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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Denis' A. Thomas entitled "Reaching Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of Protective Factors and Resilience in Adult Children of Divorce." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend its acceptance in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Counselor Education.

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Reaching Resilience:

A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of
Resilience and Protective Factors in Adult Children of Divorce

A Dissertation Presented for the Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

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Dedication

*Adversity has ever been considered the state
in which a man most easily becomes acquainted with himself.*

– Samuel Johnson

*Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life
as by the obstacles which he has overcome.*

– Booker T. Washington

This study is dedicated to the resilient, those who will be one day, and those who are not, but I wish could be. It is also dedicated to the ones who help them, formally and informally. May this work contribute to increasing resilience and helping children of divorce see the event as beneficial, though not desirable.

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How do I begin to acknowledge all those who have helped me on my journey to this point? So many people have been influential and helpful. While many of those are not listed by name here, I am grateful to them. First, I want to thank my wonderful husband, Tim, who has supported me daily in countless ways. I love you, Bug, and I am a better (and more educated) woman because of you. Second, I want to thank my parents: Lin Bass, David McGinnis, Denny and Debbie Long. You provided the topic, but also gave me the tools to be resilient. I am grateful to you for that and so many other things. Third, thank you to Frank and Milly Long, who have shown me what a beautiful marriage looks like and given me hope that I can do it, too.

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I also want to thank Angela, Sarah, Craig, Rob, and Suah for sharing their stories and making this study what it became. I am humbled by your honesty and trust in me.

Thanks to Amanda Rieger for transcribing hours and hours of interviews in record time. Finally, thanks to my other friends who have supported me, encouraged me, and challenged me. I am blessed to have true friends, both old and new. You have been a protective factor for me.

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to describe the experiences of resilience following parental divorce for university freshmen. Five participants were interviewed using a multiple case study methodology and Richardson's (2002) resilience model as the theoretical framework. It examined how the three needs of Self-Determination theory (autonomy, relatedness, and competence) and the three categories of protective factors (individual, family, and community) contributed to resilience. Data were collected through demographic surveys, divorce artwork, resilience artwork, and interview transcriptions. General themes, typological self-determination need themes, and typological protective factor themes were developed for each individual and across cases. The findings suggested that autonomy needs and individual protective factors were the same, competence needs and most community factors were the same, and relatedness needs and family protective factors, along with the community protective factor of friends, were same. Therefore, this study linked the empirical support of protective factor research to the tenet of self-determination theory that stated that by facilitating the three self-determination needs, optimal positive psychological, developmental and behavioral outcomes occur (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Findings also revealed a) the importance of cognitive coping strategies, b) the benefit of helping others, c) the significance of the relatedness need, and d) the value of multiple types of relationships. Implications for counselors and recommendations for future research on resilience in children of divorce were provided.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A History of Divorce, Resilience, and Protective Factors

According to Riley (1991) in *Divorce An American Tradition*, the first divorce in America occurred among the Puritans in Massachusetts Bay in December, 1639. James Luxford's wife requested a divorce on the grounds of bigamy, since he already had another wife. The magistrate granted the divorce, seized Luxford's property, transferred it to her and her children, fined him £100, ordered him to be put in the stocks for an hour, and banished him back to England. Almost five years later Anne Clarke sought a divorce because her husband, Dennis, had deserted her and was living with another woman. The Court of Assistants granted it.

In an analysis of session laws, House and Senate journals, and court records, Shultz (1984) noted changing patterns of divorce for the three states of Illinois, Missouri, and Ohio. In all three states, the state supreme courts held jurisdiction over all divorce cases until the power was passed to lower courts, making divorces more difficult to obtain. For example, the first divorce law in Ohio was signed in 1795 and adopted with minor changes when Ohio became a state in 1803. The Ohio state supreme court held jurisdiction for all divorce cases from 1804-1853, when the power was handed to the common pleas court in the counties. Shultz found that less than half of all divorce petitions for the tri-state sample were granted in 1820, more than two-thirds were granted by 1850, and nearly three-fourths were granted in 1900, which, according to his research, paralleled a liberalization of divorce laws and a growing social acceptance of divorce.

More than 200 years after the Luxford divorce in Massachusetts, the new state of California narrowly passed the state's first divorce statute in 1851, drawing the issue of children's welfare into the divorce arena (Basch, 1999). Debate exploded in the state senate over the proposed bill, with Elcan Heydenfeldt of the Select Committee on Divorce arguing that granting a divorce was a legislative power that could not be given to the judiciary branch, while George Tingley, who drafted the minority report, emphasized the suffering of innocent children (Basch). The plight of the children is still debated in divorce courts today (Thompson, Tinsley, Scalora, & Parke, 1989).

Divorce and the Effects on Children

About 1.5 million children and adolescents in the United States experience parental divorce each year, and 40% of children are predicted to live with a divorced parent before they reach the age of 16 (Haine, Sandler, Wolchik, Tein & Dawson-McClure, 2003). Approximately 19.8 million children (27.7% of all children under the age of 18) live with one parent (Lugailia, 1998). According to a U.S. Census Bureau report on living arrangements of children (Kreider, 2007), in 1950 approximately 299,000 children experienced parents who finalized divorce, but that number increased to more than 1 million children by 1972. In 1950 about 6.3 children per 1,000 experienced parental divorce but by 2004 about 15 per 1,000 did.

Major shifts in children's living arrangements occurred between 1970 and 1990 when the proportion of children living with only their mothers doubled from 11 percent to 22 percent (Kreider, 2007). In another U.S. Census Bureau report examining population characteristics (Fields, 2003), three trends related to the shift between two-parent and one-parent families from 1970 to 2003. First, a larger proportion of unmarried women gave birth, and single mother

families grew from 12% to 26% of family groups. Second, the delay of marriage increased the likelihood of a nonmarital birth. Finally, the rate of divorce among couples with children grew, and traditional family households declined from 81% to 68% of all households.

Parental divorce was a risk factor associated with maladaptive outcomes in behavior for children. For example, higher levels of aggression, depression, anxiety, school dropout, drug and alcohol use, early sexual behavior, adolescent pregnancy and poor academic performance occurred in children from divorced families (Wolchik, Wilcox, Tein, & Sandler, 2000). Higher levels of misbehavior, more under-controlled behavior, and less competence were also associated with children whose parents have divorced (Ruschena, Prior, Sanson & Smart, 2005). One of the most common stressors that children faced was the dissolving of their parents' marriage (Wolchik, et al.).

Moreover, many children experienced a series of environmental transitions and changes, since divorce rates were even higher in remarriages than first marriages (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999). Divorce often accelerated a downward slide in standard of living and resulted in changes in residence, school, and friends meaning that children were no longer able to participate in the sports and organizations that they had prior to the separation (Kelly & Emery, 2003). In addition, the economic hardship during and following a divorce made it difficult for parents to provide resources such as books, computers, travel, and assistance with college tuition to facilitate their children's educational success (Amato & Cheadle, 2005).

Research indicated that the effects of divorce on children lingered from childhood into adulthood (Kelly & Emery, 2003; Wallerstein, Lewis & Blakeslee, 2000). As a group, adults from divorced families demonstrated lower academic performance and achievement test scores

and were two to three times more likely to drop out of school (Kelly & Emery, 2003). They had poorer outcomes academically, behaviorally, and social-emotionally (Peris & Emery, 2004) and were at greater risk for psychological problems (Laumann-Billings & Emery, 2000) than their peers from intact families. In general, adult children of divorce tended to earn less income, obtained less education, had more troubled marriages, had weaker ties with their parents, and reported more psychological distress symptoms as adults (Amato & Cheadle, 2005). Long-term, adult children of divorce were more likely to engage in delinquent behavior, lack self-esteem, have poor peer adjustment, become aggressive, and divorce from their own mates (Kirk, 2002). Compared to adults from intact families, those with divorced parents were less likely to have attended or completed college, were more likely to be unemployed and on welfare, and had fewer financial resources (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999).

Yet these outcomes for children and adults were not inevitable (Pedro-Carroll, 2001). Gottman (1997, p. 145) wrote that, “It’s not necessarily the divorce that hurts kids, but the intense hostility and bad communication that can develop between unhappily married mothers and fathers and may continue after the divorce.” In fact, some studies have identified positive consequences for children and adults whose parents divorce. When conflict between parents was chronic, intense, and overt, divorce could be a release from a toxic home environment, resulting in a better outcome than if the parents remained together (Pedro-Carroll, 2001). In the Virginia Longitudinal Study of Divorce and Remarriage, researchers found that “resilience is the normative outcome” and children of divorce were “frequently” in one of the clusters that the authors identified as “high-competency” (Hetherington, 2003, p. 224).

University students from families of divorce may have come to college more equipped with characteristics that helped them cope with stressors than their peers from intact marriages (McIntyre, Heron, McIntyre, Burton & Engler, 2003). Adults reported a powerful increase in intimacy and attachment to their siblings during the divorce process (Abbey & Dallos, 2004). Some girls demonstrated exceptional competence and seemed to be enhanced by dealing with the challenges, responsibilities, and independence associated with parental divorce (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999).

As researchers began to recognize the occurrence of resilience despite an increased risk for maladaptive outcomes, philosophical changes in divorce research began to emerge. The resilience research developed in three waves (Richardson, 2002), influencing and challenging the basic assumptions of divorce research. These are discussed in the next section.

Philosophical Changes in Divorce Research: From Risk to Resilience

Philosophical changes about divorce have transpired since the 1970's when divorce research began to emerge as a research topic (Kelly, 2003). According to Hetherington (1999), early research on divorce was based on two assumptions. First, a two-parent family structure was assumed to be a necessity for a child to have successful socialization, and paternal absence was presumed to have adverse consequences for children, especially boys. Much of this early research conceptualized the problem as father-absence (Kelly). Second, divorce was assumed to be a traumatic event with "severe and enduring deleterious effects on children's adjustment" (Hetherington, p. 130). By the 1990s, researchers began to recognize and assess the variation in individual differences in children's responses to family dissolution and the events that both preceded and followed the divorce (Dunn, 2004). In other words, assumptions about divorce

changed. A nuclear family was not always “good” for children, absent fathers did not always precipitate adverse consequences, and divorce was not always an enduring traumatic event (Dunn).

For example, in non-divorced families, 10% of children had adjustment problems, but in divorced families, 20-25% of children did (Hetherington, Bridges, & Insabella, 1998). This marked a two-fold increase in adjustment problems. Researchers also noted the inverse, that 75-80% of children from divorced families did not have adjustment problems (Hetherington, et al., 1998). The trend was similar in adulthood. Adults from divorced families did not demonstrate more adjustment problems those from intact families (McIntyre, et al., 2003). Although many people experienced parental divorce as children, most developed into well-adjusted adults (Amato & Cheadle, 2005).

In addition to changes in basic assumptions about divorce, research also shifted in focus from a pathogenic paradigm, emphasizing weaknesses, shortcomings and dysfunctions, to a more salutogenic paradigm, emphasizing positive characteristics and strengths (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004). This prompted a shift to the topic of resilience. A recognition of resilience as normative led to changes in the types of research questions that were asked. In other words, research expanded from a focus on risk to a focus on positive outcomes and strengths or a focus on resilience.

Resilience

Resilience is the concept of doing well despite adversity (Patterson, 2002). It conveys not just surviving, but thriving. Richardson (2002) described three waves of resiliency inquiry. The first wave identified characteristics that marked people who thrived despite high-risk situations

or setbacks. This phase generated lists of qualities, assets, and factors considered to protect the individual. The bulk of resiliency literature falls into this category. The second wave examined the resiliency process. It marked a shift from generating characteristics to examining the factors that nurtured personal strengths. This phase addressed identifying, fortifying, and enriching resilient qualities or protective factors. Chapter Two of this study will examine the literature from this wave. The third wave examined innate resilience and focused on theories of resilience, motivational forces within individuals and groups, and creating experiences that fostered the growth and use of those forces. This is the youngest wave of resilience inquiry with the least research. The current study falls into the category of the third wave, by examining innate resilience in the participants and focusing on protective factors that Richardson described as fostering motivation, growth and resilience.

Richardson (2002) detailed a linear resiliency model, which emerged from the resiliency research. (See Figure 1.) In the model, a person began in the stage of biopsychospiritual (body, mind, and spirit) homeostasis followed by a disruption caused by stressors, adversity, or life events. A person reintegrated in one of four ways: resilient, back to homeostasis, with loss, or dysfunctional. For example, a child of divorce would be at biopsychospiritual homeostasis before the divorce, depicted by the disruption. Following the divorce, the child would rebuild their life in one of the four ways shown in the model.

Of particular importance to this study was the component of the model represented as resilient reintegration and the contributions to that positive outcome, labeled by Richardson (2002) as protective factors. Richardson defined resilient reintegration as experiencing insight or growth through disruptions, in this case, parental divorce. Identifying, accessing, and nurturing

resilient qualities when dealing with life stressors resulted in strengthening resilience. Resilient children of divorce had protective processes in their character or environment, which moderated

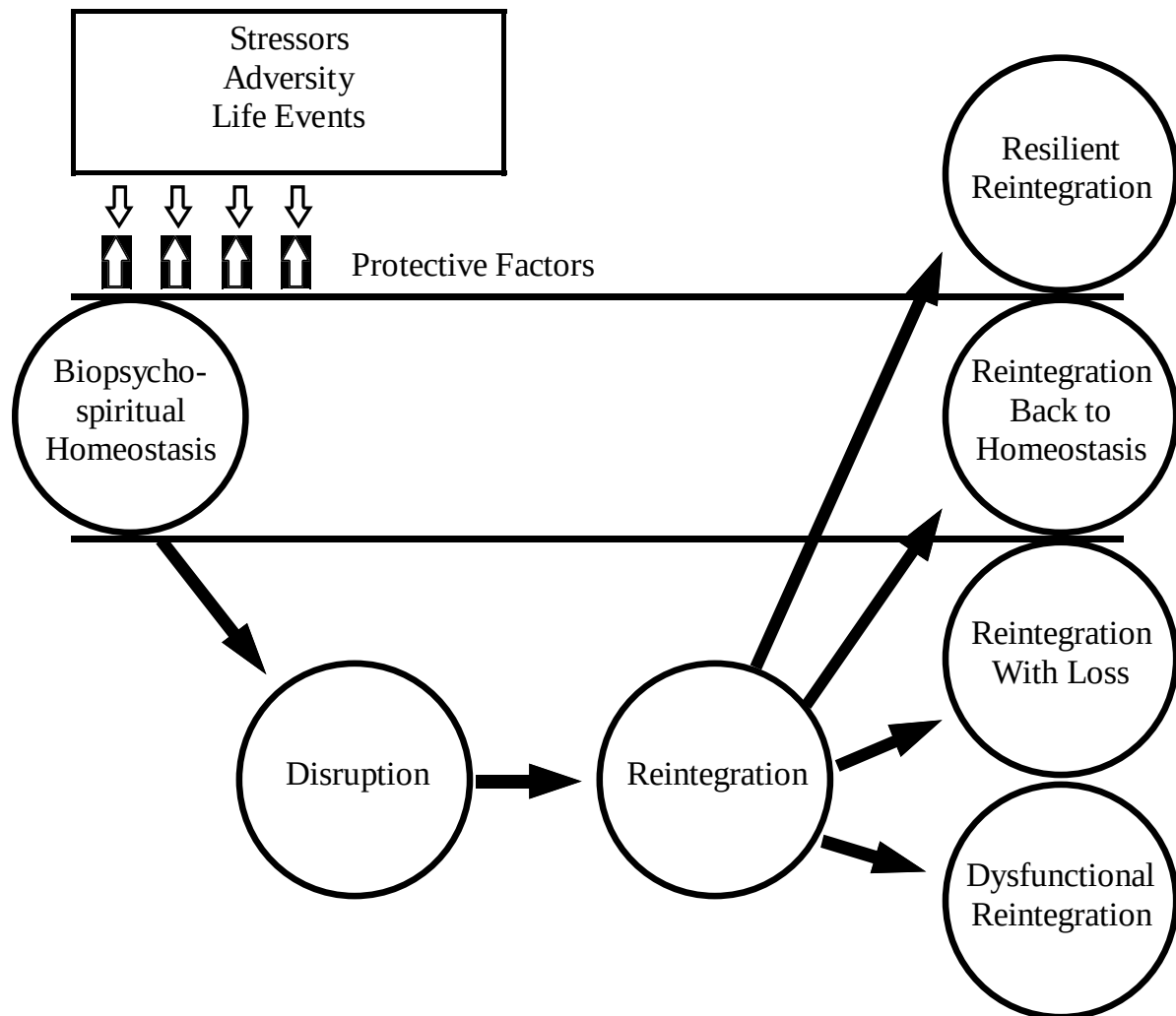


Figure 1: The Resilience Model

Richardson, G. E.(2002). The metatheory of resilience and resiliency. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 58, p. 311.

the effect of one or more risk factors (Rodgers & Rose, 2002). In the model, the additional protective arrows represented this process. The next section provides an overview of the research on protective factors as they relate to children and adults of divorce.

