Resilience and Coping Strategies: Learning to Become Resilient

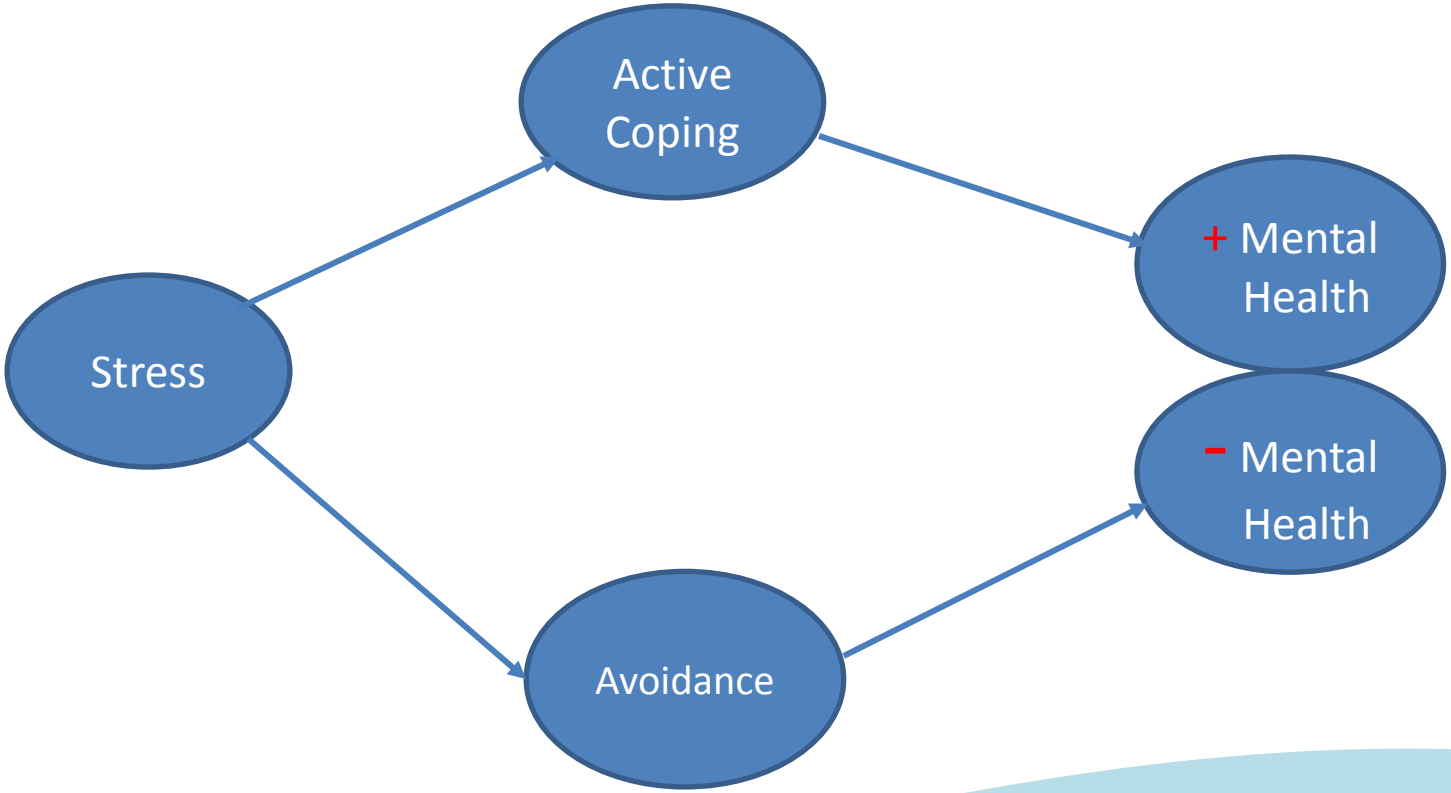
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Resilient Individuals, Coping, and Mental Health

- The diathesis theory suggested that stress may activate vulnerability, which negatively impacts mental health.
- When encountering a stressful situation, the process by which individuals deal with the situation plays a more vital role in influencing the outcome than do factors such as intelligence and social support.
- Not every coping process leads to a positive outcome.


