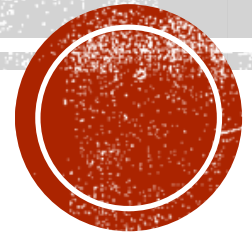# EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BE RESILIENT IN CHALLENGING TIMES: IT STARTS WITH UNDERSTANDING

SUNY Cortland PE Department

Helena Baert

EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE FACTS

- How to weather the storms and rebound after something difficult

- It is an adaptive dynamic process

- It effects your interactions and you environment

- Context plays a role

- We want to thrive, not just survive

- You can cultivate it by engaging in certain habits and fostering certain dispositions
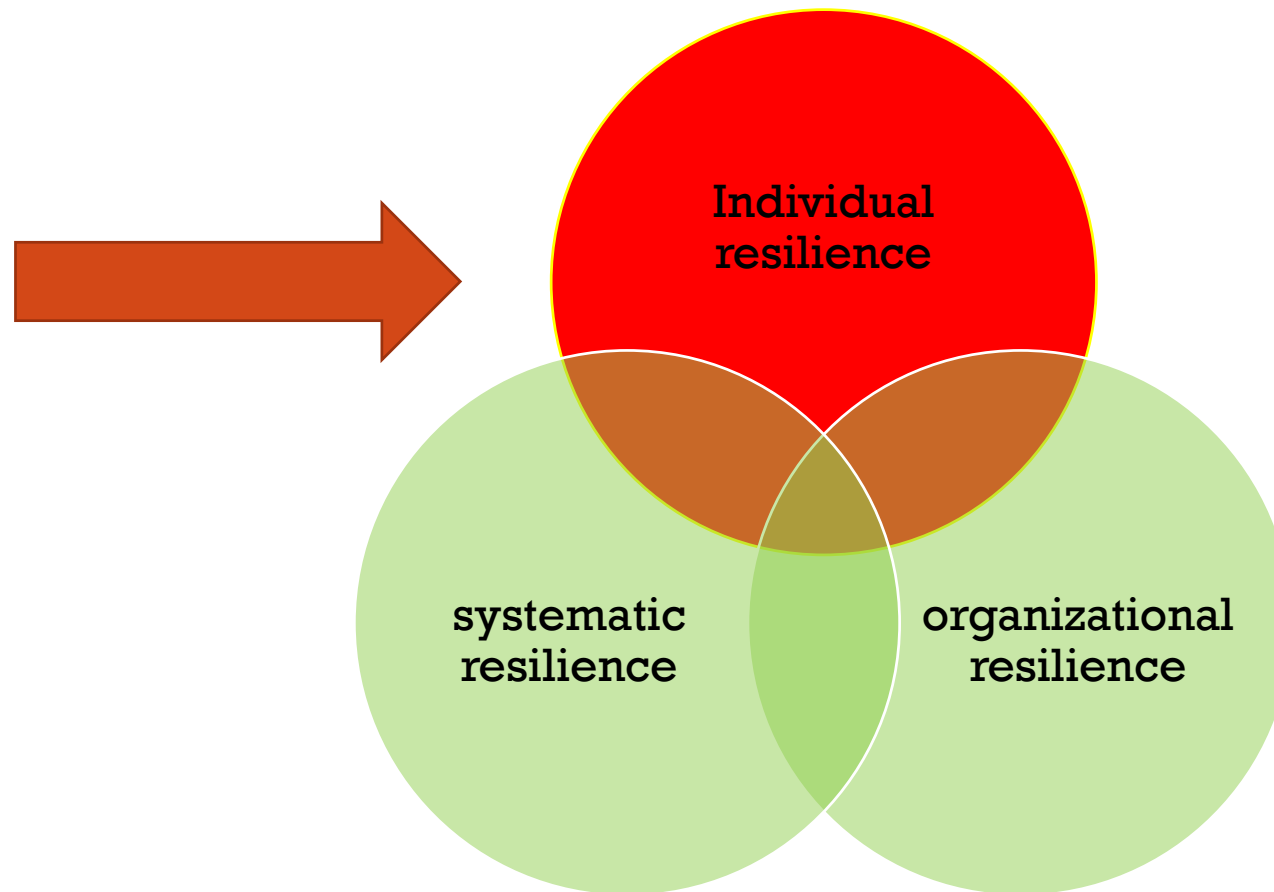
IMPACT

- Lack of resilience impacts learning and experience

- K-12 Schools have been increasing efforts in social and emotional learning needs of children

- Effects not just the students

- Half a million US teachers leave the profession every year (turnover rate of 20%) (Alliance for excellent education, 2014)

