

Resilience, Endurance, and the Christian Medical Worker

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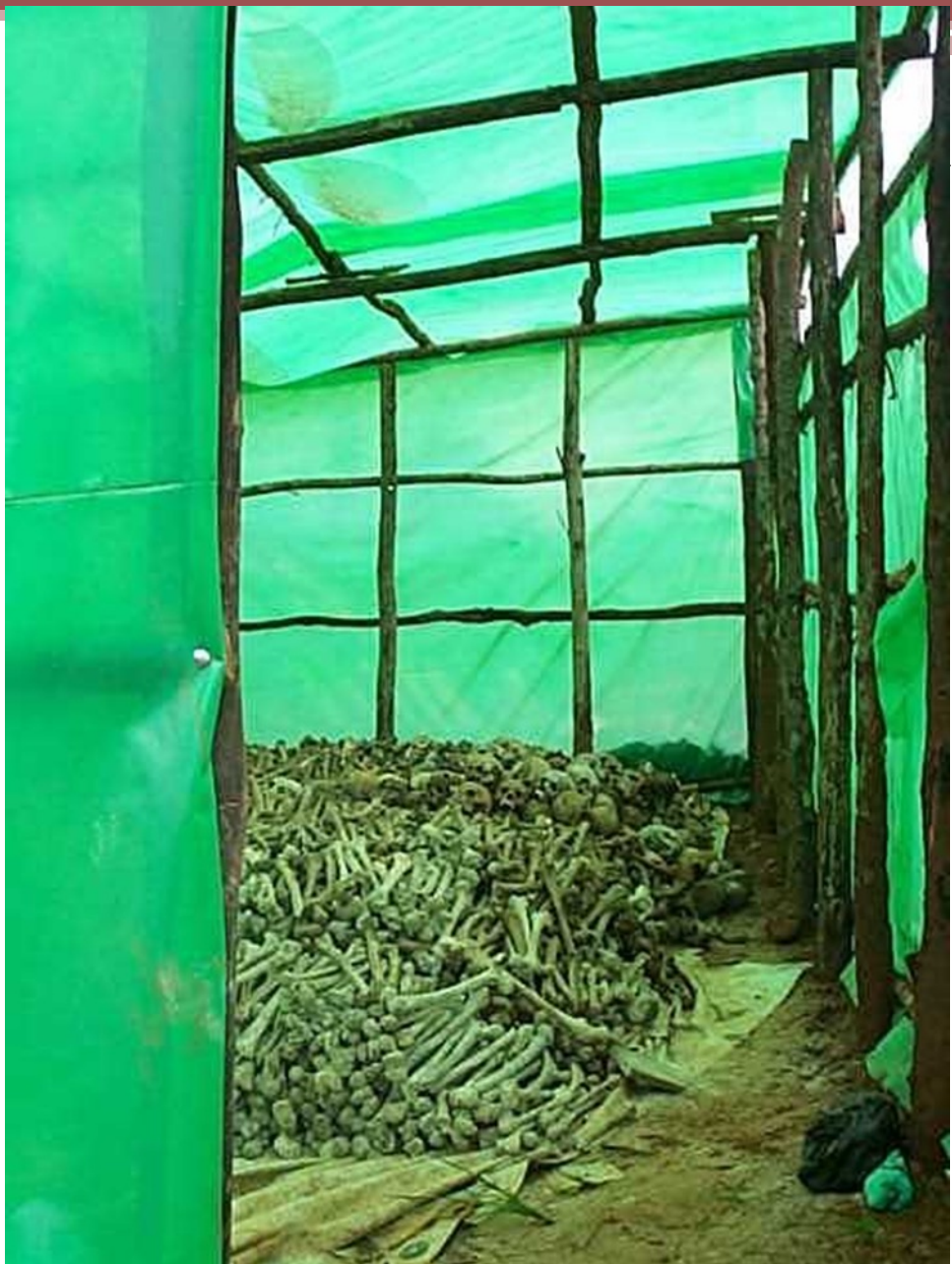
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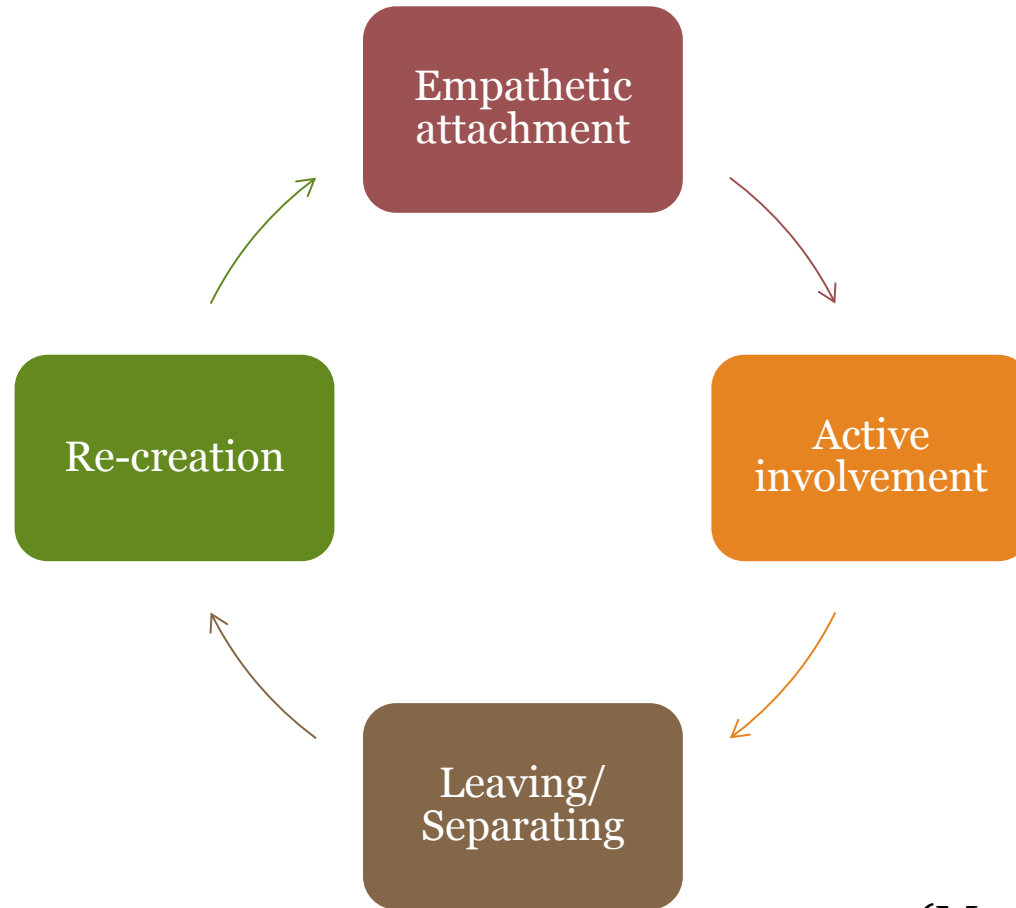