Protective Factors

Experts have asserted that the risks associated with parental divorce are well documented, but much less research has been devoted to the protective factors that contributed to resilience and positive outcomes (Pedro-Carroll, 2001). Although divorce has often been thought of as a Western problem, studies conducted around the world indicate that it is a global problem (Abbey & Dallos, 2004; Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004; Lazar & Guttman, 2004; Ruschena, et al., 2005). Empirical studies have researched individual, family, and community protective factors, which are outlined in Chapter 2. As divorce has become more common, researchers around the world have examined its effects and the influences that helped children of divorce develop into well-adjusted citizens of their respective countries (Abbey & Dallos; Greeff & Van Der Merwe; Ruschena, et al.).

In addition, researchers used a variety of theories and models to frame their studies (Abby & Dallos, 2004; Doyle, Wolchik, Dawson-McClure, & Sandler, 2003; Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004; Hipke, Wolchik, Sandler, & Braver, 2002; Lazar & Guttman, 2004; Lengua, Wolchik, Sandler, & West, 2000; Ruschena, et al., 2005). For Example, Abby and Dallos used attachment theory in their study of divorce and sibling relationships. Temperament theory guided others (Lengua, et al.; Ruschena, et al.). Researchers have applied family stress theory (Greeff & Van Der Merwe), transitional events theory (Doyle, et al.; Hipke, et al.), and psychoanalytic theory (Lazar & Guttman,). Researchers from a variety of theoretical backgrounds have sought

answers to help build resilience in those whose families, cultures and nations have been impacted by the effects of divorce.

The focus of this study was to examine the experience of resilience and the protective factors that contributed to resilience in adult children of divorce. Maslow believed that humans had an innate drive for personal growth and a need to fulfill their potential (Weiten & Lloyd, 2006). Self-determination theory is a humanistic theoretical perspective that is based on the foundational work of Maslow, Rogers, May, and others (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003). Three needs identified by self-determination theory are autonomy, the need for independence and the ability to alter the environment when necessary (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007), competence, the ability to function effectively in the environment (Eggen & Kauchak), and relatedness, feeling connected to others and feeling worthy of love and respect, similar to Maslow's need for belonging (Eggen & Kauchak). When contexts facilitate satisfying these three needs, optimal motivation and positive outcomes occur (Deci & Ryan, 2008). This study explored the protective factor contexts, which include personal, family, and community resources that contributed to resilience for adult children of divorce.

Chapter Overview

The remainder of this chapter will provide a foundation for understanding this research study and its importance. In the following sections, I will present the problem statement, the significance of the study, and the purpose of the study. Then, I will define important terms, describe the research questions, and explain delimitations and limitations. I will end the chapter with an organizational framework of the remaining chapters.

Problem Statement

Divorce has become a cultural phenomenon. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2004 1.1 million children lived with a parent who had experienced a divorce in the last year (Kreider, 2007). Children of divorce had poorer outcomes than their counterparts from intact families including more distress (McIntyre, et al., 2003), more conflict with parents (Ruschena, et al., 2005), lower expectations for a successful marriage (Kirk, 2002), and poorer academic performance (Mulholland, Watt, Philpott, & Sarlin, 1991). Even though children from divorced families were at greater risk to develop behavior problems, depression, school failure, and incompetence in social or intimate relationships, research findings indicate that most did not experience those difficulties (Laumann-Billings & Emery, 2000). Greeff and Van Der Merwe (2004) stated that by identifying, understanding, and mobilizing resilience, interventions could be more productive and helpful. In other words, learning about the experience of resilience and the protective factors that contributed to resilience could translate into interventions that are more productive.

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to understand the phenomenon of resilience after parental divorce from the perspective of the adult child, and built upon the results of a previous pilot study. The qualitative pilot study included two male participants who were both eighteen-years-old and in their senior year of high school. It was framed around two research questions: 1) Your parents divorced when you were _____. What was that like for you? and 2) After their parents divorce, some people have a really hard time and some people bounce back. How did you bounce back? What helped you bounce back? From interview data, four themes developed. First,

both participants conveyed being *too young to understand* divorce when it happened. (One was eight and one was nine months at the time of the divorce.) Second, they talked about a *dad deficit* stemming from limited contact with their fathers. Third, they had a high admiration for their *mega mom* who filled many roles and who they greatly admired. Finally, they both described how their families had reassembled into a *fatherless family*. Using the pilot study as a springboard, this study was designed to examine resilience and protective factors in more depth and in a slightly different population of university students.

Creswell (2007) wrote that the following were appropriate reasons to conduct qualitative research: a) because a problem or issue needed to be explored; b) when a complex, detailed understanding of an issue was needed; c) to empower individuals to share their stories; and d) because it was a better fit for the research problems. I chose a qualitative study in order to provide a more in-depth understanding of Richardson's resiliency model through the lens of three human needs by asking adult children to share their stories about resilience surrounding the divorce of their parents. See Figure 2 for the portion of the model that this study examined.

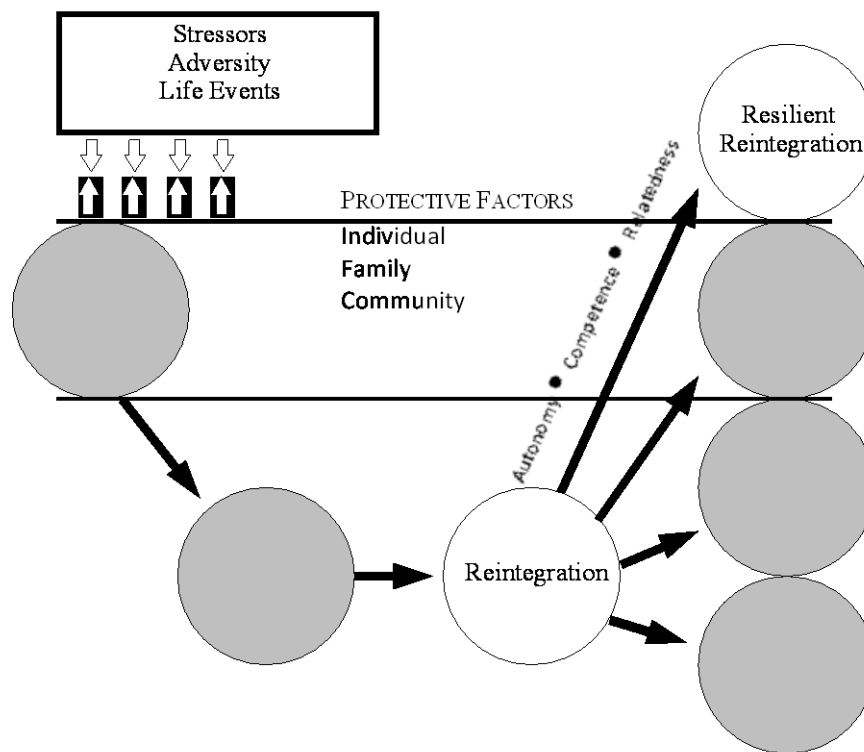


Figure 2: Focus of the Study

A case study, according to Yin (1994) is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Resilience, although not necessarily a contemporary phenomenon, is, as outlined above, a contemporary focus of research. Protective factors, then, are the boundaries that Yin described between the phenomenon of resilience and the context of parental divorce. Yin continued, “In other words, you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study” (p. 13). Therefore, the phenomenon (resilience), the context (parental divorce), and the boundaries between them (protective factors) were explored in this study.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to describe the experiences of resilience following parental divorce for five university freshmen at the University of Tennessee. This study added to the knowledge base, shed understanding on a complex phenomenon, and generated new ideas for further research. Its significance is discussed in the next section.

Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it added to the body of existing literature. First, this research was designed to scrutinize the salutogenic concept of resilience, as opposed to the burgeoning body of work correlating the risk factor of parental divorce with poorer outcomes. Second, unlike most research on resilience in children of divorce, it explored the perspectives of the now adult children. The participants of this study were limited to traditional freshman ages, unlike any other study of this kind, and the research gave voice to their experience. Third, most research on this topic is quantitative (see Chapter 2), leaving a severe deficit of qualitative

research and the thick, rich description of the experience of resilience, which this study helped to fill.

Fourth, this study expanded the literature by examining the resilient reintegration portion of Richardson's (2002) Resiliency Model, positioned unlike any other study. Finally, this study was significant because it was framed within self-determination theory and the three needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, unlike any similar work. Self-determination theory was a cognitive theory of motivation based on three basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2003). It made positive assumptions about human behavior, yet explained maladaptive outcomes (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003), tying in well with the literature on risk and resilience.

Definition of Terms

Before progressing further, defining terms that were integral to this study would be helpful. Resilience, protective factors, and children of divorce were terms used throughout this study. The three needs of self-determination theory (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) were also foundational to the language of the study. This section defines those terms.

Resilience – Resilience has been defined as doing well in the face of adversity (Patterson, 2002). It required two things: adversity, trauma, or a difficulty and a bouncing back with positive adaptation. For the purposes of this study, *resilience* was defined as the characteristic of bouncing back with a general overall positive adaptation from parental divorce transition, both the event and the process. To objectively determine resilience, I used the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment (Appendix A), an optional portion of the California Healthy Kids Survey that was developed by Norm Constantine, Bonnie Benard and a panel of researchers in 1998. It

measured what the authors identified as protective factors, or external assets, and resilience traits, or internal assets.

Protective Factors – Werner and Smith (1982), authors of seminal resilience research, characterized protective factors as those that were important in counterbalancing stress, deprivation, or disadvantage, but not important in the absence of those circumstances. In this study, the term *protective factors* referred to individual, family, or community strengths or assets that offset the negative stress, deprivation, or disadvantage of parental divorce.

Children of Divorce – A *child of divorce* was the offspring of parents who had legally ended a marriage through divorce regardless of the child's current age. This definition included children, adolescents, and adults in the category of children.

Autonomy – Autonomy was the need for independence and the ability to alter the environment when necessary (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). A question in this study was how the participants' experience reflected the need for autonomy.

Competence – The ability to function effectively in the environment was competence (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). How the participants' experience reflected the need for competence was a question in this study.

Relatedness – Relatedness was feeling connected to others and feeling worthy of love and respect (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). Another line of inquiry in this study was how the participants' experience reflected the need for relatedness.

Research Questions

For the purposes of this study, the focus was limited to resilience and protective factors that contributed to resilience. According to Yin (1994), case study research questions should

answer how and why questions, which are more explanatory in nature. The following research questions were answered through a qualitative inquiry approach:

- 1) How did participants describe their experience of resilience following parental divorce related to the three basic needs of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2003)?
 - a. How did the participants' experience reflect the need for autonomy?
 - b. How did the participants' experience reflect the need for competence?
 - c. How did the participants' experience reflect the need for relatedness?
- 2) How did participants describe protective factors that contributed to their resilience related to the classification of protective factors?
 - a. How did participants describe their experience of individual protective factors as these related to their experience of resilience?
 - b. How did participants describe their experience of family protective factors as these related to their experience of resilience?
 - c. How did participants describe their experience of community protective factors as these related to their experience of resilience?

These questions provided insight into how the children of divorce viewed their own ability to thrive after parental marriage dissolution. The data generated from the analysis of the questions provided a basis for understanding resilience, according to Richardson's Resilience Model, from the adult child's perspective.

Delimitations

This research project was focused on the study of resilience in adult children of divorce. Therefore, I imposed three delimitations on it. First, to examine the phenomenon from the perspective of children of divorce, I chose to delimit the study to include only traditional-aged university freshman students. I did this to gain an articulate adult perspective from a narrow age range of students. Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989, pp. 299-300) concluded that:

The cumulative effect of the failing marriage and divorce rose to a crescendo as each child entered young adulthood. It was here, as these young men and women faced the developmental task of establishing love and intimacy, that they most felt the lack of a template for a loving, enduring, and moral relationship between a man and a woman... Although many young people in the study were able to move forward and to establish good relationships and good marriages, this is a critical passage for all.

Traditional-aged university freshman are developmentally at the age that Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) described. Other similar studies with university participants or subjects did not limit the age ranges. For example, Abbey & Dallos (2004) included university women (ages not specified), Kirk (2002) included university students from ages 15-34, and McIntyre, et al. (2003) included university students under the age of 24. Like the current study, these studies drew from the university population, but included a broader range of ages. In addition, limiting the ages of the participants meant they were more similar developmentally. Second, because the focus of this study was on an individual experience of resilience, only one member from a family was included. Finally, the study was delimited to students attending one southeastern university.

Limitations

While the case study design was selected because of its strengths in answering the research questions, it also had limitations. According to Merriam (1998), some limitations of

case study included issues of reliability, validity, generalizability, and the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher. This study also contained limitations inherent to my choices of items collected for data. Since case studies are limited by having enough information to present an in-depth picture (Creswell, 2007), I gathered multiple types of data to strengthen the cumulative data. Chapter 3 provides a more detailed description of these and other limitations.

Organization of the Study

This chapter provided a brief overview of the study. In Chapter 2, I review the literature on resilience and children of divorce, specifically focusing on protective factors. After a historical view of the research, I explain the research findings of individual, family, and community protective factors. In Chapter 3, I present the methods used to address the research questions. I elaborate on my case study research design, participant selection, data collection, and data analysis. The data findings from the study are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 includes the relationship between my findings and self-determination needs, protective factors, and the resilience model that framed the study, as well as the researcher reflection, implications for practice, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Resilience in Children of Divorce

Within Western cultures divorce occurs in about 40-50% of all marriages (Abbey & Dallos, 2004), a pattern that has been documented around the globe (Dunn, 2004). The United States has the highest divorce rate in the industrialized world (Hipke, et al., 2002). In 2004, 1.1 million children in the United States were living with a parent who had experienced a divorce in the last year (Kreider, 2007).

In this chapter, I will review the literature on resilience in children of divorce, and the protective factors identified in buffering the negative effects of divorce. A preliminary search in June, 2008, of the ERIC database revealed nearly 1,300 citations on “resilience.” In determining which articles were pertinent to this review, I used four approaches. First, I searched three education and social science databases (PsychInfo, ERIC, and Web of Science) using the search terms “protective factors AND divorce” and then the broader search of “resilienc* AND divorce.” Since this is an exhaustive review, I did not limit the years of the search. I also checked the number of times Web of Science cited articles to point me toward prominent researchers and important articles. Second, I eliminated the articles that focused primarily on (1) adult divorce, (2) risk factors for children of divorce, and (3) other forms of resilience not related to children of divorce. This review was narrowly focused on protective factors that improved outcomes for children (including adult children) of divorce. Third, I searched the Dissertation Abstracts database for other dissertations on similar topics. Finally, after generating a list of studies,

articles, dissertations, and books, other citations were located through the reference lists included in these studies.

Chapter Overview

This chapter is divided in three primary sections. First, resilience is placed within a historical context to help the reader understand how Werner's landmark study of the children of Kauai spawned research into resilient children. The second section of the chapter reviews empirical research studies on protective factors and how those factors contributed to resilience. The empirical studies are divided into three areas: individual protective factors, family protective factors, and community protective factors. Finally, I describe the theoretical framework for this study of self-determination theory.

