



Appreciative Inquiry: Resilience Across Professions

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Introduction

- **Objective:** Build a theory of resilience by identifying common behavior and themes between our literature review and appreciative inquiry interviews with individuals across four professions.
- **Preliminary Reading**
 - *The Resilient Organization*
 - *How Resilience Works*
 - *The Stockdale Paradox*
- **Literature Review**
 - Each researcher conducted both broad and profession based literature research
- **Appreciative inquiry Interviews**
 - Each researcher used the Appreciative inquiry method to interview members of a particular profession
- **Theory of Resilience**

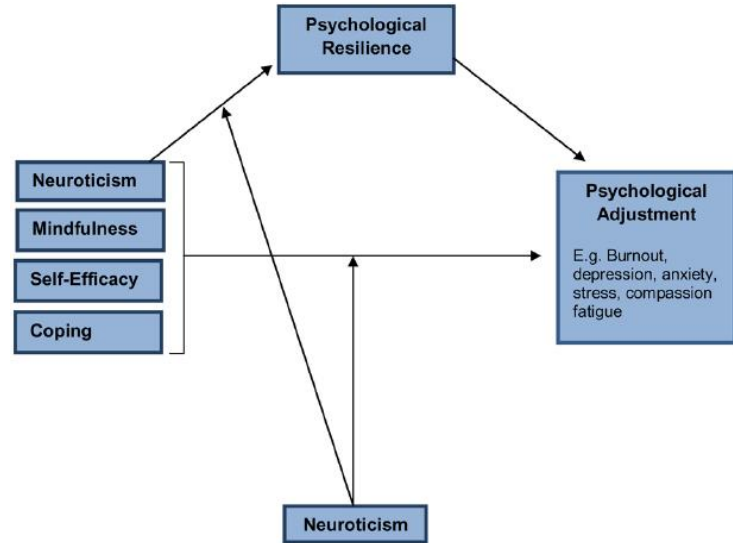
Literature Review

Bryden

- “Understanding Individual Resilience in the Workplace”
- “Workplace Team Resilience”
- “Auditor Strong: A CPA Plan for Resilience”

Claire

- “Why Lawyer Burnout is Still an Issue in 2021”
- “Lawyers and the ABA Must Show Resilience in Tackling Pandemic Challenges”
- “The Bounce Back Factor”



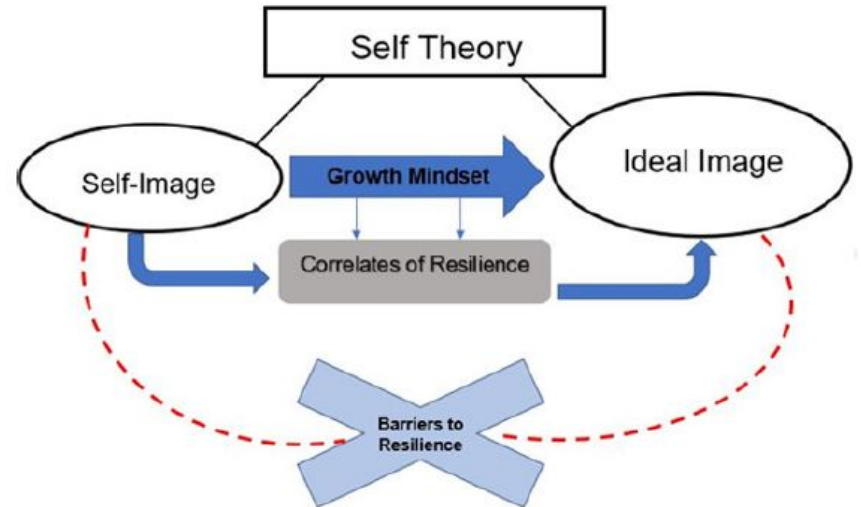
Literature Review

Kaley

- “During COVID-19, Dancers Must Reframe What It Means to be Resilient”
- “11 COVID-19 Business Lessons Dance Studio Owners Have Learned So Far”