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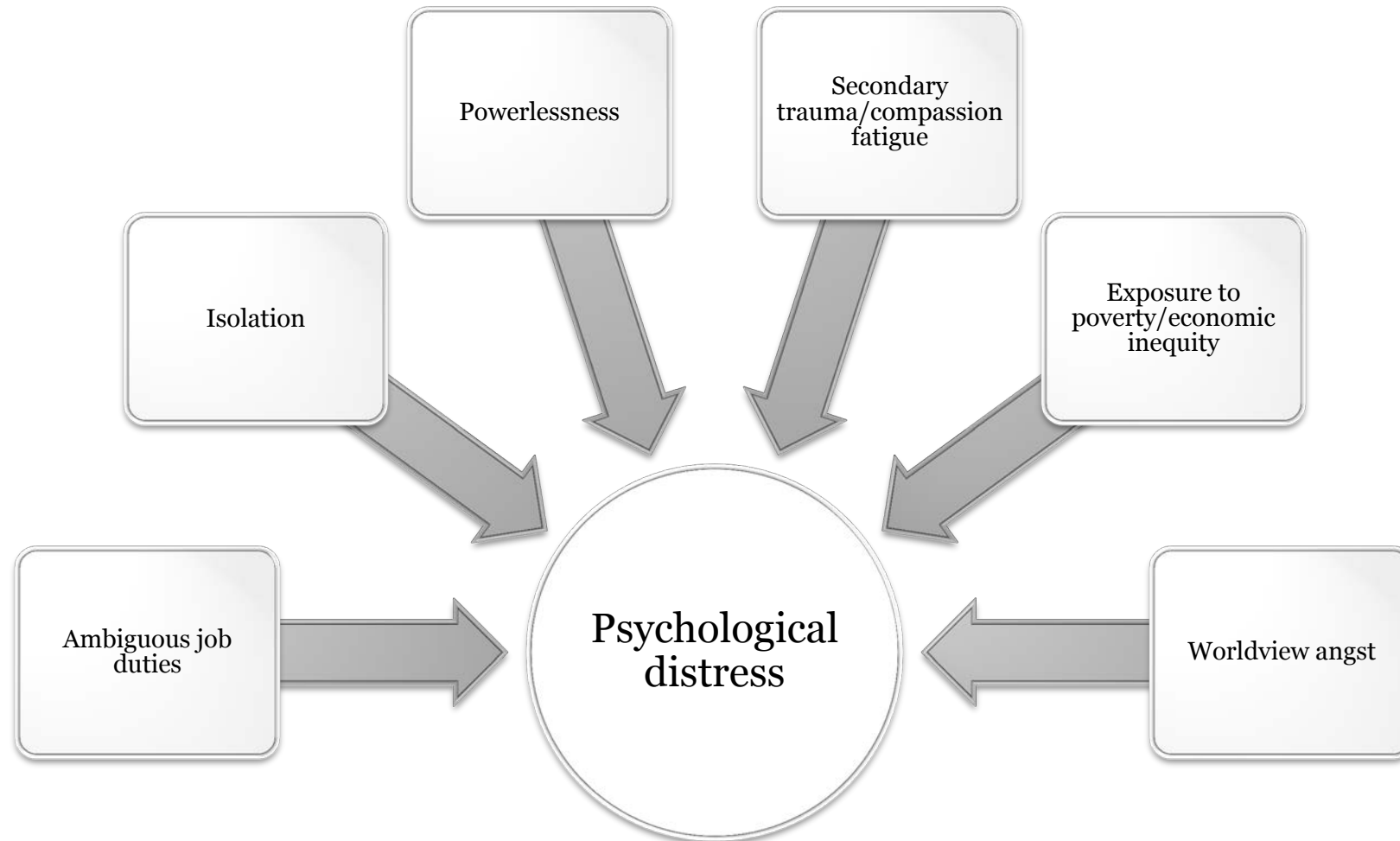
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The Cycle of Caring



