Introduction To The Transformational Resilience™ Program

A Model for Building Personal and Psycho-Social-Spiritual Resilience for Climate Change

Email: tr@trig-cli.org

Website: http://www.theresourceinnovationgroup.org/transformational-resilience/
A Serious Ecological--Turned Mental Health--Turned Psycho-Social-Spiritual—Turned Humanitarian Crisis is Growing...

The Harmful Human Reactions to Climate Change!

Building Human Resilience Can Minimize the Problems and Increase Individual, Social, and Ecological Wellbeing.
Climate Change Produces A Growing Array of Acute Traumas and Ongoing Overwhelming (Toxic) Stresses!

**Acute Traumas from Extreme Weather, Floods, Wildfires, and Other Disasters**
- Damage or loss of property & valuables
- Loss business or place of work
- Personal injury
- Serious injury or death of loved ones
- Physical damage or loss of neighborhood or community
- Injury or death from disaster triggered crime or violence
- Black Swan & other surprise traumas

**Chronic Toxic Stresses From Seeing, Experiencing, or Worrying About...**
- Water, food & other resource shortages
- Economic disruptions & job losses
- New illnesses and diseases
- Injury or death from crime and violence
- Family disruption and separation
- Destruction of community bonds
- Disruption of social support network
- Loss of sense of place and culture
- Many other chronic toxic stresses
Mental health, psycho-social-spiritual, and humanitarian crises are often highly interconnected.

The direct & indirect traumas & chronic toxic stresses produced by climate change create a wide range of interconnected problems for:

- Individuals
- Families
- Organizations
- Communities
- Entire Societies

These maladies erode critical protective supports, amplify pre-existing mental health, social justice, and inequality problems, and generate many new surprising psycho-emotional and psycho-social-spiritual maladies.
A Whole New Way Of Thinking Is Needed To Respond to 2C Temp Rise

Treatment modalities based on “medical model” of health are inadequate because:

They focus on assessment and eliminating deficits or symptoms via therapy rather than

Building existing strengths & resources

Most concepts of vulnerability are inadequate because as temps rise toward 2C:

• Every person or group is at risk, and yet

• Not everyone in any group will develop problems
Most concepts of resilience are inadequate because as temps rise toward 2C it will be increasingly impossible to “bounce back” to relative pre-crisis conditions...

And many people don’t want this!

They want to increase their sense of wellbeing above previous levels!
A Whole New Way Of Thinking Is Needed To Respond to 2C Temp Rise

Similarly, we don’t want to “bounce back” to pre-existing economic patterns ... with its high habitat destruction, consumption, and emissions patterns.

Resilience skills must help people *increase* their sense of wellbeing above previous levels while *reducing* their environmental impacts!
The Personal and Psycho-Social-Spiritual Consequences of Trauma & Toxic Stress

**Stress Reaction From Cortisol & Adrenaline**
- Physical Reaction:
  - Blood pressure, pulse rate, difficult breathing, cold sweats, muscle tension, head and stomach aches, sleep disorders
- Mental Reaction:
  - Mind racing, excessive worry, tension, fear, anxiety.

If overwhelming and/or persistent

**Shattered Assumptions and Self-Destructive Coping**
- Hyperactivity and overworking
- Legal & illegal substance abuse
- Food, alcohol, tobacco abuse
- Avoidance or danger seeking
- Dissociation, denial, reenactment
- Less ability to cope, problem solve, and enhance wellbeing

If it continues

**Personal Breakdown**
- Physical health problems
- Psycho-emotion problems
- Spiritual problems (hopelessness)
- Cognitive problems
- Behavioral problems (withdrawal, aggression)
- Less ability to cope, problem solve, and enhance wellbeing

If many people experience it

**Community/Social Dysfunction** *(Trauma-Organized Societies)*
- Despair, loneliness, meaninglessness
- Social and political extremism
- Racism & other systemic oppressions
- De-individualization
- High crime and violence
- Disregard for the environment
- Less ability to cope, problem solve, and enhance wellbeing

