

THE ISSUES

FROM THE DESK OF MU EXTENSION
HOME & FAMILY FIELD FACULTY



BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES

What are your family's unique strengths?
How can you build upon them?

Learn to identify and build strengths to make your family even stronger. You can learn new skills to help you improve yourself, increase your child's self-esteem and much more!

This is a 5 session series class and certificates of completion will be given.

Register for this virtual series at:
<https://extension.missouri.edu/events/building-strong-families-1612196538>

WHAT'S NEW?

Building strong families [link](#)

Instilling hope in the early years

Where there is hope, there is resilience

Will it ever get better?

INSTILLING HOPE IN THE EARLY YEARS

BY AMBER ALLEN

The Hope Research Center at the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa states "Hope is the belief that the future will be better, and you have the power to make it so. Hope is based on three main ideas: desirable goals, pathways to goal attainment, and agency (willpower) to pursue those pathways."

Hope can be instilled throughout our lives, but the seeds can start to be planted in those early childhood years.

Hope is a protective factor against life's challenges and instilling this at early age can help mitigate future risk factors. Children learn about hope through how their parents and caregivers' model and teach them how to instill hope in adverse situations.



Take a moment to reflect on the behaviors below that research has shown are associated with a hopeful person.

- *Creating goals that are attainable, articulated, and measurable.*
- *Consider multiple strategies or pathways that will lead to a desired outcome.*
- *Hopeful individuals can exhibit self-control and regulate their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors during goal pursuits, especially while experiencing stress and adversity.*

Hope is a powerful tool to get through tough situations. Modeling and instilling it in children at an early age can allow them to always have HOPE!

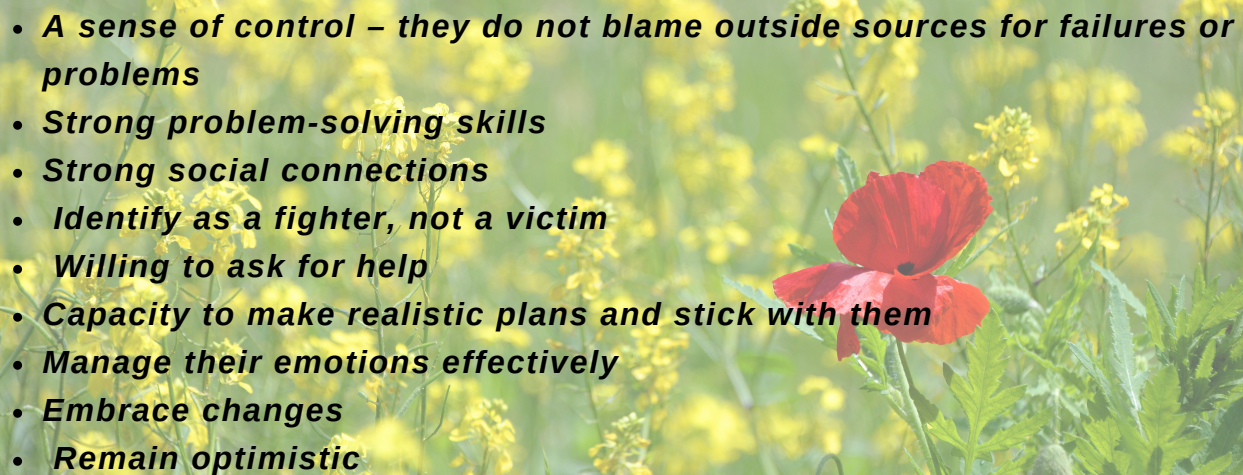
"Plant seeds of HOPE at an early age."

WHERE THERE IS HOPE, THERE IS RESILIENCE

BY MARY ENGRAM

Dealing with change or loss in life is inevitable. Some changes might be relatively minor, while others can be catastrophic. Our ability to bounce back from life's difficulties is known as resilience. A necessary ingredient of resilience is hope – that positive state of mind that motivates us. How we deal with life's problems can play a significant role in not only the outcomes of our problems, but also the long-term psychological consequences we will carry with us.

While the concept of hope can seem rather abstract, research tells us that resilient people share some very concrete traits. Some people come by resilience naturally. But for others, it can be learned. So, what do resilient people have in common?

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- ***A sense of control – they do not blame outside sources for failures or problems***
 - ***Strong problem-solving skills***
 - ***Strong social connections***
 - ***Identify as a fighter, not a victim***
 - ***Willing to ask for help***
 - ***Capacity to make realistic plans and stick with them***
 - ***Manage their emotions effectively***
 - ***Embrace changes***
 - ***Remain optimistic***

By changing some of our old habits and adopting many of the above traits, we can re-train our brain to respond to life's challenges with resilience and hope. For a more in-depth look at resilience and other positive coping skills, consider MU Extension's "Taking Care of You" class by contacting your local University of Missouri Extension Center for more information.

WILL IT EVER GET BETTER?

BY KYLEIGH SULLIVAN

Will it ever get better? And by “it” I mean just about everything imaginable. Many of us have felt alone, scared, angry, and sad this year and for very good reasons! It seems like every day we hear some piece of news that is disheartening. In a world that seems to have so much going wrong, it can become easy to lose hope. What do we do when it feels like there’s no point?

1. *Stay in the moment: focus on the positives that exist now rather than the possible negative unknowns. Take advantage of things you can do to make a difference.*
2. *Validate your feelings: feelings are not logical so don't try to reason them away. Instead, accept that sometimes things don't go our way and it's okay to be upset about that.*
3. *Seek support: find ways to connect with loved ones even if it's virtual at this time. Seek out professional help if you are experiencing symptoms that disrupt your daily life.*
4. *Take care of your body: Eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of water. Maintain regular routines for hygiene, sleep, and physical activity.*



MU EXTENSION: FAMILY AND HOME

For more research-based programs and tips on housing, parenting, relationships, divorce, senior living, and personal finance visit <https://extension2.missouri.edu/find-your-interest/youth-and-family/family-and-home-education>

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