

Finding Wellbeing in the New Normal: Supporting Educators and Parents

BY Brandon Jones, M.A.

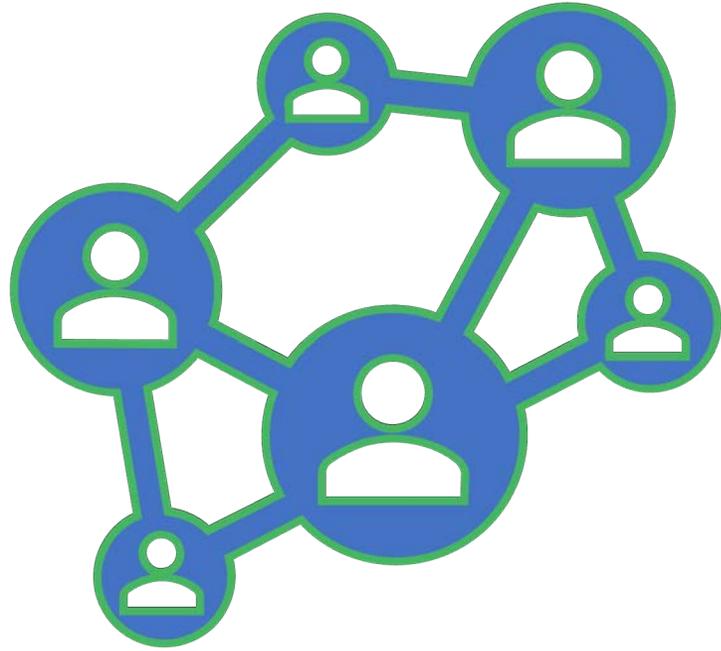
Psychotherapist, Professor, & Consultant



10 Areas of People Activity

- 1) Economics
- 2) Education
- 3) Entertainment
- 4) Labor
- 5) Law
- 6) Politics
- 7) Religion
- 8) Sex
- 9) War
- 10) Health

Originally from Mr. Neely Fuller Jr.



Welcome to the New Normal...

We Are Adjusting To A New World In The Moment

Remote Working

Distant Learning

Social Distancing

Sheltering In Place

Pandemics

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

Unprecedented Times

WE ARE IN A
STATE OF
GRIEF!

WE HAVE LOST THE FOLLOWING...

- Access
- Our “Normal” Routine
- The Ability Of Choice
- Connection
- Opportunities
- Lives Of Love Ones

This Is What We Call Ambiguous Loss

GRIEF AND AMBIGUOUS LOSS

The natural emotional response
resulting from a significant loss.

Languishing is a sense of stagnation and emptiness. It feels as if you're muddling through your days, looking at your life through a foggy windshield. And it might be the dominant emotion of 2021.

- According to the New Times

Languishing

Understanding Stress and Distress

Stress

Is both experienced shared with others (objective reality) but also perceptions experienced within the child's body and mind (subjective reality).

Distress

Describes the child's internal state of dysregulation and often, disorganization: what is happening to me right now is dangerous.