If many individuals and groups experience it

**Group Dysfunction** *(Trauma-Organized Organizations)*
- Short-term, quick-fix thinking
- Pervasive distrust and conflict
- Groupthink
- Rigid rules and regulations
- Dissociation, denial, reenactment
- Oblivious to ecological impacts
- Less ability to cope, problem solve, and enhance wellbeing

If it continues
If There Is A Silver Lining In Climate Change

It is a primal truth that, as painful as it can be, adversity is often our greatest impetus for learning, growth, and transformation.
TRIG’s Transformational Resilience Program Uses The
Resilient Growth ™ Model

It Is Framed Around The Knowledge That Humans Are

Pushed by drives

and

Pulled by meaning and purpose!

(Quote by Viktor Frankl)
Focus: *Presencing* skills to calm your emotions and thoughts

**Ground**—and center yourself by stabilizing your nervous system.

**Remember**—your personal skills as well as internal and external resources.

**Observe**—your reactions to and thoughts about the situation non-judgmentally with self-compassion.

Focus: *Purposing* skills to find meaning, direction & hope in adversity

**Watch**—for insight and meaning in climate-enhanced and related hardships.

**Tap**—into your purpose & the values you want to live by in the midst of adversity.

**Harvest**—hope for new possibilities by making choices that increase personal, social, and environmental wellbeing.
The Resilient Growth™ Model

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Presencing Goals:

Develop Skills to Moderate the "Push" of our Psychobiological Drives

• Learn skills to discharge hyperarousal and stabilize our nervous system and in the midst of stress and adversity.

• Learn skills to create psychological flexibility by observing our thoughts non-judgmentally without being captured by them.

The knowledge that we can manage our emotions and thoughts in any situation provides enormous confidence and peace of mind.
The Resilient Growth™ Model

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Ground—and center yourself by stabilizing your nervous system

**Body-Based Skills**
(Trauma Resource Institute)

- Tracking
- Resourcing
- Grounding

**Breath-Based Skills**

- Controlled breathing
- Six-Second breathing

**Awareness-Based Skills**

- Mindfulness of breath, thoughts and emotions
- Mindful eating, walking, movement

**Culturally-Based Skills**

- Music
- Dance
- Eating/food

**Combo Skills**

- Reset Button
**The Resilient Growth™ Model**

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CIRCLES OF SUPPORT
Identifying the skills & internal & external resources you have to deal w/adversity.

- My External Physical Resources
- My True Allies
- My Internal Resources
- My Personal Skills
- Me
TR Program Uses The Resilient Growth™ Model

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The ABC Model of Observing Your Thoughts and Emotions
(G. Schiraldi)

We often see A and C clearly

A  Activating event—the situation that a video camera would record

B  Our beliefs and self-talk about the event

C  Consequences: Our emotions, body sensations, and impulses to act

But We Are Often Not Aware of B: Our Beliefs and Automatic Self-Talk

We think the event caused our reaction, when it was our \textit{interpretation of it} that did, which usually includes some true and many erroneous beliefs and stories.
TEN COMMON "THINKING DISTORTIONS"

1. Fixated on Flaws
2. Dismissing the Positive
3. Assuming
4. Labeling
5. Over-generalizing
6. All-Or-Nothing Thinking
7. Catastrophizing
8. "Should" and "ought" statements
9. Personalizing
10. Blaming
### ABC Thought and Emotion Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event (Describe)</th>
<th>Consequence (For you, others or the environment)</th>
<th>Belief (Self-Talk)</th>
<th>Is It Really True? (Yes/No)</th>
<th>Possible Thinking Distortion</th>
<th>Write An Alternative Belief/Self-Talk</th>
<th>What Would You Be Like With The Alternative?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Worked in rush mode long after regular work hours to complete project</td>
<td>Me: bought fast food for dinner, was tense and irritable when got home, yelled at kids, ate and drank too much, felt bad about self afterwards</td>
<td>I am the only one in the organization that can do this work.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Personalizing</td>
<td>Others are skilled-- next time I'm running late I'll ask for help</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kids: Felt like second priority, angry for being yelled at</td>
<td>If I don't do it climate change will grow worse.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Over-generalization</td>
<td>I alone can't prevent CC &amp; I'll be more effective if I care for myself and my family</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Environment: needless consumption of packaging, chemicals, energy</td>
<td>I'm too tired and stressed to cook.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Catastrophizing</td>
<td>I can cook a simple meal &amp; it might relax me</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Observed—the situation & your views about it with clear eyes and self-compassion

More calm, thoughtful, and effective at work

A more caring parent.

