

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES IN ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY

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NETWORK LITERACY

Military Families Learning Network

www.militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org

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ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

ASSET-BASED
RECOVERY
FRAMEWORK

Heather Keam.
Jonathan Massimi

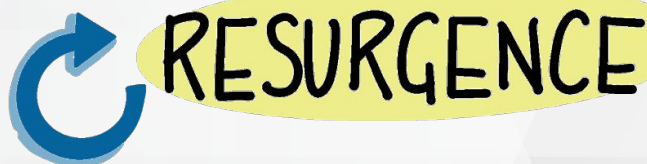


The Asset-based Community Recovery Framework, created by Jonathan Massimi and Heather Keam, starts in crisis, “an event or series of events that suddenly and unexpectedly disturb patterns of life.” This disruption can cause us to feel disoriented, uncertain, vulnerable and lonely. The feeling that we’ve lost our direction can lead us to “re-create what was.” Uncertainty drives us to look for answers. The feeling of loneliness causes us to seek out connections in new ways.

As we begin to tire from our response to crisis, we start to recognize patterns, make deeper connections, and realize our strengths and abilities. Massimi and Keam see fatigue as the catalyst that moves us from the stage of Crisis to the Discovery stage. In this stage we settle into new rhythms and our resilience emerges. We reduce the the number of our connections and focus on deep relationships. Finally, we begin to see our own capabilities and the capacity of our community.



The recognition of our own strengths and the strengths of our community gives us hope. As we start to turn that hope into action, we move into the Resurgence stage. Massimi and Keam write, resurgence is “a reclamation of a community’s power.” After discovering what has been gained through the crisis and where our systems and institutions have fallen short, we can begin to build toward a better future. However, we must remember to challenge old frameworks, remind ourselves we do not have all the answers, and give ourselves permission to be creative and let the future emerge.



ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

ASSET-BASED RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

Heather Keam
Jonathan Massimi

CRISIS

- Life patterns **D/SRUPTED**
- Vulnerability, Disorientation, uncertainty, & loneliness
- We try to hold on
- Ask questions
- Seek answers
- Find **NEW** ways to connect

DISCOVERY

- Look for new *patterns* to emerge
- Make connections
- Foster deeper relationships
- What is *possible*?
- **FATIGUE**
- Limits of **SYSTEMS**

RESURGENCE

- Foster connections
- Share stories
- Community **POWER**
- Use gifts that emerged
- Create **NEW** way
- Take *hopeful* action to move **FORWARD**

PERMISSION
to be

creative

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY WORKSHOPS

As part of the 2021 Military Families Readiness Academy series, “Disaster and Hazard Readiness in Action,” three interactive workshops were offered with the purpose of providing a space to share our stories of community recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Military family service providers who participated in the workshops worked together to identify the interdependencies, capacities, and assets that have emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic response. Using the Asset-based Community Recovery Framework, participants engaged in a collaborative approach to build on what they’ve learned and address the challenges we face from multiple perspectives.

After a brief introduction to the framework, participants joined small (3-6 people), facilitated breakout groups. The small group conversations were guided by four questions selected from or inspired by the many powerful questions included in Massimi and Keam’s “Asset-based Community Recovery Framework” article.

- **Do you have a story that comes out of this experience that inspires hope?**
- **Which unknown assets have come to light?**
- **What has happened that you don’t want to lose?**
- **What did you need or wish for during the pandemic that your community can now provide?**

On page 8, you’ll find the graphic template that was created for the small group facilitators. It includes the four questions we used to help reveal the assets that emerged from the COVID - 19 pandemic. Please feel free to use it with the people you work with.

After the small group conversations, the facilitators shared their harvest of the conversation with the full group. As each small group harvest was shared, graphic recorder Sherrill Knezel captured what was being shared. The resulting graphic record from each workshop can be found on pages 9 - 11.

After all the workshops were completed, the authors of this resource independently analyzed the content of each graphic recording noting any themes that emerged from the data. We then triangulated our individual findings, and eight distinct themes emerged (see page 12).

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY WORKSHOPS

Do you have a story that comes out of this experience that inspires hope?



What has happened that you don't want to lose?



What did you need or wish for during the pandemic that your community can provide now?



Which unknown assets have come to light?



ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY WORKSHOPS

February 3, 2021

WELCOME!

CRISIS
 • feelings & emotions
 • leads to questions & actions

ASSET-BASED RECOVERY frameworks

DISCOVERY
 • look for patterns
 • make connection
 • gain confidence to create another way

RESURGENCE
 • Hopeful action
 • community POWER
 • use gifts that emerged
 • create NEW way

PERMISSION to be **creative**

What has happened that you don't want to lose?

CURBSIDE pick-up!

- SENSE of COMMUNITY
- Camraderie
- CONNECTIVITY!
- access to RESOURCES
- Willingness to STEP IN & help
- NETWORKING
- Deeper family connections
- SOCIAL DISTANCING!
- GFT
- INCORPORATE FUN
- Flexible EMPLOYERS
- FAMILY time
- Reconnecting to NATURE & Healthy Life style
- NEW connections
- Work from HOME
- online programming
- Flexibility of time
- when the SYSTEM works, no one appreciates it

REDISCOVERED!
 Which unknown assets have come to light?

Do you have a Pet?
 • PETS

viva la Sourdough!

- COOKING
- Increased COMMUNITY involvement
- Brought lack of connectivity to FRONT
- Laptops!
- came together
- Building of HUMAN capital
- GRACIOUSNESS
- Kindness on SOCIAL media
- Less TRAFFIC
- MUSIC
- Local FOOD
- Time to REASSESS skills
- POP-UP FOOD PANTRY
- POLITICAL capital
- Mental Health & Social emotional needs addressed
- SOCIAL opportunities
- games!
- FAITH
- ADAPTABILITY
- VALVES
- NEEDS vs. WANTS
- DIFFERENCE in cultures
- Outdoor Sports
- Resilience built in to COMMUNITY
- ONLINE services
- FAITH-based efforts
- RULES WAIVED

What did you need or wish for during the pandemic that your community can provide now?

Tech for HOSPITALS

- Get HAM radio license
- Help for SENIORS with TECH
- Make connections
- Telehealth
- TECH access for school & health
- Tech for HOSPITALS
- works when NOTHING else DOES
- Meetings in HYBRID
- SUPPORT Financially
- childcare
- VACCINE!
- COMMUNICATION ongoing
- Back-to-BASICS
- Mental & PUBLIC Health
- Broadband disparities addressed
- Some earning NEGATIVE income due to paying for childcare
- WOMEN disproportionately affected.
- small business support, community DEVELOPMENT

Do you have a story that comes out of this experience that inspires hope?

STORY & HOPE



COOPERATION & COLLABORATION

Healthcare WORKERS stepping UP

Weekend vaccination CLINIC

Work with MENTAL HEALTH STRESSFUL for STUDENTS, but they are RESILIENT!

SHIFT to VIRTUAL to reach more

When youth serve OTHERS, they get out side themselves

Remember small things to APPRECIATE

• HYGIENE KITS

• consistent connection

• INTENTIONAL connections

• keep STUDENTS engaged

Let it BE BALANCE PATIENT & ACCEPTING

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY WORKSHOPS

February 23, 2021

WELCOME!