(Modified from Skovholt
& Trotter-Mathison, 2016)

Potential Stressors of a Short or Long Term High Threat Assignment




Impact of Ongoing Stress from Christian Medical Work


1. Compassion fatigue
2. Burnout
3. Vicarious traumatization
4. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Four Useful Concepts

- Hardiness: control, commitment, change
- Grit: persistence, passion
- Resilience: bouncing back, thriving under pressure
- Virtue: "Virtue is that which makes its possessor good, and his work good likewise." Faith, hope, love; prudence, temperance, justice, fortitude

The Classical Christian Virtues

1. Faith
 2. Hope
 3. Love
- 
- Theological Virtues

4. Prudence (practical wisdom)
 5. Temperance
 6. Justice
 7. Fortitude
- 
- Cardinal Virtues

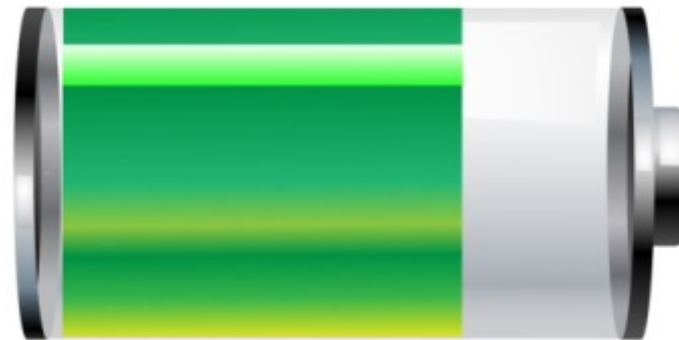
For the Christian health worker, being prudent
means thinking about those things that make us
resilient

St. Augustine:

"Prudence is love choosing wisely between the things that help and those that hinder"

Resilience

The capacity to adapt successfully in the presence of risk and adversity and to bounce back from setbacks, trauma and high stress.