Types of stress responses

POSITIVE



A normal and essential part of healthy development

TOLERABLE



Response to a more severe stressor, limited in duration

TOXIC



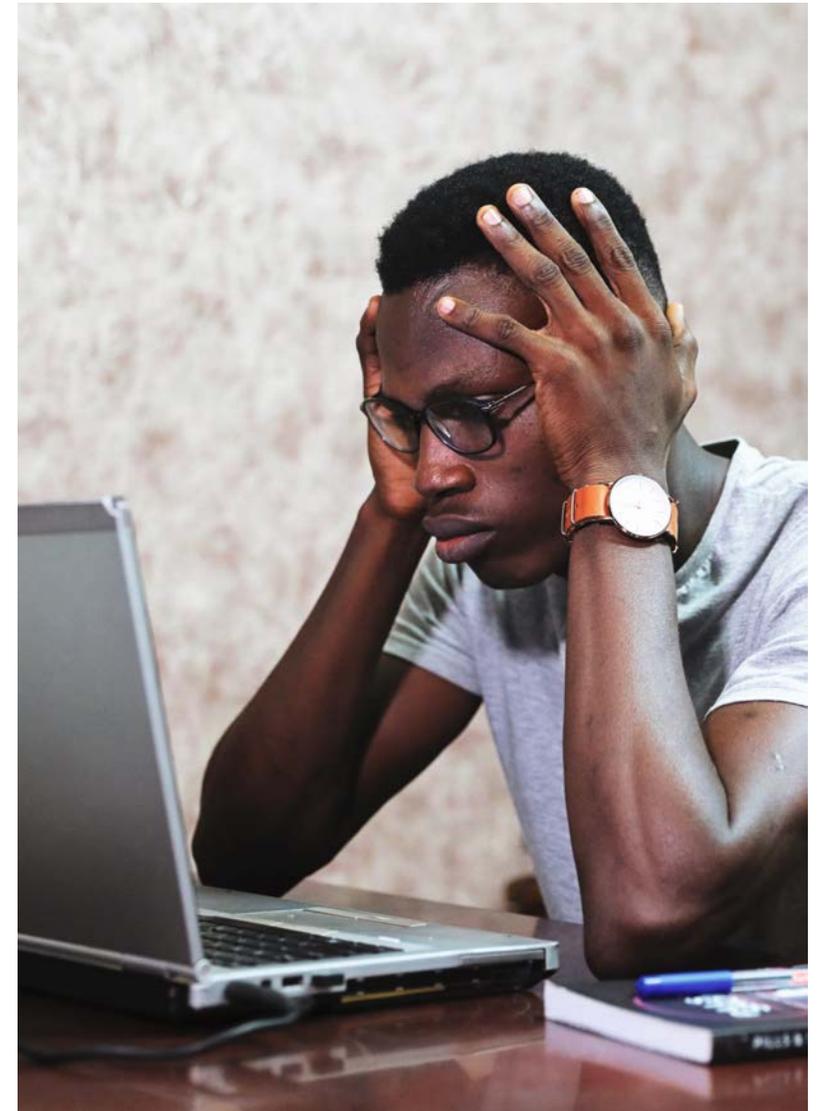
Experiencing strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity

Race Related Stress

Stress is the body's physiological and cognitive response to situations perceived as threats or challenges. It is a normal and natural response.

Most stress individuals encounter on a day-to-day basis is tolerable, because individuals have coping skills and supportive relationships to help them endure it.

However, exposure to stressful and adverse experiences over a long period without positive mitigating factors can become toxic.



Racial Trauma

- **Race-based traumatic stress** is the cumulative effects of experiencing and witnessing discrimination and even death of another person of same race.
 - **Institutional racism**
 - **Microaggressions**
 - **Historical or personal memory of racism**
- The constant threat of racial discrimination linked to feelings of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideations, as well as other on a mental and physical health issues. (Helms 2012).

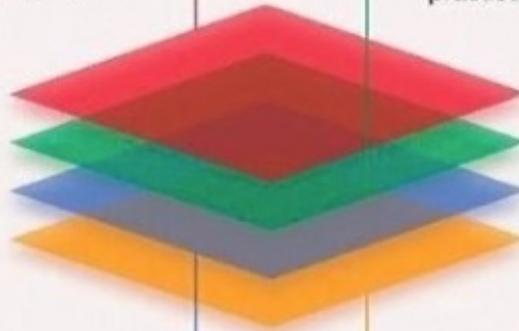
THE FOUR ^{OF} DIMENSIONS **RACISM**

INSTITUTIONAL

Policies and practices that reinforce racist standards within a workspace or organization.

STRUCTURAL

Multiple institutions collectively upholding racist policies and practices, i.e. society.



INTERPERSONAL

Racist acts and micro-aggressions carried out from one person to another.

INTERNALIZED

The subtle and overt messages that reinforce negative beliefs and self-hatred in individuals.

