



BUILDING SOCIAL RESILIENCE IN NURSING

Workbook

Philip Callahan, Ph.D, EMTP
Michael Wm. Marks, Ph.D., ABPP
Heidi Kosanke, MS-Ed, RN
Wanda Larson, PhD, RN, CEN
Patty Wilger, MS, RN
Kenneth Oja, PhD, RN
Christine Pasquet, MSN, RN
Deborah Williams, PhD, MPH, RN
Pam Fick, MS, MBA

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Resilience and Integrative Nursing

Do you remember when you first realized you wanted to be a nurse? When you felt *called*? For those of you who are students that revelation is probably fresh in your minds. For those of you who have been in healthcare, that spark may seem a distant memory, yet when pushed, you will admit to that passion.

While that passion may drive us, it is important to recognize that burnout, posttraumatic stress, and even suicide are far too common in the nursing community. The very passion that brought you to this profession can sometimes contribute to these problems. This workbook will introduce you to an evidence-based program to increase your personal resilience as well as that of those closest to you, your social support system. You will examine positive coping skills and how to apply them to yourself, your social support system and your community in the context of the principles of integrative nursing.

The *goal* of this workbook is to foster resilience, the development and use of skills needed to manage stress, by applying positive-coping skills to personal challenges and by developing and sustaining a social support system in the context of integrative nursing. There are a number of *key objectives* or *steps* to achieve that goal that include:

- Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience through positive-coping skills and social support system.
- Relate the principles of integrative nursing to resilience and the social support system.
- Relate past challenges to resilient positive-coping skills.
- Apply resilient positive-coping skills to current challenges in conjunction with a member of your social support system.
- Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of resilient positive-coping skills.
- Create a personal social support system based on your needs with attention to why you are selecting those individuals.
- Identify how you will sustain a social support system over time.

Introduction

“It's not the stress that kills us, it's our reaction to it.”
--Hans Selye

It is unrealistic to expect that we can be immersed in critical healthcare and not be affected by it. Indeed, we can look to decades of research and see just how much we are affected by these work-related exposures and stressors (Marks, Callahan & Grill, 2018).

While stress will affect us both mentally and physically in a variety of ways, one of the more frequent terms we hear is that of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD. PTSD can follow an event or cumulative events where one experiences a potential or actual loss of life or a traumatic event that results in a sense of helplessness or horror. This might show as anxiety or fear-based symptoms, uneasiness, an inability to experience pleasure, externalizing anger or aggressive symptoms, and detachment. These symptoms could appear as avoidance, numbing, blame of self or others, persisting poor emotional state, difficulty concentrating, and reckless or destructive behavior (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Why is PTSD so critical? A very high percentage of all individuals who die by suicide have at least one identifiable psychiatric disorder (Bertolote, Fleischmann, De Leo, & Wasserman, 2004; Bolton, James, Gunnell, & Turecki, 2015; Ilgen, Bohnert, Ignacio, McCarthy, Valenstein, Kim, & Blow, 2010). Thus, those individuals dealing with PTSD are potentially at higher risk of suicide (Sareen, Cox, Stein, Affi, Fleet, & Asmundson, 2007; Sareen, Houlahan, Cox, & Asmundson, 2005).

A tragic consequence of these personal struggles can lead to completing suicide. Suicide is problematic across the caregiver community, from physicians to first responders (Davis, Detre, Ford, Hansbrough, Hendin, Laszlo, J., ... & Miles, 2003; Newland, Barber, Rose, & Young, 2015; Stanley, Hom, & Joiner, 2016). A female nurse, for example, is four times more likely to complete suicide than other women (Nurses at Risk, 2018).

Increases in nursing turnover have led the profession to consider the causes and methods to address this loss (Bae, Mark, & Fried, 2010; Cleary, Hunt, & Horsfall, 2010; Sumner & Townsend-Rocchiccioli, 2003). The reasons for nurses leaving the profession are complex and range from bullying to burnout (Meadors, Lamson, Swanson, White, & Sira, 2010; Poncet, Toullic, Papazian, Kentish-Barnes, Timsit, Pochard, F., ... & Azoulay, 2007). Nearly 25% of nurses entering the profession leave a position within their first year of practice (American Sociological Association, 2014). Some 27% of nurses cite stress and burnout as the reason for leaving the profession all together (Spector, 2015).

Compassion fatigue and secondary trauma stress have also been recognized as problems in the nursing profession (Dominguez-Gomez & Rutledge, 2009; Hooper, Craig, Janvrin, Wetsel, & Reimels, 2010). The uneasiness regarding the nursing shortage, both nationally and internationally, is compelling (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2011; Fox & Abrahamson, 2009; Janiszewski, 2003; Kuehn, 2007; Oulton, 2006).

There are, however, protective factors for the workplace stressors we face. The concept of resilience has emerged as a process for investigating the impact of stress. Resilience has since fostered research in education and clinical applications addressing stress, PTSD and suicide. The definition of resilience varies depending upon focus from clinical and educational perspectives. Resilience can be the development of skills needed to manage stress in an optimal way, or an ability, perception or set of beliefs which buffer individuals from the development of suicidality in the face of risk factors or stressors (Johnson, Wood, Gooding, Taylor, & Tarrier, 2011; Markel, Trujillo, Callahan, & Marks, 2010). Emerging resilience models favor social connectives, or social support, as protective for reducing suicide risk (Gunderson & Grill, 2014; Klonsky & May, 2015; O'Connor, 2011; Stanley et al., 2015).

The World Health Organization advocates for resilience at individual and community levels by recognizing the role of protective factors relative to suicide risk factors. Protective factors include

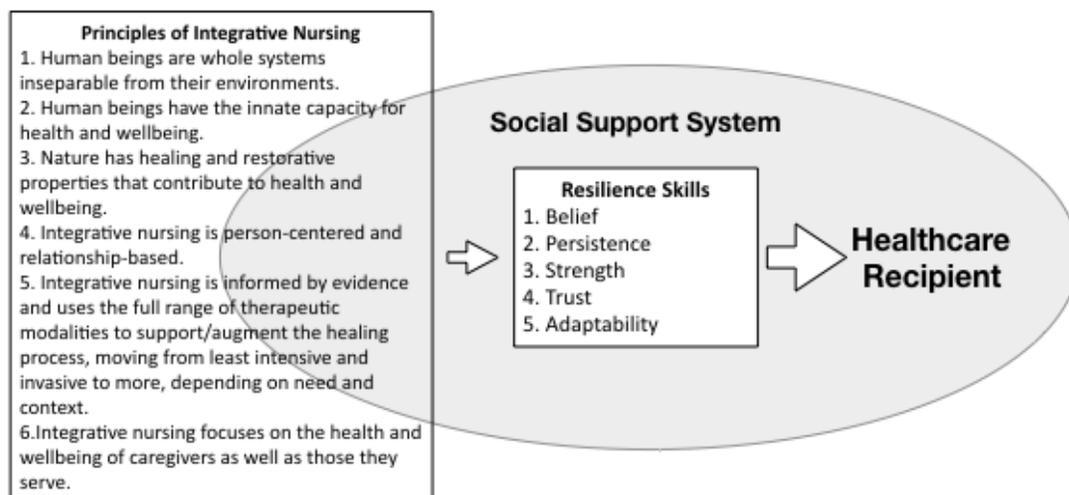
development and sustainment of social support systems, spirituality as an access to a socially cohesive and supportive community with a shared set of values, and lifestyle practices of positive coping strategies, good self-esteem, self-efficacy and effective problem-solving skills. This includes the ability to reach out and find help when needed (Suicide, 2014).

Unfortunately, the stigma of illness associated with mental health, or behavioral health, often prevents us from reaching out. We can instead focus more on educational practice rather than on the pathology of mental health to create opportunity for awareness and learning. We can develop a program about mental armor, thereby educating ourselves to become resilient. This requires a commitment to honestly educate ourselves and explore behaviors and attitudes that may challenge long held beliefs on how we view others, our world, and ourselves.