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

WHAT HAS EMERGED?

CRISIS

- Patterns DISRUPTED
- Uncertainty
- We try to HOLD ON
- Find NEW ways to connect

DISCOVERY

- What's POSSIBLE?
- New normal
- Fatigue
- Deeper CONNECTIONS
- LIMITS of SYSTEMS

RESURGENCE

- ASK questions
- Share STORIES
- Take ACTION

PERMISSION to be

creative



- MORE remote work
- LESS TRAVEL cost
- Home delivery of FOOD

Do you have a story that comes out of this experience that inspires hope?



- Baking businesses started



- Help others learn
- Grandma celebrated ONLINE & NOW she has vaccine!

- 21 yr. olds STARTED MUTUAL AID for community
- RUNNING for OFFICE!



What has happened that you don't want to lose?

- Curbside pick-ups

- Tech connection
- Knowledge of TECHNOLOGIES



- Handwashing
- ONLINE Faith-based COMMUNITIES
- Board games!

- MORE remote access to COMPUTERS
- Internet access
- MORE cleanky

- Compassion & GRATITUDE
- People STEPPING UP
- Look at systems & How to make them work BETTER
- Camaraderie w/colleagues

- YOUTH engagement
- flipgrid

- MORE tolerance
- More COMMUNITY resources
- Adaptation - walking cocktails
- Renewed interest in CONNECTING

- Deep listening
- Decreased cases of COVID
- Questioning Belief Systems
- Productivity up through TELECOMMUTING

- TX SNOW COMMUNITY support

COMING TOGETHER in CRISIS

TELEHEALTH

- Better awareness of ESSENTIAL WORKERS

- Telecommuting saved TIME & RESOURCES

- THINKING about logistics

- Hybrid access to NIGHT classes

Which unknown assets have come to light?



- ZOOM
- Understanding of other's situation
- Need for adjustment to HYBRID structure
- Youth learning to Lead
- Quality of TEACHERS amazing
- TIME to read + COOK



- Resiliency & FLEXIBILITY
- Getting to know NEIGHBORS
- 4H Volunteers stepped UP!
- INDOOR gardening

- YOGA online
- Access to OUTDOORS
- More use of STATE PARKS
- Build better network
- TEAMWORK to support online Learning
- Appreciation of NATURE
- PET ADOPTION increased!



- VOTER TURNOUT

What did you need or wish for during the pandemic that your community can provide now?

- NEW view of PRIORITIES
- CONNECTION on Global Level
- GLOBAL perspective
- Military kids helped with transition
- Work on LIFELONG SKILLS



- MORE outdoor gathering SPACES
- EQUITY of delivery of services
- Access for PET OWNERS at PARKS
- Pop Up Pantries
- Devices for ALL
- FINANCIAL Readiness NEEDED



PUBLIC input

- Less TRAVEL cost
- Home delivery of FOOD
- MORE cleanky



ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY RECOVERY WORKSHOPS

March 2, 2021

WELCOME!

ASSET-BASED RECOVERY framework

CRISIS - Pandemic

- Life patterns D'SRUPTED
- VULNERABILITY DISORIENTATION
- UNCERTAINTY, & loneliness
- ASK questions & SEEK ANSWERS

DISCOVERY

- New PATTERNS emerge
- WHAT is possible?
- FATIGUE → smaller social
- Deeper relationships

RESURGENCE

- HOPE!
- Turn to ACTION
- Recognize GIFTS
- Foster connections
- Tell stories
- Move FORWARD

PERMISSION to be **creative**

What has happened that you don't want to lose?

UNITY

Do you have a story that comes out of this experience that inspires hope?

STORY HOPE

Informal NETWORKS

Remote work

More compassionate EMPLOYERS

helpful coworkers

Lost FAMILY members & pet - Learned to feel the feelings & GRIEVE.

Airmen checked on one another

HOW ARE YOU?

WORK from home after NEW BABY

WORK HOME balance

FOUND groove

More access to MENTAL health

FLEXIBILITY

connection WITH community

TECHNOLOGY connection to NATURE

Adjusting to EVERYTHING - Food pick-up

Take time

MORE collaboration

creative ways to get WORK done

Increased coping skills & RESILIENCE

Bright LIGHTS Parade

Help distributing SUPPLIES at SCHOOLS

RELY on COMMUNITY

Training PARTICIPATION

FAMILIES able to learn TOGETHER

Which unknown assets have come to light?

Recovered TIME

FOCUS TIME

DNS BLOCK SCHEDULE

SET DO NOT DISTURB

on PHONE

I'm in another meeting...

Reinforce Boundaries!

MEET people where they're AT!

MORE programming

ACCESSIBLE NIGHT CLASS

What did you need or wish for during the pandemic that your community can provide now?

Provide better RESOURCES

ACCESS to INFORMATION

Communication

SMALLER CLASSROOMS

WORKOUT at HOME

Rec. Dept. MOVIE night

Flexibility & GRACE

DOD Technology!

Hygiene

Germ CONTROL

INCREASED communication

HIDDEN Treasures & skills

RESILIENCY!

City & COUNTY leaders stepped UP.

TIME with FAMILY

UNO

NETWORKING

safe Sensory PLAY

Play-doh

THEMES THAT EMERGED

Eight distinct themes emerged from our analysis of the stories shared in the Asset-based Community Recovery Workshops.

- **Ground yourself in your strengths and values.**
- **Make deep connections.**
- **Adapt, flex, and be resilient.**
- **Apply technology to community, and community to technology.**
- **Invest time in leisure, in learning, and in yourself.**
- **Share the work (and love).**
- **Watch for opportunities to think big.**
- **Come back better.**

These themes are discussed in the coming pages. For each theme, you'll find:

- A graphic record of the experiences that were shared in the Asset-based Community Recovery Workshops.
- A deeper discussion of some of the stories shared in the workshops.
- An explanation of the theme.
- Action steps you can take to help build resilience.
- Additional resources related to the theme.
- An open section where you can capture your own stories and ideas related to asset-based community recovery.



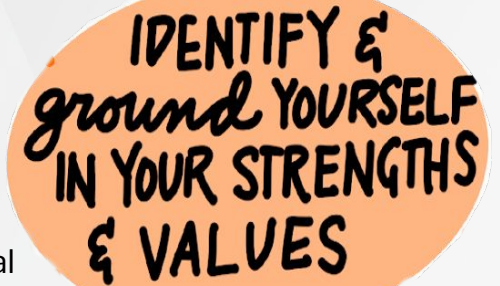


STORIES GROUNDED IN STRENGTHS & VALUES

The challenges we faced during the pandemic brought out our strengths and values. Several participants in the Asset-based Community Recovery Workshops told stories about showing compassion, being patient and accepting, and practicing tolerance. In the midst of our shared experience, people were more willing to be understanding of the situations of others, whether that was a colleague struggling to meet a deadline, teachers trying to balance the needs of their students and the needs of their families, or clients dealing with loss of income, home schooling, and health concerns while navigating a transition. Showing people some grace was something participants observed during the crisis, and it was something they wanted to take with them into the future.