*Inspired by
Race Forward Trainings*

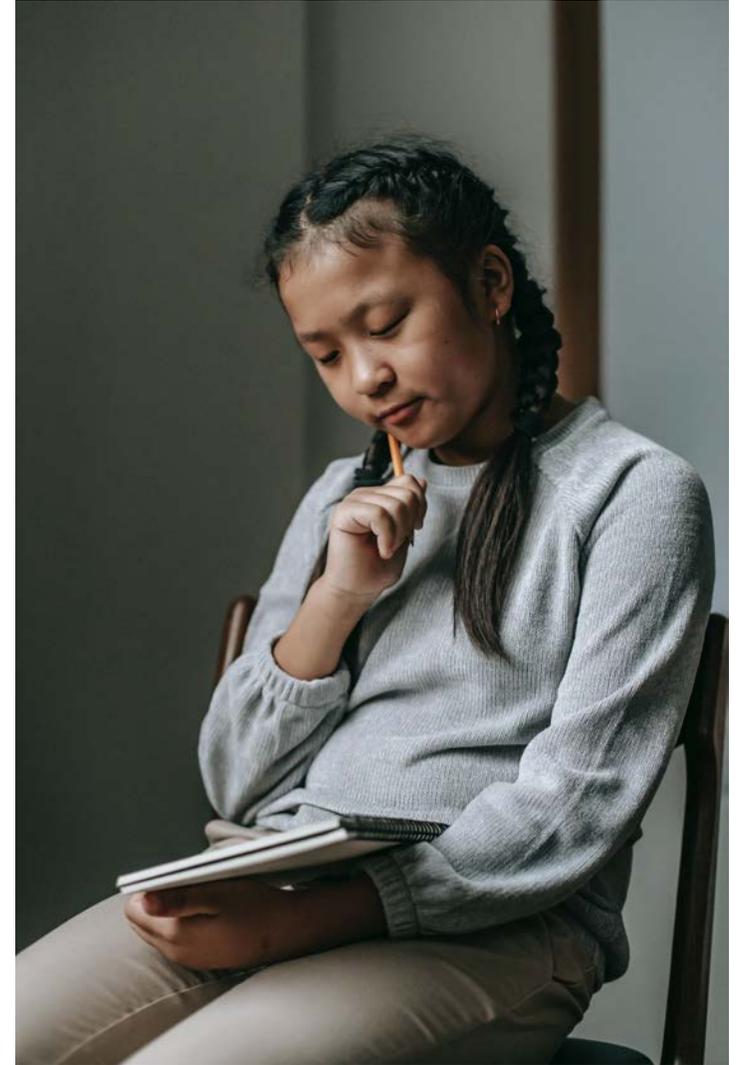
**Slow Factory
Foundation**

How Are the Children???

Behaviors are Going Up...so are punishments

We are not sure how effective distance learning was.

What about all the surrounding issues that effect academic success?



Re-Entry Stress



This is a psychological adjustment into a known cultural standard that one has been removed from for a period.

One may deal with feelings of frustration and rejection and a sense of being out of step with the people around you.

What Re-Entry Stress Looks Like

- **Feeling let down:** You have a peculiar sense of disappointment or missed out (FOMO)
- **You feel disconnected from your community:** You're sometimes overwhelmed with nostalgia. You feel abnormal.
- **Your relationships with family and friends are strained:** People around you seem boring and narrow-minded. You withdraw from your friends and family and, not surprisingly, you feel isolated.
- **Your emotional state is in flux:** You feel disoriented. You sleep a lot, but your dreams are disturbed. You feel out of control, even aggressive. You're angry one minute, sad the next. You try to deny the importance of your experience.
- **Your life skills need tweaking:** The things you do without thinking are often inappropriate. You feel overwhelmed by the tasks of everyday life.
- **Your health deteriorates:** You get headaches; your appetite fluctuates. You're irritable, lethargic, even depressed.

Family Stress

- Chronically distressed families will have similar experiences as their children.
- When families are overwhelmed, it is more likely that they will feel confused or angry at their children who add to their stress.
- This is critical when families cannot provide stability.
- Developmental Repair assume that children must learn new and better ways of being regulated as soon as possible and ask parents to become part of this new learning.

A collection of lit candles in various colors and textures, creating a warm, glowing atmosphere. The candles are arranged in a row, with some in the foreground and others in the background. The flames are bright and flickering, casting a soft light. The background is dark, making the candles stand out. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

What Is Healing?