Active Coping
Stress
+ Mental Health
- Mental Health
Avoidance

Resilient Individuals, Coping, and Mental Health

- Stress→ active coping→ positive mental health
- Stress→ avoidance→ negative mental health
- Resilient individuals tend to use active coping strategies to deal with stressful situations. Consequently, resilient individuals tend to show good mental health.

Resilience In The Coping Process

Resilience might occur in the coping process when

- (a) the risk impact is being reduced,
- (b) the negative chain reactions are being reduced,
- (c) self-esteem and self-efficacy are being established, and
- (d) positive opportunities are available.

Resilience models

- The first model is the compensatory model. According to this model, the impact of a stressful event could be counteracted by individuals' personal strength. For example, individuals who are more socially competent may adapt better than their socially incompetent counterparts in the same school bus accident.

Resilience models (cont'd)

- The second model was the challenge model. In this model, individuals' adaptability could be enhanced by a moderately stressful event. However, excessive stress would negatively influence individuals' adaptability. For example, a moderate level of test anxiety might help individuals focus on solving a mathematics question.

Resilience models (cont'd)

- In the third model, the conditional model, personal characteristics served as modulators of the negative impact on individuals. Certain characteristics might reduce the negative impact of a stressful event while other characteristics might increase the impact of the same event. For example, when threatened by a parental divorce, children's faith in God might buffer the impact. On the other hand, an insecure attachment pattern might worsen the impact.

Resilience Is A Product of Interaction and Integration

- As stressors or challenges exist, they activate both risk factors and protective factors in individuals' environmental contexts. These factors then interact with individuals' internal characteristics. The outcome of the interaction decides the level of adaptation and resilience reintegration, ranging from maladaptive reintegration to resilient reintegration.

The Development of Resilience

- Resilience develops from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in their families and relationships, and in their communities.

Effect of Trait Resilience

- Can trait resilience predict active coping across different cultures?
- Can trait resilience predict active coping across time?
- Can trait resilience mediate the effect of stress on problem-solving?
- Can trait resilience moderate the effect of stress on avoidance?

Effect of Trait Resilience (cont'd)

- Findings: Trait resilience can predict active coping across cultures and across time. Although trait resilience can mediate the effect of stress on problem-solving, it cannot moderate stress's effect on avoidance.