- Teacher attrition among first year teachers has increased about 40% in the past decades. (Ingersoll, Merrill, and Stuckey, 2014)
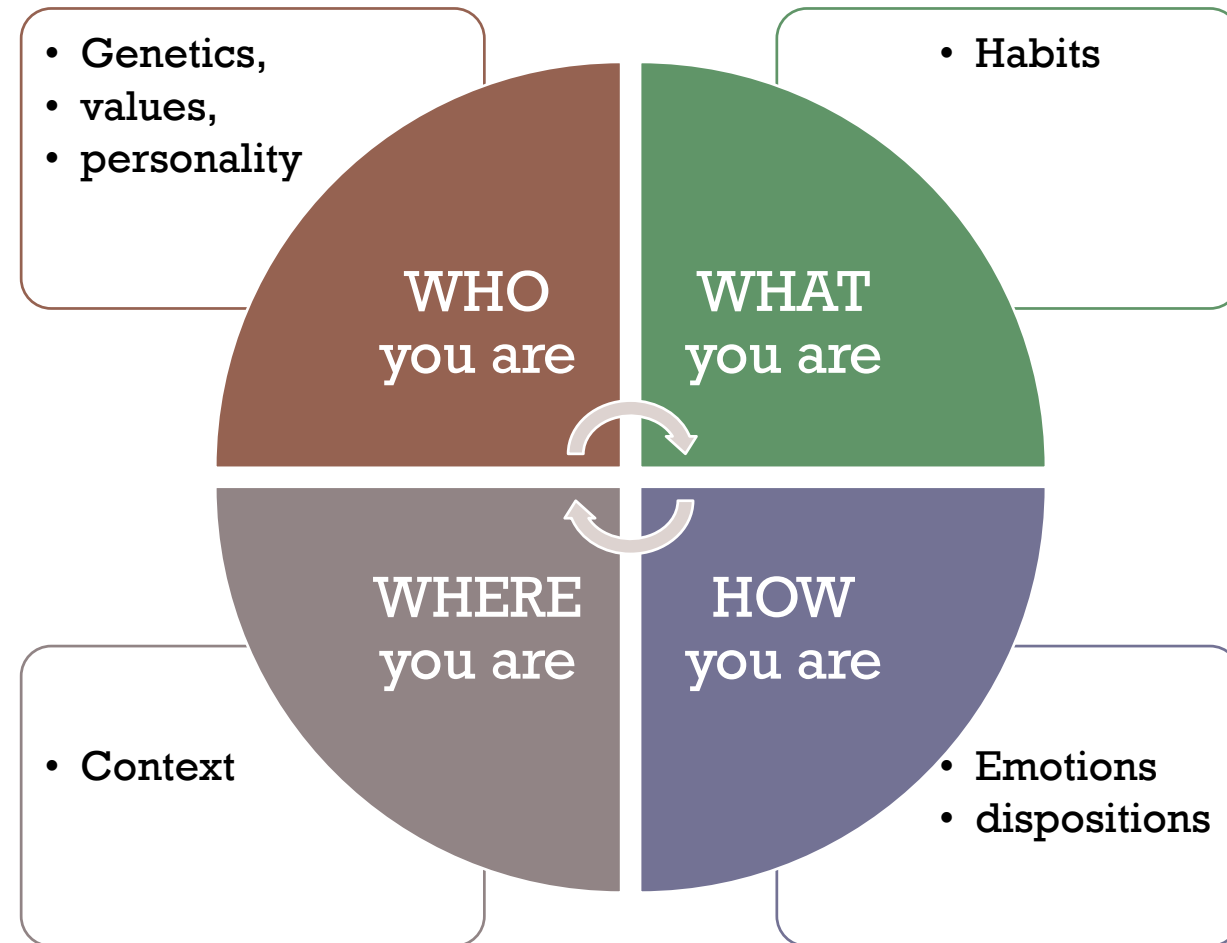
CULTIVATING RESILIENCE

CULTIVATING RESILIENCE

Individual resilience

systematic resilience

organizational resilience

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESILIENCE
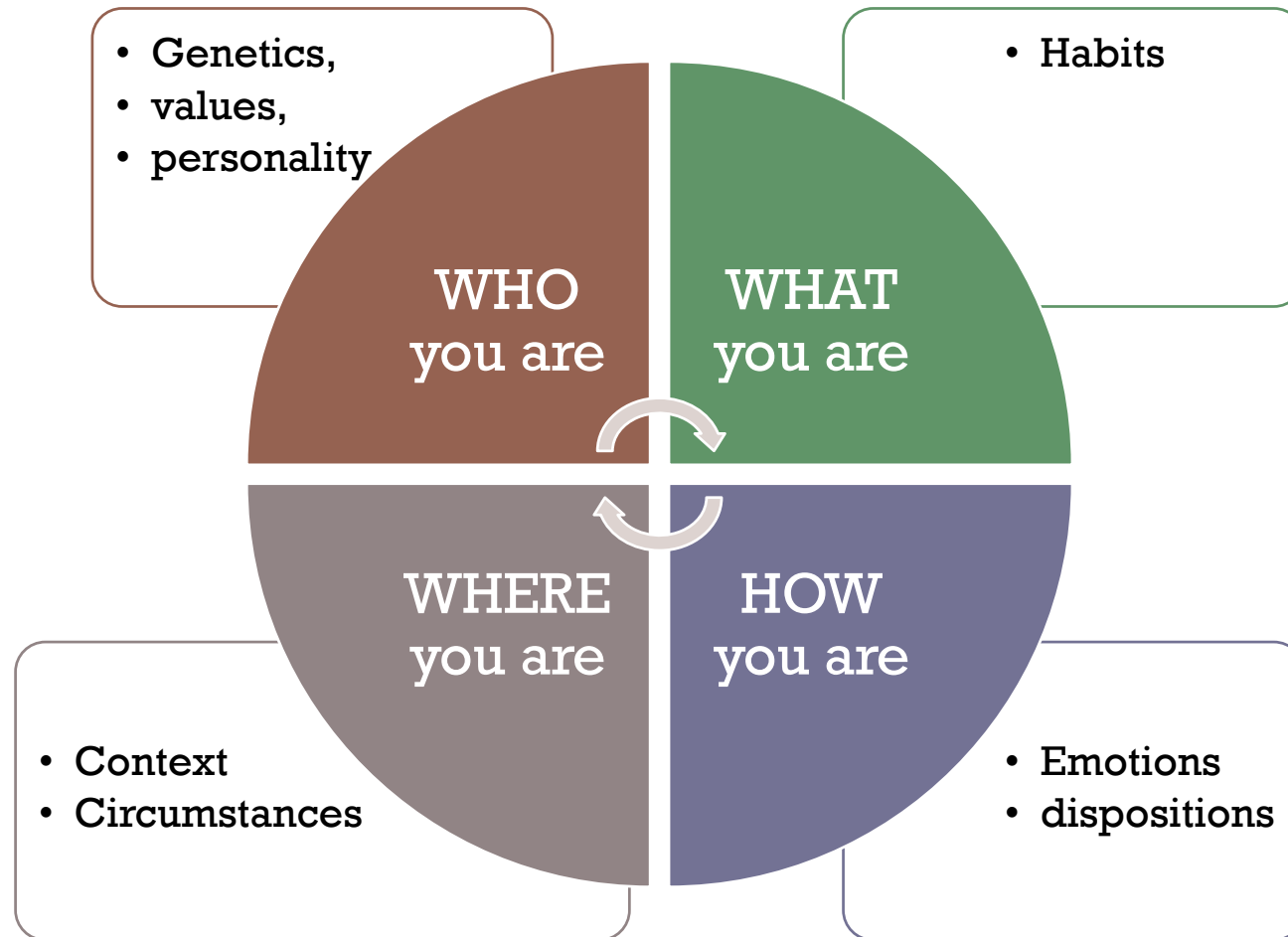
- Genetics,
- values,
- personality