Healing is...

A consistent process of efforts to create peace, balance, and justice.



Trauma Healing

Using and demonstrating several practices and strategies that neutralize and/or overcome and transform the traumatic impact of an event or reactions to traumagenic beliefs and structures. In the case of historical harms, healing requires transforming beliefs and structures, so they no longer create circumstances that continue to wound current generations and those to come.



WELLBEING

Understanding Our Wellness Domains

From the U of M Center for Spirituality and Healing Center





How to incorporate this into your Parenting and Connection to Youth???

Developmental Repair Model

By Dr. Anne Gearity

Developmental Repair is an intervention for young children (ages 3 to 3rd grade) who need intensive early intervention because their aggressive and disruptive behavior is harming themselves and others, and they have not been able to benefit from usual community resources.

- Children's behaviors reveal their efforts to cope with too few resources, including too little adult protection.
- This intervention must be relational because this developmental learning always relies on interpersonal experiences with caregiving adults. Intervention must help children acquire developmental skills that are normal for their age, such as self-regulation.
- And it must directly address children's social alienation, lest they become further disconnected from their peers and the larger community.

Understand the Youth- Adult Dynamic

Youth look to Adults for assurance and clarity.

Youth look to Adults for supportive emotional connection & empathy

Adults serve as the emotional guide

Both youth and Adults can bring out the best in each other

Creating a Calming Environment

Keep Bedrooms Simple And Furnished With Things Needed For Comfort

Use Digital Clocks, White Boards, And Wall Calendars Since They Are Easy To Read

In Each Room, Post Rules Specific To That Room, If Necessary

Don't Move Things Around: Furniture And The Child's Basic Self-care Items Should Always Be In The Same Place



Helping Them Reach Their Potential

Be A Role Model

Be Aware Of How You Talk About COVID-19

Demonstrate Wellness (Self-care) Practices

Identify Projects That Connect With Others And Yourself

Have Intentional Times Of Love And Affection





Surround Yourself with People Who Understand

Do Not Go At This Alone. This Will Help You Maintain Control

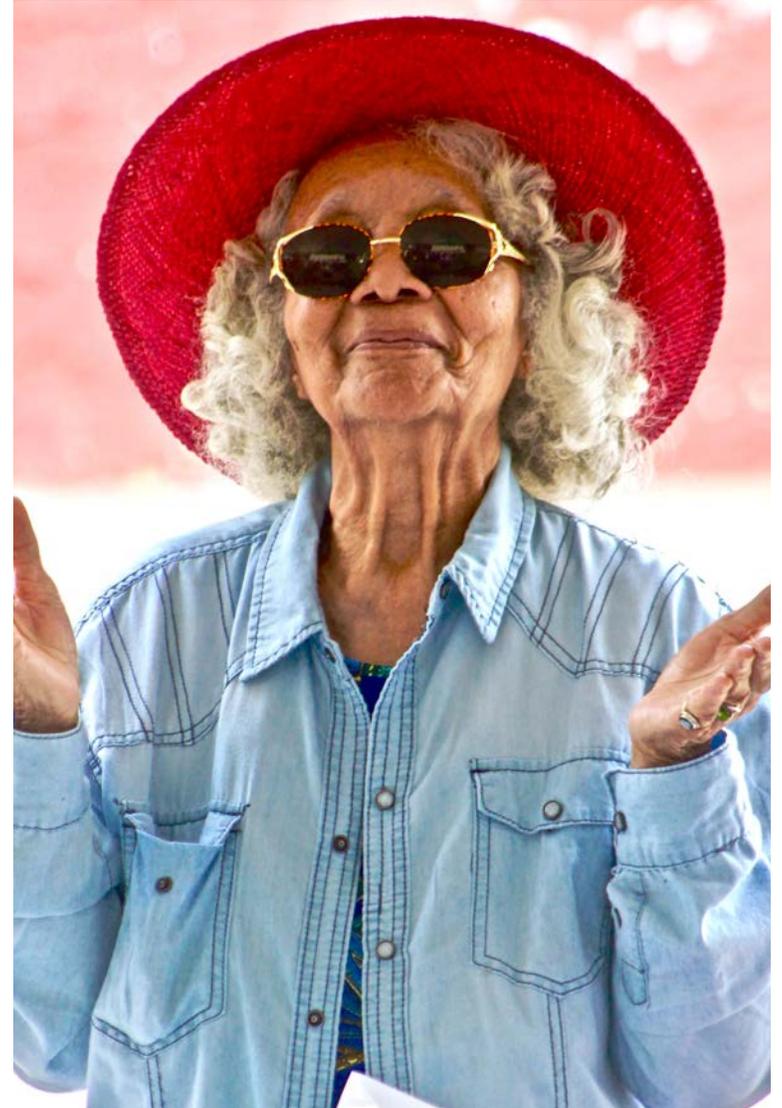
It Is Too Taxing Not To Have Supports That Get It Stay Connected To School