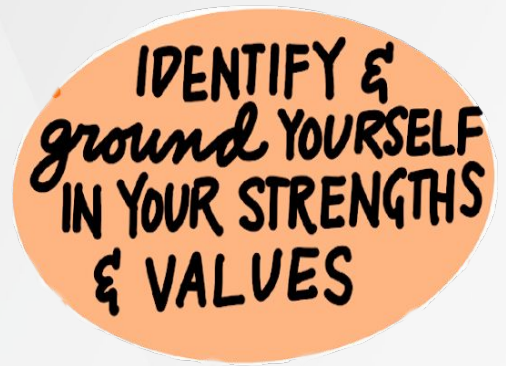
They also wanted their organizations to bring those values into the future. Participants shared how their employers had shown more compassion to workers during the pandemic. They said their employers were more understanding of the demands of their personal life and more willing to be flexible on work location, work hours, and even work demands. While participants were grateful, they questioned why employers had not been as understanding or flexible before the crisis. This questioning of systems and frameworks was viewed as a valuable practice among participants. It's also important in the Discovery and Resurgence stages of the Asset-based Community Recovery Framework.

In their description of the Discovery stage of the framework, Massimi and Keam write about the need to pare down the number of relationships we are maintaining and to focus on deeper connections with fewer people. Workshop participants shared stories of a similar approach to other parts of their lives. They talked about “getting back to basics,” re-examining priorities, and focusing on core values like kindness, faith, balance, and a connection to nature. Decreasing the clutter in their lives and focusing on their values helped participants identify what they wanted to carry forward post-pandemic in their personal practice, in their connections to others, and in their communities.



IDENTIFY &
ground YOURSELF
IN YOUR STRENGTHS
& VALUES

GROUND YOURSELF IN YOUR STRENGTHS & VALUES



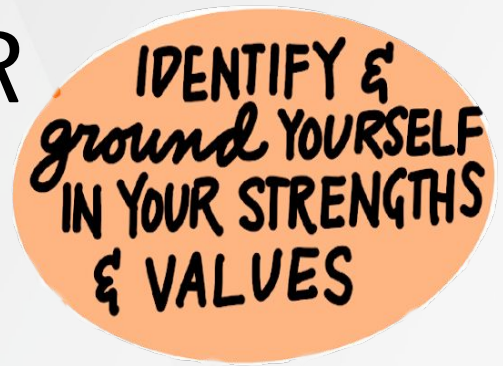
Our strengths form the basis of our contributions to our communities in good times and bad.

- **Take stock of and explore your values and strengths.**
Don't wait for a crisis to reveal what you really care about and how you can best contribute. Think about how your values are showing up in your life and explore what assets you can bring to the work of building resilient communities.
- **Help others do the same.**
Sharing your strengths and values with others can help you connect with them, and it can help others think about their own strengths and values. Invite others into conversations about the shared values and complementary strengths..
- **Assess how your actions align with your values and strengths.**
Sometimes our lives and work don't reflect our values and strengths. Take time to think about how you are practicing your values when you are not experiencing a crisis and how you can share your strengths in your community.

Action Steps:

- **Make daily note of what actions make you feel energized and why.**
This is a great way to identify your strengths and the kind of work you value. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on your day.
- **Dedicate time to exploring strengths and values in your meetings and conversations.**
Exploring our strengths and values together can deepen our connections and ground our shared work.
- **Schedule time to find opportunities to contribute your strengths to your community.**
Don't be afraid to reach out and offer your particular skills to organizations in your community.

GROUND YOURSELF IN YOUR STRENGTHS & VALUES



Additional Resources

For exploring strengths

- VIA Institute on Character <https://www.viacharacter.org/>
- The Power of Character Strengths. 2019. Ryan M. Niemiec & Robert E. McGrath

For exploring what's important to you

- The Science of Happiness Podcast, Episode 52, UC-Berkeley Greater Good Science Center
- Best Possible Self Activity, https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/best_possible_self

NOTES

MAKING intentional &/OR DEEPER connections

Camraderie with colleagues



More collaboration



Consistent connection



New friendships & connections



Reconnecting & deepening relationships



Connection on a GLOBAL level



Intentional connections



Getting to know neighbors



Networking



W-I-D-E-R Social networks

Airmen checked on each other

How are you?

Informal networks

Deep listening



Deeper family relationships



Recreation Department movie night



STORIES OF INTENTIONAL & DEEP CONNECTION

In “Asset-based Community Recovery Framework,” Massimi and Keam write about the increased number of connections we tend to make in the Crisis stage and the paring down of the number of connections and a deepening of remaining connections in the Discovery stage of the framework. Participants in the Asset-based Community Recovery Workshops told stories of both a wider scope of connections and of deeper connections with family, colleagues and community.

The COVID-19 crisis, in particular, created a greater sense of connection among workshop participants because people across the globe were all experiencing the pandemic. One participant said that hearing pandemic stories “reminded me we are all living through this shared crisis around the world, and we can all support each other’s work globally as we work on and share info about our resilience strategies.” Other participants shared stories of new friendships and connections that had been forged during the pandemic. In general, they felt their social networks widened as they found new connections and re-connected with old friends via social media.

Participants also told stories about how their connections deepened during the pandemic. Many families, “stuck” together at home, found they had more time for more meaningful conversations. The simple question, “How are you?” took on more meaning given the newfound space to give an authentic answer. Participants shared they had developed stronger connections with their neighbors and an increased feeling of camaraderie with their colleagues as everyone attempted to deal with the challenges of the crisis together.

In the virtual workspace, participants gained new information about their colleagues that deepened their relationships. Seeing a co-worker’s home for the first time or their pet jumping on their lap during a meeting increased the bandwidth of information they had about that person. That, along with spending more time in meetings talking about how people were feeling and what they were dealing with, created stronger connections, leading to more collaboration.

MAKING INTENTIONAL and/or DEEPER CONNECTIONS



Intentionally making connections can build the trust necessary for collaborative, community-based, disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

- **Take stock of the people that contribute to your resilience.**
Social support is critical to resilience. Start to identify your social support network.
- **Take stock of the people whose resilience you contribute to.**
You support the resilience of others, just as they support you. Who are you supporting, and how?
- **Identify the gaps in what we need (to learn/grow/feel) to be resilient.**
Where are the gaps in your social support network? How can you fill these gaps by intentionally seeking or deepening connections with others?

Action Steps:

- **Make a list of people you would like to connect with and relationships you would like to deepen.**
This is the first step in making your relationship building intentional. Focus on your needs and goals in seeking out people who can contribute to your resilience.
- **Make a plan for regularly reaching out to the people on your list.**
Reach out to your connections with the universal gifts of attention and gratitude. Sharing of yourself in a spirit of generosity helps deepen your connections.
- **Intentionally practice your deep listening skills, allowing yourself to have an emotional connection.**
Listening to learn and listening for understanding increases the bandwidth of information you receive from those you are connected with. It also gives you insight into what you can do to contribute to the resilience of those you are connected to.

