

Building Resilience



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Resilience Building

Resilience Characteristics and Practices

- Personal & relational
- Spiritual
- Physical

**Shape preparation, training, ongoing support,
and crisis care**

The TREASURE comes in JARS OF CLAY

Accepting our humanity points to the “surpassing power”

Sending Workers into High Risk Environments

- Important work areas are HIGH RISK environments
- Workers are increasingly targets of hostage taking, violence, and crime; need to evacuate more often
- In some countries Christian workers are persecuted, which may include expatriates
- It is often NOT just once, but recurrent events

Common Traumas in CCW Service

Death of a Loved One

Relationship Conflict without a Resolution

Car Accident

Civil War/Unrest

Serious Illness

Burglary

Intense Surveillance

Natural Disaster

Denial of Visa

Bomb Threat

Impact of Multiple Traumas

Work Location	Impairing Post-traumatic Stress
Europe	7 %
West-Africa	21 %
VERY high risk WA	30 %
People in USA	6 %

Resilience

... is having the strength to fulfill the call God has given us, even when we know it will be painful and difficult- staying fixed on the higher purpose, motivated by love, supported by friends while realizing that they can let us down, carried by the One who called us.

Preparing and Supporting to *Build Resilience*

Workers need to be equipped to live in situations of

- high ongoing stress,
- adversity, and
- trauma risk.

Doing well requires additional equipment and training!

Resilience

- A resilience concept teaching tool
- Importance of the time factor in “getting back into shape”
- **STRENGTH - Resilience**
can be built or trained -
but even the most resilient
will brake under too much load



Building Resilience:

Assess and Strengthen

- **Personal, Relational**
 - **Spiritual**
 - **Physical**
- Resilience Characteristics**



- Personal Assessment → Growth Plan
- Spiritual Readiness → Growth Plan (home, organization)
- Medical Evaluation → Stress Management Skills

Seven strengths that promote resilience

Personal

and

Interpersonal



Which personal strengths promote resilience?

- Sense of **purpose and meaning**
 - God's calling to His global work
- Sense of **collaborative control**
- Ability to **actively** cope with stress
- **Flexibility** and adaptability

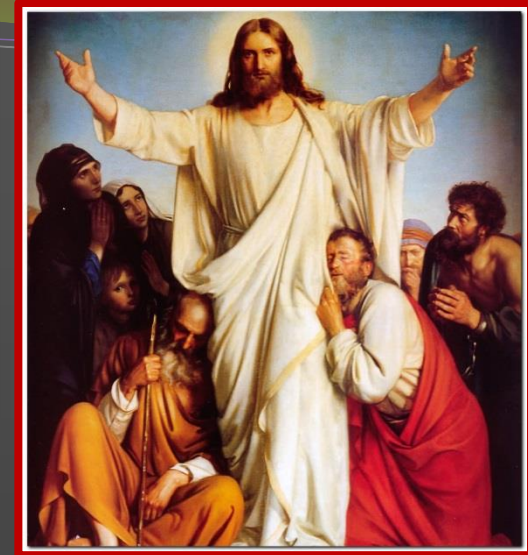


Which interpersonal strengths promote resilience?

- Ability to **connect well with others**
- **Social support** is in place
- (Local and Organizational) **culture**
that is **graceful towards distress**



The Master's Resilience



Flexibility

Graceful culture

Purpose and meaning

Connecting well

Collaborative control

Social support

Active coping skills

Spiritual Readiness

**What spiritual characteristics or abilities
are we looking for in candidates
for high risk environments?**

Protective Spiritual Factors



Time

Pre-trauma Characteristics

- **Biblically sound theology of suffering**
- **Motivated by God and his purposes rather than by the benefits of faith**
- Ability to **forgive** others
- *Regular* **faith community participation and spiritual practice**

Ability to form supportive relationships in faith community

Knowing and receiving grace (*accept human vulnerability*)

Ability to accept and deal with difficult feelings

Spiritual Factors and Trauma



Post-Trauma Adjustment Factors

- **Support** by faith community
- Prayer
- **Forgiveness & Grace**
- **(Re-)Connecting with God's presence**

Unhealthy Responses:

