

Expecting the Unexpected: Resilience Building Coping Strategies for Today's Unpredictable Environment

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Presentation Objectives

- Introduction
- Trauma, Traumatic Stress and Resilience
- Is COVID-19 a “Traumatic Event”?
- Resilience Building Coping Strategies
- *School in the Time of the Coronavirus* Children’s Book

Introduction

- Clinical Assistant Professor, Psychology Department, MU
 - Clinical and Research Interests are in
 - traumatic stress and resilience
 - re-settled refugee population
- Licensed Clinical Psychologist in WI and VT
- MU Director of SWIM Collaboration and Innovation

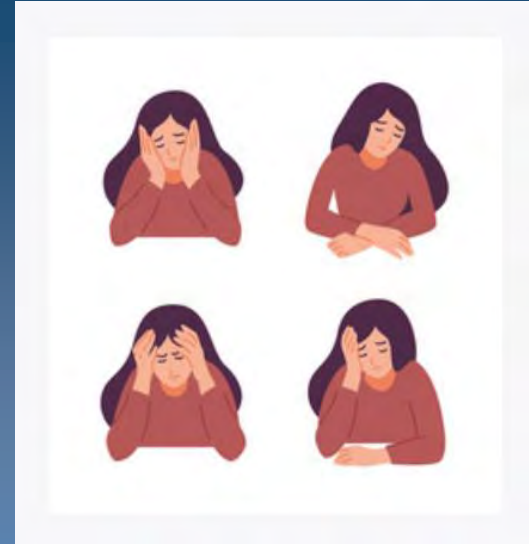
Scaling Wellness in Milwaukee (SWIM)



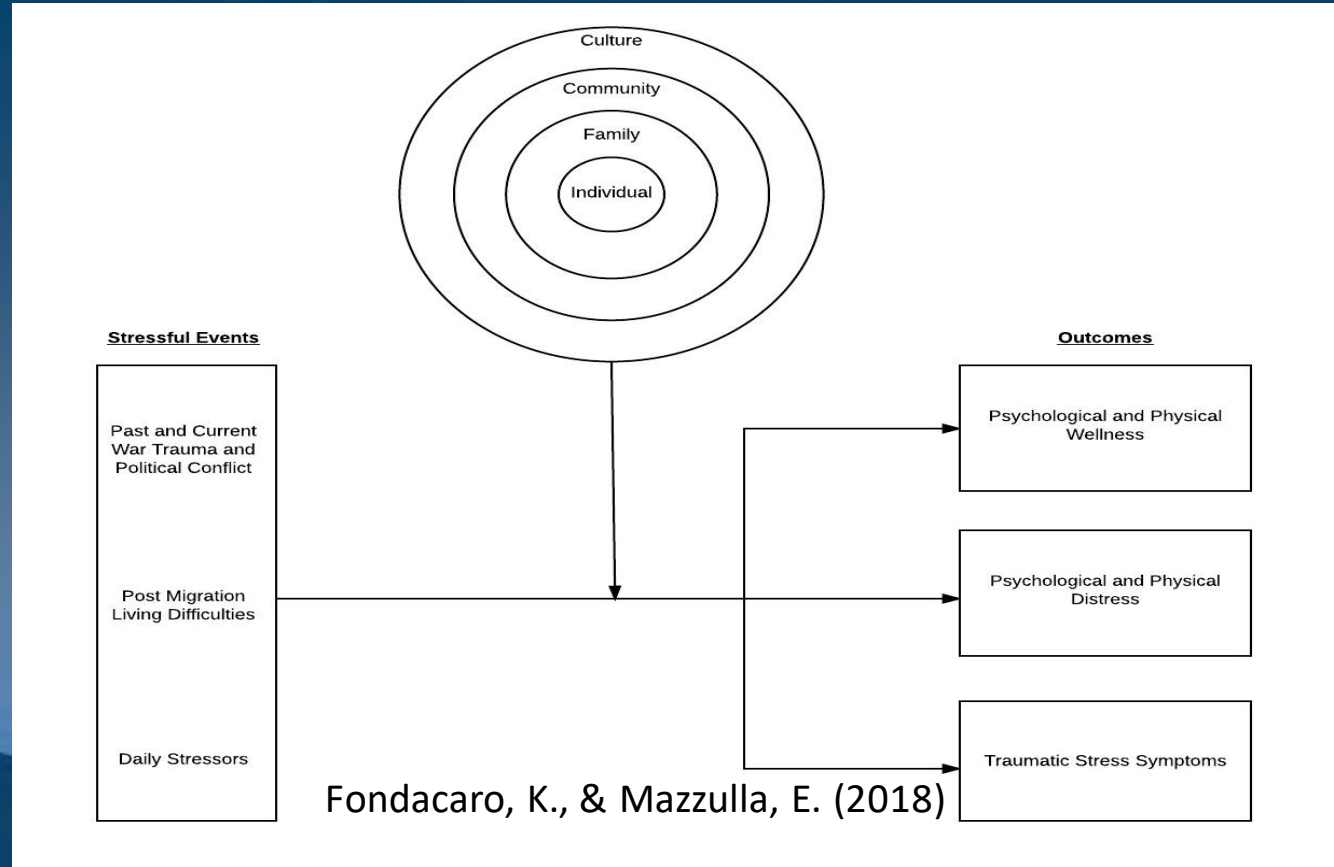
- SWIM (swimmke.org)