Be Sure To Find A Little Fun Outside Of The Family Dynamic

Implement Proactive Self-care Practices That Include Things Like Humor Or Adventure To Disconnect

Age and Wisdom are not Synonymous

- We often think adults know all the answers. Especially, when youth and adults disagree, the adults are usually correct.
- This is an example of **Adultism**.
- To have an effective youth-adult partnership, everyone must consider their bias and stereotypes.
- Instead, adult superiority is not assumed, and everyone shares the right to influence another's experience, perspectives, and values.





Youth and Adults must share Power

If an adult is making all the decisions, the true essence of a partnership is lacking.

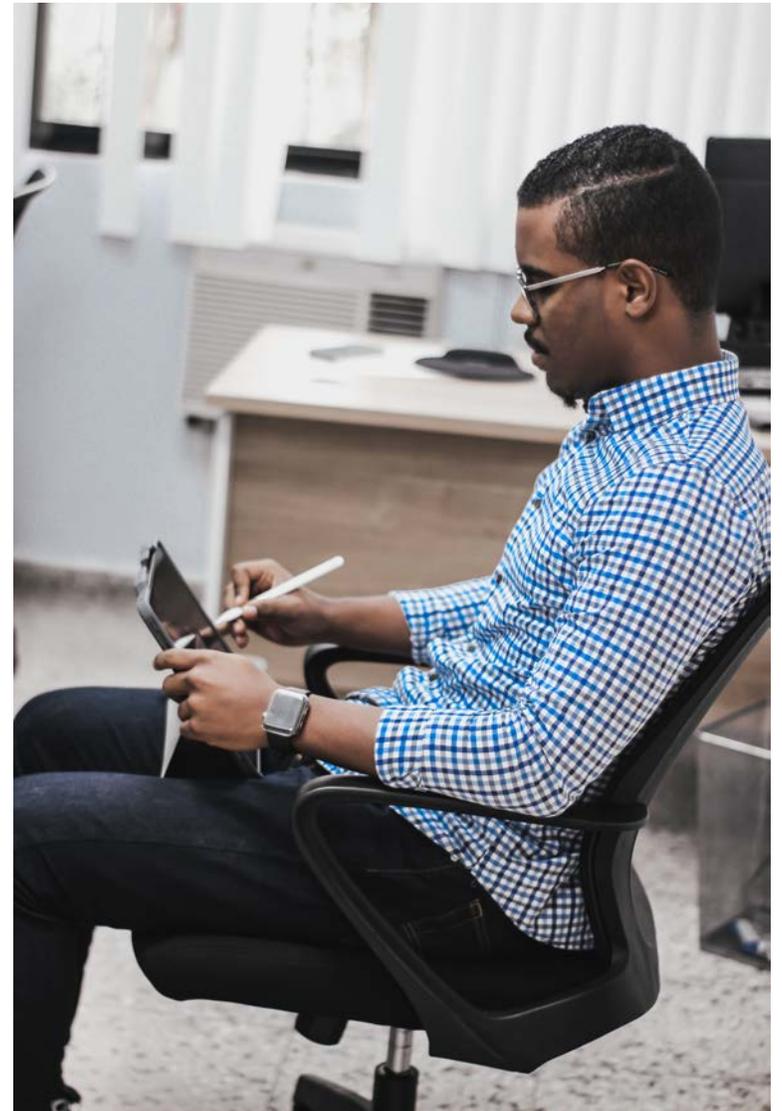
Even in work-related settings, a single person's control over a group can be authoritative, restrictive, and one-sided.