History of Resilience

Resilience has been defined as the ability to bounce back from a traumatic event or situation (Chen & George, 2005) or doing well in the face of adversity (Patterson, 2002). Greeff and Van Der Merwe (2004) claimed that resilience implied strength, power and hardiness. It connotated positive adaptation despite severe adversity (Sameroff, 2006). Some children of divorce demonstrate more resilience than others, so identifying, understanding and mobilizing resilience could make interventions more productive and helpful (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004). In this section, I will examine the history of the resilience research.

The Children of Kauai

The study that marked the foundation of resilience research was a longitudinal study by Emmy Werner (Richardson, 2002). The study commenced in 1954 as a team of pediatricians, psychologists, and public health workers began tracking the prenatal influences on the

development of children born in 1955 on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, and followed them through adulthood. One of the primary goals was to observe and document the course of all pregnancies and outcomes in an entire community until the children were 10-years-old. The researchers documented the results of the study in five books. They assessed the reproductive histories and the physical and emotional status of the mothers and collected data about the material, intellectual, and emotional aspects of the family environment. Focusing on risk and vulnerability, they documented the cumulative effects of perinatal stress, poverty, and a disordered caretaking environment in their first book *The Children of Kauai* (Werner, Bierman & French, 1971).

In the second book, *Kauai's Children Come of Age*, (Werner & Smith, 1977), the researchers continued to document the learning and behavior disorders highlighted in the first book, but they also began to examine new “problems and promises” in adolescence along with the community’s response to at-risk youth (resulting from attention drawn to the problem through the first book) as they followed the cohort of children born in 1955 to ages 17-18. While the focus of the research was on mental health problems, antisocial behavior, and other vulnerabilities, the researchers also noted that the needs of the youth at risk from birth complications generally were met. They continued to examine children overcoming difficult circumstances, but they became interested in the phenomenon of resilience. In summarizing this phase of the study, they later wrote:

While this report focuses on the vulnerability of young people, we could not help but be deeply impressed by the resiliency of most children and their potential for positive growth. Most young people in this cohort were competent in coping with their problems, chose their parents as their models, found their family and friends to be supportive and understanding, and expressed a strong sense of continuity in family-held values attached to education, occupational preferences, and social expectations (Werner & Smith, 1982, p. 2).

By the third book, *Vulnerable but Invincible*, (Werner & Smith, 1982), the researchers changed the focus of their research from risk to resiliency, looking for the roots of resilience over the previous two decades of research. They contrasted the resilient youth with their high-risk peers who developed serious coping problems. The researchers identified major sources of stress and support, as well as 15 protective factors that contributed to resilience (See Figure 3). The protective factors were: being first in birth order, high activity level, good-natured (affectionate disposition), responsive to people, free of distressing habits, positive social orientation, autonomy, advanced self-help skills, age-appropriate sensorimotor and perceptual skills, adequate communication skills, ability to focus attention and control impulses, special interests and hobbies, positive self-concept, internal locus of control, and the desire to improve themselves.

The fourth book, *Overcoming the Odds: High Risk Children from Birth to Adulthood* (Werner & Smith, 1992), looked at the same cohort of children at age 30, what the authors called the biological peak of adulthood. One of the objectives was to examine the long-term effects of protective factors and the processes that led to the most successful outcomes as adults. In this fourth study, they found additional protective factors. Some of these were education level of the parents, availability of caring adults outside the home, and supportive teachers in school. The researchers found that as adults, the resilient 30-year-old children had emotional support from spouses, kith, and kin; faith and prayer; and opportunities that enhanced confidence. Activity level, sociability, and emotionality also predicted resilience.

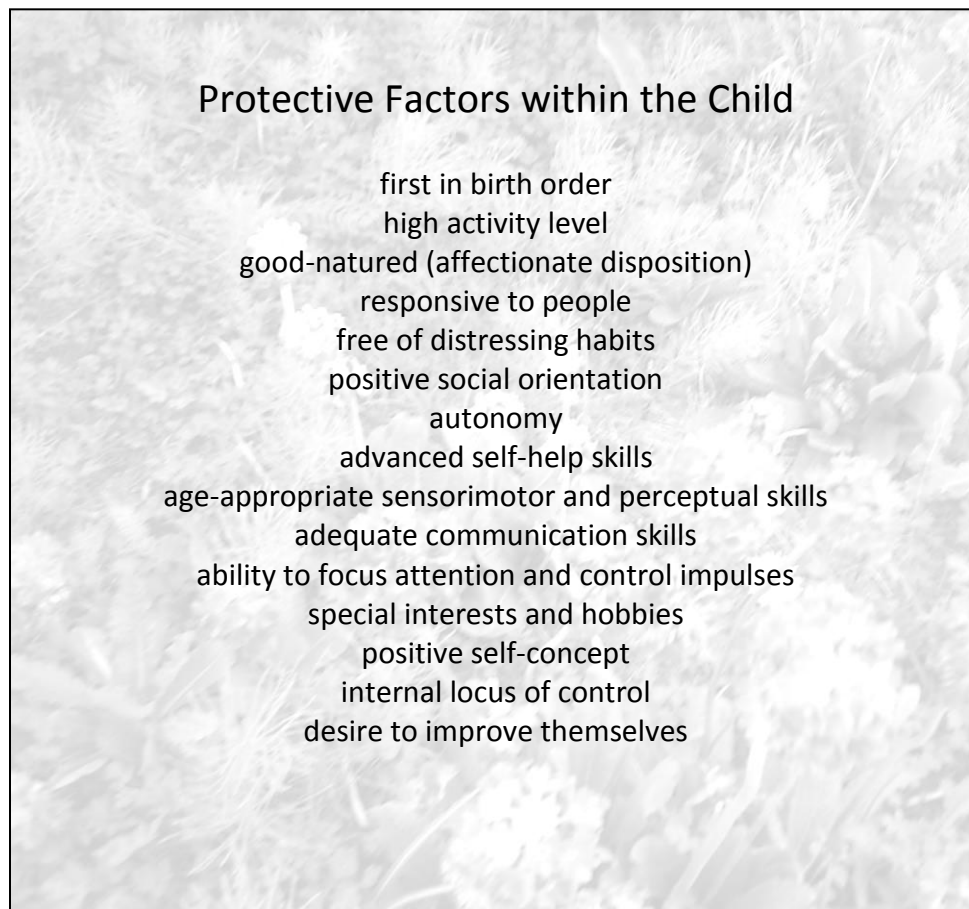


Figure 3: Fifteen Protective Factors Identified by Werner and Smith

Werner, E. E. & Smith, R. S. (1982). *Vulnerable but invincible: A longitudinal study of resilient children and youth*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. pp. 134-135.

The latest book, *Journeys from Childhood to Midlife* (Werner & Smith, 2001), looked at outcomes at age 40. Those high-risk children who grew into adults without major adaptation problems tended to have a more positive social orientation at age 2; better problem-solving skills and reading achievement scores at age 10; a higher degree of social maturity, resourcefulness, and use of intellect and talents at age 18; and a faith that life made sense and odds could be overcome as adults. These children generally came from families with less than four children, two or more years between siblings, and older and better-educated mothers. Both the men and women relied on their spouses as major sources of emotional support in their 30's and 40's. Protective factors identified in this study for those of the cohort who made a successful transition into adulthood included caring teachers, elder mentors, and other caring adults outside the family.

The Children of Divorce

A researcher in California, Judith Wallerstein, and her colleagues, began another longitudinal study examining how normally healthy people coped with divorce (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989). Their group of 60 families and 131 children ranging in ages from two to 18 “were representative of the way normal people from a white, middle-class background cope with divorce” (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, p. xiv). The children in the California Children of Divorce Project had not been referred for mental health services, were at the appropriate grade level in school, and the families were selected to screen out the confounding variables of racism, poverty, violence, etc. When they began what they planned to be a year-long study, they held the common assumption at the time that normal, healthy people would work out their problems in about a year. Yet they discovered that 12-18 months later, most of the families were still in crisis.

Turmoil and distress had not noticeably subsided. Many adults still felt angry, humiliated, and rejected, and most had not gotten their lives back together. An unexpectedly large number of children were on a downward course. Their symptoms were worse than before. Their behavior at school was worse. Their peer relationships were worse. Our findings were absolutely contradictory to our expectations (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989, p. xv).

Therefore, they continued the study and published the results of a five-year follow up in a book titled *Surviving the Breakup: How Children and Parents Cope with Divorce* (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Their language changed with their understanding, describing divorce not as a single event, but rather as a “chain of events – a series of legal, social, psychological, economic, and sexual changes, strung complexly together and extending over time” (Wallerstein & Kelly, p. 4). They also noted that time had a different and significant dimension for children, meaning that two to three years of instability from the parental divorce marked half the life of a kindergarten girl and a third of the life of a nine-year-old boy (Wallerstein & Kelly). Their five-year findings indicated that the psychological condition of the child was related to the quality of life of the post-divorce family. Seven components affected their outcomes: 1) parental resolution of conflict and anger, 2) resumption and improvement of parenting within the home, 3) lack of feeling rejected from the noncustodial or visiting parent, 4) the child’s personality assets and deficits, 5) a supportive human network, 6) child’s absence of continuing anger and depression, and 7) the sex and age of the child. They also found that the children were independent actors on their outcomes as well as recipients of support. In other words, “the supports which the child used must be available, but the child needed to be able to grasp them and hold on” (Wallerstein & Kelly, p. 208). A third of the children were doing well at the five-year follow-up. “These youngsters had stabilized and moved ahead impressively, perhaps strengthened by their mastery of the many stresses of the unhappy marriage, the divorce and the post divorce period”

(Wallerstein & Kelly, p. 210). More than a third had significantly worse outcomes, demonstrating unhappiness, dissatisfaction, and moderate to severe depression, even while showing developmental progress in all aspects of functioning (Wallerstein & Kelly). Nearly a third continued to witness intense bitterness between parents, but the majority of children still hoped that their parents would get back together (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989).

The study continued with 10-year and 15-year follow-up interviews, “the first and only ten-year reports on the psychological effects of divorce on men, women, and children” (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989, p. xix). They presented those findings in the book *Second Chances: Men, Women, and Children a Decade after Divorce* (Wallerstein & Blakeslee). One of the most important findings was that a child’s reaction at the outset of parental divorce did not predict the long-term effects of the divorce. They found general themes as well. The divorce experience was very different for children and their parents. “There are winners and losers in the years after divorce... And for the children of divorce, growing up is unquestionably harder every step of the way.” (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, p. x). Children lost family structure, which was fundamental to their development. They felt anger, loneliness, loyalty conflicts, guilt, and a lack of finality. The authors wrote (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, pp. 14-15):

Children do not perceive divorce as a second chance, and this is part of their suffering. They feel that their childhood has been lost forever. Divorce is a price *they* pay, as forfeiture to their parents’ failures, jeopardizing their future lives But children of divorce do have second chances, in the very futures they are worried about... They have the chance to choose better and to resolve the unresolved issues of a childhood that included the trauma of divorce. Many children are able to do just this. Sadly, many others fail.

Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) identified seven psychological tasks that children of divorce experienced in addition to normal developmental tasks: understanding the divorce,

strategic withdrawal, dealing with the loss, dealing with anger, working out guilt, accepting the permanence of the divorce, and taking a chance on love. They found that divorce was almost always more devastating for children than for their parents, and that the effects were long-lasting. As adults, they were eager for enduring love and marriage, but did not take divorce lightly. Those with positive outcomes relied on both inner resources and supportive relationships, but nearly half the children became worried, underachieving, self-deprecating, and sometimes angry adults (Wallerstein & Blakeslee).

In the most recent book, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: A 25 Year Landmark Study*, the study continued (Wallerstein, Lewis & Blakeslee, 2000). As the children moved into adulthood, they navigated Erickson's intimacy versus isolation stage of development in a "divorce culture" (Wallerstein, Lewis & Blakeslee, p. 296). For some children of divorce, fears of loss and betrayal were overcome, and they created what they wanted from a love relationship. Children took on new roles after the divorce that had profound effects on who they became and their future adult relationships.

But it's in adulthood that children of divorce suffer the most. The impact of divorce hits them most cruelly as they go in search of love, sexual intimacy, and commitment. Their lack of inner images of a man and a woman in a stable relationship and their memories of their parents' failure to sustain the marriage badly hobbles their search, leading them to heartbreak and even despair. They cried, "No one taught me." They complain bitterly that they feel unprepared for adult relationships and that they have never seen a "man and woman on the same beam," that they have no good models on which to build their hopes. And indeed they have a very hard time formulating even simple ideas about the kind of person they're looking for. Many end up with unsuitable or very troubled partners in relationships that were doomed from the start (Wallerstein, Lewis & Blakeslee, 2000, pp. 299-300).

Wallerstein and her colleagues offered an unprecedented look into the effects of parental divorce on children. Her study began with a one-year interview that revealed that most families

were still in crisis. After five years (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980), they recognized that divorce was a complex series of events, not a single occurrence. Many components affected the child's outcomes, but the child's ability to use those resources was as important as having access to them. By the 10 and 15-year follow-up interviews (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989), the researchers concluded that a child's reaction during parental divorce did not predict long-term effects of the divorce. They identified psychological tasks that children of divorce needed to navigate. Finally, 25 years after parental divorce (Wallerstein, Lewis & Blakeslee, 2000), the adult children struggled with intimate relationships and continued to report lives marked by the divorce. "People may get their lives back on track, but for most the track runs a wholly different course than the one they were on before divorce" (Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989, p. xii).

Summary

This study of the children of Kauai spanned more than 4 decades, spawned five books, and led the way to further resilience research by examining what helped children adapt despite significant risk (Werner, Bierman & French, 1971; Werner & Smith, 1977; Werner & Smith, 1982; Werner & Smith, 1992; Werner & Smith, 2001). The longitudinal study of the children of Kauai initiated an interest in resilience research (Richardson, 2002). Similarly, Wallerstein and the California Children of Divorce Project initiated an interest in children of divorce and offered qualitative, longitudinal data documenting the cumulative, long-term effects of parental divorce on children.

In the 1950's when Werner began studying the children of Kauai, divorce was not a major national concern, and those who studied the "adverse effects of broken homes on adolescents" conceptualized the problem as father-absence (Kelly, 2003, p. 238). The divorce

rate in the United States increased 113 percent from 1966 to 1976, and empirical, clinical, and self-help divorce literature began to appear in the 1970's (Kelly), as Wallerstein and her colleagues began to study parents and children after divorce. In the 1980's researchers began to conduct more well-designed studies, to examine the diversity of children's adjustment, and to focus on risk and protective factors associated with negative and positive outcomes (Kelly). The 1990's added research to expand the knowledge on resilience and protective factors by learning more about the pre-divorce experience for children (Kelly). While divorce had traditionally been viewed as an isolated, single event, models conceptualizing marital disruption as an on-going process began to challenge earlier views (Sun & Li, 2002).

This section has been a very brief overview of the landmark resilience research and children of divorce research and how both prompted and paralleled resilience research in children of divorce through the decades. Now, with knowledge of how resilience research in children of divorce began, protective factors in the research literature will be discussed.

Protective Factors

Amato (2000) equated protective factors to shock absorbers that weaken the links between divorce events and the extent to which they are followed by negative outcomes. Experts generally categorize protective factors into three groups. For example, Amato used the categories of individual, interpersonal relationships, and structural roles and settings, and Emery and Forehand (1994) classified them as individual, familial, and extrafamilial. In this review, I have chosen to classify protective factors into the groups of individual, family and community, as concentric circles that grow larger and more distant from the individual. The following section

will examine the protective factors that have been studied in the literature in these three categories.

Literature reviews

Before reviewing the empirical research examining protective factors and children of divorce, it would be helpful to examine how others have reviewed the literature. Six reviews of literature were published between 1999 and 2005 on the topics of resilience or protective factors and divorce (Amato, 2000; Chen & George, 2005; Dunn, 2004; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999; Kelly & Emery, 2003; and Leon, 2003). Since each researcher viewed the literature through a different conceptual lens, examining these journal articles will broaden the reader's understanding and paint a portrait of the landscape of resilience in children of divorce before examining empirical studies. How these authors identified protective factors is listed in Table 1. As the chart shows, all of the reviews examined family factors, five of the six included at least one individual factor, and four of the six included community factors.