- Habits

WHO you are

WHAT you are

WHERE you are

HOW you are

- Context

- Emotions
- dispositions

EXERCISE #1: FACULTY

- Genetics,
- values,
- personality

- Habits

WHO you are

WHAT you are

WHERE you are

HOW you are

- Context
- Circumstances

- Emotions
- dispositions

HABITS

CelebrateAndAppreciate
BeALearner
PlayAndCreate
TakeCareofYourself
CultivateCompassion
UnderstandEmotions
BuildCommunity
KnowYourself
BeHereNow
FocusOnTheBrightSpots
TellEmpoweringStories

EXERCISE #2: STUDENTS

- Genetics,
- values,
- personality

- Habits

WHO you are

WHAT you are

WHERE you are

HOW you are

- Context
- Circumstances

- Emotions
- dispositions
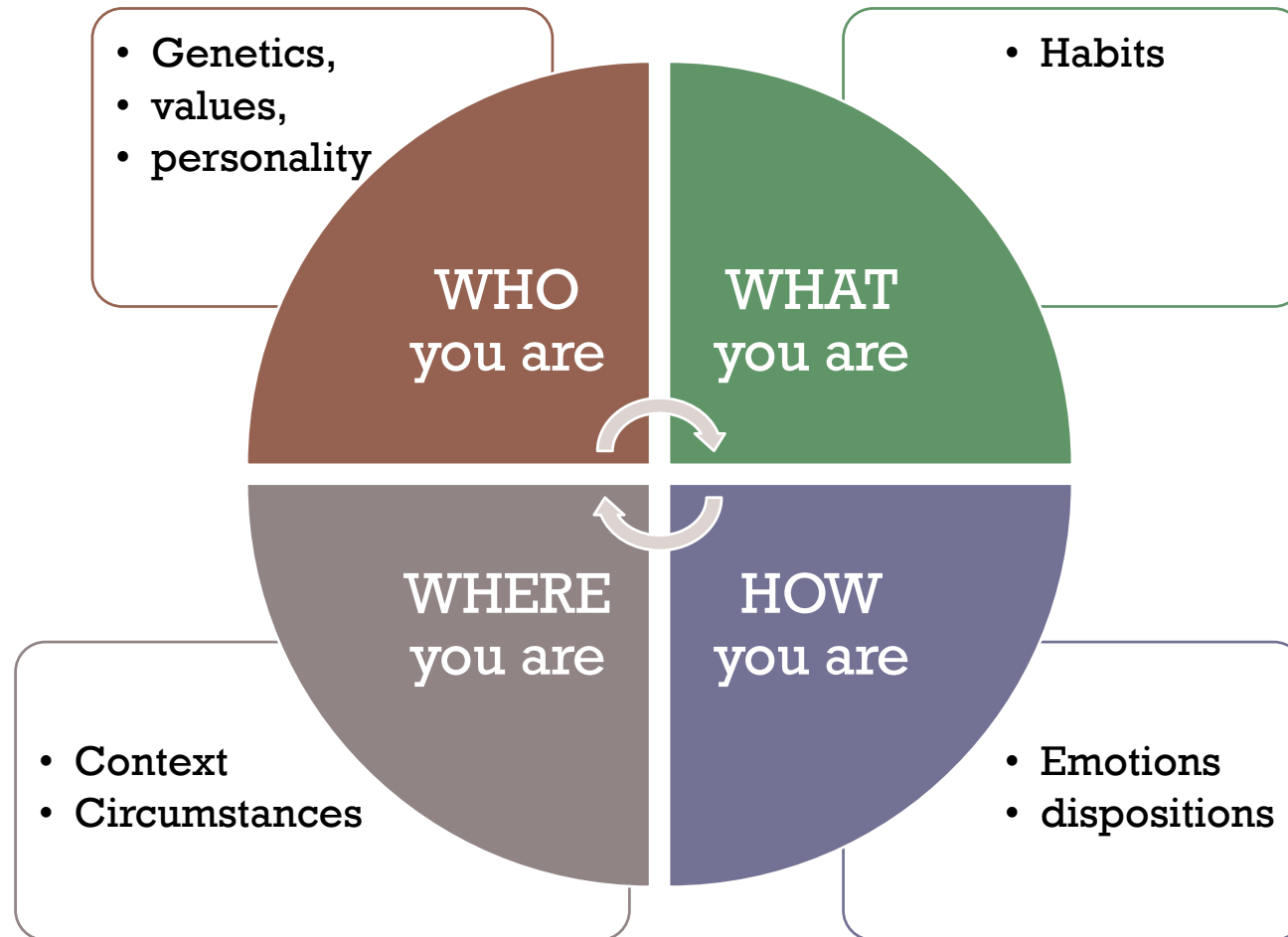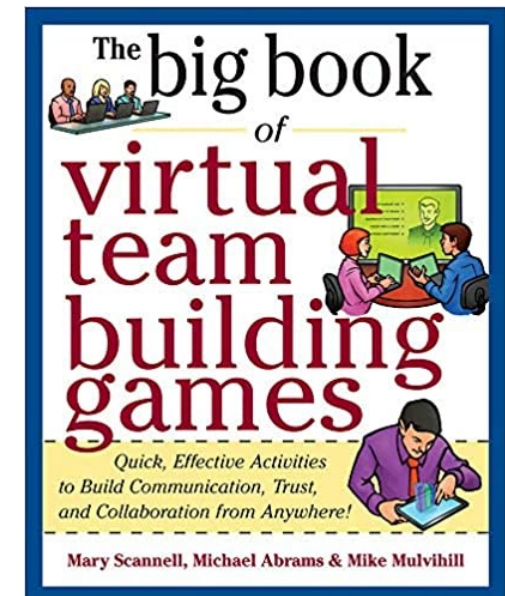
WHO ARE THEY?