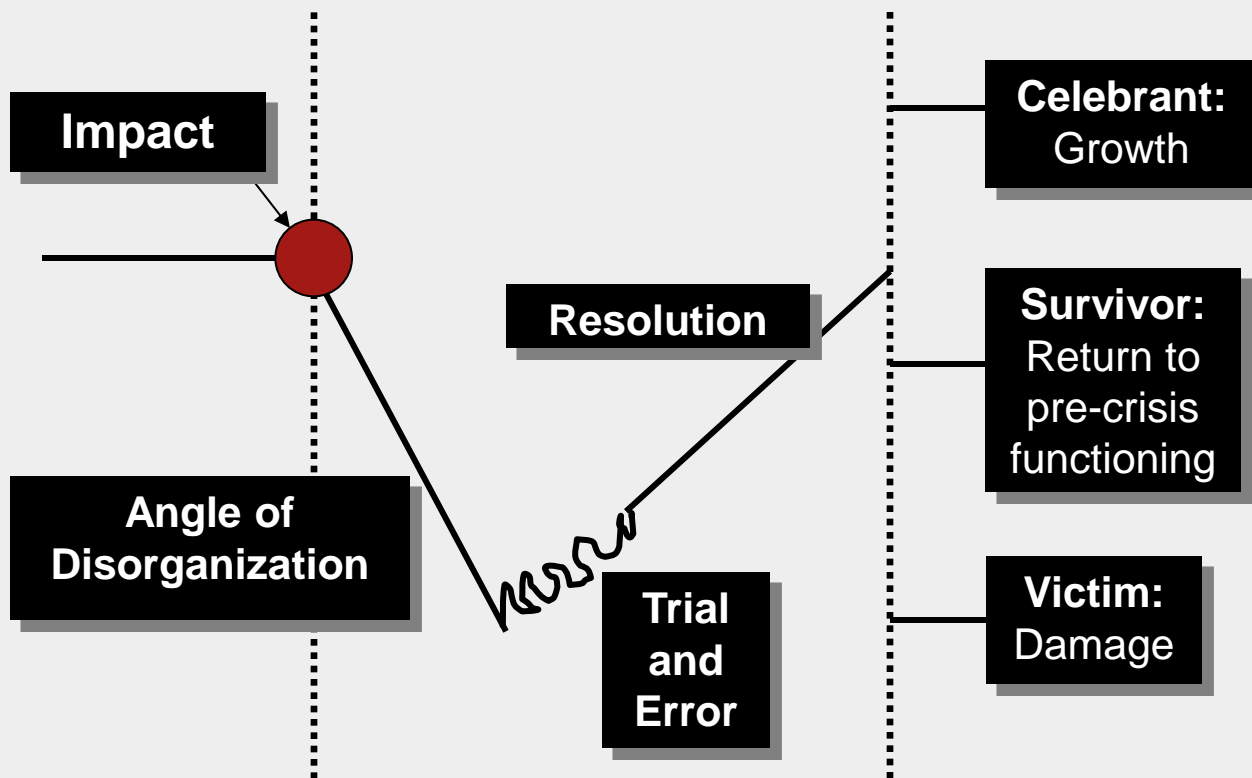
- Trauma as punishment from God
- Sense of abandonment by God
- Doubting God's love and power

Victim Survivor or Celebrant?

PRE-CRISIS

CRISIS

POST-CRISIS



Growth in Suffering: Rom 5: 3-5

We also glory in our sufferings,
because we know that suffering produces perseverance;
perseverance, character; and character, HOPE.

And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

TAKE A HAPPY BREAK !



Best Practices in High Risk Assignments

DEVELOP A MEMBER CARE PROTOCOL for

1. Appointment/Assignment Process

How should leaders determine strategy and assignments in light of varying levels of risk? Are some strategies or assignments too risky?

2. Orientation/Preparation Process

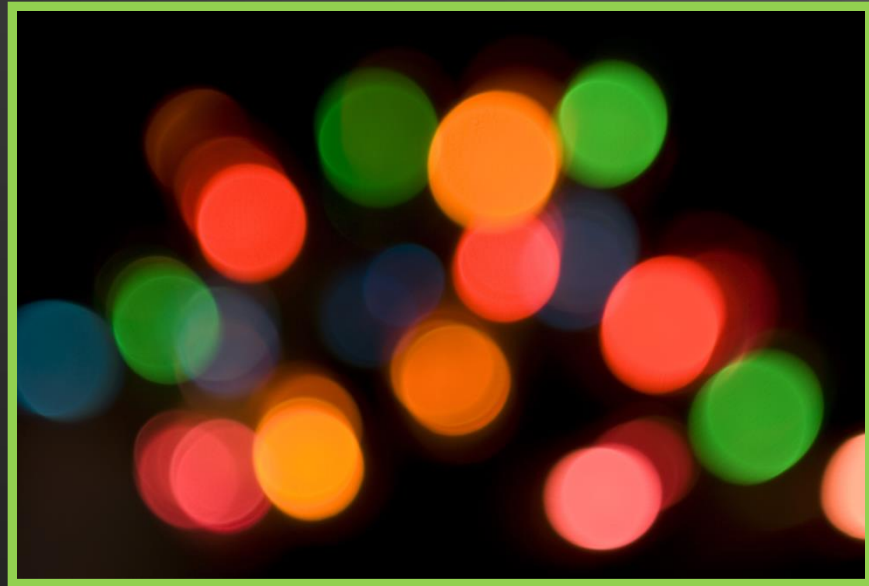
In light of the cultural views of suffering prevalent in many churches, how can workers be prepared for risk and suffering before going into hostile environments?

3. Ongoing Member Care

What member care systems or services are needed for workers while in high-risk assignments?