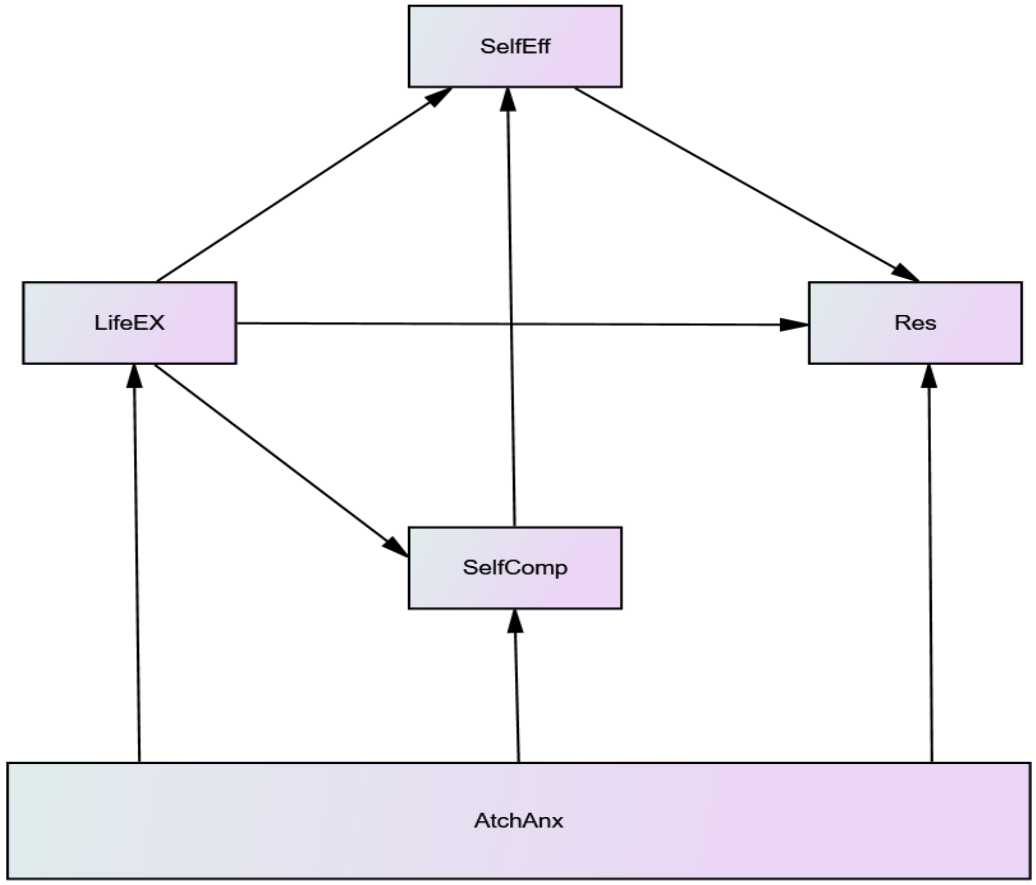
Resilience and Learning

- Can trait resilience be learned from life experiences?
- In the process of learning to become resilient, do stress, generalized anxiety, attachment avoidance, and attachment anxiety impact the influence of life experience-learning on resilience?

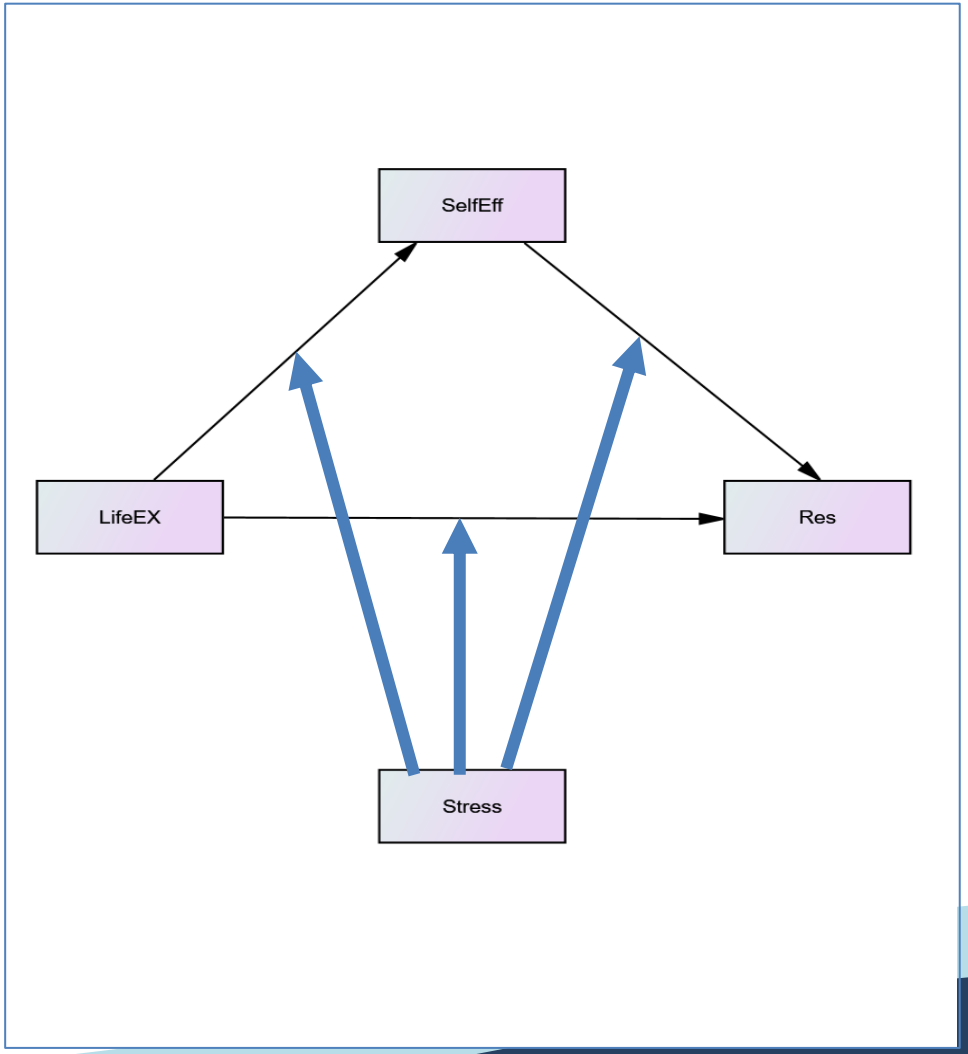
Resilience and Learning (cont'd)