Table 1: Protective Factors in Reviews of Literature

Article and Focus	Individual	Family	Community
Chen & George (2005) <i>Cultivating Resilience</i>	persistence social responsibility/freedom from the influence of others active coping strategies	Reduced and encapsulated parental conflict parental monitoring and support	teachers/ schools peers extended family clergy community resources
Dunn (2004) <i>Family Transitions</i>	role in decisions about visitation	parent-child relationship biological relatedness parents' and grandparents' histories communication and confiding relationship with nonresident parent	friends as confidants
Leon (2003) <i>Young Children</i>	easy temperament	maternal education maternal warmth lower interparental conflict fewer partner changes	extended family social support day-care provider social support

Table 2: Continued

Article and Focus	Individual	Family	Community
Kelly & Emery (2003) <i>Long-Term Adjustment</i>		psychological functioning and competent custodial parenting appropriate noncustodial parenting low parental conflict	
Amato (2000) <i>Consequences of Divorce</i>	active coping skills	supportive family authoritative parenting leaving high conflict situation	supportive friends therapeutic interventions
Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan (1999) <i>Risk and Resilience</i>	intelligence competence easy temperament high self esteem internal locus of control good sense of humor age? (mixed results) gender? (mixed results)	Minimized conflict between parents Positive parenting (warm, supportive, communicative, responsive, firm, consistent control) positive discipline monitored activities	

Chen and George (2005) reviewed six factors that mitigated children's adjustment: parental conflict, parental monitoring and support, extrafamilial social support, individual attributes of the child, open communication on divorce, and help with divorce-related life changes. The focus of their review was examining protective factors that cultivated resilience. According to their review, reduced parental conflict, encapsulated away from the children, protected children from further harm resulting from the divorce. Parents who were nurturing (i.e. warm, supportive, communicative, responsive to children's needs, positively disciplined, and closely monitored children's activity) had children who were less likely to demonstrate the adverse effects of divorce. Social supports from adults and friends outside the family improved adjustment. Specifically mentioned were teachers, peers, extended family, clergy, and community resources. The temperament traits of persistence, social responsibility, freedom from the influence of others and active coping strategies were individual characteristics of resilience. Finally, appropriate communication and adequate sharing of divorce-related decisions abated children's misconceptions about their responsibility for the divorce and reduced feelings of abandonment.

Dunn (2004) reviewed current perspectives in understanding family influences surrounding parental divorce. Parent-child relationships, within-family differences, biological relatedness, parents' life histories, children's views, and contact with nonresident parents and extended families revealed key lessons about the complexity of children's worlds. The quality of parent-child relationships was an important mediator between risk and outcome. Children within the same family showed marked differences in adjustment following family breakup and greater variance within families than between families. Biological relatedness raised issues of oneness

within stepfamilies, even with very young children. Prior events in the parents' lives had generational ripple effects. Studies of children's views found that communication and confiding, grandparents, a role in decisions about visitation, and friends as confidants were important to their adjustment and well-being. Lastly, the quality of the relationships of nonresident fathers and children related to children's outcomes, and these connections linked to the relationship and support between the mother and nonresident father.

Using a developmental psychopathology model, Leon (2003) reviewed risk and protective factors, both short and long-term, related to young children and divorce. In the 24 studies that addressed developmental outcomes in early childhood, she found that more recent studies have shown fewer associations between divorce and children's outcomes and suggested that earlier studies that were weaker methodologically found stronger associations between parental divorce and negative outcomes. Her review found that family context had a more important relationship with children's development than the divorce itself. Family characteristics, such as maternal education, maternal warmth, lower interparental conflict, and fewer partner changes appeared to be protective, but studies on nonresident parent contact were mixed. Social support from extended family and day-care providers was associated with better outcomes. Her review revealed no gender differences, but children with easy temperaments and high levels of support showed greater adaptability.

Using a risk and resilience perspective, Kelly and Emery (2003) reviewed the literature for the stressors that elevated risk and the protective factors correlated with better adjustment for children of divorce. The protective factors they identified were psychological adjustment and competent custodial parenting, appropriate parenting of noncustodial parent, and low parental

conflict. They indicated that differences in longer-term outcomes are dependent on the child's adjustment prior to separation, the quality of parenting before and after the divorce, and the amount of conflict and violence between parents pre- and post-divorce.

Also using a risk and resilience perspective, Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan's (1999) review looked at consequences of divorce for children's adjustment, vulnerability and resiliency in coping with divorce, and moderating interventions. They found that the most studied characteristics relating to resilience were age, gender, and personality. Their review revealed inconsistent findings on age as a risk or protective factor, which they surmised could be due to flaws in methodology or confounding factors. Gender studies also provided inconsistent results. Early research pointed to more negative effects on male adjustment, but gender differences were less likely in later literature. They did note that some girls seemed to be enhanced by the independence, responsibilities, and challenges of parental divorce if they were in a supportive environment. The personality characteristics of intelligence, competence, easy temperament, high self-esteem, internal locus of control, and good sense of humor (in previous studies by the author) were found to be protective by prompting positive responses and support from others and helping children adapt to new challenges. Children's adjustment was also correlated with the parenting environment. Minimizing conflict, and parenting that was warm, supportive, communicative, responsive, firm, consistently controlled, positively disciplined, and with monitored activities moderated risk factors. Custody and visitation by fathers could also be a protective factor. They found that father-custody families had fewer problems, but they suggested that finding could be more related to the type of fathers (active and involved) who sought custody. Frequency of visitation by noncustodial fathers was significant in child

adjustment, especially for boys and to improve socioeconomic status, but the authors noted that disengaged, rejecting, nonauthoritative, or deviate fathers could be more destructive than absence.

Amato (2000) used a divorce-stress-adjustment perspective to review the research in the 1990's on the consequences of divorce. This model viewed divorce not as a single event, but as a process that began while the parents were still living together and continued until long after the legal divorce concluded. This process led to mediators, or stressors, for both the adults and children. Moderators, or protective factors, then influenced the individual's adjustment, which included psychological, behavioral, and health problems, functioning in new roles, identity and lifestyle. He reported that a few studies suggested positive consequences for children, such as especially close relationships with custodial mothers and leaving chronic high-conflict situations. However, he concluded that divorce probably helped fewer children than it hurt.

Summary

These six reviews of the literature approach slightly different aspects of the problem, using different conceptual frameworks, and different populations. Most of the reviewers examined the topic by looking at child adjustment (Dunn, 2004; Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1999; Kelly & Emery, 2003; Leon, 2003), but some looked at the negative consequences (Amato, 2000) or cultivating resilience (Chen & George, 2005). Dunn took a distinctive family perspective, yet every review looked at parental factors. This is telling because much of the research has focused on parental and child characteristics, with much less on community factors that contribute to resilience. Yet, these reviews show how the research is broadening from

Werner and Smith's (1982) Kauai study, which included only individual factors. Next, we will look at empirical studies focused on protective factors in children of divorce.

Individual Protective Factors

Individual protective factors provide a buffer from the negative impact of divorce stressors (Pedro-Carroll, 2001). The following is a discussion of studies that have identified the individual protective factors of temperament (Lengua et al., 2000; Ruschena et al., 2005), social responsibility and peer influence (McIntyre et al., 2003), social networks and personal resources (Neher & Short, 1998), emotionality and self-regulation (Hipke et al., 2002), intelligence and regulation (Katz & Gottman, 1997), and academic performance (Mulholland, et al., 1991). See Table 2.

Table 3: Empirical Studies of Protective Factors

Category	Protective Factor	Study
Individual	Temperament	Lengua et al. (2000) Ruschena et al. (2005)
	Social Responsibility and Peer Influence	McIntyre et al. (2003)
	Social Networks and Personal Resources	Neher & Short (1998)
	Emotionality and Self-Regulation	Hipke et al. (2002)
	Intelligence and regulatory physiology	Katz & Gottman (1997)
	Academic Performance	Mulholland et al. (1991)
Family	Parent-Child Relationship and Characteristics	Wolchik, et al. (2000) Ruschena et al. (2005) Lazar & Guttman (2004) Katz & Gottman (1997)
	Family Coherence	Greeff & Van Der Merwe (2004)
	Family Hardiness	Greeff, Vansteenwegan, et al. (2006)
	Siblings	Abbey & Dallos (2004)
	Grandparents	Lussier et al. (2002); Ahrons (2006)
Community	Intimate Friendships	Kirk (2002)
	Peers, schools, neighbors	Rodgers & Rose (2002)
	Positive Events	Doyle et al. (2003)

Temperament

One study, conducted by Lengua, et al. (2000), sought to investigate the protective or exacerbating effects of temperament on negative parenting (specifically maternal rejection and inconsistent discipline) and adjustment problems in children of divorce. Using a pool of 231 mothers and children (ages 9-12), the study assessed recently divorced families who had participated in a parenting training intervention. Pretest, post-test and follow-up interviews gathered data from both mothers and children on parenting, temperament, children's adjustment problems, depression, and conduct problems. The researchers hypothesized that by investigating the six interactions between three temperaments (positive emotionality, negative emotionality and impulsivity) and two parenting dimensions (rejection and inconsistent discipline), children at the greatest risk for developing adjustment problems could be identified. The results identified that the temperament characteristic of positive emotionality – i.e. sensitivity to positive environmental clues, smiling, and laughing– was a potential individual protective factor.

Ruschena et al. (2005) collected 13 waves of longitudinal and concurrent questionnaire data from the Australian Temperament Project. Using data from 1983-2000, outcomes from 1,605 children from infancy to age 17-18 experiencing parenting marital transitions (separation, divorce, remarriage and death) were compared to those of a random comparison group whose biological parents remained together. The measures gathered data about demographic information, behavioral problems, academic measures, temperament, family measures, peer measures, social skills and family transitions. No significant group differences were found with regard to behavioral and emotional adjustment concurrently or across time, or on academic outcomes and social competence. However, significant differences between groups surfaced in

measures of parent-teen conflict and parent-child attachment. Female participants displayed greater adaptive and maladaptive behaviors. Attrition rates, which slightly underrepresented children from families that experienced both socioeconomic hardship and family transition, may have contributed to the positive findings of this study, which contrasted other research. However, their results indicated that temperament predicted adjustment status for both the transitions and comparison groups. They found the most prominent contributing factors to poorer behavioral outcomes were dimensions of temperament and the parent-child relationship quality rather than the transition itself.

Children have different and distinct temperaments. These qualities increased the probability that some children would be resilient in the face of divorce while others were at even greater risk. Two studies examined the protective effects of temperament and found that positive emotionality was protective (Lengua, et al., 2000) and temperament predicted adjustment outcomes (Ruschena et al., 2005).

Social Responsibility and Peer Influence

Social responsibility and not giving in to peer influence are two factors that were hypothesized to be protective. McIntyre et al. (2003) studied 197 college students from a large midsouth public university, 105 with divorced parents and 92 whose parental marriages were intact. College students from divorced families, in general, did not exhibit more adjustment problems than college students from intact families. Therefore, the researchers wanted to answer the question: What accounts for the resilience to adjustment problems manifested by college students from divorced families? They collected demographic information through a questionnaire and measured personality characteristics with the Social Responsibility Scale and

the Other-Direction subscale of the Personal Behavior Inventory. They examined the impact of two personality characteristics, social responsibility and other-direction (not allowing one's behavior to be directed by another) on adjustment problems and distress, which were measured with the Symptom Checklist-90-Revised.

The results suggested that parental divorce, social responsibility and other-direction were predictors significantly associated with adjustment problems and distress. Parental divorce was related to higher social responsibility and lower other-direction, and this combination of personality characteristics was shown to reduce the relationship of divorce to adjustment problems. In summary, social responsibility and freedom from other-direction served as individual protective factors.

Social Networks and Personal Resources

Neher and Short (1998) examined risk and protective factors for substance use and antisocial behavior following parental divorce in 136 sixth-and seventh-grade public school students. The group of children with married parents had a median family income of \$55,000 and included the following ethnic diversity: 43% European American, 31% African American, 11% Hispanic, 11% Asian American, and 4% other ethnicity. The group of children from divorced families, however, had a lower median income of \$35,000 and a different ethnic makeup: 62% African American, 18% European American, 9% Hispanic, 5% Asian American, and 6% other ethnicity. The students completed questionnaires to assess substance using friends and family members, coping, social skills, parenting behavior, antisocial behavior and substance abuse. Parents completed questionnaires about their marital history and educational level.

Their results indicated that children of divorced parents reported more substance abuse and antisocial behavior than the children of married parents. Age and mother's education significantly related to substance use and antisocial behavior. The protective factors the researchers identified were the psychosocial resources of problem-focused coping, support-focused coping, esteem-focused coping, social skills, and parental support, which were negatively related to substance use and antisocial behavior. In summary, coping skills and social skills acted as protective factors, and were negatively correlated with substance use and antisocial behavior.

Emotionality and Self-Regulation

Hipke et al. (2002) wanted to examine maternal and child variables that predicted intervention-induced resilience in children of divorce whose mothers participated in a preventive parenting program. They used the transitional events model, so they began with the assumption that children's adjustment to divorce was the joint consequence of the ongoing, stressful changes and events they experienced related to the divorce as well as the protective factors available to them. They examined contextual, maternal, and child factors as predictors of improved child adjustment using within-group and between-group analyses. The 157 families were randomly assigned to either a parenting skills condition or a self-study, guided reading control group. It is important to note that the control group received an intervention, and nearly all the mothers had some postsecondary education and were predominantly white (90%). The program taught skills related to four mediators (quality of the primary residential mother-child relationship, effective discipline in the post-divorce household, exposure to interparental conflict and access to the nonresidential father) in 11 weekly group sessions, supplemented by 2 individual sessions.

Researchers gathered pre-test, post-test and follow-up data. They measured maternal education, economic stress, maternal demoralization, child temperament and child adjustment using mother and child reports. Two interactions were significant. They found that both maternal health (demoralization) and child temperament (self-regulation) moderated program effectiveness on maintenance of intervention gains in child externalizing behavior at 6-month follow-up. Therefore, emotionality and self-regulation were found to be individual protective factors.

Intelligence and Regulatory Physiology

Katz and Gottman (1997) examined potentially protective factors that could reduce negative outcomes for children faced with marital conflict. The study included 56 families (of which 96% were Caucasian and two-thirds were white-collar workers) with a 5-year-old preschool child at the beginning of the three-year study. They looked at three factors of parent-child interaction (parental warmth, parental praise, and inhibition of rejection), the parents' meta-emotion philosophy, and two characteristics of the children (intelligence and regulatory physiology). They collected data through interviews, observations, EKGs, intelligence tests and a series of inventories completed by parents and teachers. The results relating to the parents is discussed in a section below. Many of the child outcome variables were not measured at Time 1 due to the inappropriateness for the child's age, so they did not reflect changes with time. The study results indicated that basal vagal tone, vagal suppression, and child intelligence buffered against negative affect with peers, physical illness, and academic achievement. In other words, children that were able to calm themselves down physiologically from emotional arousal as indicated by heartbeat measures and children with higher intelligence measured by the Wechsler

Preschool Scales of Intelligence fared better with friends, health, and school. Thus, intelligence and regulatory physiology were found to be protective factors.

Academic Performance

Mulholland et al. (1997) investigated group differences between children of divorce and intact families on academic performance along with differences on patterns of academic performance over time. Using a sample of 96 middle school students (90-97% Caucasian and middle to upper socioeconomic status) solicited from 4 middle schools in a Denver suburb, the researchers gathered information from teachers on students' scholastic motivation, extraversion, interpersonal harmony, and emotional stability. The students selected the teachers. They compiled data from students' records to determine GPA, attendance, and scores on standardized tests. The students were divided into a divorce group (marital separation or divorce), with 60 students, and a control group (intact families), with 36 students. They analyzed their results as current and over time, reflecting scores from 1st through 8th grades based on school records. They reported that the current control group did significantly better on scholastic performance, girls from both groups did better than boys, and teachers observed greater scholastic motivation in the control group. However, when looking at the data over time, several trends were revealed. First, they found no significant group differences on standardized test scores. Second, the majority of the divorce group had relatively successful academic ratings, and they closed the academic gap over time, but then showed a setback in middle school. Finally, the results indicated a significant trend over time in the low achieving group. An important and insightful aspect of this study was the separation of the control and divorce groups into low, medium, and high achieving groups for comparison. Within the divorced group, the high and medium subgroups improved or very

slightly declined in GPA, but the low divorced group plummeted. Looking at the results as one group would indicate that the entire divorce group declined in academic achievement, but a closer look at the data revealed that the low achieving students skewed the results. In summary, the results indicated that academic performance was also a protective factor.