More at ease with myself and the world

Feel good about less impact on the environment
Observe—your reactions to and thoughts about the situation non-judgmentally with self-compassion.

When Observing Your Thoughts, Emotions, and Reactions
Self-Compassion Is Essential!

Self-Compassion Exercise
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Presencing Safety Plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Will Watch For These Signs That I Am Outside of My Resilient Growth Zone</td>
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</table>

*Physical Signs:* rapid breathing, heart beat, or pulse; head or stomach ache; muscle tension.
*Mental Signs:* racing mind, anxiety, fear, excessive worry, sleep troubles.

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<th>When I See These Signs I Will Take These Actions</th>
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</table>

*Examples*

Practice tracking, grounding, controlled breathing, mindfulness of breath, thoughts & emotions, Circles of Support, ABC Model of Thinking Distortions, Self-Compassion

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<td>5.</td>
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Remember, humans are not only

Pushed by psychobiological drives

We Are Also

Pulled by meaning and purpose!

Quote by Viktor Frankl
The Resilient Growth™ Model

Focus: *Presencing* skills to calm your emotions and thoughts

**Ground** — and center yourself by stabilizing your nervous system.

**Remember** — your personal skills as well as internal and external resources.

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**Focus: Purposing** skills to find meaning, direction & hope in adversity

**Watch** — for insight and meaning in climate-enhanced and related hardships.

**Tap** — into your purpose & the values you want to live by in the midst of adversity.

**Harvest** — hope for new possibilities by making choices that increase personal, social, and environmental wellbeing.
Purposing Goals

Learn Skills To Intensify The "Pull" of Meaning and Purpose

• *Presencing* is necessary, but insufficient, because it doesn't guarantee a principled, vital, or meaningful life in the midst of rising climate traumas and toxic stresses.

• *Purposing* is about developing positive meaning, direction & hope in life and making values-based choices that enhance personal, collective *and* environmental wellbeing.

• Research shows that using adversity as a catalyst to adopt a mission greater than ourselves is good for others, increases our mental health, and enhances our capacity to deal with future negative events.
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Intro Exercise

Identify 1-2 times when you **used adversity as a catalyst to learn, grow, and find new purpose and meaning in life**—or saw others that did?

**Examples**

- Re-dedication to a goal or mission after a setback
- Develop new priorities in your life after trauma
- Eat better, get more exercise, or in other ways take better care of yourself after illness
- Greater empathy for others after your own tragedy
- Identify new personal strengths by observing your response to hardship
- Deepened understanding of others as result of seeing how you were affected by adversity
- More desire to help others due to help you got
- Start of a new spiritual quest after trauma

If you were able to identify an example—**you already know how to do it!**
The Choices We Make In Midst Of Adversity Determine Our Pathway

Adversity-Based Growth: moving beyond previous levels of functioning while holding the pain of trauma and toxic stress

Requires a Choice: Continue to suffer, or use the experience to learn, grow, and increase our sense of wellbeing

Adapted from S. Joseph, What Doesn't Kill Us (pp. 69)
Famous Example: Nelson Mandela

Spent 27 years in prison

Refused release because he would be required to stay silent.

Led transition from apartheid with empathy, equity, and strength.
Common Changes Seen In Adversity-Based Growth
(Tedeschi, Calhoun, Joseph)

- Personal
- Philosophical
- Relational

Leading to These Common Benefits

- Better mental health
- Improved positivity
- Improved physical health
- Shift from "Me to We"
Deep Exercise: Learning, Growing and Finding Meaning in Adversity

- Describe a stressful situation and how you normal react to it.

- Describe how your reaction affects other people, you, and also the natural environment.