“Be strong in the Lord and the strength of his might”

Ephesians 6:10

Why attend to resilience?

- Disillusionment can develop during difficult assignments
- High personal cost of unattended stress/distress
 - Substance abuse
 - Unexplained irritability
 - Emotional detachment
 - Depression
 - Moral injury



The Resilience Factors

1.

Sturdy Role Models

Inner Moral Compass

6.

2.

Cognitive Flexibility

Religious/Spiritual Resources

7.

3.

Active Problem Solving

Physical, Mental, and
Emotional Training

8.

4.

Realistic Optimism

Meaning in Adversity

9.

5.

Social Support

Responsible for Personal
Emotional Wellbeing

10.

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Social Support

1. Gratitude

2. Forgiveness

3. Humor

6.

Mass

7.

sources

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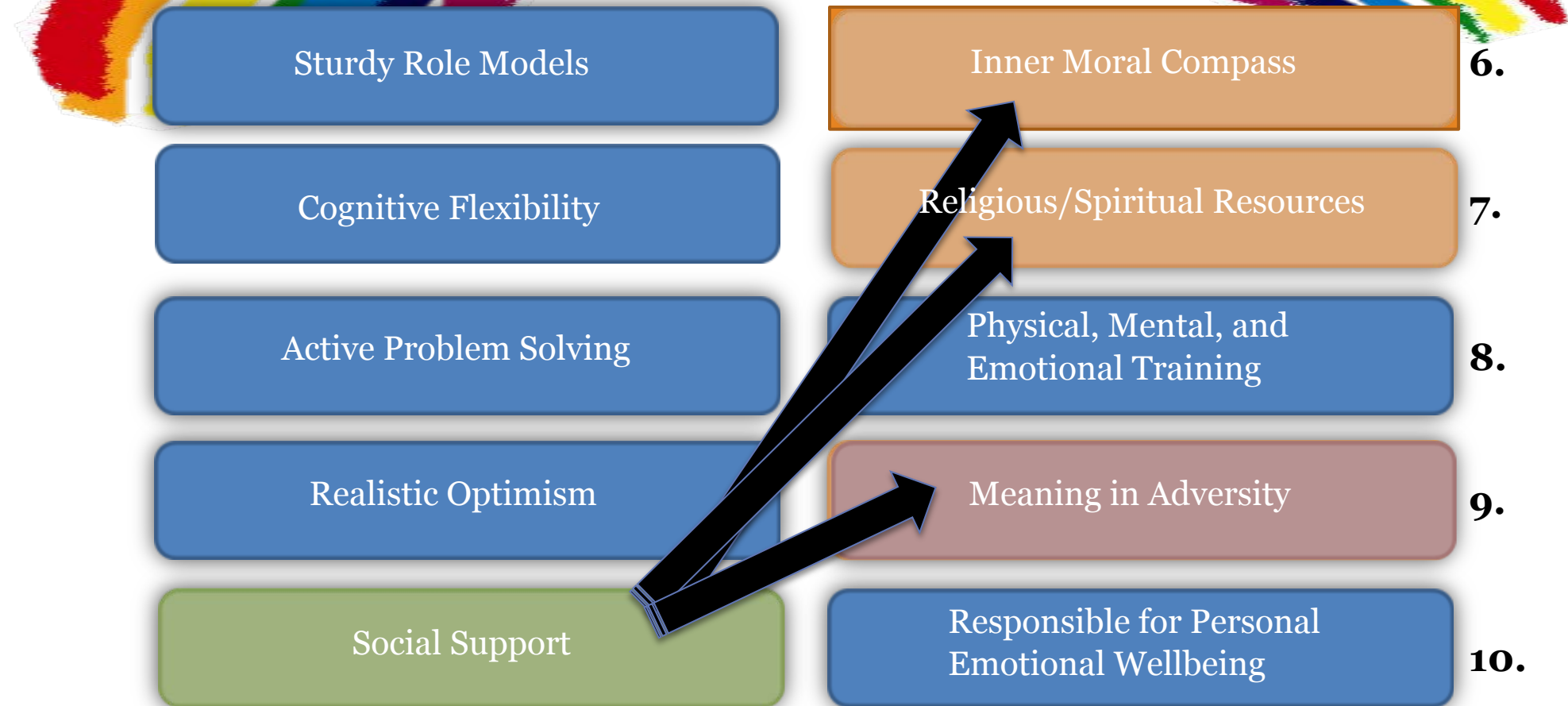
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The Resilience Factors



“Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, all the more as you see the day drawing near.”