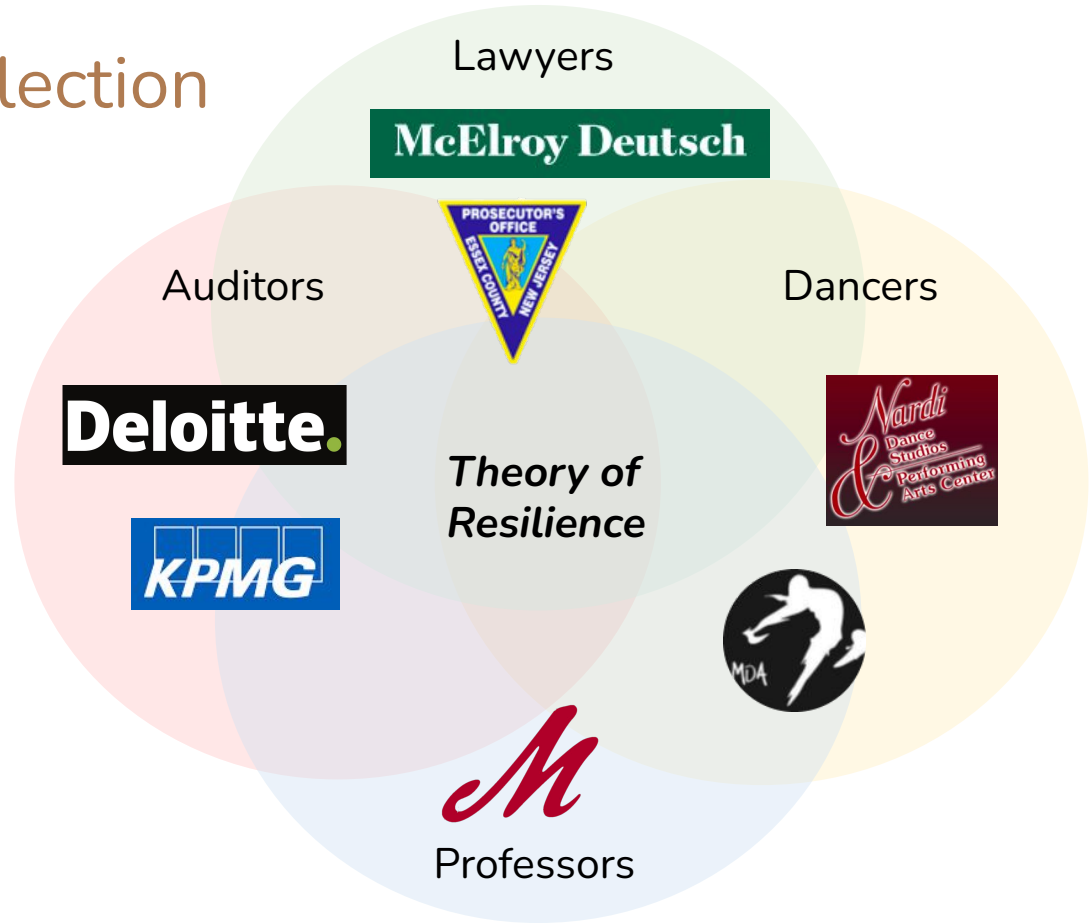
Dougie

- “Faculty Resilience in Higher Education: A Review of the Literature”
- “The Science of Resilience: How to Teach Students to Persevere”



Method & Data Collection

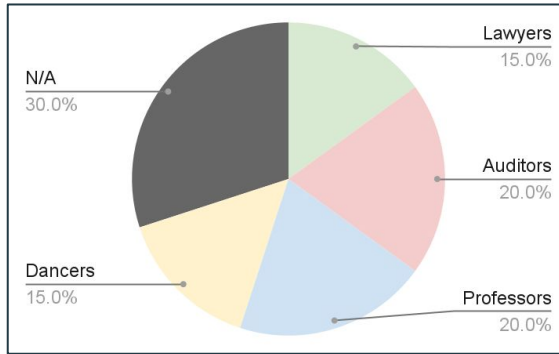
- 4 professions based on our desired fields of interest
- 5 interviewees from each profession
- 20 total interviews to pool common themes from



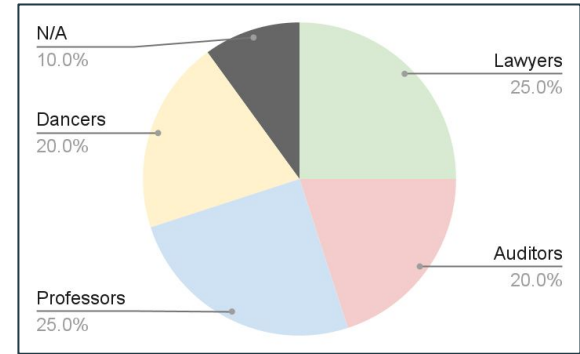
Our Questionnaire

1. How did you overcome a period of extreme pressure?
2. Tell me about a time when you used momentum to push through a difficult situation?
3. Has there been a time where you were working towards a goal that you did not achieve? How did you move on?
4. How did you bounce back from negative feedback?
5. Tell me about a challenge in your personal life that affected your ability to maintain a high level of performance in your professional life.
6. Has there been a time when you leaned on those around you to push through difficult times?
7. How have your leaders, mentors, etc. promoted resilience?
8. Tell me about a time when you helped others stay resilient in a leadership role.
9. How has the COVID-19 pandemic forced you to adapt and innovate?