A substantial body of evidence-based research supports both resilience and effective learning. The resilience skills presented here are representative of this research as are the methods for learning these skills. We refer to these resilience skills as positive-coping skills because our intent is to take a personal challenge and create a more positive and less stressful outcome (Suicide, 2014). We title these skills Belief, Persistence, Strength, Trust, and Adaptability for our learning. They serve as a personal protective factor and help us to sustain our social support systems. We will define social support system as two or more people who can work together to solve a challenge. And, it is a system where everyone has a specific role to play to solve a challenge. That means, when you encounter a difficult challenge, the people you may want in your support system are those who have skills or qualities you need to effectively deal with the challenge. One way we can sustain our social support systems is by mentoring them in resilience, using positive-coping skills, to create a common language of support.

In addition to donning mental armor to better protect us from work related stresses, there is the added benefit that we are better preparing ourselves to deal with the rigors of health education. These skills and the associated learning methods contribute to academic success (Galatzer-Levy, Burton, & Bonanno, 2012; Hartley, 2011; Martin & Marsh, 2006; Martin & Marsh, 2008).

Resilience as a developed social support system and a practice of using positive coping skills provides a foundation to integrative nursing. We define integrative nursing as a framework for providing whole person/whole system care that is relationship-based, person-centered, and focused on improving health and wellbeing (Kreitzer & Koithan, 2014; Kreitzer, 2015). As healthcare providers we become a supportive element of the patient's social support system.



Given we are a diverse audience having differing backgrounds in resilience, our instructional method is constructivist, or more specifically learner-centered (Weimer, 2002). This approach is consistent with medical education and provides flexibility and control to better attain a level of learning that meets with personal expectations while assuring a level of competency meeting the program objectives (Martin & Marsh, 2006). Typical of a learner-centered setting, we use problem-based learning to solve relevant personal challenges rather than fabricating challenges for you to solve (Schmidt & Moust, 2000). Learning is facilitated, not by direct lecture, but by providing leading questions that direct you through problem-based learning in a self-paced manner.

The self-paced process begins by examining each skill simply, to provide awareness and scope without complexity. As you become more proficient with a skill, you can drill deeper for more information and use the citations provided for further reference. Skills are presented as memory aids or flashcards, each having a brief definition *about* the skill, *why* the skill is important, *how* to apply the skill, and an *example* demonstrating the skill being used to meet a challenge (Cobb & Bowers, 1999). The resilience skill flashcards are used across three exercises, or contexts, to improve transfer-of-learning and make the skills memorable, that is, easier to remember (Bjork & Richardson-Klavehn, 1989; Eich, 1985; Van Merriënboer, Kirschner, & Kester, 2003). Transfer-of-learning means that you are able to take learning from one situation and successfully apply it to another situation—this is sometimes very difficult to do. By sharing these flashcards with your friends and family, you develop yet another attribute of being resilient, that is, working in a supportive community of people sharing similar beliefs and values. Each skill is composed of three exercises followed by a self-evaluation.

Tell your story. In the first exercise, following the overview of the skill, we ask that you recall a past challenge where you have had success using something like the skill. For example, if we are examining the skill of Persistence, think about when you used something like Persistence to deal with a personal challenge. By answering the questions, you link the new skill format to a past success. This makes the new learning more memorable and you tend to look at the new learning in a more positive manner (Andersson & Conley, 2013; Race, Badre, & Wagner, 2009). This first exercise, *Tell your story*, helps you to develop self-efficacy, an attribute of being resilient. Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to complete tasks and successfully reach goals (Bandura, 1982; Margolis & McCabe, 2006).

Collaborate. In the second exercise, we ask that you work with an associate and consider a challenge you, your partner or someone you know is currently facing. Being able to effectively interact with another person is an essential part of the process of becoming resilient and sustaining your social support system (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2014; Lochhead & Whimbey, 1987).

Pursuing social support encourages empathy, communication, and the act of reaching out to one another, especially so when problem-solving a challenge that has relevance or meaning to you. Empathy is often described as putting aside one's own beliefs and instead "seeing through the eyes of another" or "walking in the shoes of another." It is important to understand that empathy is not the same as sympathy, rather it is a critical thinking skill to help give you insight. Who you want to work with is up to you, but initially consider someone with whom you are comfortable communicating such as a family member, friend, or associate. This might be someone you would consider as having a role in your social support system. Working with a child, teen, or young adult? This exercise presents an opportunity to work with a challenge that he or she is facing using the resilience skill (DeBerard, Spielmans & Julka, 2004; Martin & Marsh, 2006).

Your goal in this second exercise is to use the information provided on the resilience skill flashcard to resolve the challenge. Write your challenge and your skill solution to the challenge. If you are working in a classroom environment, post your outcome with other groups' outcomes from the class. Through this

learning process, you can observe how social support systems apply positive coping skills to solve real life challenges. In completing this second exercise, *Collaborate*, helps you to recognize the crucial importance of a social support system, bolsters your self-efficacy, self-esteem, empathy, and your ability to problem-solve and reach out to others (Bandura, 1993).

Own it. In the third exercise, we ask that you take a few minutes and reflect upon the skill you have just examined and describe the skill in your own words. If you are time limited, then reflect upon the skill, and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you, perhaps a more workable definition or how you might use it. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you (Bromage & Mayer, 1986). If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support. Completing this exercise helps you to develop self-efficacy and empathy through observation of the diversity of results.

If you have ample time and are with a group of people, this exercise can be worked in three parts. The first part of the exercise is an oral warmup to assure everyone has a basic understanding. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this oral exercise. Ask the group “What is a word, words or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill?” The facilitator makes sure that everyone who wishes has an opportunity to orally describe the skill.

Next, reflect upon the skill, and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

Finally, if more time is available, finding a memorable quotation can be a powerful way to personalize and adapt the skill. For example, the introductory Selye quotation “It's not the stress that kills us, it's our reaction to it” is a forceful reminder. And as Winnie-the-Pooh reminds us:

“A quotation is a handy thing to have about, saving one the trouble of thinking for oneself, always a laborious business.”

– A.A. Milne

If you are doing this exercise with your family you can play “scavenger hunt,” with each family member finding a quote they really like, and the family can vote on the one they, as a group, like the best. This can be an example of “gamification,” but the real importance of completing this third exercise, *Own it*, is that it helps you to develop self-efficacy and empathy through observation of the diversity of results.

How am I doing. Following the three exercises, a self-evaluation compares personal progress with a goal *to develop resilience by applying positive-coping skills to personal challenges and by developing a social support system*. Meeting this goal begins with the three exercises. *Tell your story*, to develop self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to complete tasks and successfully reach goals. *Collaborate*, to recognize the crucial importance of a social support system, bolster self-efficacy, self-esteem, empathy, and the ability to problem-solve and reach out to others. And, *Own it*, to develop self-efficacy and empathy. Therefore, a self-evaluation helps you to determine just how useful the learning was and how much personal change occurred. Because the self-evaluation follows each positive-coping skill, it provides a formative view of progress, that is, to help adjust your thinking and learning because so much of the learning occurs with other people. This is important because we are trying to get a better idea of how social support systems work to deal with stress, challenges, and catastrophes.

The first part of the self-evaluation, *Learning Objectives*, asks whether the exercises are working for you. The second part, *Change of Behavior*, asks how much you have changed, or has your thinking changed. While we all learn and change differently, we might expect to see improvement as we progress through the learning of resilience. And, that is the role of the self-evaluation, to help you assure that learning and change are occurring.



Want another method to help remember your skills and keep yourself motivated in the learning process? Consider using a length of paracord, or something similar, and as each skill is completed, tie a knot in the cord. At completion you have five knots. Recall that our social support system is one of our most important protective factors in our mental armor. So, when you share the skills with someone in your social support system, you tie the two ends of the cord together and you have begun the process of sustaining your social support system — five knots, one circle. Remember, too, the cord is reusable as are the resilience skills. Untie the knots and use the cord again to keep track of your skill practice, or pass it on to someone in your social support system as a reminder. This process of “passing it on” may provide opportunity to become a mentor, perhaps to someone in your social support system.

Mentoring is the belief that individuals may best learn through observing, doing, commenting and questioning, rather than by simply listening (Nicholls, 2002). Mentoring can be a process of educating a person through the concept of a role model. A role model serves as an excellent tool for learning for both for the mentor and the person being mentored because both are encouraged to examine their practices and reappraise values. As you become more practiced with these resilient positive-coping skills, mentoring these skills and practices with your social support system is a good way to help sustain it.