- Survey the students
- In a new environment, do a weekly check in
- Icebreakers – yes even online
- Webex i-spy game
- Use video to talk to students, webex or teams
- Create short videos to check in with students
- Personality Tests
- Focus on their strengths
- Other ideas?

WHERE ARE THEY?

- Survey questions

- Online / Hybrid: create structure & consistency

- Everything must be explained step by step online (be patient)

- New protocols, routines, guidelines, rules – focus of week 1

- Help them understand/navigate this new world

- Do an online scavenger hunt / webex scavenger hunt

- Navigation quiz on BB

- Every tool should be explained – creating short video tutorials on how to do something is often the best way for students to gain understanding of a tool or task. (screencastify free for short max 5 min videos)

WHAT WE DO

- Active Learning strategies

- Authentic learning

- Give choices

- After 3 weeks, reflect! "Start, Stop, Continue"

- Multiple modalities of learning - Check out the UDL (universal Design of Learning)

- Online office hours

- Learn and explore effective tools, join webinars

CelebrateAndAppreciate
BeALearner
PlayAndCreate
TakeCareofYourself
CultivateCompassion
UnderstandEmotions
BuildCommunity
KnowYourself
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HOW WE ARE

- Model positive dispositions

- Use dispositions in your language / feedback

- Ask questions about how your students displayed positive dispositions. Share these dispositions with them

- It is often the way we give feedback that will impact the learner

- Own experience – put a grade on it, students will not read the feedback or will judge the feedback without learning from it

- How else do we empower learners?

Empathy PositiveSelf-Perception
Curiosity
Perspective
Empowerment
Trust Purposefulness
Perseverance
Acceptance
Optimism
Courage
Humor

SURVEY #1

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=tBmbbEfIKkSknG2df9riMOmYNgo6ZvxHt7FEZl8WZ5dUMFJXU0tTM1A0SEozR0YzREJKTjRGQkpJQi4u
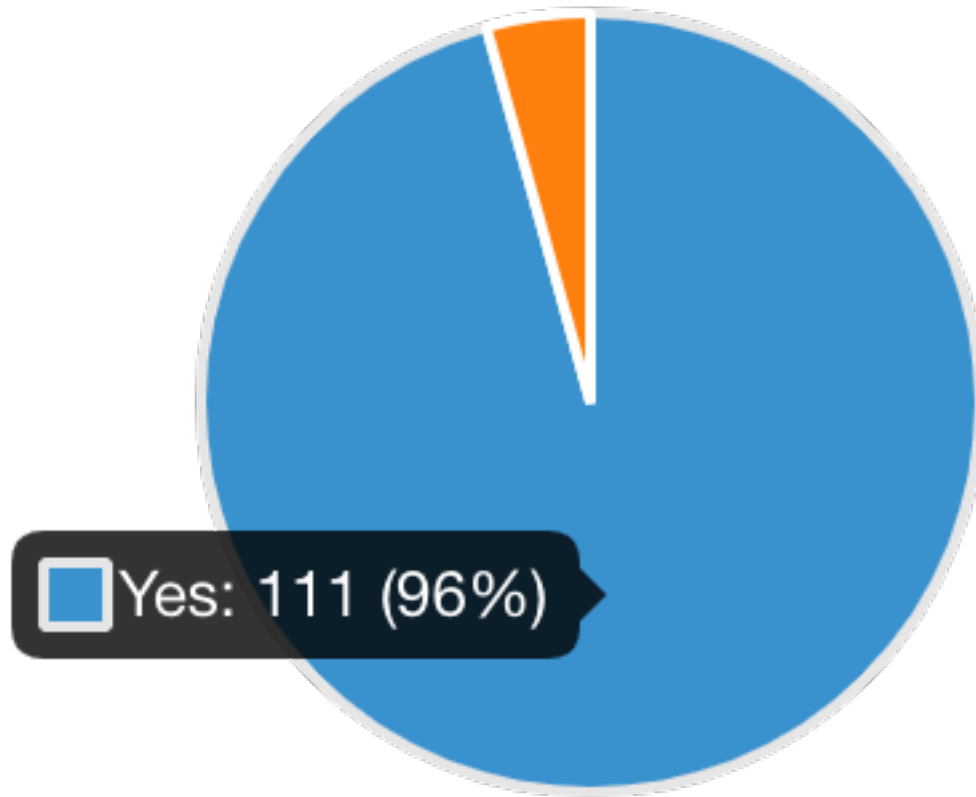
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The questions:

- name/C#

- Access

- Experiences

- Tools they use for success

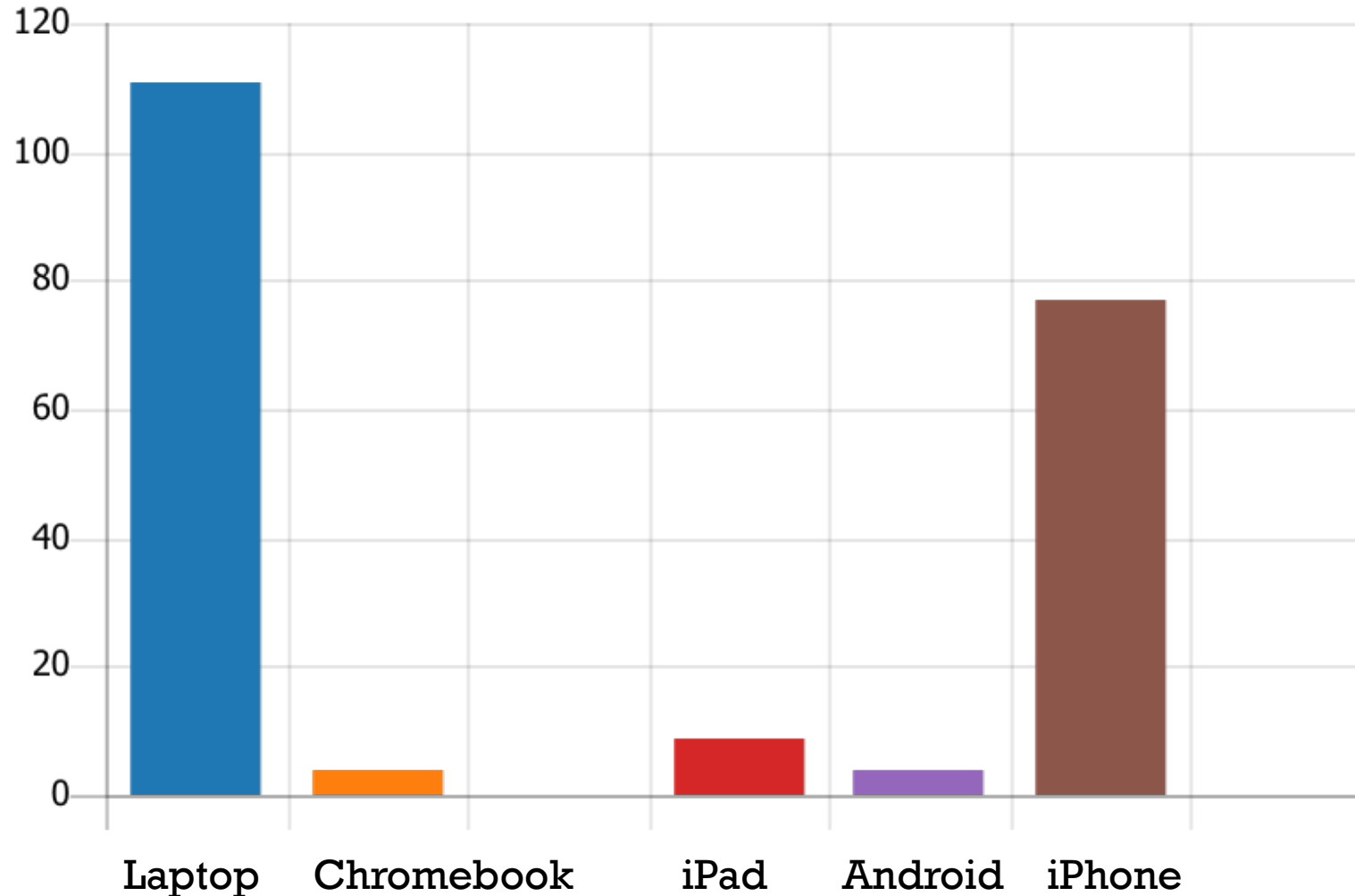- Concerns

RESULTS: ACCESS TO RELIABLE INTERNET

What we can do:
- Communicate with the students who said "no"
- Can we see if they can gain access
- Is it due to not having a device?
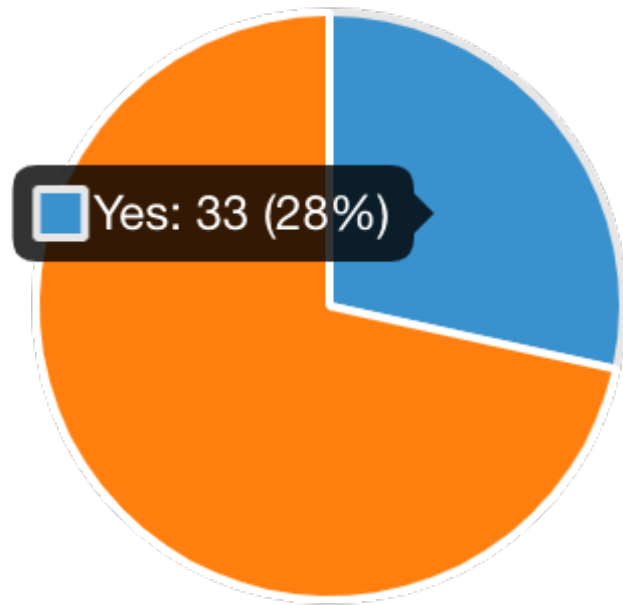- What can the administration do?