Hebrews 10:25

Social
Affiliation

• Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

• 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Cognitive
Flexibility

• Of this gospel I was made a minister ...to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things. Ephesians 3:7/9

Meaning
in
Adversity

The Inner
Moral
Compass

• Whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin. James 4:17

For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. John 13:15.

As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord... James 5:10.

Sturdy Role Models

- ...let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger, for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. James 1:19-21*

Emotional Management

- And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of earth..., that they should seek God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him, yet he is actually not far from each one of us for "In him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:26-28a*

Religion and Spirituality

Taking Responsibility for Yourself

- Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. Mathew 7:24*

Only in God has my soul silence.

Psalm 62:1

Be still and know that I am God.

Psalm 46:10

*Wait for the Lord and be strong
and he shall comfort your heart;
wait patiently for the Lord.*

Psalm 27:14



- *Wait upon the Lord
and keep his way
and he will raise you
up to possess the
land. Psalm 37:35*

- *Be still before the
Lord and wait for
him. Psalm 37:7*

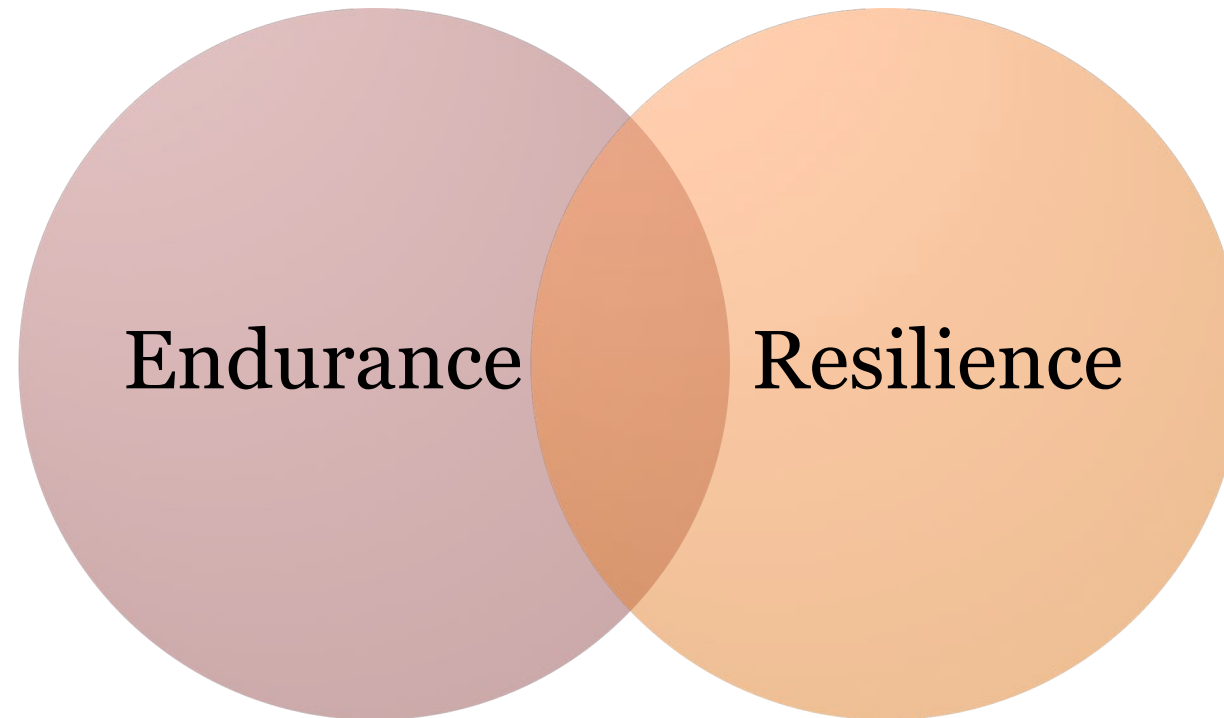
Endurance [Hypomoné (ὑπομονή)]

means a. 'standing fast' and b. 'expectation,' 'waiting.'