As we look back over the learning and what we wish to accomplish, consider the *goal*. The goal is to develop resilience by applying positive-coping skills to personal challenges and by developing and sustaining a social support system. There are a number of *key objectives* or *steps* that help us achieve that goal to include:

- Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience through positive-coping skills and social support system.
- Relate past challenges to resilient positive-coping skills.
- Apply resilient positive-coping skills to current challenges in conjunction with a member of your social support system.
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- Identify how you will sustain a social support system over time.

Beyond our personal resilience needs is that of the community. Although there are gaps in evidence-based practice, the literature currently encourages stress-resistant and resilient outcomes relative to promoting a sense of self and community, safety, calming, self-efficacy, social connectedness, and hope (Hobfoll, Watson, Bell, Bryant, Brymer, Friedman, ... & Maguen, 2007). Through your own practice of resilience, you have an opportunity to mentor your families and communities. Making the commitment to participate in learning these positive coping skills provides you with the opportunity to return to your social support system, as a mentor, and practice these skills using the methods described in this text.

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BELIEF

Belief affects attitude. Changing your belief changes your attitude.

My story: What is Belief? The way I perceive things is shaped by my beliefs. That means that my beliefs control my actions and my attitude. My attitude is the way I feel about something. How might this play out? Perhaps, my neighbor's dog has been barking for an hour. My attitude might be one of annoyance based on my belief that the dog barks for no reason. Or, my attitude might be one of concern based on my belief that the dog is barking because something is justly wrong. Do you see that the way I perceive the event is shaped by my belief? Do you see that my attitude is the consequence of my belief?

So, when I encounter a personal challenge, I have choices to make. Sometimes I can alter the challenge to make it more positive or more manageable. Many times, however, the challenge may appear to be unalterable. I then have to alter a personal belief so I develop a better attitude dealing with the challenge. I have to ask myself if the belief I currently have is self-defeating and perhaps based on some fear. What then might be a more positive, yet realistic, belief that I can consider. This is not always easy or immediate. But, once I have made the decision to develop a more workable belief, I have also made the decision to be a survivor rather than a victim. Then too, I may find that with a better attitude, I can also make the challenge more workable for me. I am in control.

Again, consider the barking dog. My attitude may be one of concern based on my belief that the dog is barking because something is justly wrong. If I check and find that the dog has tipped over its water bowl and wants water, then my belief is justified and even reinforced. But, if I see that the dog is barking for no apparent reason, then do I maintain the attitude of annoyance, perhaps even anger? I reflect on that attitude and recognize that the belief may be self-defeating. I understand that changing a belief that may be self-defeating is not always instantaneous. I need to persist in my thinking to develop a more positive belief and, consequently, a better attitude. I have a question for you. How do you manage your beliefs?

Why: Your beliefs control your actions and the way you feel about something, your attitude. You can alter your belief to change your perception and better deal with your challenge. Beliefs, whether positive or negative, can have a profound impact on physical and psychological health. As nurses, understanding your patients beliefs about their health problems and treatment can assist you in understanding a course of treatment and outcome.

How: Approach your challenge with a realistic view. Can you change the challenge and get more control? If the challenge appears not changeable, then a change of attitude is possible by changing a belief.

- What is your challenge?
- Can you change the challenge to something more positive or workable? Or ...
- Can you change your Belief to something more positive?

Example: Because of a fracture, my arm is immobilized in a cast. This condition is not going away for several weeks and I can't change it.

- My challenge is how to deal with a cast on my arm for several weeks.
- The outcome is not changeable, so I will focus on a change of belief.

- My worst fear is that I can't do everything I want to do.
 - I recognize that my belief is self-defeating because the belief appears to be "all or nothing" thinking.
 - I seek the more positive belief that there is still opportunity to do some of what I need and want to do.
 - I recognize now that I can also improve my outcome with a support system and attainable goals.
-

"How we perceive, is how we proceed."
--Andrea Gould, Ph.D., ABPP

Tell your story: Recall a past Belief challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will help to link this new learning to prior learning, something you did with some success in the past, to make the Belief skill more memorable.

Perception is shaped by belief. Changing your belief changes your perception, giving you control, inner strength and courage to make change.

A belief can be described as an idea or principle that we judge to be true. Some people believe the Earth is flat and others believe it is round. We become attached to our beliefs, whether they are beneficial or self-defeating. This is because our beliefs affect how we perceive things and subsequently affect our behaviors, particularly as we face challenges. What I may experience as stressful may not be that bothersome to you. And yet, what is stressful to you may have little impact on me.

The good news is that self-defeating beliefs can be modified into more positive beneficial beliefs (Burns, 1999). Let us look at Belief as a resilience skill. Read the Belief flashcard. Recall a past personal challenge where you successfully used the skill of Belief or something similar to Belief. Work on answering the following reflective questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences. Writing your responses will help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise. Working with another person can develop problem-solving skills when one person acts as problem solver and the other as a listener. The problem solver reads the problem aloud and describes a potential solution. The listener follows the problem solver's steps attempting to catch any errors (Lochhead, & Whimbey, 1987).

Brief reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. Did you change the challenge to something more positive or workable? Or ...
3. Did you change your Belief to something more positive?

Detailed reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. If you **were able** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 - What was your more positive outcome to the challenge?
 - Did you then find you had a more positive belief and a change of attitude?
3. If you **were unable** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 - What was your worst fear or concern?
 - Now the tricky part. Can you identify the self-defeating belief that caused your fear or concern?
 - What was the more positive belief that you used to replace the self-defeating belief? If you are struggling to identify the self-defeating and positive beliefs, then describe how you worked

around the fear that confronted you. That description will help to identify the more positive belief you used.

- Did you then find you were able to find a way to change the outcome to make it more positive and manageable?

Collaborate: Apply Belief to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will encourage communication, empathy, and the ability to reach out while problem-solving a relevant challenge.

While positive coping skills are important to self resilience, these skills also become very important to sustaining the social support system. So, by making yourself more resilient you also make your social support system more resilient too. For that reason, we strongly encourage you to do this exercise with another person so that you become aware of how to work with people within a social support system, people who will work with you on real life challenges. Recognize too, that working with others is demanding, particularly so for those of us dealing with Post Traumatic Stress whereby we tend to isolate ourselves from others. Beliefs, whether positive or negative, can have a profound impact of our physical and psychological health (Schwarzer, 2014). As nurses, understanding your patients beliefs, about their health problems, and treatment can assist you in understanding a course of treatment and outcome (Ownby, Acevedo, Jacobs, Caballero, & Waldrop-Valverde, 2014).

Consider a challenge either you or perhaps someone you know has encountered. Write the challenge in as much detail as you feel necessary to allow you, and your associate, to make a decision as to whether you can alter the challenge outcome so it is more manageable. Or, if the outcome appears to be not changeable, a change of attitude is possible by changing a belief (Bandura, 2001, Reivich & Shatté, 2002). Though this stressful challenge may be quite dire, we can still change the way we react to the situation and have some healing value emerge from the process (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). Refer to the Belief flashcard, especially the example, to get an idea on how you might write your responses to the following reflective questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Can you change the challenge to something more positive or workable? Or ...
3. Can you change your Belief to something more positive?

Detailed reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Are you **are able** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 - What is a more positive, yet realistic, outcome to the challenge?
 - Are you able to recognize a more positive belief and a change of attitude?
3. Are you **are unable** to change the challenge to something more positive or workable:
 - What is the worst fear or concern?
 - Can you identify the self-defeating belief that caused the fear or concern?
 - What is a more positive belief that can replace the self-defeating belief? If you are struggling to identify the self-defeating and positive beliefs, then describe how you could work around the fear or concern. That description will help to identify the more positive belief used.
 - Are you now able to find a way to change the outcome to make it more positive and manageable?

If you are working within a classroom environment, consider posting your outcome with other groups' outcomes from the class. Through this learning process, you can observe how social support systems apply positive coping skills to solve real life challenges.

Own it: Reflecting on Belief

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and therefore more workable for you.

