

Courage, Hope, and Optimism: Resiliency in Uncertain Times

Mut, Hoffnung und Optimismus: Resilienz in ungewissen Zeiten

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Themenschwerpunkt Auswirkungen der Pandemie

Psychology is not only the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue ... treatment is not just fixing what is broken; it is nurturing what is best.

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (APA, 2000)

bleiben, ängstlich sind und nicht gut damit umgehen können? Ein großer Unterschied ist die individuelle Resilienz. In diesem Artikel beschreibe ich die drei Säulen der psychischen Resilienz und stelle Möglichkeiten vor, wie man empirisches Wissen aus dem Gebiet der positiven Psychologie auf das persönliche sowie auch aufs Berufsleben anwenden kann.

Abstract

It may seem as if the sky is falling with war, environmental degradation, global climate change, an ongoing pandemic, and political chaos. Adding to all of this is the financial impact to our daily lives seen at the grocery store or gas station. The cognitive dissonance is too much for even the hardest of us to manage. And yet some do. What is the difference between those who can adapt to difficult circumstances and move forward and others who find themselves psychologically stuck, fearful, and less able to function? One major difference is an individual's resiliency. In this article, I outline the three pillars of psychological resiliency and outline opportunities to apply empirical knowledge from the field of positive psychology to one's personal and professional life.

Zusammenfassung

Es mag scheinen, als würde der Himmel einstürzen angesichts von Krieg, Umweltzerstörung, globaler Erderwärmung, einer anhaltenden Pandemie und politischem Chaos. Dazu kommt noch die finanzielle Auswirkung in unserem Alltag, welche wir im Lebensmittelgeschäft und an der Tankstelle wahrnehmen. Die kognitive Dissonanz ist zu viel, sogar für die Widerstandsfähigsten unter uns. Und dennoch schaffen es manche. Was ist der Unterschied zwischen jenen, die sich anpassen und voranschreiten können, und jenen, die psychisch stecken

I had the opportunity to study positive psychology before it became a popular field, and I am happy to say that in the past two decades the field is deeply rooted in empirical studies and evidence. I studied under Howard Gardner and examined multiple intelligence theory at the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University; with flow theory with Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi at the University of Chicago; and attachment theory as a clinical intern at the Tavistock in London. I was interested in what makes individuals and groups able to move forward in times of painful setbacks.

Understanding happiness is an age-old pursuit. Aristotle said "happiness is the supreme good and all else that man does in life is in pursuit of attaining happiness"; Cicero wrote that "there is no fool who is happy; and no wise man who is not"; Montaigne argued, after a great deal of soul searching, that the purpose and overall goal of life is happiness and in order to do so we must understand ourselves and our identity; and perhaps my favorite comes from Zhuangzi who said "happiness is the absence of striving for happiness." The latter reflection is what numerous studies reflect to us today.

If you want to make yourself unhappy, then focus on being self-conscious. This means comparing yourself with others, closely monitoring how you come across to others, and perhaps spending too much time in the mirror... and social media. I am not at all against social media, but a regular diet of just cookies makes you sick and a regular diet of social media does the same. We know that after a period of engaging in social media we feel less happy with ourselves and our lives. And capi-