Similarly, if youth are refusing to work with the adult allies, the youth might not be sticking to the original expectations of the partnership.

Even though shared decision-making takes more time, it is integral to youth development and necessary for sustainability.

Prepare,
Prepare,
Prepare.

- Conflicts, challenges, and roadblocks are inevitable.
- Rather than viewing any of these as an indicator that your youth engagement process is failing, recognize that it is normal for any group of people—regardless of their ages—to encounter difficulties.
- Prepare back-up plans, continually assess the team's work, and pay respect to everyone's evaluation of the program, services, or experience.

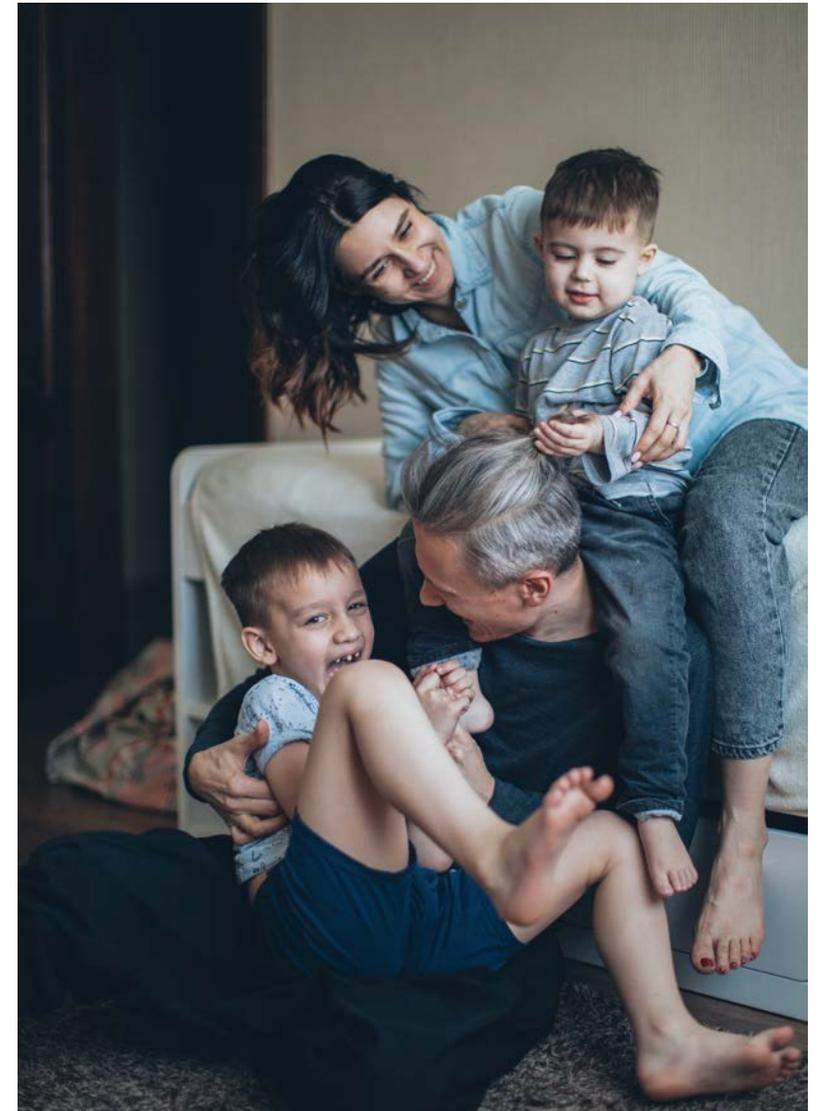


Three Key Factors for Resilience

A **strong parent-child relationship**, or, when such a relationship is not available, a surrogate caregiving figure who serves a mentoring role.

Good cognitive skills, which predict success and lead to rule-abiding behavior.

The **ability to self-regulate** attention, emotions, and behaviors.



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