These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

You have applied the Belief skill to an instance that had occurred in your past. You have also applied the skill as group problem-based-learning to a current challenge. Reflect upon the skill of Belief and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

Detailed reflection:

1. You have applied the Belief skill to an instance that had occurred in your past. You have also applied the skill as group problem-based-learning to a current challenge. Now, reflect upon the skill. What is a word, words, or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Belief. This is a good *oral* exercise in a group or classroom setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise. The facilitator makes sure everyone has an opportunity to orally describe the skill.
2. Reflect upon the skill of Belief and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.
3. If more time is available, finding a memorable quotation can be a powerful way to personalize and adapt the skill. What would you use as a memorable quotation for the this skill? You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom environment, post your results with others in the group and observe the results and recognize the power of diversity.

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.

— Maya Angelou

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment will provide opportunity to monitor progress, adjust your learning, develop self-efficacy, and improve self-esteem.

The following assessment allows you to monitor learning and track your changes as you continue to explore positive-coping skills and social support. You are encouraged to compare these ongoing assessments to see how you have adapted to the learning and resilience.

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	  Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	  Very useful
Relate a past challenge to the Belief resilience skill.				
Apply Belief, to a current challenge, with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Belief.				
Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience by using positive-coping skills and social support system.				

Change of Behavior				
Assess how much you have changed. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	  Worsened	 No change	 Improved	  Much improved
Improvement of self-esteem.				
Improvement of self-efficacy, the ability to persist in meeting a goal when dealing with a challenge.				
Ability to reach out to a social support system to better deal with personal challenges.				
Ability to problem solve when dealing with personal challenges.				
Ability to apply positive coping resilience skills to personal challenges.				

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PERSISTENCE

Persistence is facing a challenge with the belief you will succeed.

My story: There is a journey ahead. It is the journey of personal change. I must persist to bring about change. There is no honor in failure earned through lack of effort. If I wish to succeed, I need to persist.

There is something very powerful about writing a goal. It requires me to take the time to organize my thoughts into a statement that is brief and understandable. The goal has become worthy of my time and effort. I believe I can persist.

My preference is to keep my goal statement brief and to-the-point. Reduce a complex task into a simple phrase. I don't need to worry about the details, not yet, anyway. Put limitations to the goal. Limitations make the goal manageable allowing me to determine the what and when of completion. "Hike a section of the Appalachian Trail over one week." Is that doable I ask myself. There is nothing to be gained in setting myself up for failure. I want to make sure I can persist.

I decide how I will complete the goal, step by step. The process is systematic. Each step brings me closer to the goal. I write each step in a manner that permits me to determine when it has been completed. The step is measured by limitation. "Weather permitting, today I will hike 15 kilometers in 8 hours to arrive at the next campsite." I can check it off. I can mark progress toward goal completion. I make sure I will persist.

Marking progress builds belief, commitment to ensure I complete the goal. I therefore write a number of steps to both provide direction and mark my progress. The goal and the steps become my map. When I have completed all of the steps, I have attained the goal. I have persisted.

Persistence is facing a challenge with the belief you will ultimately succeed. What is your challenge? How will you persist?

Why: Persistence encourages you to make change, mark your progress, and build belief that you can reach your goal. Your persistence in attaining your nursing degree plays an important role in your success.

How: Consider creating a realistic goal and the steps needed to reach the goal so that when all of the steps are completed, you have attained your goal.

- What is your challenge?
- What is your goal?
- What are the steps needed to reach your goal?
- What makes the goal reachable?

Example: I have a project to do and need a plan to complete it on time.

- My challenge is to complete a project.
 - My goal is to “Create a Project Time Plan.”
 - I break the major parts of the project into smaller steps to identify each task and the time needed to do the task.
 - I assign a due date to each project part.
 - I make sure that there are enough steps so that I see the progress I am making.
 - I monitor progress, check-off completed steps, and reward myself as progress is made.
-

“Success is not the absence of failure; it's the persistence through failure.”

--Aisha Tyler

Tell your story: Recall a past Persistence challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will help to link this new learning to prior learning, something you did with some success in the past, so as make Persistence more memorable.

Persistence is facing a challenge with the belief you will ultimately succeed.

Read the Persistence flashcard. The skill of Persistence is defined as “facing a challenge with the belief you will ultimately succeed.” Self-efficacy is defined as “how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations” or, more simply, belief in one's ability to complete tasks and successfully reach goals (Bandura, 1982, p. 122). Notice that self-efficacy measures your Persistence. The more you persist the greater will be your self-efficacy. Being able to create an attainable goal and the steps to achieve that goal has been found to increase our sense of self-efficacy leading to a greater likelihood of persisting and attaining success (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Gist, 1987; Locke & Latham, 2002). Recall a past personal challenge where you successfully used the skill of Persistence or something similar to Persistence. Work on answering the following reflective questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences. Writing your responses will help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. What was your goal?
3. What were the steps needed to reach your goal?
4. What made the goal reachable?

Detailed reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. What made you believe you could meet the challenge?
3. Did you create a goal as a way to build the belief you could meet the challenge?
4. Was your goal made reachable within a realistic time limit?
5. Did you write a goal statement?
6. Did you write the steps to describe the actions that were needed to reach your goal?
7. Did you include enough steps so that you could mark the progress you were making?
8. Did you remember to reward yourself in some way as you persisted?

Collaborate: Apply Persistence to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will encourage communication, empathy, and the ability to reach out while problem-solving a relevant challenge.

Your persistence in attaining your nursing degree plays an important role in your success (Kimbark, Peters, & Richardson, 2017). Consider that cardiovascular patients that persisted towards a goal of improved health showed greater self-determination and perceived competence (Guertin, Pelletier, Émond, & Lalande, 2017). You can pass these skills on to your patients.

We strongly encourage you to do this exercise with another person so that you become aware of how to work with people within a social support system, people who will work with you on real life challenges. Consider a challenge either you or perhaps someone you know has currently encountered.

Write the challenge in as much detail as necessary to allow you, and your associate, to answer the following reflective questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. What is your goal?
3. What are the steps needed to reach your goal?
4. What makes the goal reachable?

Detailed reflection:

1. What is your challenge.
2. What makes you believe you can meet the challenge?
3. Will you create a goal to build the belief that you can meet the challenge? How you perceive the goal is important to the outcome. Those who perceive the goal to be a challenge show better performance than those who perceive the goal to be threatening and leading to failure (Drach-Zahavy, & Erez, 2002). Setting more difficult goals, such as "improve upon past performance," leads to better performance than no goals or vague goals, such as "do my best" (Streicher, Seijts, Kok, Latham, Glasgow, DeVellis, ... & Bulger, 1995). The SMART acronym captures some of the elements of successful goal setting from a management context. That is, goals are *Specific* (have a defined intent), *Measurable* (limits are established), *Assignable* (who is involved), *Realistic* (attainable), and *Time* related (have an expected completion) (Doran, 1981).
4. Describe your goal.
5. Is the goal attainable?
6. Is the goal reachable within a realistic time limit?
7. Describe the steps that are needed to reach your goal. It is important to develop a realistic goal along with the smaller, more manageable, informative steps required to attain the goal. These steps have purpose. Steps can help eliminate goal uncertainty by providing limitations to a broader goal statement while introducing more flexibility in attaining the goal (White, Kjelgaard, & Harkins, 1995; Zelen, 1955).
8. Do you have enough steps to mark your progress and build belief that you can persist?
9. How will you reward yourself as you persist?

If you are working within a classroom environment, consider posting your outcome with other groups' outcomes from the class. Through this learning process, you can observe how social support systems apply positive coping skills to solve real life challenges.

Own it: Reflecting on Persistence

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and therefore more workable for you.

These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

Reflect upon the skill of Persistence and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

Detailed reflection:

1. You have applied the Persistence skill to an instance that had occurred in your past. You have also applied the skill as group problem-based-learning to a current challenge. Now, reflect upon the skill. What is a word, words, or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Persistence. This is a good *oral* exercise in a group or classroom setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise. The facilitator makes sure everyone has an opportunity to orally describe the skill.

