable threats is critical for the development of resilience.

Children who do well in the face of serious hardship typically have a biological resistance to adversity and strong relationships with the important adults in their family and community.
Neither individual characteristics or environmental effects can create resilience alone.

As our focus on child development is important,

• The capabilities that underlie resilience can be strengthened at any age.

Experiences leave a chemical “signature” on genes that determines whether and how genes are expressed. [Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University]
What's Important?

- Genes are vulnerable to modifications caused by toxic stress.
- Thus ~ Providing nurturing and healthy experiences in our children's lives & in the lives of those in recovery is underscored!

Where do we go from here?
This is where the link between resilience and belongingness becomes important!

We are wired to connect with others


"The social brain represents the only biological system in our bodies that continually attunes us to, and in turn becomes influenced by, the internal state of people we’re with...

Whenever we connect face to face (or voice to voice, or skin to skin) with someone else, our social brains interlock"
• The single most common factor for children who develop resilience is:

   at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.

Connecting Community with Family & Family with Community = A Sense of Belongingness

• What can communities do to strengthen social connections, prevent failures of adaptation, and encourage resilient outcomes?

Communities can change to promote resilience

Differences in social capital are stable manifestations of culture.

• However, social capital is also modifiable through programs that expand opportunities for positive social interaction among community members.
There are three types of social capital performed by communities:

- **BONDING** - ways to develop and sustain close relationships with others who are somehow similar and part of primary networks
- **BRIDGING** - connect socially to share experiences; involving engagement with those dissimilar and members of separate social networks
- **LINKING** - the building of relationship with institutions and individuals who have relative power, having an ability to provide access to services and resources

(Petterson & Masur, 2009)

Polling Question 2

Do any programs in your community promote a sense of belongingness for clients & their families? Which type of Social Capital is easiest to identify in your community?

Types of Social Capital performed by communities ~

A. BONDING - close relationships within one’s primary networks
B. BRIDGING - experiences within separate social networks
C. LINKING - relationships providing access to resources

The Practical Side of Building Social Capital / Recovery Capital ~

Let’s consider skill sets that family members & community members need...
Family Communication
The Association for Family Therapy

**Communication:** A Facilitating dimension ~ critical for facilitating adaptability and social interaction for enhancing belongingness

- Listening = empathy & attentive listening
- Speaking skills = speaking for oneself & not speaking for others
- Self-disclosure = sharing about self & relationship
- Tracking = staying on topic
- Respect & Regard = affective communication and problem solving

If Bonding, Bridging & Linking are to be performed

Communication as a tool to facilitate Belongingness will need practiced and performed through these skills:

- **Listening** = empathy & attentive listening
- **Speaking skills** = speaking for oneself & not speaking for others
- **Self-disclosure** = sharing about self & relationship
- **Tracking** = staying on topic
- **Respect & Regard** = affective communication and problem solving

Polling Question 3

Which of the following does your community offer to support clients and their families; thereby promoting practice of communication skills that enhance their “recovery capital”?

- A. Primary treatment facilities involving family support.
- B. Community programming facilitating pro-recovery activities.
- C. Community recovery programs elevating the visibility of local recovery role models, access to recovery coaches, sponsors and indigenous healers.
As we wrap-up our webinar,

I’d like to propose how communication – as a facilitating tool - is related to family resilience.

Communication Skills assist family resilience by expanding their social capital, particularly bridging and linking to sources for access to support, resources, and a positive sense of social belongingness = Recovery Capital!

During our Q & A time period, along with any questions or thoughts you might have, I would like you to share any notes you made to Polling Questions 2 or 3, or add thoughts you might have on the following questions ~
Can you identify ways your community enhances Recovery Capital for families and individuals in recovery? Any examples of how practices of communication skills & a sense of belongingness are supported?

References


Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University, http://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/


Thank You!

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UPCOMING WEBINARS

January 29th, 2020
Social Media and Ethical Dilemmas
By: Mike Bricker, MS, NCAC II, CADC II, LPC
www.naadac.org/webinars

February 26th, 2020
Cultivating Greater Meaning and Purpose to Prevent Relapse
By: Garret Biss, CAPP, MRED

February 12th, 2020
The Wounded Healer: Helping the Helping Professional
By: Sarah Buino, LCSW, CADC, CDWF

March 11th, 2020
“The Wide World of Sports…” Wagering
By: Dan Trolaro, MS

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