Trauma

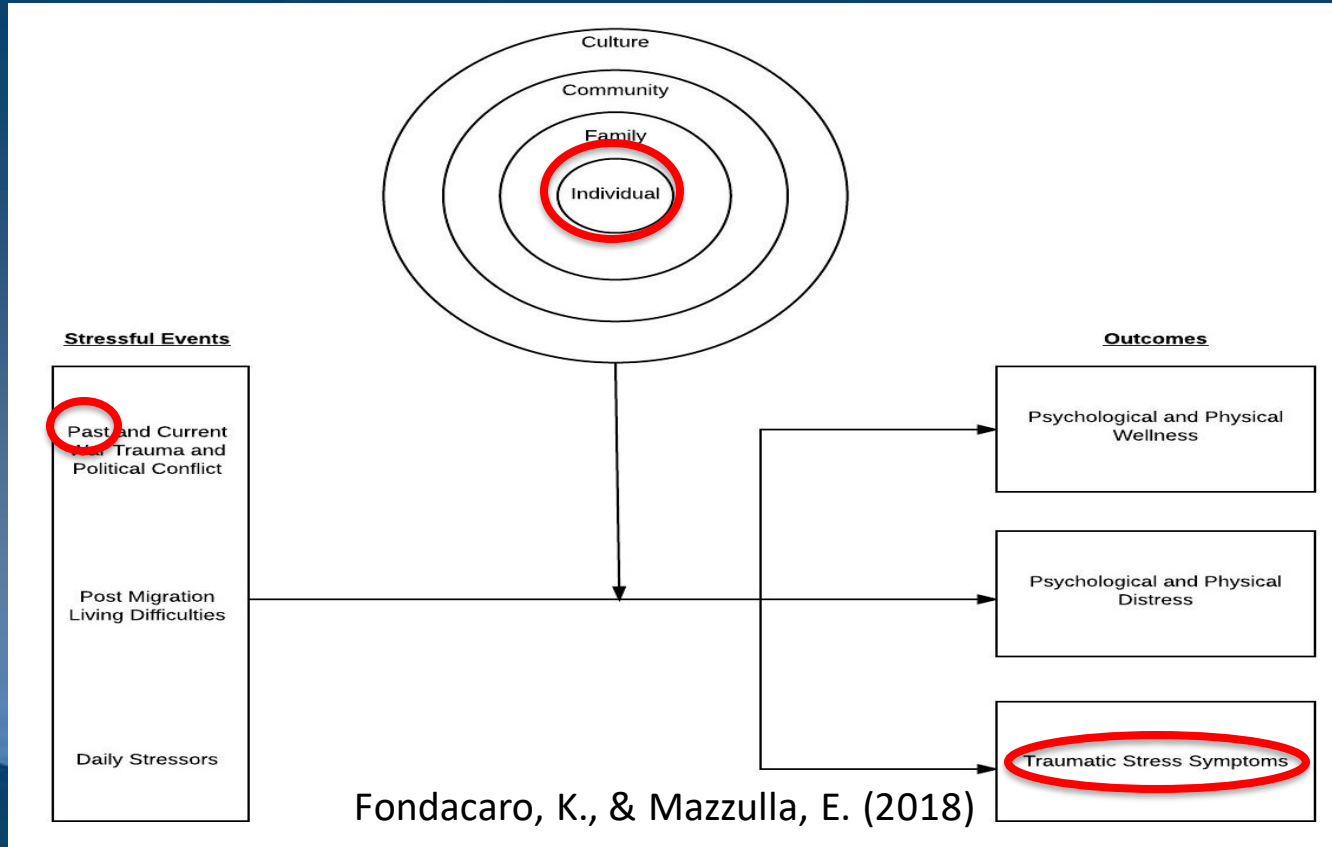
- Trauma
 - Exposure to actual or threatened injury or death
 - Subjective
- Collective Traumatic Event
 - A collective traumatic event (e.g., war, natural disaster coronavirus pandemic) impacts not only individuals but also families, communities (countries, globe)



