

Dear Suicide Australia Working Party,

I would like to document a preventive approach to suicide/depression in the elderly that I have developed over the last 6 years inside the U3A system.

My submission is that this approach could be used more widely to attempt to deal with the established fact that there is a high incidence of depression and suicide in the elderly, both before and after entering Residential Villages. (references Fleming 2001, Lloyd 2003).

The presentations are based on the attached resilience promotion module that aims to facilitate discussion in groups that are not used to this type of area.

I have modified it for short presentations to groups such as Probus when the aim becomes to interest the audience in reading and acting on " immediately practical" strategies--as attached.

I am aware that NSW Mental Health have this type of programme running but what I have seen on their website presents to me as far too didactic. Their modification of my model seemed quite off target.

I hope that this submission and its attachments can be accepted as part of your review.

With thanks

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References

Fleming 2001 Challenge Depression Programme, Commonwealth Dept of Health and Ageing.

Lloyd 2003 Challenging Depression--taking a spiritually enhanced approach ,Geriatrician Dec 2003

Lloyd 2005 Spiritual nurturing as a technique--advancing the search for meaning International Psychogeriatric Association Bulletin May 2005

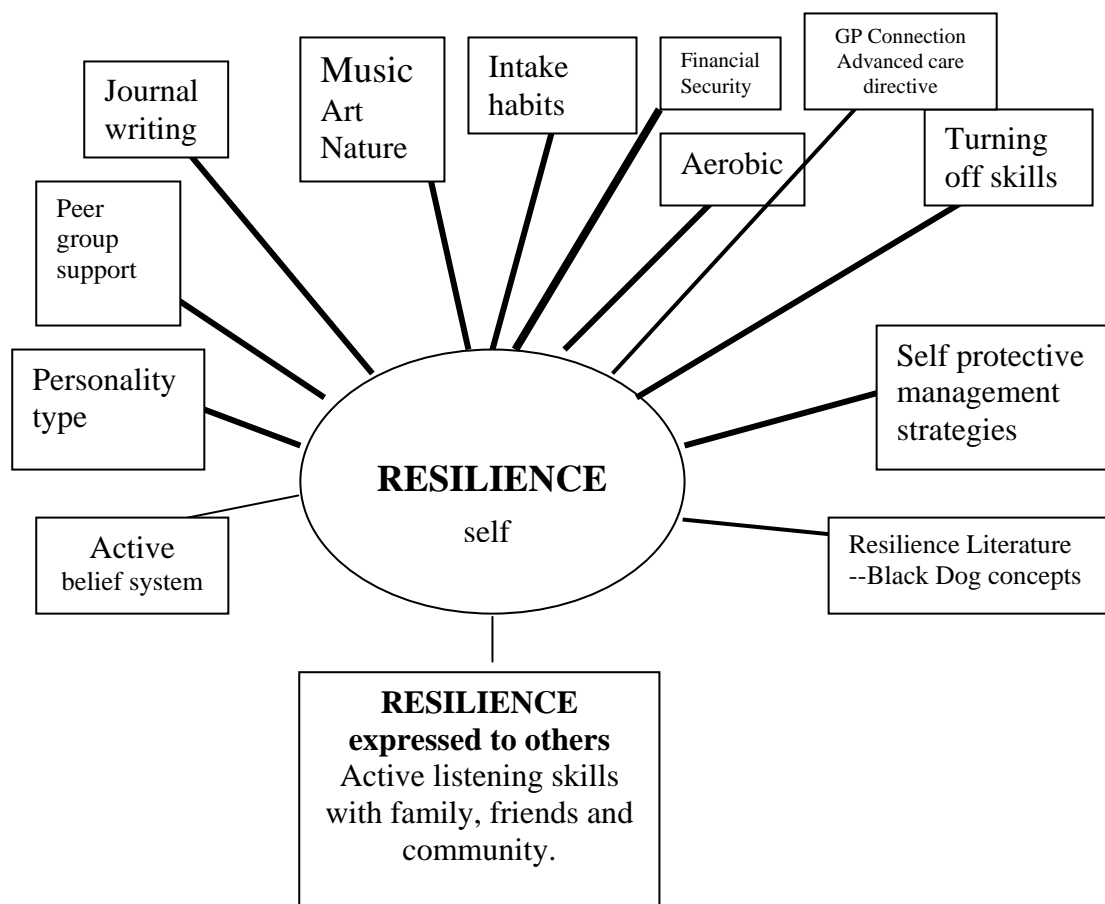
Attachments

1. Resilience Promotion Model
2. Immediately practical methods of Resilience Promotion handout.

This may well be distorted by transmission—if so, please notify and I will snail mail it.