Summary.

In an effort to understand factors that are protective, some researchers have looked at individual characteristics. The preceding studies identified the individual protective factors of temperament (Lengua et al., 2000; Ruschena et al., 2005), social responsibility and peer influence (McIntyre et al., 2003), social networks and personal resources (Neher & Short, 1998), emotionality and self-regulation (Hipke et al., 2002), intelligence and regulation (Katz & Gottman, 1997), and academic performance (Mulholland, et al., 1991). All seven of the studies included in this section were quantitative. Three studies included children or adolescent subjects (Mulholland, et al., 1991; Neher & Short, 1998; and Ruschena et al., 2005), three studies included children, adolescents and their parents (Katz & Gottman, 1997; Hipke et al., 2002; and Lengua et al., 2000), and only one study (McIntyre et al., 2003) included adult, college age subjects. The next section will review studies of family protective factors.

Family Protective Factors

Families are an additional source of protective factors. Researchers have asked questions about family influences on children of divorce. This section reviews the studies of family protective factors of the parent-child relationship (Wolchik et al., 2000; Lazar & Guttman, 2004; Ruschena et al., 2005; and Katz & Gottman, 1997), family coherence (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004), family hardiness (Greeff, Vansteenwegen, & DeMot, 2006), siblings (Abbey &

Dallos, 2004), and grandparents (Lussier, Deater-Deckard, Dunn & Davies, 2002; Ahrons, 2006).

Parent-Child Relationships and Characteristics

When seeking answers about the effects of divorce on children, one area explored has been the parent-child relationship. Because 85%-90% of children reside with their mothers after a divorce, the mother-child relationship is potentially an important protective resource (Wolchik et al., 2000). One of the most consistent predictors of post-divorce adjustment in children is the relationship between the residential parent and the child (Lengua et al., 2000). Children who have close, supportive relationships with their mothers fare better (Wolchick et al.). Therefore, we will begin by exploring the mother-child relationship as a buffer of divorce.

Wolchick et al. (2000) explored the effects of two maternal characteristics on children's psychological adjustment problems. Using the New Beginnings Program, they examined contextual, maternal and child factors as predictors of improved child adjustment using within-group and between-group analyses. The 157 families were randomly assigned to either a parenting skills condition or a self-study, guided reading control group. The New Beginnings Program taught skills related to the quality of the primary residential mother-child relationship, effective discipline in the post-divorce household, exposure to interparental conflict, and access to the nonresidential father in 11 weekly group sessions supplemented by two individual sessions. Researchers gathered pre-test, post-test and follow-up data. They measured maternal education, economic stress, maternal demoralization, child temperament, and child adjustment using mother and child reports. Children were less likely, according to the results, to maintain program gains in externalizing behaviors when maternal demoralization was high. Maternal

health moderated program effectiveness on maintenance of intervention gains in child externalizing behavior at the six-month follow-up, demonstrating a need to attend to the parent's mental health in order to buffer the children. On the other hand, the researchers found that maternal acceptance and consistency of discipline had direct as well as stress-buffering effects on children's post-divorce adjustment.

In the discussion of the study, the researchers offered several reasons why high levels of maternal acceptance might be protective for the child. First, a mother's acceptance might reduce the child's fear of abandonment. Second, high levels of acceptance might help children feel comfortable using their mothers as a resource in problem-solving or in sharing their feelings and fears. Finally, high acceptance could promote a sense of self-esteem and security. Wolchick et al. (2000) suggested that the maternal relationship could be a familial protective factor for children of divorce.

Close emotional bonds between children and their fathers also serve as protective processes that are in the best interest of the children (Pedro-Carroll, 2001), yet very little research has focused on the buffering effect of this relationship. Unfortunately, two to three years after a divorce between 18% and 25% of children do not have any contact with their fathers (Kelly & Emery, 2003). In a meta-analysis by Amato and Gilbreth (1999) which examined 63 studies on the influence of nonresident fathers' involvement with their children, timely payment of child support significantly improved children's economic and general well-being, enhanced their health status, and improved their educational attainment. Lengua et al. (2000) said that the important roles fathers played in children's lives were increasingly recognized, and future investigations were needed.

Ruschena et al. (2005) inspected the impact of parental separation, divorce, remarriage and death upon the lives children and adolescents in a longitudinal study of temperament and development to see if the time since the family transition, family characteristics, child temperament, gender, and peer relationships predicted adjustment. Using temperament theory, researchers began with the assumption that biologically based but socially conditioned differences in emotional reactivity as well as emotional, attentional and behavioral self-regulation affected the individual's behavior. They hypothesized that children experiencing separation and divorce would be at risk for poorer outcomes in behavior, well-being, and family processes compared with adolescents living in their original families. Using 13 waves of longitudinal data and concurrent questionnaire data from the Australian Temperament Project from 1983 to 2000, outcomes from 1,605 children from infancy to age 17-18 experiencing transitions were compared with those of a random comparison group whose biological parents remained together. The measures gathered data about demographic information, behavioral problems, academic measures, temperament, family measures, peer measures, social skills and family transitions. They found no significant group differences in behavioral and emotional adjustment concurrently or across time, and they concluded that the family transition had not necessarily had a negative impact in those areas. However, significant differences between groups surfaced in measures of parent-teen conflict and parent-child attachment, indicating that parental relationships may have been negatively impacted. However, though correlated, the study did not prove causation. The most prominent contributing factors for those with the poorest behavioral outcomes were difficult temperament and lower parent-child relationship quality, and those with positive temperamental styles were more likely to have developed warm, supportive

parental relationships. It was noteworthy that the transitions group included children whose parents had died, which was a different event than that experienced by children whose parents had separated, divorced, and/or remarried.

Lazar and Guttman (2004) investigated the relationship between adolescents' experiencing parental divorce, their perception of parents' characteristics, and their perception of the ideal mate's characteristics. They wanted to know if parental divorce re-created conflict as reflected in an adolescent's choice of an ideal mate, and they framed the study within psychoanalytic theory, which stated that people's choices of a later love object presumably were influenced by their resolution of the Oedipus and Electra complexes and experiences with their mothers and fathers. The assumption was that the degree to which a person was independent of his or her parents' personality characteristics in choosing an ideal mate reflected the degree to which parent-child conflicts had been resolved. To state it another way, the greater the resolution of parent-child intrapsychic conflicts, the greater the degree of independence in the choice of an ideal mate. High school seniors from Haifa, Israel, (100 from intact families and 79 from nonintact families) ranked the degree to which 40 personality traits characterized both their parents and an ideal partner. The characteristics were generated from an open-ended questionnaire administered to 37 high school students. The final questionnaire was part of a five-page booklet. Three judges grouped the characteristics into four dimensions: strength/dominance, sociability, success, and kindness. Discrepancy scores showed, as a whole, adolescents from nonintact families characterized their ideal mate as being more like their parents than adolescents from intact families did, which the authors believed could indicate that they had more "unfinished business" with their parents. The differences may have also reflected the quality of

parent-child relationships in nonintact families. However, the results indicated no significant difference between adolescents from intact and nonintact families in degree of independence regarding choice of an ideal mate, and gender of the subject made almost no difference. While this study broadened understanding of diverse groups through an Israeli population, offered an atypical viewpoint using psychoanalytic theory, and explored the correlation of parental divorce and ideal mate characteristics, their interpretations were open to question and the absence of validity measures left their findings suspect.

Katz and Gottman (1997) examined a large number of potentially protective factors that reduced negative outcomes for children faced with marital conflict. Fifty-six families with a preschool 5-year-old (at time 1) completed interviews, inventories and underwent observations. The researchers collected data again three years later, adding child assessments not deemed age-appropriate at time 1. The sample was 96% Caucasian, and two-thirds were considered white collar. They looked at the parent-child interaction variables of parental warmth, parental praise, and inhibition of rejection and the child variables of intelligence and regulatory physiology. Unique to this study, the researchers also interviewed the parents about their meta-emotion philosophy, which was their feelings, metaphors, and philosophies toward their own and their children's anger and sadness. Meta-emotion variables provided complete buffers for emotional regulation, teacher ratings of negative peer relations, observed negative affect with a peer, and child physical illness. They found that parental warmth buffered against negative academic achievement and emotion regulation ability. Parental praising, nonderogatory parenting, parental awareness and coaching of the child's emotions buffered against negative outcomes that children from martially distressed homes tended to exhibit.

To summarize, four studies looked at parent-child relationships and characteristics. First, Wolchick et al. (2000), in the New Beginnings Program, found that maternal health moderated program effectiveness of intervention maintenance in child externalizing behavior. The findings of the longitudinal Australian Temperament Project (Ruschena et al., 2005) indicated that those children with positive temperamental styles were more likely to have developed warm, supportive parental relationships. Lazar and Guttman (2004) found that as a whole, adolescents from nonintact families characterized their ideal mate as being more like their parents than adolescents from intact families did, which the authors believed stemmed from more “unfinished business” with their parents. Finally, the study by Katz and Gottman (1997) found that meta-emotion variables provided complete buffers for emotional regulation, teacher ratings of negative peer relations, observed negative affect with a peer, and child physical illness, and they also found that parental warmth buffered against negative academic achievement and emotion regulation ability.

Family Coherence

Greeff and Van Der Merwe (2004) used a cross-sectional survey research design to study 98 single-parent families in South Africa to identify factors that promoted resilience and family well-being. The inclusion criteria for the study dictated that eldest child in each family was an adolescent (12 to 19 years old) who still lived at home, the divorce had occurred one to four years prior, and the parent was not in a steady relationship or married. The parent and a child each completed an open-ended question (why they thought they had adapted so well to the divorce) and six self-report questionnaires: a biographical questionnaire, the Relative and Friend Support Index, the Social Support Index, Family Crises Oriented Personal Evaluation Scales,

Family Sense of Coherence Scale and the Family Hardiness Index. Variables that showed a significant positive correlation with the family's sense of coherence were identified as resilient factors. The participants were predominantly female, concentrated in one socioeconomic stratum, and a convenience sample, so the results were not be generalizable. However, Greeff and Van Der Merwe found that, within that population, perceptions played an important role in resilience. To summarize their results, the meaning attached to the crisis, the family members' attitudes toward the crisis, and the ability to reformulate the crisis situation, as viewed in terms of McCubbin and McCubbin's Family Adjustment and Adaptation Response (FAAR) Model, were distinguishable family resilience factors.

Family Hardiness

In examining family resiliency factors, Greeff, Vansteenwegen, and DeMot (2006) collected data from 68 divorced families in Belgium. They asked one parent and a child (more than 12 years old) to independently complete five questionnaires: The Family Hardiness Index, The Family Crisis Oriented Personal Evaluation Scales, the Relative and Friend Support Index, the Social Support Index, and the Family Sense of Coherence Scale. They also completed a biographical questionnaire, and the parents answered an open-ended question about their perception of the factors and strengths that helped their family through the stressful period. Most of the families were lower income, limiting the generalizability of the results.

The researchers found, in summary, a significant positive correlation between the components of family hardiness (commitment, challenge, and control) and the family's sense of coherence after divorce. Parents' and children's answers both correlated with the commitment and challenge components, but only the parents' answers correlated with control. Positive

redefining of stressful situations and social support were also correlated with family coherence for both parents and children. Children's answers revealed a positive relationship between family's use of avoidance strategies, parents' educational level, and the number of years that the parents had been divorced and family adjustment.

Siblings

Another potential resource for strength for children during the family crisis is the sibling relationship. During the emotional turmoil of divorce, parents may become temporarily, or even permanently, unavailable to emotionally support their children (Abbey & Dallos, 2004). Abbey and Dallos examined the sibling relationship to see how women experienced the divorce and specifically how they felt it had impacted their relationship with their siblings. Using a qualitative method emphasizing mapping meanings and understandings that the participants held about divorce, the cross-sectional interview design aimed to facilitate telling their own retrospective stories. The researchers sampled eight women from a British university, asking each to draw a genogram and two sociograms to depict their feelings before and after the divorce, and they used interpretive phenomenological analysis to identify shared themes across participants' accounts.

In summary, the findings indicated that siblings experienced increased closeness from the experience of going through the divorce of their parents together. The women reported turning to each other for support, resulting of the emotional unavailability of their parents. They concluded that siblings could be an important resource to mobilize in therapy or interventions, an important familial protective factor.

Grandparents

Grandparents are an important part of a grandchild's social realm, are often introduced into their social world immediately, and become attachment figures second only to parents (Creasey, 1993). More children today have grandparents who are still living than at any other time in history (Myers & Perrin, 1993). Relationships between grandparents and young grandchildren after parental divorce have been shown to be important in helping children adjust to single parent and step-family life (Myers & Schwiebert, 1999). Grandparents affect the emotional well-being of their grandchildren directly by acting as caregivers, playmates, historians, transmitting family values, ethnic heritage, and family traditions. They also influence their grandchildren indirectly by supporting their parents with housing, emotional support, advice, and financial support. (Schutter, Scherman, & Carroll, 1997; Creasy, 1993; and Thompson, et al., 1989).

Lussier, et al. (2002) examined children's contact and closeness with grandparents in different family types. Participants included 155 children representing four family types (intact, stepfather, stepmother/complex, and single-mother) from the Avon Brothers and Sisters Study in England. They measured grandparent-grandchild closeness, children's adjustment, parent-child relationships, and maternal history and family environment. The researchers found that greater closeness with grandparents, especially maternal grandparents, was associated with better adjustment in children. They also found that children often had different views about their closeness with their grandparents than their parents did, and the middle generation mediated contact and relationships between grandchildren and grandparents. Their results indicated that, in general, close relationships and regular contact with grandparents were good for children.

Using data from the longitudinal Binuclear Family Study, Ahrons (2006) examined the two factors of coparental relationship and parental remarriage from interviews with children 20 years after parental divorce. Two questions guided the study. The first question was what impact did the relationship between parents have on their children 20 years after the divorce? Data indicated that the factor that contributed most to children's self-reports of well-being was the continuing relationship between parents. In addition, those with cooperative parents reported better relationships with their grandparents and other family members. The parental subsystem, even 20 years after a divorce, continued to impact the quality of relationships within the family system. The second question that guided the study was when a parent remarried or cohabited, how did it impact a child's sense of family? Participants reported that when relationships with their fathers worsened, current relationships with their paternal grandparents were poorer, especially when the father remarried soon after the divorce. If, however, the father's remarriage had a positive effect on their lives, they reported better relationships with paternal grandparents. When divorced parents minimized their conflicts to coparent effectively, children could maintain their sense of biological family through relationships with both parents. It was important to note that one significant finding of the study was that siblings could have very different perceptions of their parents' divorce.

To summarize, Lussier, et al. (2002) found that greater closeness with grandparents, particularly maternal grandparents, was associated with better adjustment in children, but the middle generation mediated contact and relationships between grandchildren and grandparents. In the longitudinal Binuclear Family Study, Ahrons (2006) found that the factor that contributed most to children's self-reports of well-being was the continuing relationship between parents,

and those with cooperative parents reported better relationships with their grandparents and other family members. That study demonstrated that the parental subsystem, even 20 years after a divorce, continued to impact the quality of other relationships within the family system.

Summary.