Chronic Traumatic Stress (CTS) Framework

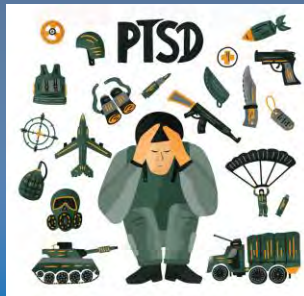


Chronic Traumatic Stress (CTS) Framework



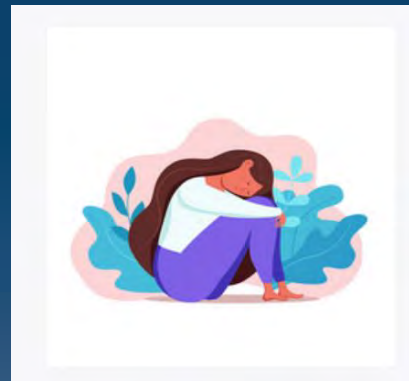
Traumatic Stress

- Traumatic Stress
 - Negative emotional impact of a traumatic event
 - Can be particularly challenging for individuals with existing mental health concerns
 - Can be triggering and exacerbate prior trauma related symptoms
 - Disrupts our sense of safety
- Traumatic Stress vs. PTSD



Traumatic Stress & Behavior Change

- When is it too much?
- Functional impairment
 - Impaired ability to manage demands of life
 - Increased or decreased behaviors (sleep, appetite, exercise, screen-time,)
 - Use of maladaptive coping mechanisms (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, substances)
- Mood or personality change
- Kids
 - Conversation and observation



Protective and Risk Factors

- Protective Factors

- Strong relationship with trusted adult
- Social support
- Efficacy
- Coping mechanisms
- Finding meaning

- Risk Factors

- Mental health challenges
- Type of trauma
- Previous trauma
- Lack of support
- Few coping mechanisms



Multiple Choice Question 1

- MC Question: Is COVID-19 a “traumatic event”?

COVID-19 and Trauma

- Differential impact
 - Race, age, social determinants of health
- Essential workers
- Family and friends
- Economy, job loss
- Protective and risk factors



Multiple Choice Question 2

- MC Question: How many people have lost a loved one, survived a car accident, been through a divorce, experienced a miscarriage, survived an act of physical or emotional violence, or another trauma?

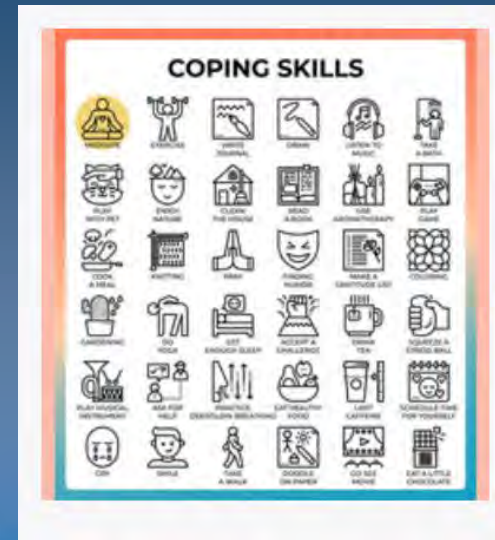
Resilience

- ***Resilience is the ability to cope under stressful or challenging circumstances***
- Built during times of stress and when life is predictable
- Anyone can build resilience; *not* pre-determined
- Post-Traumatic Growth