MAKING INTENTIONAL and/or DEEPER CONNECTIONS



Additional Resources

For Inspiration on Making Connections

- Building Networks for Resilience, Jessica Beckendorf and Bob Bertsch, <https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org/wolresilience/>
- Working Out Loud. 2015. John Stepper

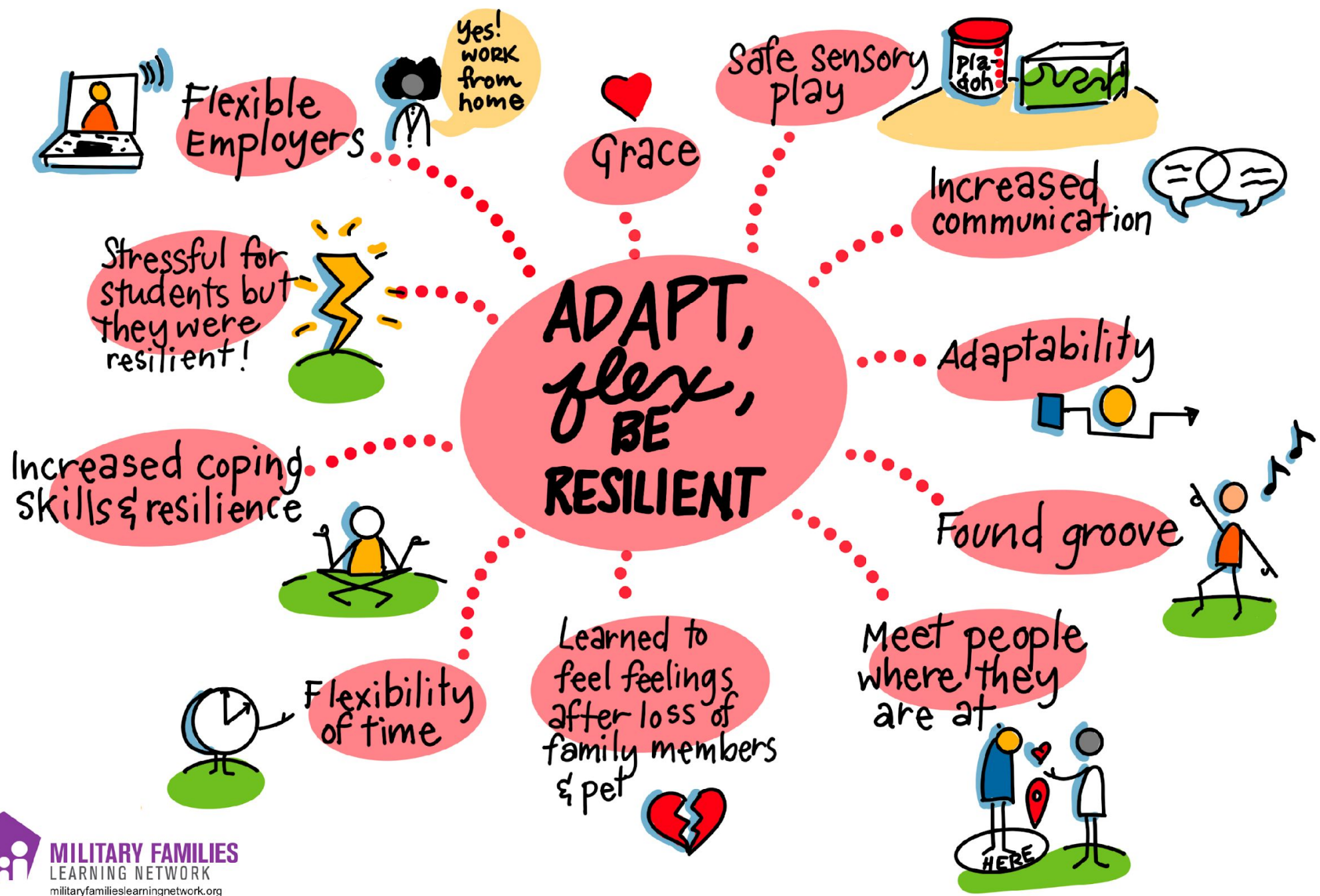
For personal practice

- Loving-Kindness mindfulness, UCLA Health, <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations>

For exploring the topic of connection

- Practicing Connection in a Complex World podcast, <https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org/series/practicingconnection/>

NOTES



STORIES OF ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE



Broadly defined, resilience is the capacity to adapt and/or maintain balance when faced with significant change or adversity. Participants in the Asset-based Community Recovery Workshops shared many examples of resilience during the pandemic.

Stories of the resilience displayed by the students and teachers in our educational systems were brought up frequently. Many young people were able to successfully adapt to a stressful and chaotic situation when schools were closed and learning moved online. Teachers showed resilience, as well, adapting to new modes of instruction while often dealing with their own pandemic-related challenges, including kids of their own trying to adapt to online learning.

Flexibility was key in many of these situations. It's one way to deal with extremely uncertain and fluid situations, like those we confronted in the pandemic. An early childhood educator, who participated in the workshops, talked about the challenge of serving kids who benefitted from sensory play. Educators had to find alternatives to sensory play when sharing toys and other objects was considered unsafe. They responded by devising a process for keeping toys sanitized, but later a change in protocol meant their innovative process was no longer considered safe. At the time the story was shared, the educators were in the process of adapting again, so they could continue to provide sensory play to the kids.

Adapting and being flexible aren't the only ways to exhibit resilience. Sometimes resilience is sitting with your feelings and getting to the other side. One workshop participant shared the devastating impact COVID-19 pandemic had on their family. After losing several family members during the pandemic, this participant was having difficulty processing their grief. When a beloved family pet passed away, the dam broke, and they were able to express the extreme sense of loss they had been holding inside. The participant said they had to "learn to feel my feelings."

As we work toward recovery for ourselves and our community, let's be flexible in our definitions of adaptation, resilience, and success. Let's be open to all that emerges including our pain.

ADAPT, FLEX, BE RESILIENT



Disaster recovery is complex and requires dynamic responses from dynamic people as conditions change. Working to be more comfortable with uncertainty can help you let solutions emerge from the community.

- **Adopt the mindset that you can learn from every situation and every person you encounter.**
A learning mindset can help us be curious, ask questions, challenge old frameworks, and be more comfortable with difficult conversations.
- **Focus on your values, rather than fears and anxieties.**
Uncertainty can be scary. Looking to the things we hold close to our hearts can help us find ways to keep going.
- **Encourage others to do the same.**
A group of people with positive intent, a learning mindset, and a commitment to shared values can do incredible things. Build that capacity among the people you work with.

Action Steps:

- **Choose a daily mindfulness practice.**
Practicing mindfulness (awareness of the present moment) can help us be more accepting of our feelings. Activities like meditating, journaling, taking a nature walk are all great ways to practice.
- **Identify experiences that challenge you and schedule time to do them.**
This is a great way to face our fears and anxieties. Start small and build up to some of the things that may be holding you back.
- **Regularly ask yourself “what’s another way of thinking about this?”**
Making a habit of asking yourself this question can help build your capacity for divergent thinking, which can fuel innovation.