Courageous endurance

Motivated by unselfish love and honor

Psalms 37:7 (ESV) 7 Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!



Endurance is:

Luke 8:15 (ESV) 15 As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with *patience*.

Expected of us by Jesus

Luke 21:17-19

17 You will be hated by all because of my name. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 ***By your endurance you will gain your souls.***

Commends us as servants of God

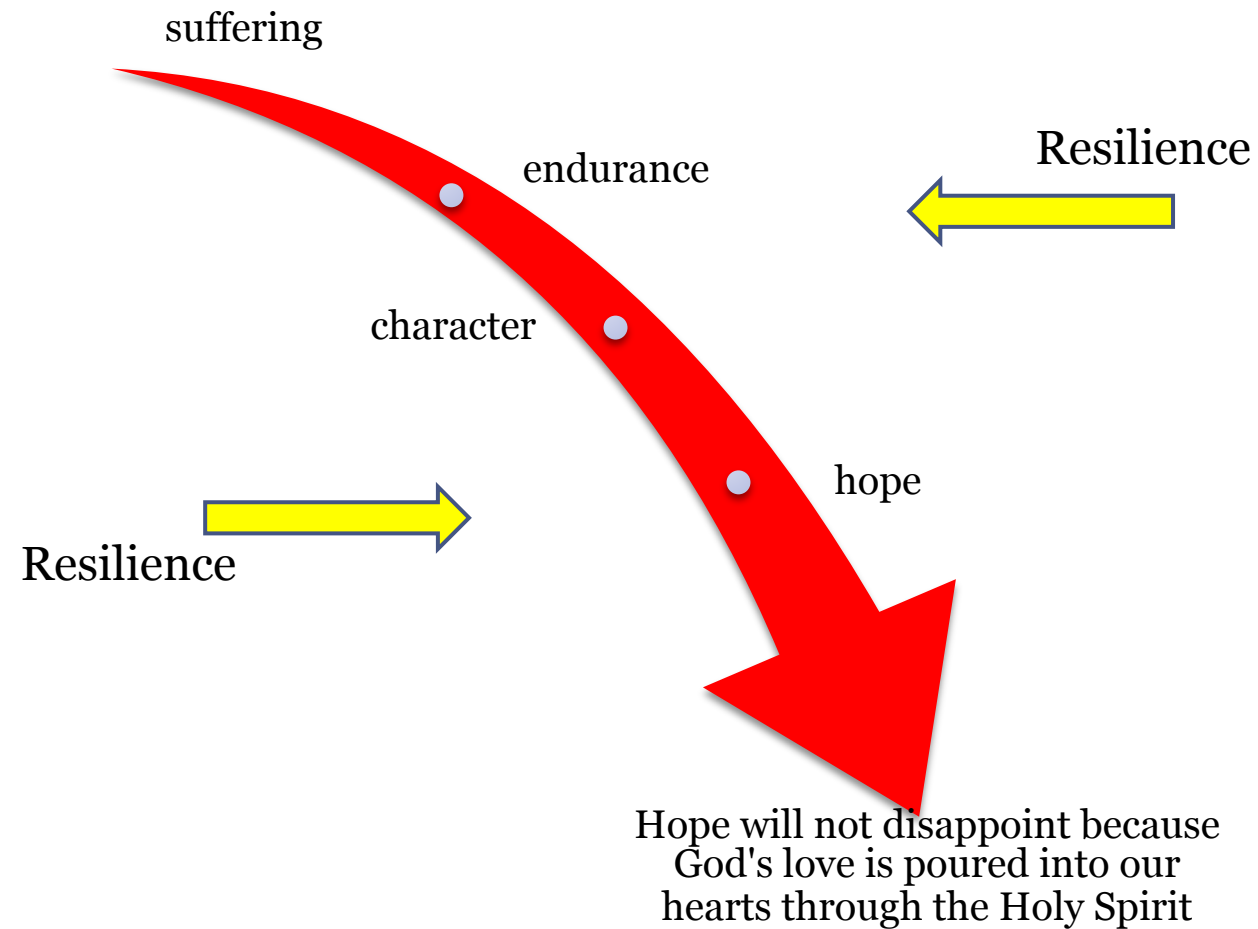
2 Corinthians 6:4-10 ... but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great ***endurance***, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6 by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, 7 truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8 in honor and ***dishonor***, in ***ill repute*** and good repute. We are **treated as *impostors***, and yet are true; 9 ***as unknown, and yet are well known***; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; ***as having nothing, and yet possessing everything***.