Yes: 111 (96%)

DEVICE USED

How we can help?
Important to know that most students have a laptop and when they use a phone, it is usually an iPhone. Still, ensure you are using apps that are accessible on both platforms

# ARE THEY LIMITED IN STREAMING CONTENT?

What we can do?

- Focus on asynchronized and "low tech" assignments (e.g. readings, writing notes, written assignments, discussion and write papers, short videos,…)

- Limit synchronize sessions OR record them and allow students to watch them later.

- Make synchronized sessions optional

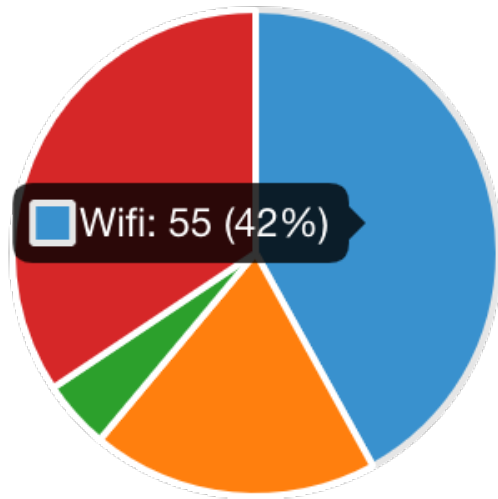- Pre-record your lectures

Yes: 33 (28%)

ACCESS TO QUIET PLACE TO STUDY

No: 25 (21%)
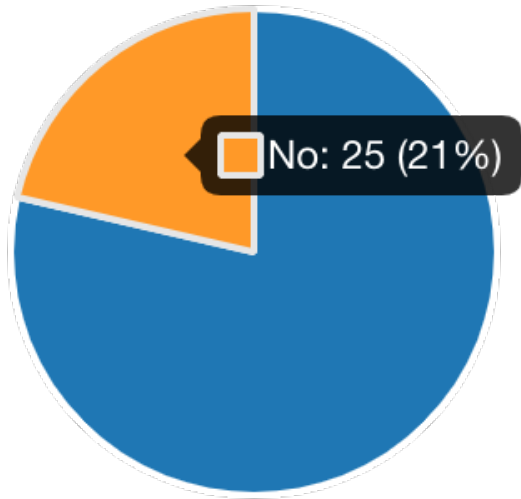
- We must be aware that many students share space and devices

- We must be aware that many students have more responsibilities snow that they are back at home

- Shorter tasks

- Tasks where breaks are ok

- More time

WHAT WOULD HELP?

Wifi: 55 (42%)

Red: Other (45)
Orange: more data (25)
Green: a device (6)

Other:

- Quiet space
- More specific directions & communication
- A laptop
- A schedule
- Work with classmates
- More then 1 device at home
- New syllabus
- Video chat or connections

TOOLS

- I do not believe this would be useful
- Can be useful but not using it
- Useful
- I use this every day

- Making a schedule
- Having structure in my day
- Doing Course assignment during class times
- Communicate with professors
- Read and understand expectations
- Take breaks
- Stay active
- Being kind and flexible with myself
- Being kind and flexible with others

