

2nd International Conference and Exhibition on **Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation**

July 14-16, 2014 DoubleTree by Hilton Baltimore-BWI Airport, USA



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Finding psychological body armor: Key factors in human resilience

Resilience may be thought of as the ability to rebound from adversity. It has recently emerged as an essential element in the understanding of the interaction of stress and human behavior. Beginning in 1990, our research team endeavored to unlock the secrets of human resilience. Beginning with structural equation modeling, then integrating case study empiricism, we were able to identify one aspect of the human psyche that proved to be remarkably inhibiting and toxic. At the same time, we were able to identify five psychological and behavioral factors that appear to be important predictors of human resilience. These factors are referred to as “psychological body armor”. This paper will discuss our findings in conjunction with the development of the Johns Hopkins’ Model of Human Resilience. Finally, implications of human resilience for physical medicine will be discussed.

Biography

George S Everly, PhD, ABPP, FAPM is an award-winning author and researcher. He holds appointments as Associate Professor in Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Professor of Psychology at Loyola University in Maryland (core faculty), and Associate in Public Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and is a member of the Johns Hopkins Center for Public Health Preparedness. He is Executive Director of Resiliency Science Institutes at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County Training Centers, a research and training consortium. In addition, he has served on the adjunct faculty of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the FBI’s National Academy at Quantico, Virginia. He holds Honorary Professorships at the Universidad de Flores, Buenos Aires, Argentina and Universidad de Weiner, Lima, Peru. He is an advisor to the Hospital Authority of Hong Kong. He is co-founder of, and serves as a non-governmental representative to the United Nations for, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, a non-profit United Nations-affiliated public health and safety organization. He was formerly Distinguished Visiting Professor, Universidad de Flores (Argentina), and was Senior Research Advisor, Social Development Office, Office of His Highness, the Amir of Kuwait, State of Kuwait. Prior to these appointments, he was a Harvard Scholar, in psychology, Harvard University; a Visiting Lecturer in Medicine, Harvard Medical School; and Chief Psychologist and Director of Behavioral Medicine for the Johns Hopkins’ Homewood Hospital Center.

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