ADAPT, FLEX, BE RESILIENT



Additional Resources

For Practices on Adapting and Flexing

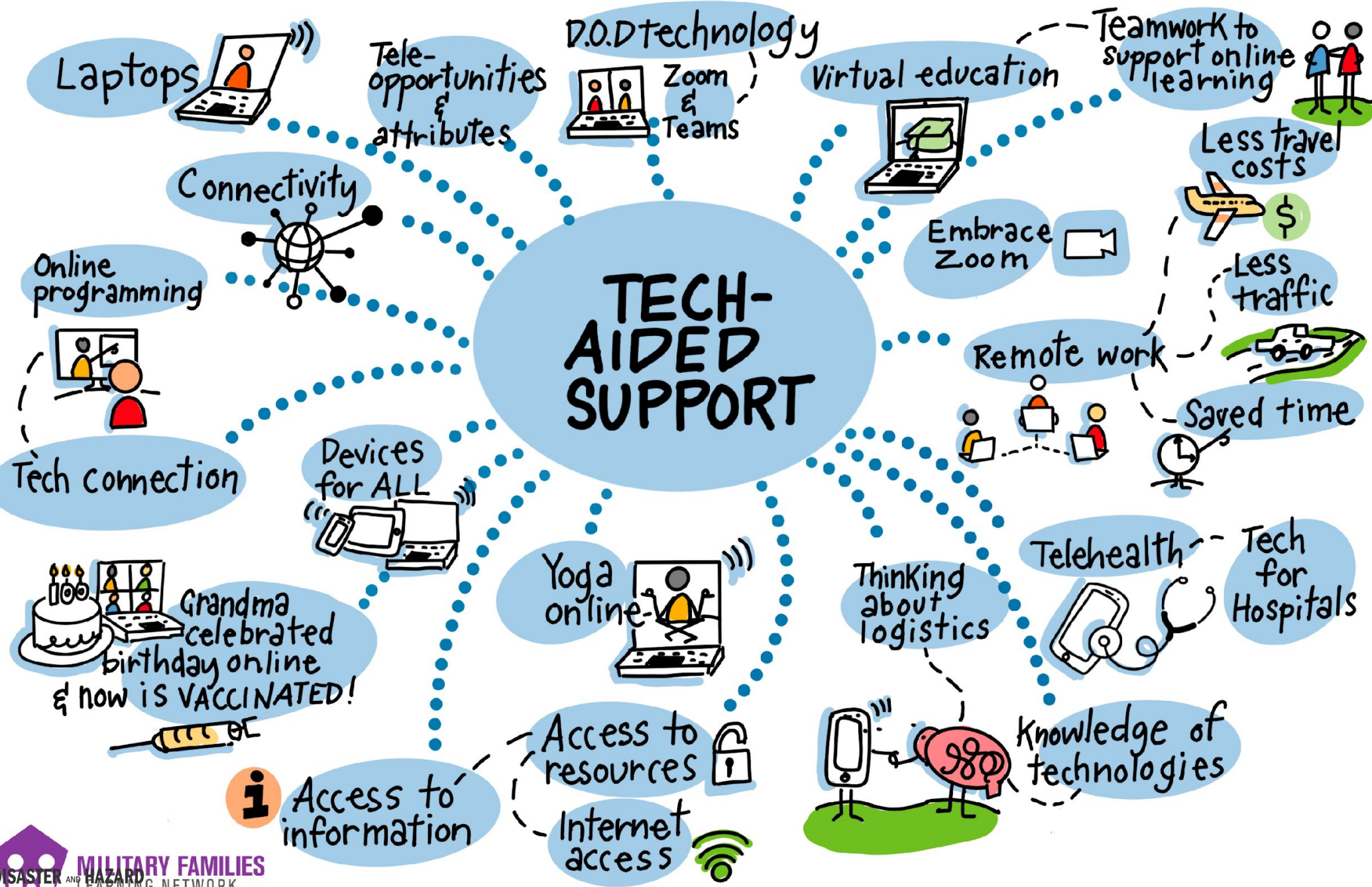
- Life Unscripted. 2018. Jeff Katzman, MD & Dan O'Connor
- Liminal Thinking. 2016. Dave Gray

For personal practice

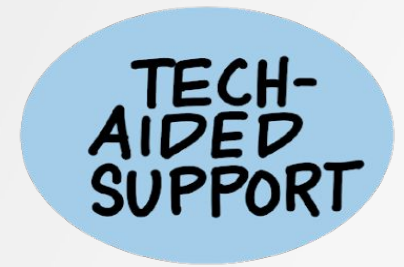
- Free Guided Meditations and Intro to Mindfulness, UCLA Health, <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/getting-started>
- Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics. 2017. Dan Harris, Jeffrey Warren, Carlyle Adler
- Playful Mindfulness. 2019. Ted DesMaisons, MBA, MTh

NOTES

TECH-AIDED SUPPORT



STORIES ABOUT TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNITY



In the Crisis stage of the Asset-based Community Recovery Framework, feelings of disorientation can lead us to hang on to what was or try to recreate it. In the COVID-19 pandemic, that often meant adopting an Internet-based technology.

In the workshops, participants shared many stories of how technology was used to recreate an experience or event made impossible by the pandemic. School moved online. Work moved online. Healthcare moved online. One participant shared the story of their grandma's birthday party which took place online. Another talked about how much they enjoyed online yoga classes.

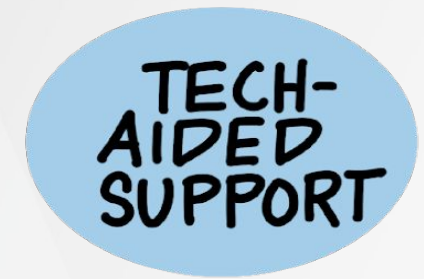
The move to technological solutions brought both benefits and challenges as we attempted to bring technology to our communities and a feeling of community to technology. Participants highlighted the increased connectivity and device access that was available as schools tried to meet the needs of all their students. They celebrated the ancillary benefits of remote work, like the time gained and the emissions saved from fewer people commuting. The need for quick adoption of technology led to relatively conservative organizations, like the Department of Defense, accepting widely used, third-party web conferencing tools, and it provided opportunities for connection as colleagues helped each other learn new tools.

Unfortunately, not all members of our communities could join us online. The pandemic highlighted the disparities in broadband access and the lack of accessibility to technology for some people with disabilities. While our move to technology provided access to meetings, workshops, and courses to people who could not access them before, it also left others out.

McConnell and colleagues define community resilience as “a community’s capacity to empower marginalized members, such as through the provision of both tangible and intangible resources that facilitate successful coping with stress.” If we are going to be resilient, we need to bring the values of our community and all its members to the technology as we bring technology to our community.

McConnell, E. A., Janulis, P., Phillips, G. I., Truong, R., & Birkett, M. (2018). Multiple minority stress and LGBT community resilience among sexual minority men. Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 5(1), 1-12.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000265>

APPLY TECHNOLOGY TO COMMUNITY & COMMUNITY TO TECHNOLOGY



Technology can improve access to community resources (church services, telehealth, food access) and a community focus can improve how technology is used and ensure it is accessible to everyone.