- Re-imagine the situation and answer these questions:
  
  ✓ What insights about myself and the world can I gain if I use this as an opportunity to learn rather than react by fighting, fleeing or freezing?

  ✓ How can I increase the wellbeing of other people and the environment through this experience rather than diminishing them?

  ✓ How can I find new meaning in my life through this experience?
The Resilient Growth™ Model

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Living Out The Values We Hold Dear Gives Our Life Purpose

• Values refer to **Actions**—not ideals, morals, or goals.

• Values are about **how you act** during life, **not what you accomplish**.

• Because our **values** tend to remain constant they can serve as a compass to guide our actions during climate related and other types of adversities.
Exercise to identify the core values that will guide your response

1. **Answer This Question:** What type of person do you want to be?

   - How do you want to **think about yourself** during your life journey?
   - How do you want to **treat other people**?
   - How do you want to **treat the natural environment**?
   - How do you **want to be remembered** after your time on earth ends?
2. Go through the list of values & **identify the top 3 values** that would allow you to be **the person you want to be** and live with meaning and purpose in the **midst of adversity**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal responsibility</th>
<th>Reverence for human life</th>
<th>Social equity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Honor</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Charity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Social justice</td>
<td>Mercy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Respect for authority</td>
<td>Respect for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplicity</td>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection of nature/climate</td>
<td>Self-sufficiency</td>
<td>Brotherhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>Selflessness</td>
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<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>Personal safety</td>
<td>Wealth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Rank and power</td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>Open mindedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Diligence</td>
<td>Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional achievement</td>
<td>Public recognition</td>
<td>Insert other</td>
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<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>Love</td>
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</table>
Humor & Gratitude Are Key To Finding Purpose and Living Our Values

In the midst of serious or ongoing adversity we often only see bad things.

Focusing on gratitude reminds us of positive things in our lives that are forgotten which creates a more complete life narrative.

We often “Play Selma’s Game”

Confessions of a Jewish Mother
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRbL46mWx9w)
The Resilient Growth™ Model

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Sample Exercise

Note a time when you helped someone else or offered your services—without any concern for yourself or feeling of obligation. (or knew someone who did).

Share the experience and describe how you (or they) felt afterwards.
One of the best ways to harvest hope in the midst of climate adversity is to take concrete steps with others to help other people or the natural environment.

This activates the release of oxytocin, which makes us more “empathetic” which produces more “altruism”
The Oxytocin Virtuous Cycle

Harvest—hope for new possibilities by making choices that increase personal, social, and environmental wellbeing.
Research Shows That When People Become More Empathetic & Altruistic They Exhibit More:

- Honesty
- Kindness
- Love
- Gratitude
- Fairness
- Forgiveness
- Modesty
- Prudence
- Leadership skills
- Social intelligence
- Bravery
- Creativity
- Good Judgment

Leading To:

- More hopeful and positive attitude
- Better mental health
- Better physical health
- Extended life-expectancy
- And Greater capacity to deal with future adversities.

(From: Paul Zak, The Moral Molecule: How Trust Works, and many others)
Researchers Have Found that Hope Emerges Most Readily When Three Closely Related Factors Are Present:

1. People have a **vision** of a place they want to arrive at or condition they want to achieve
2. A sense of **how to get to their destination**
3. And the **commitment** to work toward that end **even when obstacles block their way**

**Harvest**—hope for new possibilities by making choices that increase personal, social, and environmental wellbeing.

**Harvesting Hope**

**TR programs engage people in action planning around these 3 factors**
As climate change plays out, many deeply held beliefs about the world and our role in it will be shattered---but this also offers possibility of a new form of hopefulness.

We Can Use the Adversities for Revival...

hope for the emergence of new ways to live that are not yet fully understandable but will be more equitable, just, and healthier and allow us to flourish.

