

Assignment 4: Personal Paper

Due: April 26, 2010

Length: 7-10 pages

Format: typed, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, normal font

This paper should reflect introspection (self-knowledge). Identify personal life challenges/adversities and describe how your own developed and inherent strengths or weaknesses, thinking styles, and personal beliefs have contributed to or detracted from your resiliency. Explore how your resilience influences your life (e.g., work, school, family).

- Consider the factors that have shaped and keep you resilient, such as the thinking styles you employ (assessed through doing the Beeper Activity, the Emotions Log, and the ABCs work you were recording during the several weeks).
- How has the Personal Beliefs List helped in your self-understanding? Have you discovered beliefs that have limited you? What beliefs have empowered you? In what way do your beliefs impact your resilience?
- How do you solve problems? Do your particular problem solving skills detract or add to your resilience?
- Were the assessment tests done in class (e.g., locus of control, resilience quiz, etc) accurate in describing you? If so, why? If not, why not?
- How would you answer some of the questions you posed to your interviewee? Will you model some of their resilience-related attitudes, skills, beliefs, and philosophies?
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- Incorporate selected answers to Saleebey's questions (Survival, Support, Exception, Possibility, and Esteem).

Survival questions. How have you managed to survive (or thrive) thus far, given all the challenges you have had to contend with? How have you been able to rise to the challenges put before you? What was your mind-set as you faced these difficulties? What have you learned about yourself and your world during your struggles? Which of these difficulties have given you special strength, insight, or skill? What are the special qualities on which you can rely?

Support questions. What people have given you special understanding, support, and guidance? Who are the special people on whom you can depend? What is it that these people give you that is exceptional? How did you find them or how did they come to you? What did they respond to in you? What associations, organizations, or groups have been especially helpful to you in the past?

Exception questions. When things were going well in life, what was different? In the past, when you felt that your life was better, more interesting, or more stable, what about your world, your relationships, your thinking was special or different? What parts of your world and your being would you like to recapture, reinvent, or relive? What moments or incidents in your life have given you special understanding, resilience, and guidance?

Possibility questions. What now do you want out of life? What are your hopes, visions, and aspirations? How far along are you toward achieving these? What people or personal qualities are helping you move in these directions? What do you like to do? What are your special talents and abilities? What fantasies and dreams have given you special hope and guidance?

Esteem questions. When people say good things about you, what are they likely to say? What is it about your life, yourself, and your accomplishments that give you real pride? How will you know when things are going well in your life – what will you be doing, who will you be with, how will you be feeling, thinking, and acting? What gives you genuine pleasure in life? When was it that you began to believe that you might achieve some of the things you wanted in life? What people, events, ideas were involved?"

Saleebey, D. (1997). The strengths approach to practice. In D. Saleebey (Ed.) The strengths perspective in social work practice (2nd ed., pp. 49-58). New York City, NY: Longman.