- **Help those around us adopt the technology that will aid in their resilience and recovery.**
There are many barriers to the use of technology. Find opportunities to help people overcome them.
- **Be aware of how technology can exacerbate inequity and impede upon our lives.**
Take a thoughtful, community-focused approach to technology use. Be intentional in making online content and programming accessible. Put sensible boundaries around your own use of technology, so you can stay open to human connection.
- **Explore your own growth areas with technology.**
Identify ways you can learn more about new ways use technology to enhance resilience.

Action Steps:

- **Ask people for their preferences and comfort level when using different technologies.**
Don't assume everyone is OK with a given technology. Be open to accommodating different needs and be willing to take the time to get everyone comfortable.
- **Before adopting a technology, make sure you consider inclusiveness of people of all abilities.**
Check into the accessibility of the tools you use. Will it work for people with no or low sight, those with colorblindness, those with no or limited ability to hear, and other members of your community?
- **Research the digital access and connectivity issues in your community.**
Identify the issues and think about what, if any, steps you can take to help.

APPLY TECHNOLOGY TO COMMUNITY & COMMUNITY TO TECHNOLOGY

TECH-
AIDED
SUPPORT

Additional Resources

For Practices on Healthy Tech Behaviors

- Modeling Healthy Technology Behaviors for Young Children, Erin K. Taylor, Ph.D., <https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org/event/69347/>

For personal practice

- Accessibility and Universal Design of Online Meetings, AccessComputing, <https://www.washington.edu/accesscomputing/accessibility-and-universal-design-online-meetings>

For understanding inequities in technological change

- Tackling the inequality pandemic: Is there a cure? <https://www.brookings.edu/research/tackling-the-inequality-pandemic-is-there-a-cure/>
- Pew Research Center, Digital Divide, <https://www.pewresearch.org/topics/digital-divide/>

NOTES

INVEST in LEISURE/ TIME in OURSELVES



STORIES ABOUT INVESTING IN OURSELVES



Participants in the Asset-based Community Recovery Workshops shared several stories about how they used the time that was made available to them as a result of the pandemic. Lockdowns and remote work allowed people more free time, and they often invested that time in themselves and their families.

Participants took time to read more, to take newly-available online courses, and to develop new skills. One participant took the time to get their ham radio license, a valuable skill during a disaster. Many others further developed their cooking skills. As one participant put it, “Viva la sourdough!”

Participants also used their time to relax or, as one participant said, “to learn to relax.” They shared stories of taking time for family, playing board games, having fun, and learning together. Many participants had adopted a “pandemic puppy” or kitten into their families.

Several participants mentioned a renewed connection with nature, as socially-distanced, outdoor activities were among the safest. People accessed parks and trails that they hadn’t visited before. Spending time in nature can promote mindfulness and improve our health.

The time they were able to spend resting, learning, and working on themselves was among the things gained during the pandemic that participants said they did not want to lose. However, hanging on to that time could be difficult. We risk returning to the hectic pace many of us experienced before the pandemic as things return to “normal.” Participants also highlighted the impact remote work has had on work/life balance. While working from home can save time previously spent commuting, it can also blur the lines between personal time and work time. Participants both appreciated the flexibility of working at non-traditional hours and struggled with how that erased the boundaries between home and work.

Remote work may be something many of us want to hold on to, but we also need to reserve time for ourselves, our families, and our communities.

INVEST TIME IN LEISURE, IN LEARNING, AND IN YOURSELF



When we take good care of ourselves, we can take better care of others. We bring our best selves to our communities and to others when we feel rested, healthy, calm, present, and loved.

- **Take time to get to know yourself better.**
Knowing ourselves better helps us recognize what we need to feel healthy and resilient.
- **Set goals for your personal development.**
Be intentional. Set attainable goals to work towards as you invest time in yourself.
- **Explore what boundaries you need to allow you to take time for yourself.**
As the lines between home and work blur, we need to find the boundaries that work for us.

Action Steps:

- **Schedule time to do something you enjoy every day.**
Taking even a few minutes a day to do something you really enjoy can boost your resilience. Set aside some time, and keep that appointment.
- **Set a goal for learning a new skill and schedule time to practice.**
Practicing anything is great for resilience. It reminds us we can always improve and gives something new to work toward each day.
- **Practice gratitude by letting someone in your life know what you appreciate about them.**
Giving someone the gift of gratitude helps deepen your connection with them, and it helps you see the social support system that keeps you resilient.

INVEST TIME IN LEISURE, IN LEARNING, AND IN YOURSELF



Additional Resources

For Practices on Investing in Leisure, Learning, Yourself

- The Nature Fix. 2017. Florence Williams
- Designing Your Life. 2016. Bill Burnett & Dave Evans

For personal practice

- A Collection of TED Talks: Your 5-Day Gratitude Challenge, <https://ideas.ted.com/your-5-day-gratitude-challenge-from-ted/>
- Freeing Up Your Time for Transformation Worksheet, Network Weaver, <https://networkweaver.com/product/freeing-up-your-time-for-transformation/>

NOTES

COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER / SUPPORTING EACH OTHER

Military Kids helped with transition

Home delivery of food


Curbside pick-up


Youth help Seniors with


People stepping up


- 4H volunteers
- Healthcare workers 
- City & County leaders

Supporting others in community


RULES waived

Cooperation & Collaboration

Texas snow - Community support


Compassion 

Help others learn


Meetings in hybrid


Pet access at parks


More outdoor gathering spaces


Communication


Small business support & community development


Pop up food pantry


Resilience built into community


More community resources & increased involvement


Sense of community & connection

Coming together in CRISIS


Help distributing supplies at schools.


Better awareness of essential workers


Online Faith-Based communities


Bright Lights Parade


21 yr. olds started Mutual aid for community
- Now running for office!

STORIES OF COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER



Stories of people coming together to help one another have become an expected part of disaster recovery. The response to the pandemic was no different. Workshop participants shared stories of people with unique strengths joining forces to help their community.

We heard the story of military kids using their experience with family transitions to help their classmates deal with the rapid changes brought on by the pandemic. One participant shared the story of community members who organized a “pop-up” food pantry to help their neighbors. These examples of people sharing their strengths to help each other can seem simple. Like the North Dakota native living in Texas who shared their knowledge of how to get cars unstuck during the major snow and ice storm of February 2021. Or the story of youth who helped seniors learn to use technology to stay in touch with their families. Participants shared more complicated examples as well, including the story of young entrepreneurs who started a mutual aid company to help their community and went on to run for elected office.

The unique contributions of individuals, whether they seem big or small, when organized in coordination and collaborations aid in community resilience and recovery. Participants praised 4-H volunteers, healthcare and other essential workers, city and county workers, faith-based communities and others for stepping up to help.

Participants told stories of communities demonstrating shared purpose and shared values. One community came together for the shared purpose of taking care of kids and their families by distributing supplies at their local school. Another community organized a “bright lights’ parade of cars in place of the usual holiday celebration of their shared values.

These kinds of stories are not unusual in the wake of a crisis, but participants in the workshops hoped the sense of community and connection these stories represent would still be felt after the pandemic. Sharing the work of and our love for the community is critical not only for recovery, but also for building the resilience necessary to face future disasters.