Resilience Building

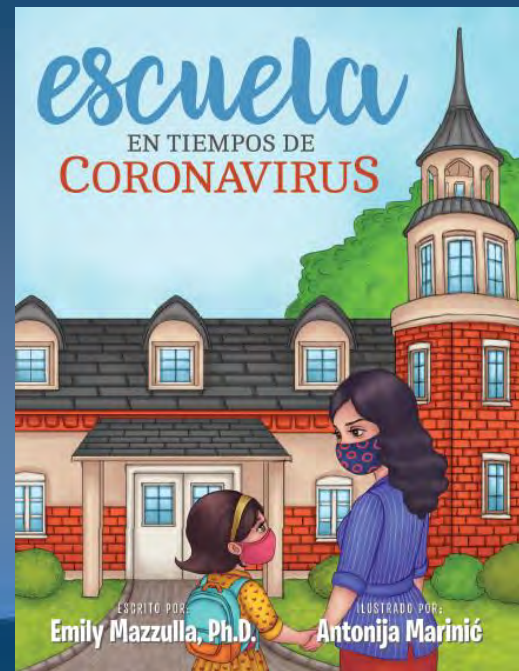
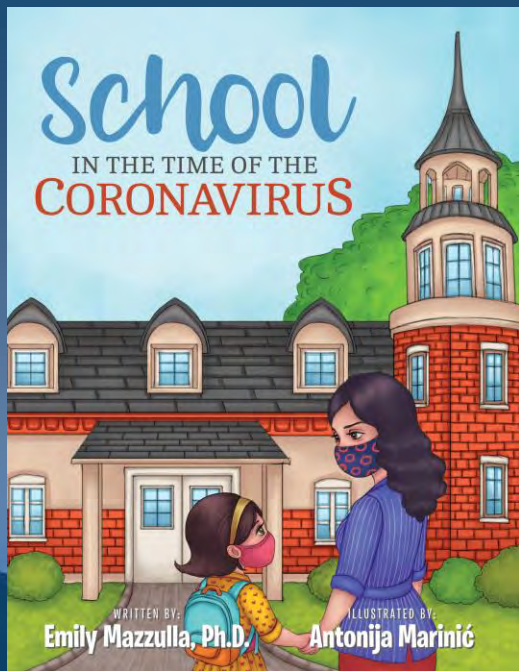
- Adversity is part of human existence
 - Why me? Why *not* me?
- We can do difficult things
- Social support
- This will not last forever
 - Feeling
 - Situation
- Is this helpful or harmful?
 - Choices
 - Thoughts



Resilience Building Coping Strategies

- Additive
- Coping skills help to calm body
 - Relaxation strategies
 - grounding techniques
 - mindfulness skills
- Distraction Techniques
 - Exercise
 - Talking to a trusted person
 - Activity
- Compassion when have setbacks

School in the Time of the Coronavirus



MARQUETTE
UNIVERSITY

BE THE
DIFFERENCE.

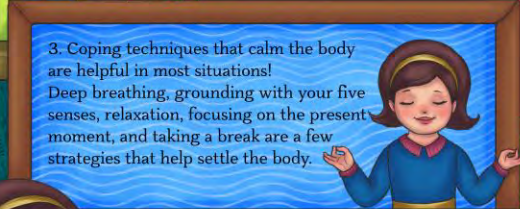
Resilience is the ability to cope under stressful or traumatic circumstances. Resilience building strategies in challenging times can help your child re-establish a sense of safety and manage the stress they might be feeling. Children are resilient and if given the tools, can thrive in the face of adversity.

Resilience Focused Coping Strategies

1. Validate your child's experiences and emotions. Tell your child that it is okay to feel their feelings and that they are safe.



2. No feeling lasts forever. Both challenging and pleasurable emotions come and go. Remind your child when they are feeling intensely that they won't feel this way forever.



3. Coping techniques that calm the body are helpful in most situations! Deep breathing, grounding with your five senses, relaxation, focusing on the present moment, and taking a break are a few strategies that help settle the body.



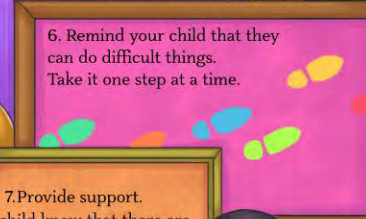
4. Distraction techniques such as laughter, exercise, talking with a loved one, reading, singing, dancing, or drawing help to take your child's mind off of the coronavirus and calms the body.



5. Help your child understand that problems have solutions even if the solutions are not obvious. When reading a story or discussing a real-life event, talk to your child about how you and others solve problems. Solutions become clearer when the body is settled.



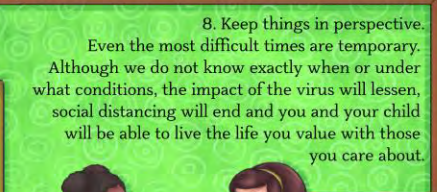
6. Remind your child that they can do difficult things. Take it one step at a time.



7. Provide support. Let your child know that there are many people who care about them and will help when needed.



8. Keep things in perspective. Even the most difficult times are temporary. Although we do not know exactly when or under what conditions, the impact of the virus will lessen, social distancing will end and you and your child will be able to live the life you value with those you care about.



9. Model these skills for your child in your own life and be compassionate with yourself when you have setbacks.



School in the Time of the Coronavirus
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Thank you!

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