- Findings: Trait resilience can be learned through life experiences. Life experience-learning could directly influence trait resilience and indirectly influence resilience via self-efficacy and self-compassion. Stress and generalized anxiety do not significantly impact the process of learning to become resilient. However, attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety can each negatively influence the process.

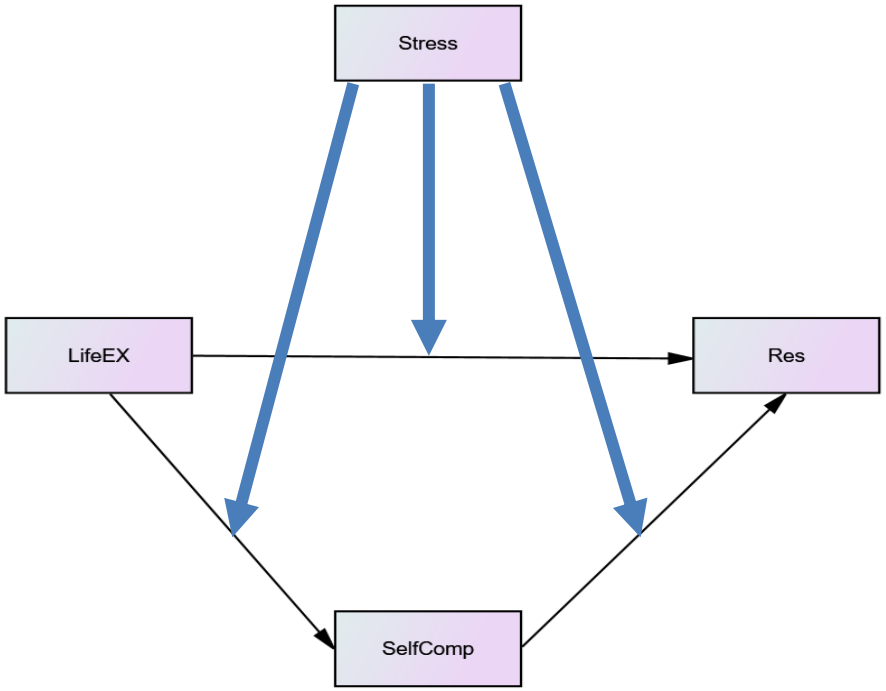
The Path Model



Stress Moderating Direct and Indirect (Via Self-Efficacy) Effect of Life Experience-Learning on Resilience