SHARE THE WORK (AND LOVE)



Disaster recovery is shared work. The ultimate outcome is tied to the many contributions made by individuals.

- **Foster co-creation and collaboration.**
Seek out opportunities to connect with community members and invite those affected by a project to get involved in helping to plan and create it.
- **Engage a range of perspectives and experiences.**
Seek out diversity in all forms. It's the only way to find the unique strengths that are needed to address the complex challenge of community resilience.
- **Explore new ways of working together.**
Working together, especially across difference, isn't easy. Look for new ways of organizing people and communicating with each other to aid collaboration.

Action Steps

- **Invite someone to co-learn with you.**
Collaboration can be difficult and high-risk. Asking someone to learn about a community issue with you has lower stakes and can build the foundation for collaboration.
- **Host a conversation about something you care about.**
Getting people together to talk about an issue can help people connect with each other and reveal their unique strengths.
- **Subvert the traditional structure of an interaction, conversation, or meeting.**
The ways we communicate are often grounded in old frameworks with uneven power relationships. Try getting turning those frameworks upside down. Answer the question, "How are you?" with something other than "Fine," or co-create the agenda for a meeting after it has already started.

SHARE THE WORK (AND LOVE)



Additional Resources

For Practices on Fostering Collaboration for Community Change Efforts

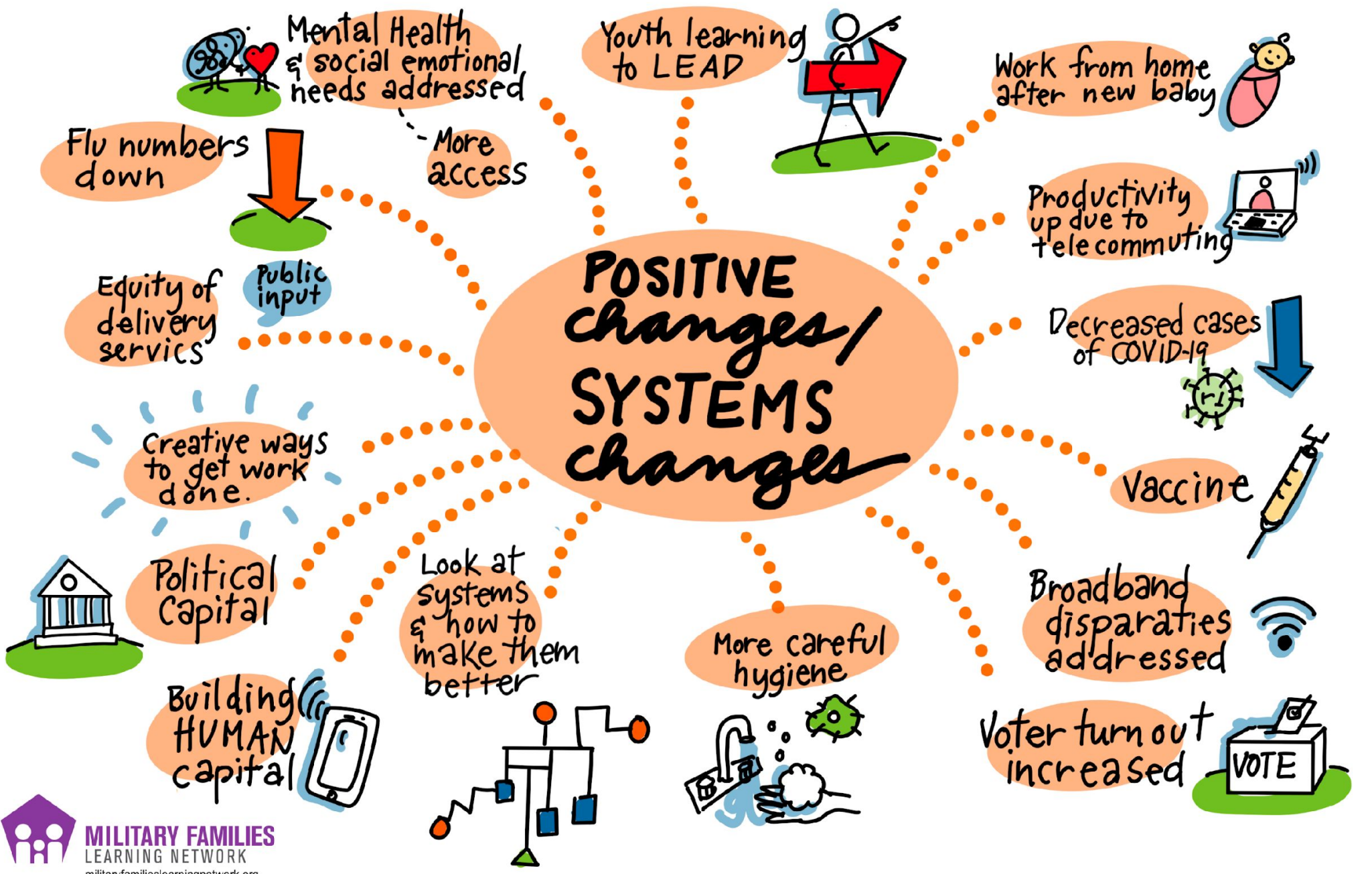
- The Community Toolbox, <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/overview/model-for-community-change-and-improvement/framework-for-collaboration/main>
- Salsa, Soul, & Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Age. 2012. Juana Bordas
- The Power Manual: How to Master Complex Power Dynamics. 2018. Cyndi Suarez

For personal practice

- Living Room Conversations, <https://livingroomconversations.org/>
- Local Voices Network, <https://lvn.org/conversations>

NOTES

POSITIVE changes/ SYSTEMS changes



STORIES ABOUT SYSTEMS CHANGE



We need to be able to see the system in order to change it. In “Asset-based Community Recovery Framework,” Massimi and Keam write, “To discover is not simply to seek what is new, but it is to reveal what is hidden.” In the Discovery stage, we start to see the limits of our systems and institutions and find the strengths that will help our community create a new way forward.

Participants in the workshops said the pandemic led them to look at systems and consider how to make them better. They discussed the lack of equity in the systems designed to deliver services. They pointed out the lack of access to mental health services and how telemedicine was providing more access, at least temporarily. They talked about the disparities in broadband access and some of the ways schools and other institutions were trying to provide more access during the pandemic. Participants were seeing the systems and thinking about how to make it better.

They shared several positive changes they had observed during the pandemic, changes that pointed to a better way forward. A new mom shared how great it was to be able to work from home and spend more time with her baby. A participant talked about how the changes in voting during the pandemic led to increased voter turnout. Another participant discussed how youth were taking the lead on projects they might never have led before.

Participants had plenty reasons for hope. They cited the COVID vaccine project as one of many examples of finding creative ways to get work done. They said they saw increases in human, political, and social capital in their communities. However, according to Massimi and Keam, to move from the Discovery stage to the Resurgence stage, we need that hope to inspire action. Resurgence, they write, “is a conscious step toward addressing and working with what has been revealed by recognizing gifts, fostering connections, telling stories, and asking questions.”