Individual protective factors buffered children from potential negative effects of divorce, but families were also important sources of protective factors. While the nuclear family unit may have dissolved because of divorce, parent, sibling, and grandparent relationships continued to have powerful influences on children (Abbey & Dallos, 2004; Ahrons, 2006; Lussier, et al., 2002). Although negative factors in these relationships could elevate a child's risk, the relationships also provided powerful protective factors (Myers & Perrin, 1993). This section examined the family protective factors of the parent-child relationship and characteristics (Katz & Gottman, 1997; Lazar & Guttman, 2004; Ruschena et al., 2005; and Wolchik et al., 2000), family coherence (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004), family hardiness (Greeff, Vansteenwegen, & DeMot, 2006), siblings (Abbey & Dallos), and grandparents (Ahron; Lussier, et al.). Eight of the studies included in this section were quantitative and one was qualitative (Abbey & Dallos). Two studies included children or adolescent subjects (Lazar & Guttman; Rushena et al.), five studies included children, adolescents and their parents (Greeff & Van Der Merwe; Greeff, Vansteenwegen & DeMot; Katz & Gottman; Lussier, et al.; and Wolchik, et al.), and only one study (Ahrons) included adult subjects. The next section will review studies of community protective factors.

Community Protective Factors

Community factors may also be protective. Intimate friendships (Kirk, 2002), peers, schools, and neighbors (Rodgers & Rose, 2002), and positive life events (Doyle, et. al, 2003) provided community sources for protective factors. The following sections will discuss these studies.

Intimate Friendships

Kirk (2002) investigated the relationship competence of young adults from divorced and intact families to determine if intimate friendships served as a protective factor to buffer the negative effects of divorce. Intimate friendships were those marked by interpersonal intimacy, defined by self-disclosure, closeness and sharing of feelings. In a cross-sectional sample of 184 unmarried undergraduates from two universities, participants completed a series of instruments measuring intimate friendships, self-esteem, fear of intimacy, relationship history, expectations, and demographic information. The results suggested that divorce affected the young adults' fears and expectations of divorce in their own relationships more than those whose parents had intact marriages. The level of perceived family conflict influenced self-esteem, fear of intimacy, and romantic relationship satisfaction. Parental divorce was not correlated with the relationship competence of the sample, but intimate friendships were correlated with relationship competence. To summarize, the results of the study suggested that close, personal friendships protected young adults from the possible negative effects of divorce.

Peers, Schools, and Neighbors

While friends provided a buffering influence, so did relationships formed at schools and in neighborhoods. Rodgers and Rose (2002) tested the moderating effect of peer support, school

attachment, and neighbor support when the variables of parental support and monitoring were low for a large group of 7th-, 9th- and 11th-grade adolescents in a metropolitan city. The sample was divided into three groups: two never divorced parents, a parent and a stepparent, or a divorced single parent. Rodgers and Rose measured family risk factors, nonfamilial protective factors, externalizing behaviors, and internalizing symptoms using a self-reporting Likert scale. They found that divorced and blended families had some of the same forms of resiliency as intact families. For adolescents in a divorced single-parent family, peer support moderated the effect of low parental support on internalizing symptoms. In blended families, low parental support and internalizing behavior had a stronger negative association with high levels of neighbor support. School attachment, which was measured by questions on how the students perceived their school as having fair rules, how much they enjoyed school, and how much they believed they were getting a high quality education, served as a main effect protective function for all adolescents regardless of family type (Rodgers & Rose). In summary, peer support buffered the effects of low parental support on internalizing for adolescents in divorced single-parent families, but not in intact families. School attachment had a protective function for all adolescents. Neighbor support was negatively correlated with low parental support and internalizing behaviors. Thus, friends, schools and neighborhoods could be another place to cultivate protective factors.

Positive Events

Doyle, et al. (2003) sought to examine whether positive events mitigated the relation between negative events and maladjustment in samples of children and adolescents experiencing family transitions. They constructed two samples. The first sample included 86 stepfamilies with adolescents aged 10-17. The second sample included 171 divorced families with children 8-15

years of age. Evidence suggested that positive events were protective for children and adolescents experiencing high levels of negative events across both samples. The relation between negative events and maladjustment was weaker for those who experienced a high number of positive events.

Doyle et al. (2003) offered several suggestions to explain why positive events were protective. Possibly, positive events activated positive emotions, which facilitated a return to baseline physiological functioning, reducing the impact of negative emotions on adjustment problems. Another explanation could have been that positive emotions enhanced sustained coping efforts and broadened scopes of attention, cognition, and action. A final explanation could be that positive events bolstered mediating self-system beliefs, such as control or esteem (Doyle et al.). Whatever the explanation, the results of the study suggested that positive events that occurred during family transitions could be a protective resource.

Summary.

Protective factors existed on the individual level and on the family level, but protective factors also were found in relationships outside the family. All three of the studies included in this section on community protective factors were quantitative. One study included children/adolescent subjects (Rodgers & Rose, 2002), one study included children, adolescents and their parents (Doyle, et al., 2003), and one study (Kirk, 2002) included adult subjects.

Kirk (2002) found that close, personal friendships protected young adults from the possible negative effects of divorce. Rodgers and Rose (2002) found that peer support buffered the effects of low parental support on internalizing behavior, school attachment had a protective function for all adolescents, and neighbor support was negatively correlated with low parental

support and internalizing behaviors. While relationships with other people buffered children from the negative effects of divorce, positive experiences were also protective. Doyle, et al. (2003) found evidence that suggested positive events buffered children and adolescents experiencing high levels of negative events. The next section describes some of the gaps in the literature that still exist.

A Gap in the Literature

Creswell (2007) suggested developing a research map of existing literature to show how a proposed study fit into or extended the literature. Figure 4 summarizes research examining protective factors in children of divorce. It provides a visual representation of two gaps in the literature – the population of the subjects/participants and whether the study was quantitative or qualitative research. (None were mixed methods.) This study filled a gap in the literature, or added to limited literature, on protective factors for three reasons. First, it was qualitative. Second, the participants were an adult population. Finally, it used the theoretical framework of self-determination theory.

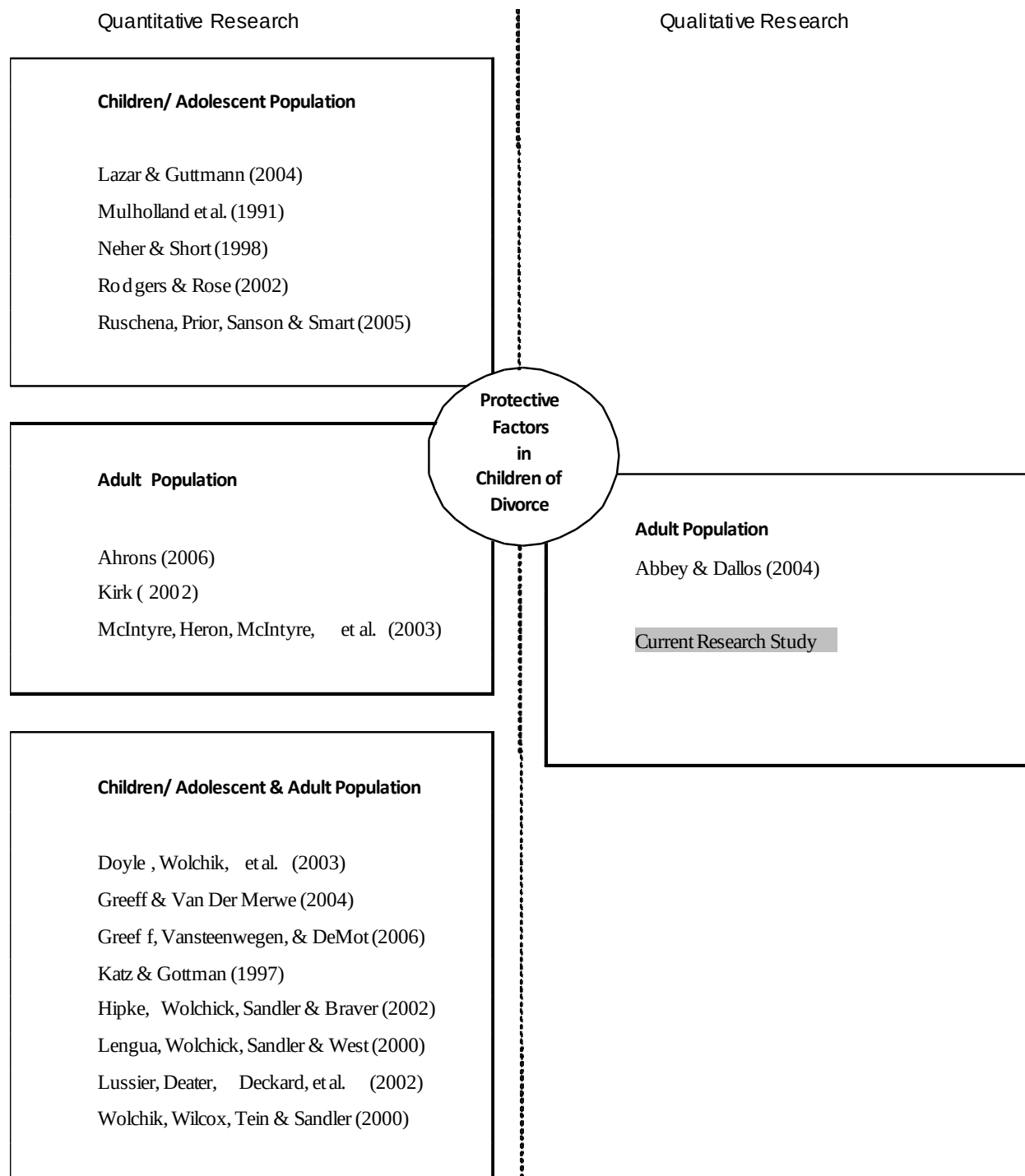


Figure 4: A Gap in the Literature -- Studies by Population and Research Method

The first reason this study added to the body of literature on resilience and protective factors in children of divorce was that it was qualitative. Qualitative research is needed to explore complex issues and gain a detailed understanding of an issue (Creswell, 2007). Figure 4 showed that most of the research was quantitative – all but one study (Abbey & Dallos, 2004). More qualitative research is needed (Patterson, 2002), to assess the meanings that individuals give events (Doyle, et al., 2003). The Abbey and Dallos (2004) study, although qualitative, was very different from this one. They examined the protective factor of the sibling relationship while this study examined protective factors more broadly. Other protective factors needed to be studied (Rodgers & Rose, 2002). In addition, the Abbey and Dallos study included only women, but the current study included both males and females as participants. This study, then, filled a gap in the literature as the only qualitative study to date examining resilience and protective factors in children of divorce.

The second reason this study filled a gap in the literature was because it drew participants from the adult population. As researchers sought to answer questions about protective factors in children of divorce, nearly 90% of the studies listed recruited children, adolescents, and their parents as subjects in their studies. In the minority were the four studies (Abbey & Dallos, 2004; Ahrons, 2006; Kirk, 2002; and McIntyre et al., 2003) which looked for answers to their research questions from adult children of divorce. Abbey and Dallos conducted research with university women (ages not specified), Kirk included university students from ages 15-34, and McIntyre, et al. examined university students under the age of 24. Ahrons included adult children of divorce 20 years after the parental divorce. Like the current study, these studies (except Ahrons' longitudinal study) drew from the university population, but included a broader range of ages. By

limiting the current study to a smaller age slice (traditional freshman ages 18-19), it was hoped that they would be more similar developmentally. This research added to the literature on protective factors by studying participants from a population that only a handful of other researchers have used.

Finally, this research filled a gap in the literature because of the theoretical framework. Research has drawn from diverse theoretical frameworks to broaden the body of knowledge. For Example, Abby and Dallos (2004) used attachment theory in their study of divorce and sibling relationships. Temperament theory was used in other studies (Lengua, et al., 2000; Rushcena, et al., 2005). Researchers applied family stress theory (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004), transitional events theory (Doyle et al., 2003; Hipke et al., 2002), and psychoanalytic theory (Lazar & Guttman's, 2004). Yet, none of the research on protective factors in children of divorce used self-determination theory, making this study unique. By framing this study using this theory, the participants' perception of how the three needs outlined in the theory (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) were met or unmet could be understood. Self-determination theory is explained further in the next section.

Theoretical Framework

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination is the process of deciding how to act on the environment (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). According to Deci and Ryan (2008), self-determination theory is based on the assumptions that people are by nature active, self motivated, curious, interested, and eager to succeed because success is itself satisfying and rewarding. However, self-determination theory recognizes that people can also be alienated, mechanized, passive, and disaffected. The

difference in outcomes, according to Deci and Ryan (2008), is a result of the interaction between a person's inherent active nature and the social environment that either supports or thwarts that nature. An early proponent of self-determination theory wrote, "Self-determination involves the free choice of shaping one's own destiny" (Ryback, 1971). Therefore, self-determination theory "recognizes the positive thrust to human nature and provides an account of passivity, alienation, and psychopathology" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 69).

According to Sheldon, Williams, and Joiner, (2003), self-determination theory has five aspects:

- Has a humanistic orientation supported by rigorous quantitative and experimental research
- Makes positive assumptions about human nature and propensities while explaining how negative outcomes can accrue instead
- Assumes that people, in order to thrive, must meet three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness
- Focuses on people's struggle to feel greater self-ownership of motivational behavior, including health- and treatment-relevant behavior
- Explains how authorities and practitioners can best motivate subordinates and clients so that they internalize suggested behaviors and self-regulate them (p. 22)

The first four aspects listed by Sheldon, Williams, and Joiner, (2003) were reasons I chose to employ this particular theory in this study. First, the humanistic feature to the theory is in alignment with my personal counseling orientation. This is important because that is "the lens through which you view the world. It determines what you are curious about, what puzzles you, and hence, what questions you ask that in turn begin to give form your investigation" (Merriam, 1998, p. 45). The humanistic characteristic of self-determination theory has support from rigorous research (e.g. Baumeister, & Leary, 1995; Burton, Lydon, D'Alessandro, & Koestner,

2006; Chirkov, Ryan, Kim & Kaplan, 2003; LaGuardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000; Levesque, Zuehlke, Stanek, & Ryan, 2004; Miserandino, 1996; Patrick, Knee, Canevello, & Lonsbary, 2007; Sheldon & Schachtman, 2007).

Second, self-determination theory makes positive assumptions about human nature while explaining how negative outcomes occur instead (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003). This, too, fits with my personal philosophy about people. Humanistic psychology emphasizes a person's capacity for goodness, creativity, and freedom (Monte & Sollod, 2003).

Third, this theory of motivation and personality assumes three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2003). Autonomy means to act with volition and a sense of choice (Deci & Ryan, 2008). It is the need for independence and the ability to alter the environment when necessary (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). People can feel like origins, who choose what they do and are in creative control, or they can feel like pawns, regulated by their environment without being personally responsible (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003). The second need, competence, is the ability to function effectively in the environment (Eggen & Kauchak). This includes survival, but also success and growth, and it relates to self-efficacy. The third need, relatedness, is the concept of feeling connected to others and feeling worthy of love and respect, similar to Maslow's need for belonging (Eggen & Kauchak). According to self-determination theory, the principal function of identity formation is fostering the experience of relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2003). When social contexts facilitate satisfying these three needs, optimal motivation and positive psychological, developmental and behavioral outcomes occur, but when the needs are not met, less optimal motivation and more

deleterious effects on outcomes occur (Deci & Ryan, 2008). This has been demonstrated with people across cultures (Chirkov, et al., 2003).

The fourth aspect listed by Sheldon, Williams, and Joiner (2003) is that self-determination theory focuses on people's struggle to feel greater self-ownership of motivational behavior, including health- and treatment-relevant behavior. Motivation is an important construct of self-determination theory. In 1959, Robert White pioneered the concept of intrinsic motivation, a need for mastery, which he described as a need rewarded by the activity itself (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is evident when performing a behavior to attain a separable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The self-determination continuum (see Figure 5) further explained extrinsic behavior by subdividing it into four categories based on the perceived locus of causality, ranging from external to internal.

As this figure shows, according to self-determination theory, the more self-determined individuals are, the more intrinsically motivated, intrinsically regulated, and internally perceiving of causality they are. The perceived locus of causality is a continuum of four types of motivation (external, introjected, identified, and intrinsic), and an internal perceived locus of causality is an indicator of autonomous functioning (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003), linking back to one of the three basic needs. A lack of autonomy reduces intrinsic motivation and causes stress (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007).