Highlights

- Theology of Suffering
- Grace
- Forgiveness
- Lament
- God's Presence



Theology of Suffering

- **Discrepancy** between prior beliefs and perception of the traumatic event increases distress
- **Personal reflection** on a sound theology of suffering will provide some protection
- Resource: Scott Shaum's *Theology of Suffering Worksheet* in *Trauma & Resilience Handbook*

Theology of Suffering - Caveats

● “WHY?”

An answer to this question is **NOT** the answer!

- Honoring others' losses is crucial, rather than minimize or spiritualize their pain
- This question is often about pain, spiritual confusion, and disconnect from God and people

“When those who are grieving ask passionate questions, remember that **their questions do not come from an inquisitive mind but from a disappointed soul.** Questions asked in anger often don't have answers because they aren't questions...” Wangerin

Spiritual Resources after Trauma



Pain

Self-accusation

Blame Others

Guilt

or

Shame

“I am bad”

“I did something bad”

God's Resources for Emotional Pain

SHAME

Grace

I see you
I know you
I love you

I will be with
you regardless



GUILT

Forgiveness

Responsibility
God's justice
Consequence

In Christ you
are forgiven and
can forgive

Lost Sense of God's Presence

Disrupted by

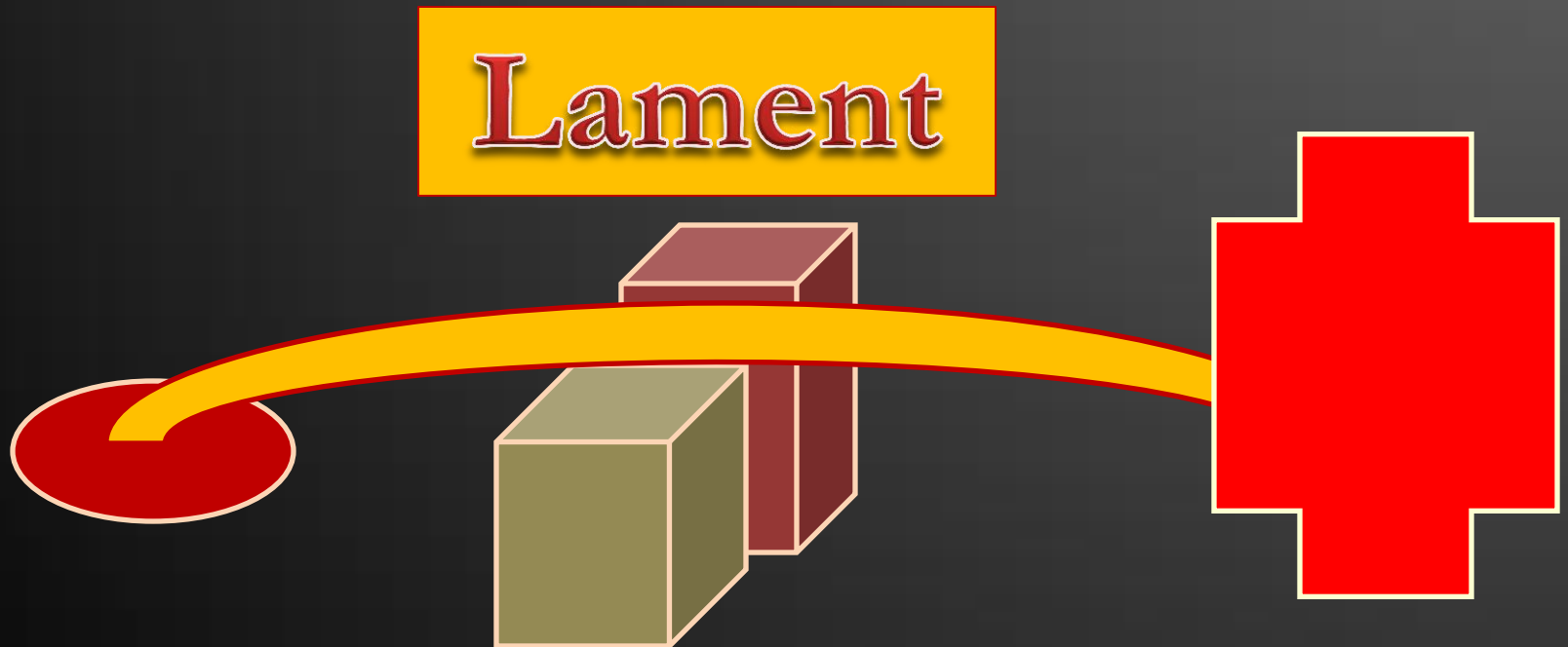
- Disorientation, confusion
- Anger, guilt, shame
- Intense hurt, sorrow
- Sense of Being Abandoned

- Depression
- Emotional numbing



Lament

- to express sorrow, mourning, or regret - often demonstratively or passionately



God's Presence – The Way to Restoration

Connection with God by

- Presence, practical support
- Prayer, intercession
- **Rituals, e.g. communion**
- **Songs, images, items, stories, memorized texts**
- Awareness of **God IN us**



- What are the things that stood out for you today?
- What do you want to find out more about and/or incorporate into your work?



PPT, Handouts, (e-)book link

www.TraumaResilience.com

> Training Materials