2. Reflect upon the skill of Persistence and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

3. If more time is available, finding a memorable quotation can be a powerful way to personalize and adapt the skill. What would you use as a memorable quotation for the this skill? You are again attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom environment, post your results with others in the group and observe the results and recognize the power of diversity.

We learn to walk by falling, falling yet persisting. Never forget that lesson, however long the fall.
—anonymous

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment will provide opportunity to monitor progress, adjust your learning, develop self-efficacy, and improve self-esteem.

The following assessment allows you to monitor learning and track your changes as you continue to explore positive-coping skills and social support. You are encouraged to compare these ongoing assessments to see how you have adapted to the learning and resilience.

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	 Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	 Very useful
Relate a past challenge to the Persistence resilience skill.				
Apply Persistence, to a current challenge, with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Persistence.				
Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience by using positive-coping skills and social support system.				

Change of Behavior				
Assess how much you have changed. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	 Worstened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Ability to apply positive coping resilience skills to personal challenges.				
Ability to reach out to a social support system to better deal with personal challenges.				
Ability to problem solve when dealing with personal challenges.				
Improvement of self-efficacy, the ability to persist in meeting a goal when dealing with a challenge.				
Improvement of self-esteem.				

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STRENGTH

Physical strength grows from proper nutrition, exercise, relaxation and sleep.

My story: Life is constantly changing. The change may be forgiving or it may be an unrelenting challenge. The journey of change demands strength. Less is to flirt with failure.

Fitness is the strength to deal with life challenges. I can choose to be fit, to build strength to carry myself through those challenges that bring about change. Fitness is awareness of mind and body, of self and needs. Fitness is forgiving of my fails, those times when my vision is poor and my footing is unsteady during storms of violent change. Fitness, too, lets me celebrate my wins. It is my ally on my journey through life.

Strength is a chain of links. Proper nutrition, exercise, relaxation, and sleep form the links in that chain. I recognize that I have almost complete control of diet and exercise to build strength. I begin simply by keeping nutritious foods, such as fruits, in plain view. I find an exercise that is an enjoyable escape from stress. I make time to relax and sleep. I monitor my progress. I see positive change. I am motivated. Strength is about self-care. The path to quality of life requires the body be strong so that the mind is able.

Strength sustains me on my journey of change. My journey is only bound by my beliefs. There are limits, though. I understand my strengths and my weaknesses. I recognize that my strength has limits. The journey will end. I will celebrate with my ally, fitness. Fitness is strength. Strength is a chain of links. How goes your journey? Have you met your ally?

Why: Practicing a healthy diet, physical exercise, relaxation, and good sleep habits improves physical, emotional, and mental well-being. When you feel good, challenges are more easily managed. Fundamentally, strength comes down to good self-care, an essential to good nursing.

How: Find and practice plans for diet, exercise, relaxation, and sleep to meet the goals of good nutrition, aerobic exercise, stress reduction and adequate sleep.

- What is your challenge?
- How is your challenge related to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep?
- What is your goal?
- What are the steps needed to reach your goal?

Example: I get anxious before and during tests and that prevents me from doing as well as I could do. I need a relaxation exercise.

- My challenge is to be relaxed while taking tests.
- I consider an easy relaxation exercise, such as diaphragmatic breathing, an exercise of slow controlled breathing. I put one hand on my chest and the other on my stomach. I try to keep the hand on my chest from moving up and down. Rather, I slowly breathe so that the hand on my stomach moves up and down. Each time I exhale, I focus on the word "relax." Like any exercise I need to practice diaphragmatic breathing for several weeks before I master it. I plan to practice for ten minutes before I go to sleep.
- I also consider an exercise plan to further reduce stress, diet plan to increase my energy, and good

sleep to better my results on the test.

I monitor and adjust any of the plans that are not working.

“Calm mind brings inner strength and self-confidence, so that's very important for good health.”

--Dalai Lama

Tell your story: Recall a past Strength challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will help to link this new learning to prior learning, something you did with some success in the past, so as make Strength more memorable.

Strength grows from proper nutrition, exercise, relaxation and sleep.

Recall a past personal challenge where you successfully used the skill of Strength, perhaps relating to exercise, diet, relaxation, or sleep. Work on answering the following reflective questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences. Writing your responses will help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. How was your challenge related to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep?
3. What made you feel you were successful meeting the challenge?

Detailed reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. How was your challenge related to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep?
3. If it was a diet, how was it “healthy” and how did it fit your lifestyle.
4. If it was a physical exercise plan, how did it fit your lifestyle yet provide at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week.
5. If it was a relaxation exercise, how did it relax you and fit into your lifestyle?
6. If it was good sleep hygiene, then what methods did you use and how did this fit into your lifestyle?

Collaborate: Apply Strength to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will encourage communication, empathy, and the ability to reach out while problem-solving a relevant challenge.

We strongly encourage you to do this exercise with another person so that you become aware of how to work with people within a social support system, people who will work with you on real life challenges. Consider a challenge either you or perhaps someone you know has currently encountered. Write the challenge in as much detail as necessary to allow you, and your associate, to answer the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. How is your challenge related to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep?
3. What is your goal?

4. What are the steps needed to reach your goal?

Detailed reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. How does it relate to diet, exercise, relaxation and/or sleep.
3. Find and practice a healthy diet that fits your lifestyle yet lowers your health risks (Reedy, Krebs-Smith, Miller, Liese, Kahle, Park, & Subar, 2014).
 - Consider researched diet plans such as MyPlate (“ChooseMyPlate.gov,” 2018), Healthy Eating Plate (Willett, 2011), Mediterranean (Mitrou, Kipnis, Thiébaud, Reedy, Subar, Wirfält, ... & Schatzkin, 2007), and DASH—Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (“DASH Eating Plan,” 2018).
4. Find and practice a physical exercise plan that fits your lifestyle and provides at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity ideally spread evenly throughout the week (“Steps to Wellness,” 2012; “Global Recommendations on Physical Activity,” 2013).
5. Find and practice a relaxation exercise. Recognize that like any physical exercise, you will need to practice with these relaxation exercises to realize the results.
 - *Diaphragmatic Breathing* or eupnea is a simple relaxation exercise of slow breathing with focus on movement of the diaphragm. Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach. Try to keep the hand on your chest from moving up and down. Rather, breathe so that the hand on your stomach moves up and down. As you exhale, focus on the word “relax.” (Chen, Huang, Chien, & Cheng, 2017).
 - *Progressive Muscle Relaxation* (PMR) to bring awareness of the body by focusing on slowly tensing and then relaxing each muscle group (Davis, Eshelman, & McKay, 2008).
 - *Social Resilience Model* (SRM) uses stabilization skills to reduce and prevent the symptoms of stress. In its simplest form, SRM focuses on accessing the parasympathetic system through several processes (Leitch & Sutton, 2013).
 - *Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction* (MBSR) is the practice of bringing awareness to the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 2005).
6. Practice good sleep hygiene by keeping a consistent sleep–wake schedule, exercising daily and eliminating long naps and naps within a few hours of bedtime (Elliot & Kuehl, 2007).
7. How will you ensure that you have the belief to persist with the challenge?
8. Will you create a goal to build the belief you can meet the challenge?
9. Describe your goal.
10. Is the goal reachable within a realistic time limit?
11. Describe the steps that are needed to reach your goal.
12. Do you have enough steps to mark your progress and build belief you can persist?

If you are working within a classroom environment, consider posting your outcome with other groups’ outcomes from the class. Through this learning process, you can observe how social support systems apply positive coping skills to solve real life challenges.

Own it: Reflecting on Strength

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and therefore more workable for you.

These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

Reflect upon the skill of Strength and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something

that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

Detailed reflection:

1. You have applied the Strength skill to an instance that had occurred in your past. You have also applied the skill as group problem-based-learning to a current challenge. Now, reflect upon the skill. What is a word, words, or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Strength. This is a good oral exercise in a group or classroom setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise. The facilitator makes sure everyone has an opportunity to orally describe the skill.

2. Reflect upon the skill of Strength and, in a few of your own words, summarize in writing what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

3. If more time is available, finding a memorable quotation can be a powerful way to personalize and adapt the skill. What would you use as a memorable quotation for the this skill? You are again attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom environment, post your results with others in the group and observe the results and recognize the power of diversity.