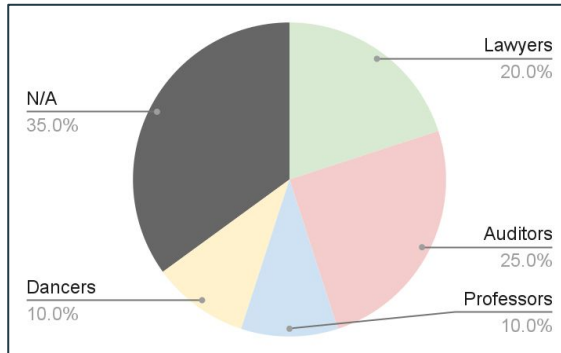
Notable Statistics



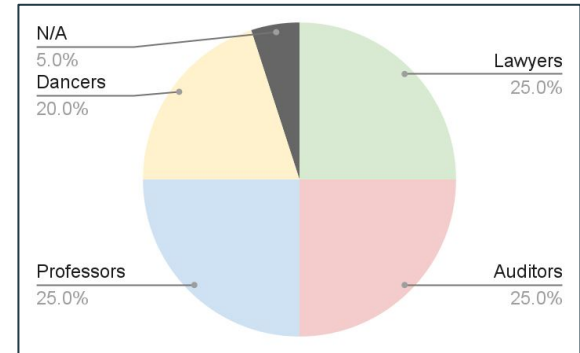
Frequent communication w/ coworkers is vital



Negative feedback provides an opportunity for growth



Mentioned the importance of a stable personal life



Bounced back from a failing to accomplish a major goal

Major Themes

Supportive Professional Network

- Boston University audit facilitated exceptional comradery and trust between team members

“Given the nature of my work, my colleagues and I deal with a number of horrific cases and we deal with an underserved community where people are often extremely vulnerable after being victimized. It is during these times that many of us rely on colleagues for support and encouragement to go forward.”

- Prosecutor Thomas Fennelly

Stability in personal life

- Dance professor noted importance of husband to staying grounded in professional life
- Family supported science professor while child was in hospital

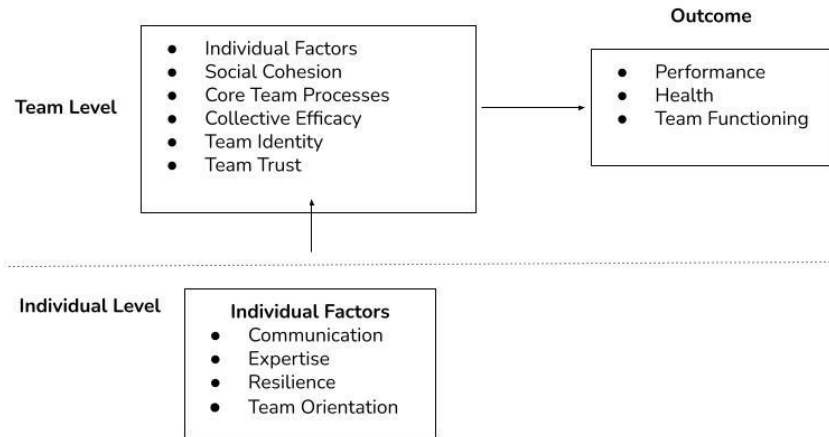


Figure 2: A Multilevel Model of Workplace Team Resilience

Major Themes

Maintain a positive attitude, even during periods of extreme stress

- Examples
 - Avis Budget Group audit
 - Natural science professors and COVID-19
- Self-efficacy
- Reframing of major stressors (coping)

Recognize that goals can be achieved if you don't quit during times of stress because it is worth it in the long run

- Examples
 - When a case does not go their way or they do not get a particular outcome for their client → bounce back, regroup, and make a new plan
 - Failing a section of CPA right before starting at KPMG → chose to start work full time while continuing to study for the exam
 - The Stockdale Paradox

Major Themes

Don't take negative feedback personally, maintain a growth mindset and realize that there is opportunity to learn

- Examples
 - Professor being turned down for grant proposals got feedback, edited them, then resubmitted.
 - Ties back to the article on Growth Mindset.
 - Studio-owner developed an open-mind and created a survey for feedback from parents of students

Outliers

Auditors

- One step at a time
- Frequent short breaks

Dancers

- Rely on what others in the industry are doing
- Dancing over Zoom

Professors

- Mapping it out, set a schedule, and get to work
- Focus on the factors that are in our control, and don't stress about the factors that we can't.

Lawyers

- Plow through the work to get it out of the way

Surprises

- How vulnerable the professionals were willing to make themselves
- Common themes amongst such different professions
- Diversity of advice tailored to each profession

Our Theory of Resilience

Resilience is an acquired characteristic. The social bonds and psychological tactics that strengthen individuals and teams during periods of adversity can be learned or developed. Strong social bonds are important to both individual and team resilience. Individuals require a stable personal life and a supportive professional network to maximize their focus on overcoming adversity. Teams and organizations benefit from social cohesion that enhances their collective ability to push through hardship. Resilient individuals harness a positive attitude, a willingness to make short term sacrifices for long term benefit, and maintenance of a growth mindset. Such psychological tactics are vital to empowering individuals to bend but not break and potentially grow from adverse experiences.



Personal Takeaways

Q & A