100%   0%   100%
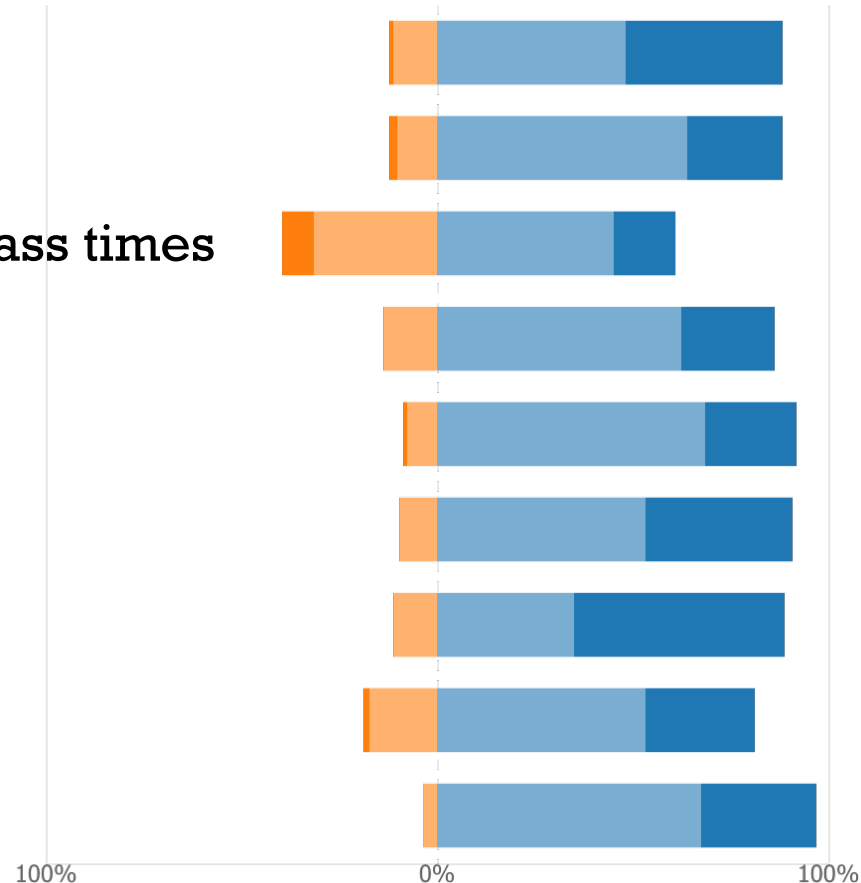
CONCERNS

Personal

- Lack of focus and motivation
- Distracting environment
- Easy to forget the work
- Do not have a microphone
- Balancing 6 online courses
- Not getting the teaching experience I need to become a successful teacher
- Teachers need to use BB, not email
- Overwhelmed
- Worried about grades/GPA

Educational

- Unorganized
- Workload increase
- Confusion about due dates
- Unclear directions
- Afraid of messing up
- Change of course outline
- All courses have same due dates
- Need assignment rather then just notes
- Teaching ourselves
- Communication
- Quick access to professors

STORIES

I think we will all be able to get through this and complete the semester as long as everyone stays on top of their responsibilities and stays positive.

This is just taking a toll. home is a very hard place for me to be because not too long ago my mother passed. it is a very distracting environment and i find it extremely hard to get stuff done. and i know many other students feel the same way

I have 6 siblings and I live in a trailer that is a quarter mile into the woods. I have been going to a friends home to do my work everyday, however, I would rather be distancing myself from them and not using their devices. My father has recently tested positive for coronavirus so all of my course work now has to be done on my phone for the time being.

I am in the army reserves and I am currently activated right now to help out with the outbreak. I got called in last weekend. So far, I have downtime at night to complete assignments and create instructional content for the kids but I don't have the ability to take videos of myself as a form of instructional content.

Read and understand the expectations of my courses was rated low as this can be helpful but it depends on the professor in how helpful this can be. I believe online lectures/videos would be beneficial for topics that could be easier to explain instead of just telling students to read it in a book (AKA rolling out the ball for professors). As we are taught (UDL) that not everyone learns best being taught just one way and reading things out of a book and having topics explained auditorily can be helpful to encompass all students on top of reading it in a book.

Just want to thank my professors because I'm sure this is much harder on them than it is us! I appreciate everything they are doing to make sure we still succeed!

WHAT I KNOW

- This is learning & teaching right now
- This is a new reality
- This is about people, not courses
- This is about collective support
- This is about creative problem solving
- This is about our students
- This is about life
- This is about caring
- This is about helping each other

- This is not a time to hide
- This is a time to support
- This is a time for flexibility
- This is a time for adaptability
- This is not about that one technology but rather finding the tools to address the needs of our students
- This is about us
- This is about our students
- This is tiring but worth it

TIPS

- Check in with your students to see how they are currently doing and how you are currently doing
  - Send them a survey, they may have some ideas as well
  - Be open to their suggestions
  - Be flexible to options
  - Make it anonymous

- Personally connect with struggling learners

- Reduce the work load, focus on outcomes – think quality over quantify

- Be flexible with type of submissions – allow different ways/tools to be used

- Reduce curricular goals – we may not be able to meet them all this semester
  - Prioritize
  - This about pre-requisite skills they need to move forward

TIPS CONTINUED

- Choose mostly asynchronous learning but offer synchronized options "check-in"

- Use video/audio to explain work – pre-record your lecture

- Be flexible with due dates but spread them out if you have several

- Be clear with directions and due dates :
  - add an item on BB that it is the first they see – with specific dates of what they need to do and when it is due.
  - Use folders per week to organize.

- Use Blackboard not email to share directions and due dates

- Help/Encourage students to set up study groups / support groups / review sessons

- Check in with your students

SURVEY #2

- N=70 / Anonymous
- Demographics – level of student / Device
- Access to space
- What are you doing that is helping you learn remotely?
- What are your professors doing that is helping you learn remotely?
- What has been the most challenging part of completing your coursework remotely?
- What would help you to be more successful in learning remotely?
- Looking into the future, what are your fears, concerns, questions?
- Stories – their experiences in their unique ways

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THAT IS HELPING YOU LEARN REMOTELY?

- Making a schedule

- Making lists

- keeping a routine

- I wrote out all of my assignments and broke them down so I do a little everyday. I do that work first thing in the morning so I do not forget.

- Checking Blackboard every day and my email more than 10 times a day to stay up to date

- Waking up before my family wakes up so I have some quiet

- Talking to ASAP tutors weekly.

- Stay in contact with friends

WHAT ARE YOUR PROFESSORS DOING THAT IS HELPING YOU LEARN REMOTELY?

- Keeping in touch, asking how we are doing personally

- Posting the powerpoints and lectures with organization and structure

- Announcing due dates early so I can plan out a schedule of doing my work

- Being readily available for consultation

- Email, zoom, webex

- a lot of virtual lessons and classes to try and achieve the best in class feeling as possible.

- Adding lots of videos to help us understand the content, voice overs

- Being flexible and adapting the courseload

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF COMPLETING YOUR COURSEWORK REMOTELY?