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.

—Dale Carnegie

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment will provide opportunity to monitor progress, adjust your learning, develop self-efficacy, and improve self-esteem.

The following assessment allows you to monitor learning and track your changes as you continue to explore positive-coping skills and social support. You are encouraged to compare these ongoing assessments to see how you have adapted to the learning and resilience.

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	 Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	 Very useful
Relate a past challenge to the Strength resilience skill.				
Apply Strength, to a current challenge, with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Strength.				

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	  Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	  Very useful
Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience by using positive-coping skills and social support system.				

Change of Behavior				
Assess how much you have changed. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	  Worstened	 No change	 Improved	  Much improved
Ability to apply positive coping resilience skills to personal challenges.				
Ability to reach out to a social support system to better deal with personal challenges.				
Ability to problem solve when dealing with personal challenges.				
Improvement of self-efficacy, the ability to persist in meeting a goal when dealing with a challenge.				
Improvement of self-esteem.				

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TRUST

Trust develops by using empathy to engage, reach out, and give support.

My story: I learned trust as a toddler. Without it, I would not have survived. I learned, too, that my peers shape me to interact with the world as we perceive it. We become a community of one, trusting and sharing common values. If our values are honorable, we win. If our values are bad, we lose. As goes my peer group, so I go. Thus, I have learned to choose carefully with whom I want to spend time.

I learn of other people from other people. Empathy is the key that opens the lock into the lives of others. I walk the walk of another. I see through their eyes. Empathy is not sympathy. Empathy lets me understand what another experiences from their frame of reference. I have to suppress my beliefs so that I can interpret those of another. Then trust can develop by reaching out to engage and provide support. A challenging decision, trust. It is after all the substance of faith, a key to my inner self, my identity.

Support comes in many forms. As I face a challenge, I look to my strengths and weaknesses. Where I find need, I find experts to provide insight. Each has a role to play in meeting the challenge. As one, they form a system, a social support system to meet the challenge. Yet, each person is one I can reach out to. They are my social support system.

My support system changes as I change. Some will remain in my social support system, those that are lifelong, perhaps family. There are new challenges. Still, everyone has a role to play in a system however big or small. So, never underestimate the value a toddler's hug when facing a seemingly insurmountable challenge. Only when recognized does consequence have personal meaning.

Identifying and sustaining a healthy support system becomes a continuous and lifelong process. I too may also play any of a variety of roles in other peoples' social support systems. By practicing and sharing positive coping skills I am making those interacting with me more resilient.

My social support system is a measure of my success, survival and legacy. Sustaining others sustains self. Together we share success, learn from failure, and cope with the challenges of life. There is a degree of trust in our relationships. We share a key. With whom would you entrust a key?

Why: Social support is considered one of the best protections from the effects of stress and suicide. Trust is foundational to *all* relationships, whether personal, professional or organizational. Developing trust with your patients creates increases patient satisfaction and compliance.

How: Develop your social support system by identifying the challenge or challenges you may be facing. Consider people who would be helpful dealing with a challenge and the role each would play.

- What is your challenge?
- Consider your challenge and identify your strengths and weaknesses to better identify your needs.
- Consider people who best meet your needs while assuring you are comfortable reaching out to them and they are comfortable reaching out to you.
- Identify those individuals in your support system, roles they play, and how to contact them.

Example: I have an uneasy feeling that one of my friends may be thinking about suicide. I am unsure how to handle this situation and need a plan on how to approach my friend.

- My challenge is to help a person who may be considering suicide.
 - I recognize that I am now part of my friend's social support system and I have a role to play.
 - I recognize suicide is one of the leading causes of death for teens and young adults.
 - I prepare to reach out to the person and listen.
 - I question the person about the possibility of suicide.
 - I persuade the person to get help.
 - I refer the person to specialized help to include getting the person to assistance or calling 911 if critical.
 - Do a personal welfare check to best encourage a positive outcome.
-

Trust is the glue of life.
—Stephen Covey

Tell your story: Recall a past Trust challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will help to link this new learning to prior learning, something you did with some success in the past, so as make Trust more memorable.

Empathy develops by seeking to understand what another being is experiencing from their point of view. Trust develops by reaching out to engage and provide mutual support.

We have long recognized that reaching out and seeking assistance is a difficult and complex process. When and where we reach out, the types of problems we are seeking help for, our attitudes, and the attitudes of the person offering the help all have an impact (Gourash, 1978). Most of us have seen children reach out and experience the positive consequences of that action. That ability to reach out and find social support can have an important influence on the ability to be resilient (Williams, Lindsey, Kurtz, & Jarvis, 2001). Trust is foundational to all relationships, whether personal, professional or organizational (Rodwell, McWilliams, & Gulyas, 2017; Serrat, 2017).

Recall a past personal challenge where you successfully used the skill of Trust or something similar to Trust, where you reached out for social support. Work on answering the following reflective questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences. Writing your responses will help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. What made you to reach out to others?
3. Did you use empathy to help with communicating with others?
4. Did you keep the social support system following the challenge?

Detailed reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. With regard to the challenge, what were your perceived strengths and weaknesses?
3. Did you use this understanding of strengths and weaknesses to better identify the individual or individuals in your social support system?

4. With regard to the challenge, what allowed you to reach out to others?
5. What do you think allowed them to reach out to you?
6. With regard to the challenge, did you use empathy as an aid to communication and critical thinking? Remember that empathy is not sympathy, rather it is being able to “see through the eyes” of another person and experience their “point of view.”
7. Did you keep the social support system following the challenge?
8. If so, what contributions did you make to sustain the support system over time?

Collaborate: Apply Trust to current needs or a specific challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will encourage communication, empathy, and the ability to reach out while problem-solving a relevant challenge.

Many of us are still socialized to “suck it up and drive on.” But, if we were to perpetuate this attitude in our personal lives it could have potentially serious consequences. The healing value of social support systems is particularly important for people who have survived horrific events (Bloom, 1998; Brewin, Andrews, & Valentine, 2000; Koenen, Stellman, Stellman, & Sommer Jr, 2003). Seligman (2006) noted “people who have at least one person, whom they can call in the middle of the night to tell their troubles to, go on to have better health than friendless people. Even ordinary social contact is a buffer against illness. People who isolate themselves when they are sick tend to get sicker.” The lack of a social support system increases the risk of developing PTSD after a traumatic event or events.

Consider your challenges with regard to empathy, reaching out to others, letting others reach out to you, and social support system. Empathy is often described as putting aside one’s own beliefs and instead “seeing through the eyes of another” or “walking in the shoes of another.” It is important to understand that empathy is not the same as sympathy, rather it is a critical thinking skill to help give you insight. As an example, notice that every *My story* segment that introduced every positive-coping skill was written in the first person, I. By writing these in first person, you were encouraged to try to see through the “eyes” of that person and ask the question, “Just who is this person?” Maybe you were put off by this person, or maybe you wanted to reach out and get to know more about the person. Regardless, this was an intentional act to help you into thinking about empathy. You have been practicing empathy. And, reading is a good way to practice empathy.

The social support system is arguably our most important sustaining element when coping with adversity. Notice that we refer to a social support system. System, by definition, is a group of interacting elements forming a complex whole. Thus, each person within our social support system serves a specific purpose, perhaps addressing a personal need, to form a supportive community.

How then does one develop a social support system? One way is to consider a current challenge you are facing. Decide which people might have the desired skills or qualities to help solve the challenge. Decide if you are comfortable to reaching out to those individuals. Reaching out can be difficult because you must trust the individual. You set aside you own beliefs to better understand that person’s beliefs. You want to be able to “see through the eyes” of the person to interpret their point of view on how to solve the challenge.

So, consider a challenge either you or perhaps someone you know is facing as the motivation for developing a social support system. We strongly encourage you to do this exercise with at least one person so that you become aware of how to work with people within a social support system, those people who will work with you on real life challenges.

Write the challenge in as much detail as necessary to allow you, and your associate, to answer the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Consider your challenge and identify your strengths and weaknesses to better identify your needs.
3. Consider people who best meet your needs while assuring you are comfortable reaching out to them and they are comfortable reaching out to you.
4. Identify those individuals in your support system, roles they play, and how to contact them. Some people may have significant roles in your social support system, while others may have more limited roles.

