



REDWOOD FAMILY THERAPY LLC

O F T H E U P P E R M I D W E S T

Therapy rooted in heart and science

Resiliency



*Resilience is an individual's ability to
bounce back. It is buoyancy, optimism, and
HOPE!*



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Therapy rooted in heart and science

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Thank you for E.A., C.E. and M.J. for sharing their experiences.

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“Your story may be like a journey down a winding and bumpy road. It is your choice to lay on the road afraid to go forward, turn around and go back over the same road, or move forward with determination, knowing that other roads lie ahead.”

Ann Gross, writer, and inspirational leader



Harness the Healing Power of Resiliency

We all are affected by the uncertainties of the times in which we live. Experiences such as COVID, the War in Ukraine, struggling adolescents and teens, along with the complexities of everyday life impact all of us. Our daily lives are crowded with time schedules that are unbelievably tight, separate our families while we eat on the run, interfere with friendships, and create fatigue. For some, the silence of loneliness or sorrow has shattered hope.

At Redwood, we hear your stories daily as we work to bring new insights, healing, and strategies so that every day can be a **Life Worth Living**. Often, we hear of anxiety and depression within the same family, children who are negatively impacted by the environment in their classrooms, along with individuals living with chronic health diagnoses. Their stories reflect the experiences of many others who struggle.



Written by Julie Aronow, LMFT



You are not alone.
Millions each year
struggle emotionally
and physically.

We asked ourselves, "**How can we be more impactful with clients in our work treating mental health challenges?**"

In response to this call to action, we began to research methods to include in our work. What we discovered is the often unspoken, unrecognized component on which mental and physical health pivots. It rarely is mentioned in a doctor's office; nor, is it generally a treatment method in a therapist's office. Yet, research studies have identified a positive impact on one's physical and mental health and their level of RESILIENCE.



These statistics are daunting and are a call to action - not only for therapists but for all of us.

- 1 in 5** U.S. adults experience mental illness each year.
- 1 in 20** U.S. adults experience serious mental illness each year.
- 1 in 6** U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year. 50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-14.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2022





One of our clients shares their experience of discovering resiliency.



I learned I'm not very resilient and I didn't know that. Now, I am strengthening it. Just having a plan makes me feel better. (C.E.)

Everyone faces physical and mental health challenges over the course of a lifetime both personally and with family and friends. How we navigate the challenges impacts our overall well-being and outlook on life. Some look the challenges in the face, and garner the strength and mental fortitude to overcome life changes, unable to successfully adapt. How is it that some people are able to adapt, look on the bright side, take steps to overcome the stress and hardship they face, and others succumb to the situations?

The more resilient we are - the healthier we are. Those with lower levels of resilience have a 3- fold higher prevalence of experiencing anxiety. They have a 4-fold higher prevalence of depression. Physically ill patients with low resilience levels are at greater risk of slow recoveries, less positive rehabilitation outcomes, and increased depression and anxiety.



One of our clients said this about using The Resiliency Wheel as a significant part of his therapy work.

I never thought about my resilience until I started working with you. Since, then and with what I know now, I have a plan to increase my resilience. My self-confidence is higher now, and I am not as depressed. (E.A.)

Resilience is an individual's ability to bounce back. It is buoyancy, optimism, and HOPE!

The **American Psychological Association (APA)** defines resilience as "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress - such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors."

We began to use the **Wagnild and Young Resilience Scale** in our practice. When we and the client know their resilience level, it opens up an important door to treatment. Basically, it provides information about the client's ability to adapt, bounce back, see a bright horizon, and engage in a meaningful life. As a result, we are able to bring more insight and possibilities to our work.

So, what does resilience look like? How do you describe it? Can it even be measured? All of these questions and others come into play when considering resilience as an asset to one's mental and physical health.

To measure your resilience level, use **The Ohio State University Brief Resilience Scale**

Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)

Please respond to each item by marking one box per row		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
BRS 1	I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
BRS 2	I have a hard time making it through stressful events.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
BRS 3	It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
BRS 4	It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
BRS 5	I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
BRS 6	I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

Scoring: Add the value (1-5) of your responses for all six items, creating a range from 6-30. Divide the sum by the total number of questions answered (6) for your final score.

Total score: ____ / 6

My score: ____ (average)

BRS Score	Interpretation
1.00 - 2.99	Low resilience
3.00 - 4.30	Normal resilience
4.31 - 5.00	High resilience

Smith, B.W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P. and Bernard, J. (2008). The Brief Resilience Scale: Assessing the Ability to Bounce Back. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 15, 194-200.





Research confirms that between 33% - 52% of individuals inherit resilience. Our ancestor's experiences and the hardships they endured may have fortified their descendants (that's us) to manage challenges and stressful situations successfully. Essentially, their children and grandchildren have higher levels of resilience. **However, what if you didn't inherit resilience? Somewhere between 48% - 67% of individuals have lower levels of resilience. Can resilience be developed? Yes! We all have within us the ability to develop resilience.**

Redwood developed The Resiliency Wheel as a guide for the development and sustainability of resilience.

The Resiliency Wheel is a tool to visualize and identify how to begin to develop resilience. Resilience is our way of being in the world. It is seen in our personality, our interactions with others, our outlook on life, and knowing our purpose in life.

If you feel stuck, have panic attacks, avoid engaging in life, and are depressed, or struggling with a chronic illness, developing a higher level of resilience will improve your life. There are too many who experience pain, stress, depression, loneliness, and unhappiness for us to not act. Make this year the year of Resilience for you! Select a spot on the Wheel and see where it takes you.

A teenager who was struggling with loneliness and school, said this: "This work has helped me see I can accomplish my dream. I didn't want to do my homework or even listen in school. But my therapist and I were able to help me with resilience and that my dream is something that I can achieve. Now, I'm ready to go after it." (M. J.)

THE RESILIENCY WHEEL

Begin anywhere and cycle around the wheel. As you complete the cycle, reflect on the changes in your mind, body, and spirit. Something or many things will be different.



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“Resiliency can be learned. It is a parent’s task to set an example and guide the child to bounce back from tears and sadness into the world of play.”

Positive Psychology, 2021



Resilience is the component that builds buoyancy, the ability to adapt to life situations, and to successfully manage illnesses. Let's create a life that springs you towards fulfillment and joy. Imagine how you can be when you are living a life worth living.

About the Author



Julie Paleen Aronow has an MS in Training and Development, is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, a former Chief Human Resources Officer and International Consultant. As a therapist, business leader, executive coach, and consultant, Julie brings a level of experience that is different from many therapists.

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