RESILIENCE FACTORS FOR COMMUNITY

(DERIVED FROM A MODEL DESIGNED FOR GP'S)



Key to each factor

- **Resilience Literature**

Dowrick Stephanie 2007. *Creative Journal Writing—the heart and art of reflection*. Allen & Unwin

Deveson Anne. 2003 *Resilience*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin

Short J. 2005 *An intelligent life- a practical guide to relationships, intimacy and self- esteem* Random House: Australia

King Petrea 2004 *Your life matters—the power of living now* Random House Sydney

Young –Eisendrath. 1996 *The resilient Spirit—transforming suffering into insight and renewal- a journey into resilience personality traits*

Seligman M. 1992 *Learned Optimism* Random House Sydney

Wilson, P, 2006, *The quiet*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney.—explains the importance of our ‘internal dialogues’ and illustrates practical methods that can control their potential harm.

Johnstone M, 2005 , *I had a black dog* Pan Macmillan Australia—cartoon style for great truths

- **Self management strategies**—includes delegating and rationing time
- **Turning off**—programming in ‘quiet times’—external and internal
- **GP attachment**—emphasises a firm trusting attachment to a GP and an existing advanced care directive.
- **Aerobic**—exercise **Intake**—diet
- **Music, art, nature**—acknowledges the escape opportunities and spiritual energising outside work. Note recent emphasis on the healing power of choir singing
- **Journal writing**—a key skill to get in touch with feelings and adjust to them
- **Peer group**—the strength provided by sharing confidentially with colleagues about the feeling component of life experience
- **Personality type**—the importance of knowing what type of individual you are and understanding how to create positivity
- **Active belief system**—the support that can be provided by an active belief in God, self, sporting club
- **Resilience –others**. Acknowledges how resilience can be passed on , both personally in family and with community and work contacts experiencing distress.

Murray Lloyd, March 2008..... Further information: mlloyd4@bigpond.com

A LIST OF IMMEDIATELY PRACTICAL RESILIENCE PROMOTERS

Murray Lloyd Probus Handout October 2006

Some of the factors in a full list of resilience promoters develop slowly and almost unconsciously. Some aspects that reduce resilience and coping ability may be irreversible or, at best, need considerable time to change.

The list below is organized in the five segments (see diagram below) that are recognized as a model of what operates on the whole human being. It picks out strategies from all the potential resilience promoters that can be used when you start feeling the shadow of what is commonly known as 'the black dog' or when you decide to pursue resilience in a preventative way as part of a programme.

Physical

- Adequate sleep –practicing insomnia skills
- Taking time out from living stresses where practical to provide space for new practices
- Understanding medications , restricting 'substances'
- More careful diet, adequate exercise and absorbing nature's beauty

Social

- Distraction with hobbies
- Identify and use a supportive companion—private or professional
- Be more selective with social activities
- Read wisdom literature
- Find a self help group if chronic illness is involved
- Take time out—'being' rather than 'doing'
- Avoid negatives—TV violence
- Work on the skills of accepting help
- Consider animal companionship

Emotional/ Feelings

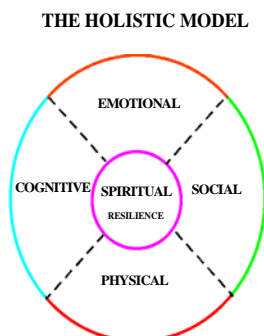
- Keep a journal—practice focussing on inner dialogues and overviewing
- Work on accepting your limitations, mistakes

Cognitive/ Thoughts

- Develop a heightened sense of humour
- Imagine what a more resilient person might do
- Reflect on your resilience in the past.

Resilience/ Spirituality

- Develop your connectedness— sporting and other clubs
hobby groups
religious faith
professional help—GP. consultants, complementary medicine.
Media Life Matters, Australian Story, Press Club
Music—classical, choir



Key references:

- 'Choosing happiness' Stephanie Dowrick 2005
'Resilience' Anne Deveson 2003
'Learned Optimism' Martin Seligman 1990
'I had a black dog' Matthew Johnstone 2005
U3A list from mlloyd4@bigpond.com