Detailed reflection:

1. Are you developing a social support system to address a very specific challenge you, or someone you know, are currently facing? Or, alternatively, are you seeking to develop a social support system to deal with a wide range of needs and perhaps current and future challenges?
2. Because you are selecting individuals with whom you must be comfortable communicating, consider your challenge with respect to empathy, reaching out to others, letting others reach out to you, and the support provided by the social support system, as well as the support you provide to sustain those individuals in the system.
3. What are your strengths and weakness? Identify several of your strengths and weaknesses to better identify your needs and the support you bring.
4. Some people may have significant roles in your social support system, while others may have more limited roles. You may, for example, have people who are supportive of your endeavors in the work setting, but whom you have no contact outside of that setting. Taken alone, the contribution of a single individual to our social support system may not seem essential to our wellbeing. Taken together, the contributions of all of the individuals who form our social support system are invaluable to our wellbeing and the development of resilient attitudes. Recognize that the roles played by those individuals in the social support system are addressing your perceived needs and challenges. That means, when you encounter a difficult challenge, the people you may want in your support system are those who have skills or qualities you need to effectively deal with the challenge. Given those needs, who are the individuals in your support system? Identify those individuals in your support system, roles they play, and how to contact them.
5. Recognize the needs of those individuals in your social support system. What contributions will you make to sustain your social support system? Remember that you may also play any of a variety of roles in other peoples' social support systems. By practicing and mentoring positive coping skills you are making both yourselves as well as those interacting with you more resilient.

An alternative approach, particularly if you are working with a larger group of people, can be explored. First, treat everyone's challenge anonymously by writing each challenge on a small piece of paper and then placing the papers into a hat or some container. Next, without reading the challenges, have each person in the group pick a challenge from the container. Everyone then pairs into smaller groups of two people and works with a picked challenge. By exploring someone else's challenge we have to "see through the eyes" of the person who wrote the challenge in order to understand what that person was trying to convey — that's empathy! Next, keep in mind that the person who wrote the challenge is reaching out to you to help solve the challenge — that's trust! Interpret the challenge to the best of your abilities, and write your responses to the questions to create an outcome to the challenge.

If you are working within a classroom environment, then consider posting your outcome with other groups' outcomes from the class so that everyone can view the posted materials. Through this learning process, you can observe how social support systems apply positive coping skills to solve real life challenges.

Own it: Reflecting on Trust

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and therefore more workable for you.

These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

Reflect upon the skill of Trust, and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

Detailed reflection:

1. You have applied the Trust skill to an instance that had occurred in your past. You have also applied the skill as group problem-based-learning to a current challenge. Now, reflect upon the skill. What is a word, words, or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Trust. This is a good oral exercise in a group or classroom setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise. The facilitator makes sure everyone has an opportunity to orally describe the skill.

2. Reflect upon the skill of Trust and, in a few of your own words, summarize in writing what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

3. If more time is available, finding a memorable quotation can be a powerful way to personalize and adapt the skill. What would you use as a memorable quotation for the this skill? You are again attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom environment, post your results with others in the group and observe the results and recognize the power of diversity.

The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them.

—Ernest Hemingway

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment will provide opportunity to monitor progress, adjust your learning, develop self-efficacy, and improve self-esteem.

The following assessment allows you to monitor learning and track your changes as you continue to explore positive-coping skills and social support. You are encouraged to compare these ongoing assessments to see how you have adapted to the learning and resilience.

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	 Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	 Very useful
Relate a past challenge to the Trust resilience skill.				
Apply Trust, to a current challenge, with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Trust.				
Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience by using positive-coping skills and social support system.				

Change of Behavior				
Assess how much you have changed. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	 Worsened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Ability to apply positive coping resilience skills to personal challenges.				
Ability to reach out to a social support system to better deal with personal challenges.				
Ability to problem solve when dealing with personal challenges.				
Improvement of self-efficacy, the ability to persist in meeting a goal when dealing with a challenge.				
Improvement of self-esteem.				

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ADAPTABILITY

Adaptability is the flexibility to meet a challenge.

My story: Surviving birth is heroic. Though to thrive meant that I needed to adapt. Adaptability became a belief upon which I learned to change. Adaptability is my Swiss Army knife, a MacGiver that comes up with solutions to what seem impossible challenges.

A Swiss Army knife, you ask. Support comes in many ways. It may be a close group of people who sustain me as I sustain them. It may be a mentor that guides me through a challenge. Or, it may be a Swiss Army knife that provides support. Whatever the means, adaptability provides confidence and understanding that I can meet the challenge. There are times when I alter the challenge to make it more positive, workable. I have adapted. When I am unable to change the challenge, I change the way I perceive it. My perception is an expectation of success. My success is a reachable goal, a belief. When my attitude improves and the challenge becomes more manageable, I have adapted.

Challenges, both personal and as a greater community, may be intuitively simple or increasingly complex. If the challenge is complex, I research the challenge to determine if a skillful solution is already developed. Or, perhaps I can adapt the skillful solution to better meet my challenge. I discuss the challenge and a potential skillful solution with others to be sure the idea is understood and can meet its intended purpose. I may find myself blending other skills to create an attainable goal. If what I adapt affects others, I may decide to include a definition about the skill, why the skill meets the challenge, and how the skill meets the challenge. We are after all a community of one. Adaptability is my Swiss Army knife, a MacGiver that meets my challenges. How have you adapted?

Why: Those believing they have the ability to succeed are more likely to pursue a challenge as something to be mastered rather than as a threat to be avoided. Developing the skill to best adapt to a challenge gives you confidence and control. You are empowered — you own it! Healthcare is rapidly changing and nursing will play a central role in that evolution. Being able to adapt will impact that change.

How: Developing your skill can be a goal setting process that calls for planning, cooperation, persistence and control to fully define and develop.

- What is your challenge?
- Can you research the challenge to see if a possible solution already exists?
- Can you talk with others to be sure the adapted skill is understood and can meet its intended purpose?
- What is the adapted skill?

Example: Use the idea of “*Who am I going to call when ...*” as one way to build a social support system. I adapt my phone contacts app to include these people.

- About...* My challenge is to build a social support system into my phone contact list.
- Why...* Preparing for the future shapes me to adapt to the unexpected.
- How...* I adapt my phone contact app and begin with easier contacts moving to more complex.
- I consider emergency services such as police, fire, and poison control.
- I consider healthcare such as physician, dentist, and maybe veterinarian.
- I consider personal services such as school, repair, and ride information.
- I consider family, friends, and associates and the roles they play in the social support system.
- I add my In Case of Emergency (ICE) contact.

"Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change."

--Stephen Hawking

Tell your story: Recall a past Adaptability challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise will help to link this new learning to prior learning, something you did with some success in the past, so as make Adaptability more memorable.

Adaptability is the confidence and understanding to create and pursue a skillful outcome that best meets the challenge.

Maxwell is credited with saying "Change is inevitable. Growth is optional." Changes bring about challenges from the closely personal to perhaps the far ranging challenges relating to social–ecological systems impacting us as a civilization. (Walker, Holling, Carpenter, & Kinzig, 2004). An adaptable person is able to adjust to different conditions. The adaptable person has the confidence and understanding to create and pursue a skillful outcome that best meets the challenge. We are all different and what works for one person may not work for another, so an adaptable person will seek out positive coping mechanisms and solutions that best meet personal needs (Six myths, n.d.).

Provided that definition of Adaptability from the flashcard, recall a past personal challenge where you successfully used the skill of Adaptability or something similar to Adaptability. Work on answering the following reflective questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences. Writing your responses will help you to better organize your thinking. Feel free to work individually or in collaboration with another person on this exercise.

Brief reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. Did you in any way do any research to see if a skillful solution had been already developed?
3. Did you talk with others to be sure the adapted skill was understood and could meet its intended purpose?
4. What was the adapted skill?

Detailed reflection:

1. What was your challenge?
2. Did you in any way do any research to see if a skillful solution had been already developed?
3. Did you discuss the skillful solution with any others to be sure the idea was understood and could meet its intended purpose?