- Lack of motivation, no structure

- Not having a direct line of communication to ask questions, email is not always helpful or reliable

- Sharing a laptop with my mom who is working from home and my sister who is still in high school

- Mental health has been the most difficult. Lately, it has been really hard to even do daily life tasks like sleeping and stuff, then I cannot do well on my school work. It feels like there is a lot more work than normally, it feels like an overload.

- Unclear directions

- Due dates because there is multiple assignments from different classes due at the same time every week. I'm not really learning anything just meeting deadlines.

- The amount of work – it does not feel like learning

WHAT WOULD HELP YOU TO BE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN LEARNING REMOTELY?

- Professors being in touch with us more on a regular scheduled time like class

- More clear directions on some assignments to limit confusion and a lot of emailing

- A little more structure and webex/zoom meeting more often

- Have all due dates on one site such as blackboard instead of mixed between outlook and blackboard

- Better communication between some professors and students.

- Clearer instructions and less websites or apps to use for submissions.

- If more professors didn't just post powerpoints but spoke them out as well over the video. Also, if they did their normal review for tests and quizzes over zoom as they would normally do as if we were in class still.

STORIES

"I am from Rockland County, one of the heaviest hit places by the coronavirus. I have 7 family members that have gotten it, and sadly one who has passed away from it. Unfortunately, I also know a ton of people outside of my family who have gotten it. My mom is a nurse in a hospital and her whole floor has been turned into a COVID-19 ICU. She has had to recently transition from working days to nights which has been extremely difficult for her. Since we live in the same house, I am potentially being exposed unknowingly every day. I am a waitress, and the restaurant I work for is catering to a coronavirus testing center. In fear of being exposed, I turned down working there and am now currently jobless. With all of this going on, my classes have been at the bottom of my priority list. I just want all of this to be over so we can transition to a new normal, since what we knew as normal will never be the same. It is going to take a lot to move on from all of this, and the fact is some of us may never emotionally recover from the damage this virus has done. As a student, I feel that at this point the only thing that can keep us driven to complete our work is support from our faculty at SUNY Cortland."

LESSONS LEARNED

- Our world (everyone's) has changed

- Make steps to transform, rethink your classes

- Our attitudes, behaviors and dispositions will mirror the students' attitudes, behaviors and dispositions. If we want our students to be resilient, we need to show resilient first

- We need to model resiliency

- We need to incorporate some of the habits and dispositions into our teaching

- We need to set expectations

- We need to have conversations

- We need to see and hear our students often!!

- We need to listen to them and consider their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

- Let's work together, share, get creative and be transparent

RESOURCE FOR RESILIENCE WORK

Onward: Cultivating emotional resilience in educators from Elena Aguilar, 2018
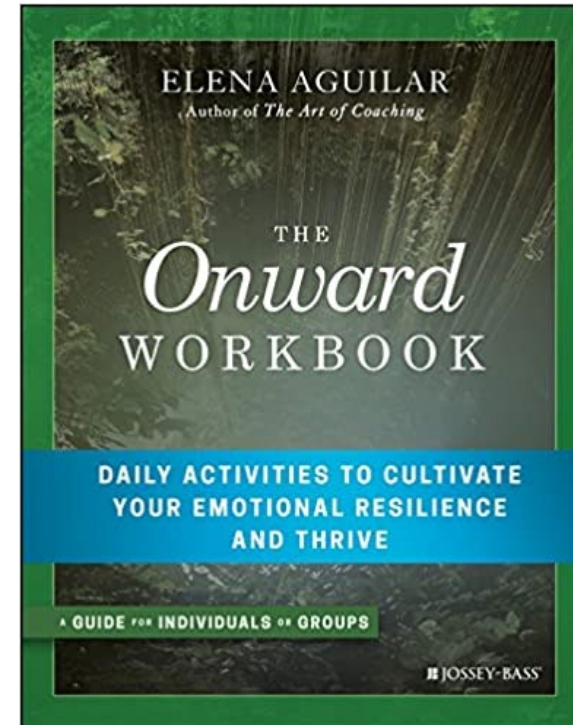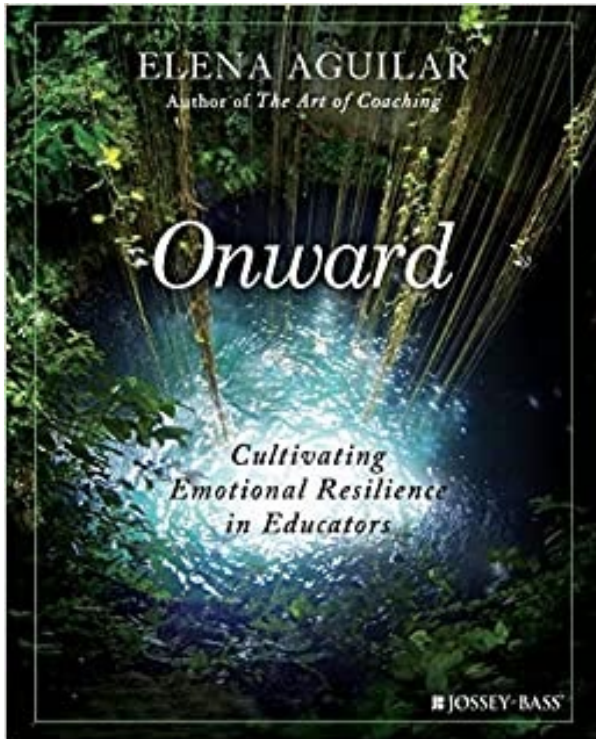
DISCUSSION

- Open floor discussion on building resilience

- What is something that resonates with you and that you will try out?

- Anything we can help you with for next semester?