The pandemic has revealed the systems and their shortfalls. To build more resilient communities, we need to hold that image and take action together.

WATCH FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO THINK BIG



Disasters and hazards overload systems. Even the best laid plans likely will need some tweaking when disasters hit.

- **Pay attention to gaps.**
Look for the places systems and institutions fall short. Those gaps are opportunities for big, positive change.
- **Get creative with solutions.**
The old frameworks and ways of thinking may not work in fast-moving, uncertain situations. Give yourself permission to be creative and let solutions emerge.
- **Stay open to the opportunities an overloaded system creates.**
Along with the negative impacts of a system failure there are opportunities for community-based solutions. Keep your eyes and mind open to them.

Action Steps:

- **Notice the impact your actions have on your family system or your local environment.**
Noticing and thinking about your place in a small scale system or in a small part of a larger system is good practice for seeing systems at work.
- **Choose a simple function and investigate the systems that made it possible, e.g. what systems support a PB&J?**
Q: How did that peanut butter get onto your sandwich?
A: Systems.
This exercise can help you notice systems, the interactions between them, and the role they play in your life.
- **Identify a system gap that could be filled by community action.**
This is the core of community resurgence and resilience.

WATCH FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO THINK BIG



Additional Resources

For Practices on Engaging in Positive Changes/Systems Change

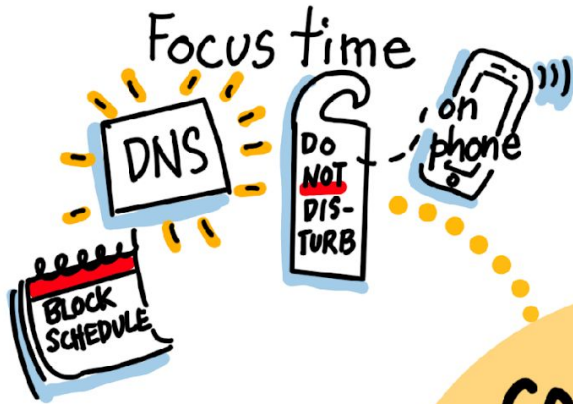
- Emergent Strategy. 2017. adrienne maree brown
- Find the Outside podcast, <https://www.findtheoutside.com/podcast>

For personal practice

- Practice Taking Perspective, https://tc2.ca/uploads/TTT/Finding_another_perspective.pdf
- On Being's Civil Conversations & Social Healing Project, <https://onbeing.org/>

NOTES

COULD HAVE BEEN better - THINGS WE SHOULD LEARN TO DO better ON



Reinforce boundaries



Childcare



Some earning NEGATIVE income because of this



Women disproportionately affected



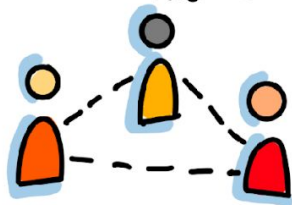
Masks



Social distancing



Build better network

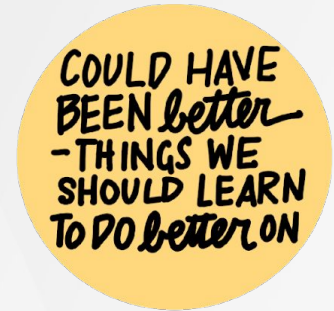


Brought lack of connectivity to forefront



Support financially

STORIES ABOUT THINGS THAT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER



In asset-based practices we focus on the strengths we can build upon, but that doesn't mean we ignore the places where we are falling short. In fact, we are looking for our strengths, so we can use them to make things better. The participants in the Asset-based Community Recovery Workshops identified a lot of positives that emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, but they also found some things we could be doing better.

Participants discussed the enormous financial strain so many people in our communities are under. The pandemic exacerbated what was already an extremely serious problem. Participants thought we should be doing much more to support our families financially.

The cost of childcare was a financial challenge for families that participants specifically called out. Childcare expenses coupled with the pandemic meant some families earned negative income. Like some other issues during the pandemic, this disproportionately affected women. Participants thought we could be doing much better on childcare and on other issues affecting women.

In addition to the positives that have come with the increased use of technology and remote work, participants identified some significant challenges. They think we could be providing much better access to Internet connectivity. They also think we could be doing better at finding time to focus as our lives get more hectic, and at setting boundaries as remote work challenges the notion of work/life balance.

Participants also talked about the need to build better networks. We need better social support networks for ourselves and for our communities. We also need better collaboration networks to spur the innovation and collective action that will drive community resilience.

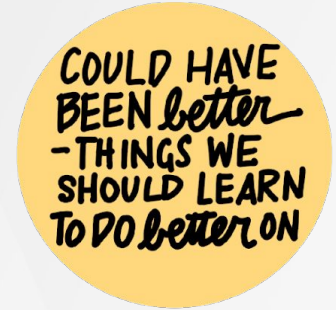
COME BACK BETTER

Focusing on assets doesn't mean we can't say, "You know, this just isn't good enough. This isn't working. This isn't helping."

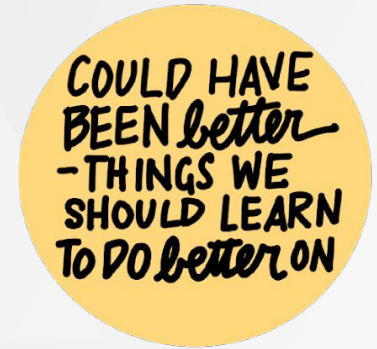
- **Adopt a growth mindset**
Shift your focus toward learning more and making incremental progress.
- **Be persistent; Tweak solutions and try again**
Commitment, consistency and openness to iteration will go a long way toward lasting change.
- **Contribute to a more just and equitable future**
This is the only way to create lasting change that works for all.

Action Steps:

- **Identify a sense of purpose for yourself and the groups you work with.**
Understanding your own purpose will help you set and reach goals to effect change in your community. In group settings, a shared purpose is necessary to cultivate a sense of co-responsibility and recognition of interdependence, which is key to any change effort.
- **Be aware of how what's happening might be affecting people from all walks of life.**
Understanding the real ways an event or circumstance affects people differently or disproportionately can prepare us to come back better by bringing an issue to the forefront. Identify liberatory practices and goals to implement with/alongside the people for whom they are intended to help.
- **Join and cultivate action networks to take on big problems.**
What do you care about so much that you would join with others in addressing it? Go do that. Meet other people who are also interested in addressing that issue, and co-create solutions together.



COME BACK BETTER



Additional Resources

For Understanding Growth Mindset

- The Power of Believing That You Can Improve, Carol Dweck
https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve?language=en
- A Thousand No's: A growth mindset story of grit, resilience, and creativity. 2020. DJ Corchin, Dan Dougherty

For personal and professional practice

- From Rugged Individualism to Self-Organized, Connected Communities, Beth Tener
<https://networkweaver.com/from-rugged-individualism-to-self-organized-connected-communities/>
- Liberating Structures, Purpose to Practice <https://www.liberatingstructures.com/ls-menu>

NOTES

Military Families Learning Network

Explore all we have to offer!

<https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org>