(From: Jonathan Lear, Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation)
My Purposing Action Plan

My Strengths and Passions:

My Core Values:

Goals To Enhance My Personal Wellbeing:

Goals to Enhance the Wellbeing of Other People and The Natural Environment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate Actions (within 30 days) to Achieve My Goals</th>
<th>* Barriers I Will Experience</th>
<th>Strategies For Barriers</th>
<th># Benefits of Action</th>
<th>Date(s) Done</th>
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<th>Mid-Term Actions (within 3 Months) To Achieve My Goals</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Strategies for Barriers</th>
<th>Benefits of Action</th>
<th>Date(s) Done</th>
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* Barriers include internal challenges as well as external barriers
The Resilient Growth™ Model

Is evidence-based and emphasizes prevention---
not therapy, but can be very therapeutic

Is based on the biology of our nervous system---
not mental or moral weakness

With practice, can be instantly self-administered--
and skills are dose-based--the more you practice the greater the effects
Applications to Organizations and Communities

Helping Leaders Transition From ‘Trauma-Organized’ to ‘Trauma-Informed’ Human Resilience-Enhancing Social Systems
Look for These Traits of Fear-based Trauma-Organized Groups

- Inability to grieve losses leading to cycle of reenactment
- Top down authoritarian leadership and poor communications
- Inability to grasp problems, admit mistakes, learn, grow and change
- Lack of trust among members, stakeholders, constituents
- Constant psycho-emotional violence & low sense of safety
- Lack of good emotional management
- Rigid and often punitive or retaliatory rules and regulations
- Siloed systems and structures leading to conflicts, contradictions, and poor performance
- Failure to acknowledge or correct injustices, abuses of power and authority, and environmental damage
- Constant Groupthink and/or staff conflict

(Adapted from Destroying Sanctuary & Restoring Sanctuary, Dr. Sandra Bloom)
Then, Take Action to Transition to These Traits of Human Resilience-Enhancing Organizations & Communities

- Strong trust among members, stakeholders and constituents
- Openly acknowledge and mourn losses
- Value diversity, participation, and democratic decision making, and open communications
- Commitment to non-violence, social responsibility, social justice, and care for the environment
- Embrace learning, growth, and change
- Healthy sense of safety among members and constituents
- Embrace and utilize criticism and contrary ideas
- Emotionally well regulated
- Rules and regulations that foster trust, safety, and care
- Integrated systems and structures leading to coherent and consistent high-performance

(Adapted from Destroying Sanctuary & Restoring Sanctuary by Dr. Sandra Bloom)
Core Elements of Preventative Human Resilience Building Initiatives

1. Form diverse "Human Resilience Coordination Groups" (HRCGs) in every community to plan, establish, and coordinate preventative “Presencing” and “Purposing” resilience building programs to reach all adults and youth. (A modification of IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies)

*Human resilience education & skills should become as common as learning to read & write!*

2. HRCGs should support teaching Presencing and Purposing skills and strengthening of social support networks of all kinds (bonding, bridging, linking).

3. They strengthen community, economic, educational, religious/spiritual protective resources that influence personal and psycho-social-spiritual resilience.

4. They inform all organizational & community leaders how to recognize signs of becoming trauma-organized and transition to resilience-enhancing social systems.

5. They identify & prepare the most vulnerable populations but don’t stop there.

6. They strengthen mental health elements of emergency services infrastructure.
We Offer Tailored Workshops, Webinars, and Consultations For

• Mental Health and Human Service Workers

• Emergency Responders, Health Care, Food Security, Police, Fire, and other Emergency Services Providers

• Environmental and Climate Practitioners

• Community Leaders

• Organizational Leaders

• Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) For Human Service, Mental and Physical Health, and Environmental Professionals

Contact: tr@trig-cli.org
About the Presenter

Bob Doppelt is Executive Director of The Resource Innovation Group, a social science climate change and sustainability non-profit affiliated with Willamette University. He is trained as a counseling psychologist and in environmental science and has combined the two fields throughout his career. He is also a long-time mindfulness teacher and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Instructor. In 2015 he was named one of the world’s “50 Most Talented Social Innovators” by the CSR World Congress.

He is the author of 4 best-selling books on the processes involved with altering human-ecological systems to enhance wellbeing. His newest book *Transformational Resilience* (Greenleaf Publishing, March 2016) describes “Presencing” and “Purposing” skills and other tools to build personal resilience as well as psycho-social-spiritual resilience within organizations and communities for climate disruption.