4. Did you develop or consider creating the skill as a goal that is reachable along with the steps necessary to reach the goal?
5. What was your goal and what were the steps that were followed to meet the goal?
6. Did you give the skill a title try to title, include a definition *About* the skill, *Why* the skill would meet the challenge, and *How* the skill would meet the challenge?

Collaborate: Apply Adaptability to a current challenge

Objective: Completing this exercise with another person will encourage communication, empathy, and the ability to reach out while problem-solving a relevant challenge.

The healthcare field is rapidly changing and nursing will play a central role in that evolution (IOM, 2011; Yilmaz, 2017). You being able to adapt will impact that change — Own it! We strongly encourage you to do this exercise with another person so that you become aware of how to work with people within a social support system, people who will work with you on real life challenges. Consider a challenge either you or perhaps someone you know has currently encountered. Write the challenge in as much detail as necessary to allow you, and your associate, to answer the following questions. These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Can you research the challenge to see if a possible solution already exists?
3. Can you talk with others to be sure the adapted skill is understood and can meet its intended purpose?
4. What is the adapted skill?

Detailed reflection:

1. What is your challenge?
2. Consider your challenge and research the idea. Where might you look for potential solutions?
3. Discuss the skill idea with others to be sure the idea is understood and can meet its intended purpose. The skill idea or “sharing of a vision” may be considered a leadership process, especially if you intend to get help from others. According to Kouzes and Posner (2009), to share your vision you “envision the future” through possibilities and “enlist others in the dream” by appealing to shared goals. These individuals play an important role in providing you with perspective as to whether you appear to be on the right track. As there appears to be a relationship between resilience and leadership (Bartone, Kelly, & Matthews, 2013), with whom will you work to best assure a skillful solution?
4. Do you want to create the skill as an attainable goal along with the steps necessary to reach the goal?
5. What is the goal and what are the steps?
6. If you intend to share the skill with others, how will you make the skillful solution more understandable—will you create a definition *About* the skill, *Why* the skill meets the challenge, and *How* the skill meets the challenge?

If you are working within a classroom environment, consider posting your outcome with other groups' outcomes from the class. Through this learning process, you can observe how social support systems apply positive coping skills to solve real life challenges.

Own it: Reflecting on Adaptability

Objective: Completing this exercise will make the skills more understandable and therefore more workable for you.

These questions are presented as both *brief reflection* and as *detailed reflection* depending upon your time limitations and preferences.

Brief reflection:

Reflect upon the skill of Adaptability, and, in a few of your own words, summarize in *writing* what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

Detailed reflection:

1. You have applied the Adaptability skill to an instance that had occurred in your past. You have also applied the skill as group problem-based-learning to a current challenge. Now, reflect upon the skill.

What is a word, words, or a phrase that best captures the idea of the skill of Adaptability. This is a good oral exercise in a group or classroom setting to determine if everyone is understanding the concept. It can be helpful to have someone facilitate this exercise. The facilitator makes sure everyone has an opportunity to orally describe the skill.

2. Reflect upon the skill of Adaptability and, in a few of your own words, summarize in writing what this positive coping skill means to you. You are attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom setting, post your responses, and recognize the awesome power of social support.

3. If more time is available, finding a memorable quotation can be a powerful way to personalize and adapt the skill. What would you use as a memorable quotation for the this skill? You are again attempting to adapt the meaning of the skill to something that is more useable and memorable to you. If you are working in a group or classroom environment, post your results with others in the group and observe the results and recognize the power of diversity.

Be willing to change because life won't stay the same.

— Anonymous

As you complete this exercise, reflect for a moment on the process you have just completed whereby you had the challenge of coming up with a word, words, or a phrase that best captured the idea of Adaptability. You reinterpreted the Adaptability skill into your own words. In doing so, you have adapted the skill. And, you did this for the other positive-coping skills of Belief, Persistence, Strength, and Trust. You have been successfully applying and practicing the Adaptability skill. You made each of the skills your own. You are empowered — you own it!

How am I doing?

Objective: Completing this assessment will provide opportunity to monitor progress, adjust your learning, develop self-efficacy, and improve self-esteem.

The following assessment allows you to monitor learning and track your changes as you continue to explore positive-coping skills and social support. You are encouraged to compare these ongoing assessments to see how you have adapted to the learning and resilience.

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	  Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	  Very useful
Relate a past challenge to the Adaptability resilience skill.				
Apply Adaptability, to a current challenge, with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Adaptability.				
Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience by using positive-coping skills and social support system.				

Change of Behavior				
Assess how much you have changed. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	  Worstened	 No change	 Improved	  Much improved
Ability to apply positive coping resilience skills to personal challenges.				
Ability to reach out to a social support system to better deal with personal challenges.				
Ability to problem solve when dealing with personal challenges.				
Improvement of self-efficacy, the ability to persist in meeting a goal when dealing with a challenge.				
Improvement of self-esteem.				

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Am I resilient?

Objective: Completing this evaluation provides a summary of overall learning and personal change.

Our goal in this learning has been to foster resilience by applying positive-coping skills to personal challenges and by developing and sustaining a social support system. A look back to what you have accomplished is a way to determine the personal impact of all the learning, that is, you are looking at it summatively to determine its effectiveness upon you. *Complete this measurement several weeks after you have completed the learning to get a sense of continuity, where you have been and what to do next.* Identify any of your areas of weakness and review and practice those materials with your social support system. Should you want additional background information, consider the companion text, *A community of One*.

Learning Experience				
Assess how well the learning materials and delivery of the learning worked for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	  Very poor	 Poor	 Okay	  Very good
Effectiveness of learning materials and resources.				
Effectiveness of delivery of the learning experience.				

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	  Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	  Used this again
Belief <i>Perception is shaped by belief. Changing your belief changes your perception, giving you control, inner strength and courage to make change.</i>				
Relate a past challenge to the Belief resilience skill.				
Apply Belief to a current challenge in conjunction with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Belief.				
Persistence <i>Persistence is facing a challenge with the belief you will ultimately succeed.</i>				
Relate a past challenge to the Persistence resilience skill.				
Apply Persistence to a current challenge in conjunction with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Persistence.				

Learning Objectives				
Assess how well the learning objectives are working for you. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following objectives.	  Do not recall doing this	 Not a useful exercise	 Useful	  Used this again
Strength <i>Physical strength grows from proper nutrition, exercise, relaxation and sleep.</i>				
Relate a past challenge to the Strength resilience skill.				
Apply Strength to a current challenge in conjunction with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Strength.				
Trust <i>Empathy develops by seeking to understand what another being is experiencing from their point of view. Trust develops by reaching out to engage and provide mutual support.</i>				
Relate a past challenge to the Trust resilience skill.				
Apply Trust to a current challenge in conjunction with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Trust.				
Adaptability <i>Adaptability is the confidence and understanding to create and pursue a skillful outcome that best meets the challenge.</i>				
Relate a past challenge to the Adaptability resilience skill.				
Apply Adaptability to a current challenge in conjunction with a member of your social support system.				
Redefine, in your own words, the meaning of Adaptability.				
Recognize the importance of developing personal resilience through positive-coping skills and social support system.				

Change of Behavior				
Assess how much you have changed. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	  Worsened	 No change	 Improved	  Much improved
Ability to apply positive coping resilience skills to personal challenges.				

Change of Behavior				
Assess how much you have changed. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	 Worstened	 No change	 Improved	 Much improved
Ability to reach out to a social support system to better deal with personal challenges.				
Ability to problem solve when dealing with personal challenges.				
Improvement of self-efficacy, defined as the ability to persist in meeting a goal when dealing with personal challenges.				
Improvement of self-esteem.				

Institutional Impact				
Assess how frequently the instructional faculty and staff asked about using the skills. Answer by checking only one response to each of the following.	 Hardly ever	 Rarely	 Sometimes	 Frequently
Question current challenges with use of resilience skills.				

Learning to apply these positive-coping skills and developing a social support system might be compared to when you first learned to tie a shoe or perhaps learned to ride a bike. You learned the process, but it was your continued practice that made that learning a fluid action requiring little effort. That same mindset needs to be applied to this current learning simply because this is a lifelong endeavor. Keep the mental armor shiny and intact and it will protect you and those closest to you.