The Self-Determination Continuum

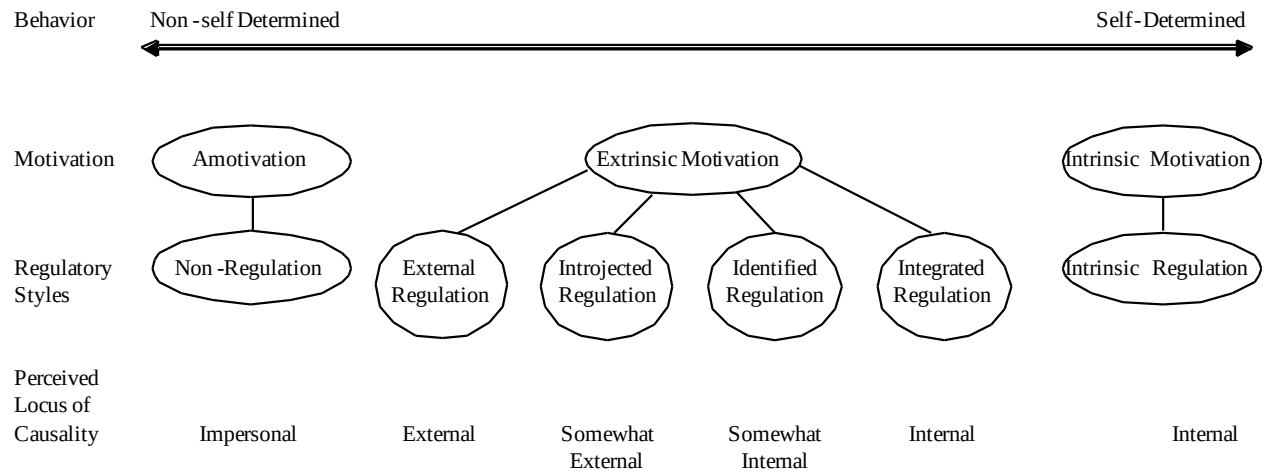


Figure 5: The Self-Determination Continuum

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55, 68-78.

To summarize, self-determination theory has a humanistic orientation supported by empirical research, makes positive assumptions about human nature while explaining negative outcomes, assumes that people must meet the three psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness to thrive, and focuses on people's struggle to feel greater self-ownership of motivational behavior (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003). The three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness provide a foundation for self-determination theory, the theoretical framework for this study. By applying these to the process of resilient integration described in Richardson's Resilience Model, this study expands the resilience literature.

Chapter Summary

This chapter was divided in three primary sections. First, resilience was described within a historical context to increase understanding of Werner's landmark study of the children of Kauai, Wallerstein's longitudinal work with children of divorce, and other, later research of resilient children. The second section reviewed empirical research studies on protective factors that contributed to resilience. The researcher of this study subdivided the literature into three categories of protective factors. The individual protective factors were temperament (Lengua et al., 2000; Ruschena et al., 2005), social responsibility and peer influence (McIntyre et al., 2003), emotionality and self-regulation (Neher & Short, 1998), intelligence and regulation (Hipke et al., 2002), and academic performance (Katz & Gottman, 1997). The family protective factors described were the parent-child relationship and characteristics (Wolchik, et al., 2000; Lazar & Guttman, 2004); Ruschena et al., 2005; and Katz & Gottman (1997), family coherence (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004), family hardiness (Greeff, Vansteenwegen, & DeMot, 2006), siblings

(Abbey & Dallos, 2004), and grandparents (Lussier, Deater-Deckard, Dunn & Davies, 2002; Ahrons, 2006). The community protective factors described were intimate friendships (Kirk, 2002), peers, schools, and neighbors (Rodgers & Rose, 2002), and positive life events (Doyle, et. al, 2003).

Next, the researcher demonstrated how this study filled a gap in (or added to) the literature for three reasons. First, it was qualitative research, which was necessary to explore a complex issue and gain a detailed understanding (Creswell, 2007), and it was unlike the only other qualitative study of protective factors in children of divorce. Second, the participants were adults, a population that had been examined in only four studies of protective factors in children of divorce. Wallerstein, Lewis, and Blakeslee (2000) in their landmark study of children of divorce found that adult children struggled with the developmental task of intimate relationships and reported lives still marked by the divorce. Third, it used the theoretical framework of self-determination theory to answer questions about the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, unlike any other study in this area.

Finally, I explained the theoretical framework for this study. Self-determination theory had a humanistic orientation supported by rigorous quantitative and experimental research; made positive assumptions about human nature while explaining how negative outcomes could occur instead; assumed that people must meet the three psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness; and focused on people's struggle to feel greater self-ownership of motivational behavior, including health- and treatment-relevant behavior (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003). In the next chapter, I explain the methodology for the study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter Overview

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore resilience and protective factors in children of divorce through the three needs of self-determination theory. I interviewed five university freshman who were determined to be resilient through the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment. I addressed two research questions: How did participants describe their experience of resilience following parental divorce related to the three basic needs of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2003)? and How did participants describe protective factors that contributed to their resilience related to the classification of protective factors? The research began after receiving IRB approval.

This chapter details the methodology I used. I begin with a rationale of my methodology and then turn to the research approach, explaining to the reader why I have chosen to conduct the research as I have. Next, I explain the strengths and limitations of choosing this research design and the quality of the research design. The next sections provide details on how I selected the participants and how I alleviated potential ethical concerns. I also describe my role as the researcher. The final sections of this chapter explicate my data collection and data analysis procedures.

Rationale

This research project was a qualitative, multiple case study with a constructivist paradigm. Within qualitative research, Creswell (2007) suggested five approaches to research: narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. The case study, though, has been an increasingly utilized methodological choice for researchers (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003) because the case study methodology contributes to the knowledge of “individual, organizational, social, and political phenomena” (Yin, 1994, p. 2).

I chose the case study research design for three reasons. First, the study of interest to me fit the definition of case study. According to Yin (1994), a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Resilience, as outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, is a contemporary focus of research grounded in the realities of family life. Protective factors are the boundaries that Yin described between the phenomenon of resilience and the context of parental divorce. In summary, the phenomenon is resilience, the context is parental divorce, and the boundaries between them are the protective factors of interest in this study.

Second, I chose this research design because my research questions were best answered by a case study. According to Yin (1994), case study research questions should answer *how* and *why* questions, which are more explanatory in nature. This study sought to answer two research questions to explain the experience of resilience. I wanted to know how participants described their experiences of resilience following parental divorce related to the three basic needs of self-determination theory and how participants described protective factors that contributed to their resilience related to the classification of protective factors. With both of these *how*

questions, I sought data to explain resilience using self-determination theory and protective factors in this population. Another reason that case study best answered my research questions is because quantitative, statistical data may do an excellent job of providing a succinct summary of major patterns, but case studies provide greater depth, detail, and individual meaning (Patton, 2002) answering my explanatory research questions more thoroughly and providing valuable thick, rich description.

Finally, the multiple case study (sometimes called a collective case study) fits the nature of this study. Yin (1994) used the term *multiple case study*, but other case study experts (e.g. Stake, 1995) have also used the term *collective case study* to refer to a case study research design utilizing more than one case. I used Yin's terminology for this study. Yin (1994) explained multiple case study not as a separate methodological framework, but as one research design included under the category of case study strategy. He described four types of case studies: holistic single case study, embedded single case study, holistic multiple case study, and an embedded multiple case study. According to Yin's categories, this would be a holistic multiple case study because I used a global approach and five cases. Although the data analysis began with five individual cases, the research study concluded with an across case analysis which led to a more holistic understanding of the participants' experience with resilience. In addition, by utilizing multiple cases, I could be comparative with the different cases and develop across case themes. Furthermore, "in collective case study, an early commitment to common topics facilitates later cross-site analysis" (Stake, 1995, p. 25). Because my research questions focused on self-determination needs and protective factor categories, this early commitment to these two topics facilitated my later analysis.

Cases were selected because understanding them would lead to better understanding about a larger collection of cases (Stake, 2005).

Data from multiple case studies are often considered to be more compelling (Yin, 1994).

Therefore, I chose the multiple case study research design for three reasons. First, the study of interest fit Yin's (1994) definition of case study. Second, the explanatory research questions were best answered by a case study. Finally, a multiple case study led to better understanding about a larger collection of cases (Stake, 2005) with more compelling data (Yin, 1994).

Research Approach

Creswell (2007) wrote, "Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information... and reports a case description and case-based themes" (p. 73). According to Yin (1994), a research approach is "*an action plan for getting from here to there*, where *here* may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and *there* is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions" (p. 19, italics Yin's). For Yin, it is the research process that delineates a case study from other methodologies (Merriam, 1998).

Five components necessary for case studies are (Yin 1994):

- 1) Questions – Questions must be appropriate *how* and *why* questions. My questions were: How did participants describe their experience of resilience following parental divorce related to the three basic needs of self-determination theory (Ryan &

Deci, 2003)? How did participants describe protective factors that contributed to their resilience related to the classification of protective factors?

- 2) Propositions – Propositions direct attention to something that should be examined within the scope of the study (Yin, 1994). The theoretical framework provides the structure or scaffolding of the study (Merriam, 1998). For this study, the propositions were the three psychological needs outlined by self-determination theory (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and the three categories of protective factors (individual, family, and community).
- 3) Units of Analysis – For small groups, the people included must be distinguished from those outside the context for the study, and specific time boundaries are needed. The participants in this study were bounded by: a) parental divorce in the last 12 years; b) scores indicating resilience on the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment; c) aged 18-19; d) enrollment in a First Year Studies class in the spring semester of 2009 at the University of Tennessee or English 101 in the summer semester of 2009; and e) willingness to participate in the study.
- 4) Linking Data to Propositions– Research design lays the foundation for data analysis. My propositions were the three typologies of the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness and the three typologies of individual, family, and community protective factors. These formed the schemes for approaching and classifying the data, which guided the qualitative interpretation. This process is described in detail in the Data Analysis section later in the chapter. Propositions may or may not have been supported by the data, but those supported were listed with data excerpts.

- 5) Criteria for Interpreting the Findings—Criteria determines how the data are related to a theoretical proposition. Yin (1994, p. 26) admitted that, “Currently there is no precise way of setting the criteria for interpreting these types of findings.”

However, by following a predetermined, clearly outlined data analysis procedure, I improved certainty and confirmation, or what others call verifying or determining validity. This, too, is explained in greater detail in the Data Analysis section later in this chapter.

The paradigm I was most closely aligned with was constructivism. Constructivism draws from the constructivist and developmental education theories which, “ask us to pay attention to the learner’s experience and to let the learner make sense for herself by struggling with ambiguities which are just beyond the level she can tolerate” (McAuliffe & Eriksen, 2000, p. 8). This study was developed to understand the participant’s experience of the reintegration into resilience after the disruption of parental divorce. In seeking to understand the experience of resilience, the ontological question was: what was the nature of reality (Creswell, 2007)? The answer was that it was relative based on the participants’ local and specific constructed realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). The epistemological question was: what was the relationship between the researcher and those being researched (Creswell)? The answer was that it was subjective and transactional and that together we created the findings (Guba & Lincoln). Finally, the methodological question was: what was the process of research (Creswell)? The constructivist answer was that it was hermeneutical and dialectical, elicited and refined through the interaction between us (Guba & Lincoln).

To summarize, the research was a multiple case study design describing how the participants described their experience of resilience following parental divorce. It explored the participants' experience with the three basic needs of self-determination theory and how the participants described protective factors that contributed to their resilience related to the classification of protective factors. Examining the participants' descriptions of their experiences through the lenses of self-determination theory and the categories of protective factors allowed the researcher to articulate how their experiences supported or deviated from the theory and existing research while giving voice to their experience. Using the theoretical framework of Richardson's resilience model described by self-determination theory needs and protective factors, explained in Chapter 2, and the paradigm of constructivism, I analyzed and categorized the data inductively for developing themes.

Participants

Five participants were selected from students enrolled in FYS 101, a First Year Seminar class, or ENG 101, a freshmen English course. Although multiple case study research design does not prescribe a specific number of cases, Creswell (2007) suggested that a researcher not choose more than four or five cases to balance having enough information to provide an in-depth picture of the case while realistically constraining the study in terms of time, events, and processes. I recruited participants during the spring and summer 2009 semesters. Each participant was selected based on the following inclusion criteria: a) parental divorce in the last 12 years; b) scores indicating resilience on the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment; c) aged 18-19; d) enrollment in a First Year Studies class in the spring semester of 2009 or ENG 101 in the summer semester of 2009 at the University of Tennessee; and e)

willingness to participate in the study. To determine if the potential participants met the eligibility requirements, I used Demographic Survey #1 and the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment.

Demographic survey #1

The purpose of the first demographic survey was to determine which students met the inclusion criteria and to obtain contact information. (A second, more detailed demographic survey was later given to the five students selected to be participants.) The students were encouraged to complete the demographic survey as honestly as possible.

Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment

The Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment (HKRA) is a 56-item optional portion of the California Healthy Kids Survey that was developed by Norm Constantine, Bonnie Benard and a panel of researchers in 1998 (Constantine & Benard, 2001). The assessment has been used in California for needs assessments, program planning, program evaluation, and research. It measures what the authors identified as protective factors, or external assets, and resilience traits, or internal assets. Content reviews by researchers, classroom teachers, and other school practitioners established content validity. All items were tested for reliability, and the authors kept the 18 subscales with coefficient alphas ranging from .55 to .88. The sub-scales demonstrated good internal consistency with a median coefficient alpha of .72 (Constantine, Benard, & Diaz, 1999). I obtained permission to use the assessment for research purposes.

The Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment was administered to all students willing to participate in the study during the First Year Studies or English class at the same time as Demographic Survey #1. I scored the assessment using the scoring key provided by

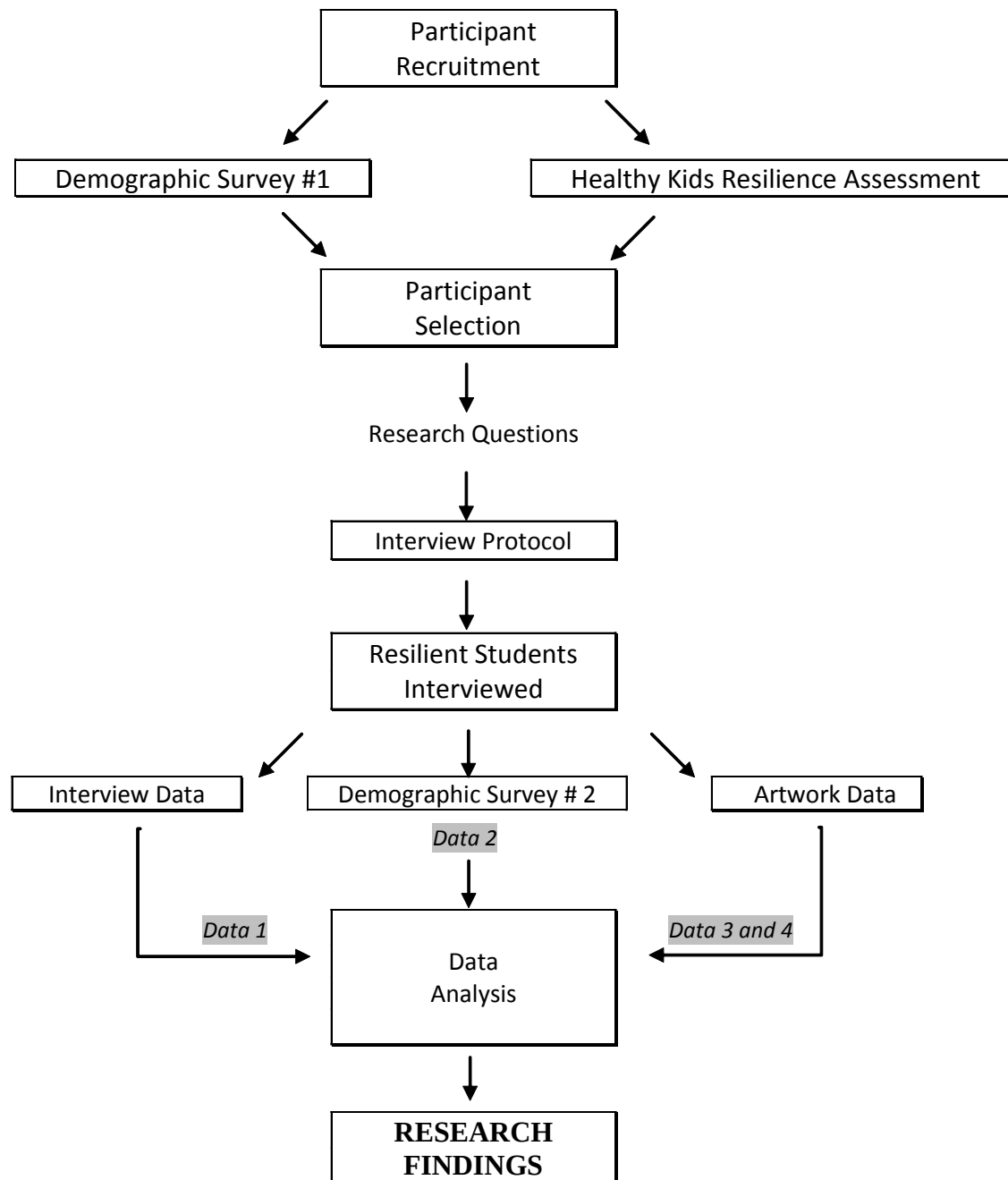
the authors. A resilient score, for this study, was determined to be a score of 3 or higher (on a scale of 1 to 4); however, the participants selected scored between 3.44 and 3.82. The assessments were identified by a code and no student names appeared on the assessments. The purpose of administering the assessment was to have an objective measure of resilience that gave an overall picture of how resilient a particular student was. The students were encouraged to answer the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment as honestly as possible and were reminded that there were no right or wrong answers.