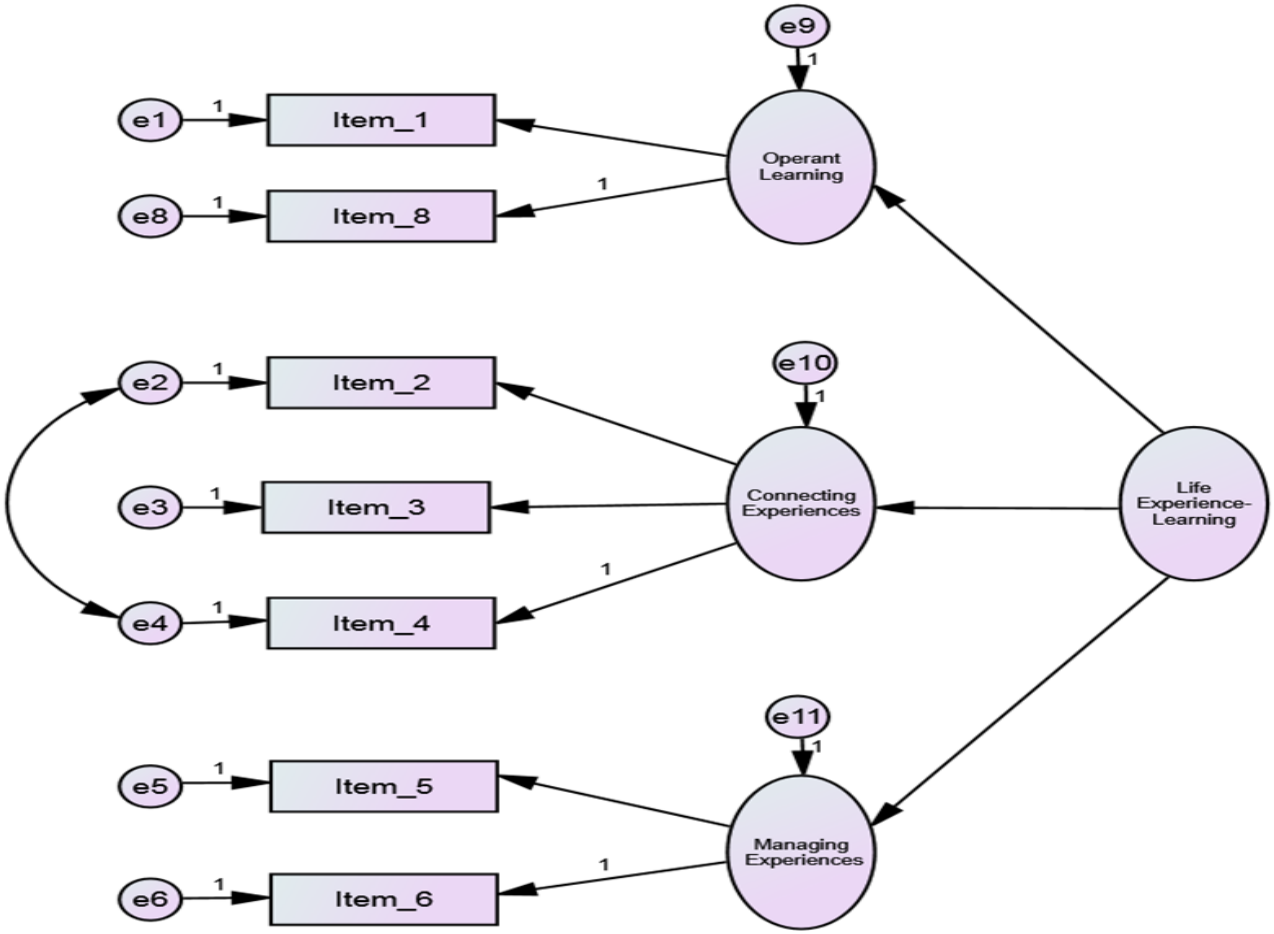
Stress Moderating Direct and Indirect (Via Self-Compassion) Effect of Life Experience-Learning on Resilience



Resilience and Learning (cont'd)

- Findings suggest mental health practitioners add a new ingredient, life experience-learning, to resilience development programs. In addition, resilience programs can be more effective when attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance are dealt with.

Life Experience-Learning



Incorporating "Life Experience-Learning" Into Traditional Approaches To Counseling And Psychotherapy

- (1) Looking back on the clients' past successful adaptations to developmentally appropriate difficult situations.
- (2) Identifying personal, family, school, or community resources that supported them to adapt to the situations.

Incorporating "Life Experience-Learning" Into Traditional Approaches To Counseling And Psychotherapy

- (3) Describing in a step-by-step manner how they used these resources to adapt to the situations.
- (4) Identifying a current developmental difficulty and documenting day-to-day adaptation experience in a daily resilience log.

Incorporating "Life Experience-Learning" Into Traditional Approaches To Counseling And Psychotherapy

- (5) Counselors may want to direct the clients to review their less successful adaptation experiences and deal with negative feelings associated with these experiences, and guide them to explore resources that could have been used to yield a more positive outcome.

Incorporating "Life Experience-Learning" Into Traditional Approaches To Counseling And Psychotherapy

- (6) Although trait resilience activates an active attitude toward life stressors, it does not seem to greatly influence students' active coping. Resiliency skills such as cognitive flexibility and self-regulation may also be required to influence individuals to cope actively.