Endurance forms Christian character

Romans 5:1-5

1 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our **sufferings**, knowing that **suffering** produces **endurance**, 4 and **endurance** produces **character**, and **character** produces **hope**, 5 and **hope does not disappoint us**, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Endurance is a step the pathway to the experience of God's love - Resilience helps us stay on the path



Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely; and let us run with **endurance** the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him **endured** the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2

The Everlasting Kingdom Psalm 145

13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds.

14 The LORD upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down.

The Psalms are a resource for building resilience and endurance

When people are familiar with the psalms and can use them they are:

1. An example of a prayerful attitude/strategy
2. Prayers for the traumatized.
3. A template for traumatized people who have trouble finding words or concepts to capture their experience.
4. An Inoculation against cynicism.
5. A. Powerful “theology” of suffering.
6. Connect with Christians in all previous ages, all locations.
7. Can enhance our resilience and foster our endurance

Stillness

Great are you, O Lord, and exceedingly worthy of praise (Psalm 48:1; 96:4); your power is immense, and your wisdom beyond reckoning (Psalm 147:5). And so we humans, who are a due part of your creation, long to praise you—we carry our mortality about with us, carry the evidence of our sin and with it the proof that you thwart the proud. Yet these humans, due part of your creation as they are, still long to praise you. You stir us so that praising you may bring us joy, because *you have made us and drawn us to yourself, and our heart is unquiet until it rests in you* (Psalm 62:1).

Augustine, Confessions Bk 1:1 (trans. Maria Boulding)

Only within God has my soul silence
from him is my salvation
only he is my rock and my salvation
My high stronghold I shall not be moved
Greatly.

Psalm 62: 1-2 *Book of Praises*, Roger Wagner

In God alone my soul in stillness waits;
from him comes my salvation.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my
stronghold,
so that I shall never be shaken.

Common Worship, Daily Prayer C of E

In God alone is my soul at rest;
my salvation comes from him.
He alone is my rock, my salvation,
my fortress; never shall I falter.

Revised Grail Psalms

For God alone my soul waits in silence;
from him comes my salvation.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my
fortress;
I shall never be shaken.

NRSV

Psalm 46

⁷Nations are in tumult, kingdoms are shaken:
he lifts his voice, the earth melts away.

⁸The LORD of hosts is with us:
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

⁹Come and behold the works of the LORD,
the awesome deeds he has done on the earth.

¹⁰He puts an end to wars over all the earth;
the bow he breaks, the spear he snaps, the shields
he burns with fire:

¹¹**“Be still and know that I am God,
exalted over nations, exalted over earth!”**

¹²The LORD of hosts is with us:
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

²**God is for us a refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in time of distress:**

³so we shall not fear though the earth should
rock, though the mountains quake to the heart of
the sea;

⁴even though its waters rage and foam,
even though the mountains be shaken by its
tumult. The LORD of hosts is with us:
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

⁵The waters of a river give joy to God’s city,
the holy place, the dwelling of the Most High.

⁶God is within, it cannot be shaken;
God will help it at the dawning of the day.

Calvin's Observations on Psalm 46

- [v. 10]
- *The Psalmist seems now to turn his discourse to the enemies of the people of God ... he bids them be still, that they may know that he is God ... he warns them, that if they proceed to act like madmen, his power is not enclosed within the narrow limits of Judea, and that it will be no difficult matter for him to stretch forth his arm ... that he may glorify himself in every land... [he] has more than enough, both of weapons and of strength, to preserve and defend his Church which he has adopted.*

Finally, two quick ways to make yourself feel better and build your resilience

1. Exercise
2. Do something good for someone else

Summary and Action Items

Christian health workers have unique stresses.

Christian practices of prayer, worship, and fellowship are critical to enduring in the Christian life.

Reflect on the resilience factors and try to develop those that make sense to you.

Monitor your resilience, get input from others, and work with colleagues to maintain your resilience and endurance.

Use Christian practices such as praying the psalms so that, with God's help, you can strengthen your resilience and endurance.