Data Collection Procedures

Before the data were collected, a colleague interviewed me for a pre-data collection interview. Then, I arranged a time to address a freshman level class in First Year Studies or English at the end of scheduled class time without the instructor present. I explained the study and that students' decisions about participation in this study did not affect their grade in the course. I obtained informed consent from students, and all students in the class who were willing to participate were given the Demographic Survey # 1 (Appendix B) and the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment (Appendix A) to complete as a screening tool to determine those who met the inclusion criteria.

Five students were then identified and interviewed once for about an hour. Data collected during the interview time included the Demographic Survey #2, two pieces of artwork, and interview transcriptions for each participant. Each form of data is outlined in the sections below. For the participant interviews, I asked the participants to begin and end the interviews with a drawing, so I collected two pieces of artwork data from each. Next, I interviewed the participants and later transcribed that verbal dialog for a

another form of data. Finally, the participants completed Demographic survey # 2 for the last form of data. See Figure 6 for a visual map of the research procedure.



Interview

I contacted each of the five eligible participants by email or telephone and scheduled a time to interview each one privately one time for about an hour. When we met, I reviewed the informed consent and specifically explained confidentiality and its limitations. Each participant was given a written description of the research study and reminded that (s)he could withdraw from the study at any time.

The interview (see Appendix C for full protocol) was guided by two primary questions worded to help me understand their experience:

- 1) Some people have a hard time after their parents divorce, and some people bounce back. They are more resilient. How would you describe your experience of resilience?
- 2) After their parents divorce some people have a hard time and some people bounce back. How did you bounce back? What things helped you bounce back? What made you different from those who do not bounce back?

Artwork

Moustakas (1994, p. 114) wrote “Often the phenomenological interview begins with a social conversation or a brief meditative activity aimed at creating a relaxed and trusting atmosphere.” Expressive art therapy is a means for accessing hidden resources and gaining a better understanding of the unconscious (Snyder, 1997). Participants were asked to draw two pictures of abstract concepts

(divorce and resilience) in order to quickly establish a relaxed rapport between the researcher and participant, as well as to access their hidden resources of explaining their experience. Cox (2005) found that a central part of the context for drawing was the verbal commentary that accompanied the act of drawing, so participants were asked to describe their drawings out loud as they created them.

At the beginning of the interview time, each participant was provided with paper, pencils, pens, markers, and crayons. They were asked to, “Please draw a picture of divorce,” and explain their work as they drew. After the interview, they were asked to, “Please draw a picture of resilience,” and explain their work. This resulted in two pieces of data (Artwork #1 and Artwork #2) with an accompanying verbal description.

Demographic survey #2

The second demographic survey (see Appendix D) was designed to gather more detailed information to enrich the description of the participants as well as to gather demographic information that was unnecessary when screening for participants at the time of the first demographic survey. Participants were asked to complete it after the interview, so that trust and rapport could be established first. It required the participants to describe themselves, their parents’ divorce, and the difference between themselves and other children of divorce. It also asked for age, ethnicity, gender, and the ages of siblings.

After the data were collected, I decided to include two questions from Demographic Survey #1 to be used in data analysis as well. Originally, these questions were written to give me insight about the resilience of a potential participant for inclusion purposes, but the answers provided important data. The question, “What are three words that describe your parents’ divorce for you?” was coded

as demographic data, and the question, “How would you rate yourself after the divorce?” on a scale of 1 (awful) to 10 (awesome) was used in the description of the data. References to Demographic Survey #2 data include these questions throughout the discussion of this study.

Data Analysis

I began data analysis by selecting two procedures, one general and one a specific typology analysis. Using a combination of those procedures as a guide, I developed the procedure for data analysis used in this study. What follows is brief description of those two methods and then a longer, detailed description of the specific procedure employed for this study.

Crabtree and Miller’s Data Analysis Procedure

In determining a plan for data analysis, I began with the general process steps in what Crabtree and Miller (1999) call the “dance of interpretation” (p. 127). This formed a guiding framework for my own data analysis procedure. They described the following five steps for analysis of qualitative data:

- 1) Describing – a reflective phase in which the researcher steps back and reviews what is happening, how that influences interpretation, and what should happen next. This step is about reflexivity and is revisited throughout the iterative process.
- 2) Organizing – selecting schemes for approaching and classifying the data which guide the qualitative interpretation.

- 3) Connecting – specifically refers to themes, patterns, linking categories, developing models, and generating theory. The authors strongly encourage creating maps and diagrams to visualize concepts and categories. I followed this advice to clarify my own thinking and simplify large amounts of information to reveal patterns to the reader more easily.
- 4) Corroborating/ Legitimizing – creating certainty and confirmation, what others call verifying or determining validity. The steps of organizing, connecting and corroborating/ legitimizing form an ongoing, iterative spiral.
- 5) Representing the Account – sharing understandings and interpretations. This step can be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

Hatch's Data Analysis Procedure

Crabtree and Miller (1999) described the general process of data analysis that offered a concise series of iterative steps to follow and provided a general description of data analysis. This helped guide the first phase of general data analysis, but was less helpful for analyzing the typologies of self-determination needs and protective factors. Hatch (2002) outlined a specific series of steps that more explicitly explained the typological data analysis process that this study required. Hatch's steps of typological analysis were as follows:

- 1) Identify the typologies to be analyzed.
- 2) Read the data, categorizing entries that are related to the typologies.
- 3) Read the entries by typology, recording the main ideas on a summary sheet.
- 4) Look for patterns, relationships, and themes within the typologies.

- 5) Read the data, coding entries according to the patterns identified. Keep a record of what entries go with which elements of the patterns.
- 6) Decide if the patterns are supported by the data. Search the data for nonexamples.
- 7) Look for relationships among the identified patterns.
- 8) Write the patterns as one-sentence generalizations.
- 9) Select data excerpts that support the generalizations.

Using Crabtree and Miller's and Hatch's data analysis procedures as a guide, I developed a specific procedure for the data analysis used in this study, which is explained next. My findings were presented as themes and written as a rich, thick description of the experience of resilience and can be found in Chapter 4. See Figure 6 for how the two procedures guided each step of the data analysis for this study.

Crabtree & Miller (1999)	Current Study: Data Analysis Procedure	Hatch (2002)
	Describe Typologies	Identify typologies
Describing	Individual Case Analysis 1) Description of Data	
Organizing Organizing Connecting Corroborating/ Legitimizing Connecting	2) 1 st Review of Data: <i>General</i> meaning units codes themes outliers categorize themes	Categorizing entries
Organizing Connecting Corroborating/ Legitimizing Connecting	3) 2 nd Review of Data: <i>Needs</i> codes themes outliers categorize themes	Main ideas
Organizing Connecting Corroborating/ Legitimizing Connecting	4) 3 rd Review of Data: <i>PF</i> codes themes outliers categorize themes	Coding entries Themes within the typologies Support & nonexamples Relationships among patterns
Connecting Connecting Connecting	5) All Participant Data General Themes Need Themes PF Themes	Relationships among patterns Relationships among patterns Relationships among patterns
Representing the Account	6) Summary Description of Participant	One-sentence generalizations Data excerpts for support
	Across Case Analysis	
Connecting	<i>General</i> Themes	Relationships among patterns
Connecting	<i>Need</i> Themes	Relationships among patterns
Connecting	<i>Protective Factor</i> Themes	Relationships among patterns
Connecting	Summary Themes	Relationships among patterns
Corroborating/ Legitimizing	Outliers	Support & nonexamples
Connecting	Overall Themes	Relationships among patterns
Representing the Account	FINDINGS	Data excerpts for support

*Figure 7: Guides for Data Analysis Steps**Data Analysis Procedure*

After data collection, but before I began data analysis, I created a descriptive typology list for each of the six codes (three self determination needs and three protective factors) to help me more accurately label meaning units. This was not intended to be an exhaustive vocabulary list, but a list of ideas that would be included for each typology. During the data analysis process, I added to the list to document my decisions and keep them consistent. See Table 3.

From each of the five participants, I collected four kinds of data for analysis: Demographic Survey #2, Artwork #1, Artwork #2, and the interview transcription. I analyzed these data for each participant first (within case analysis) and then analyzed across participants (across case analysis), following a specific procedure. The results can be found in Chapter 4.

Table 4: Typology Vocabulary Chart

Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness	Individual Protective Factors	Family Protective Factors	Community Protective Factors
independence	resilience	family	temperament	nuclear family	community
self	responsibility	relationships	personal characteristics	extended family	friends
activity	academic achievement	friends	personal coping	divorce descriptions	boyfriend/girlfriend
cognitive processes	healthy coping	boyfriend/girlfriend	personal reactions	divorce reactions	school
perspective	self perceptions	relational style	perspective	separation	response to others
	future outlook	interactions	cognitive understanding	visitation	
	career	divorce descriptions		home	
	helping others	divorce reactions			
	activities	separation			
	work/ responsibility	home and family			
		clubs/ organizations			
		work			

Within case analysis.

To begin with multiple pieces of data and end with themes for each participant, I followed six steps: description of data, 1st review of data, 2nd review of data, 3rd review of data, review of all participant data, and a summary. Each step is described below. I began with the Demographic Survey #2 for one participant and completed steps 1-4. Then, I repeated the process with the two pieces of artwork and the interview transcriptions from the same participant. Therefore, I repeated steps 1-4 twenty times, four pieces of data for five participants. Next, I integrated the themes from each piece of data into summary themes for the participant. Then, I duplicated the process for the other four participants. Steps 5 and 6 were repeated five times, once for each participant. When that was completed, I moved on to analyze the data across cases. The data analysis procedure is shown in Figure 7.

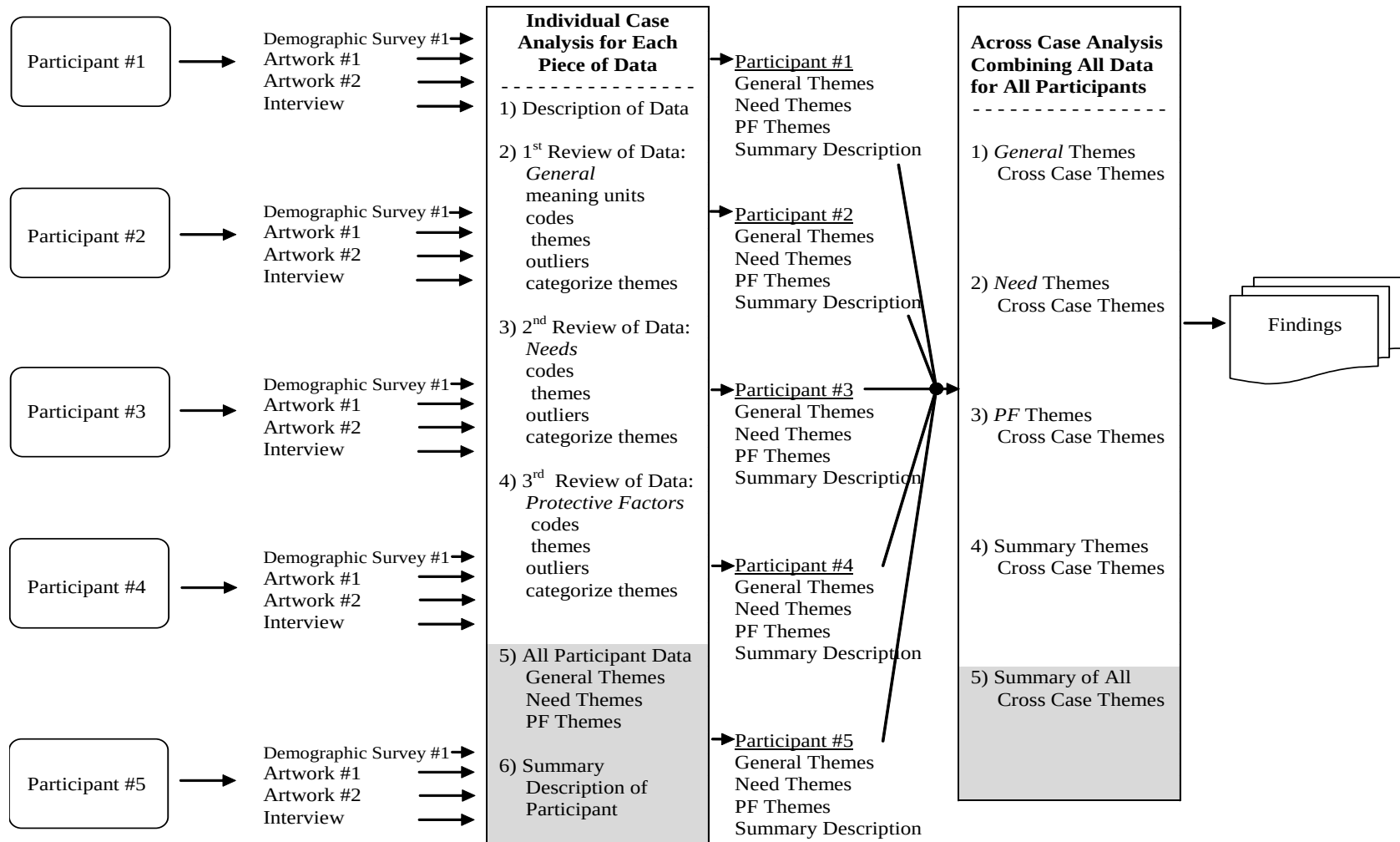


Figure 8: Data Analysis Procedure

- 1) Description of Data – As suggested by Crabtree and Miller (1999), I started by reflecting on what was happening, how that influenced interpretation, and what should happen next. I made observer comments to include nonverbal information, my reactions and hunches, and other pertinent information. Although this is listed as a first step, it was iterative throughout the process.
- 2) First Review of Data – I began by analyzing the data for general themes, without being guided by typologies, to gain an understanding of the essence of the participant's experience. First, I read the data and marking meaning units, or each instance in which a participant changed focus (Thomas & Pollio, 2002). Second, for written data (the demographic survey and interview transcriptions), I read and marked each phrase, sentence, or paragraph with a code that captured the essence of the thought. For the artwork, I assigned codes to capture the essence and main ideas of the drawings using my interpretation of what the participants drew combined with their verbal descriptions. Next, I compiled a list of codes with line number references from the meaning units, and I narrowed the list of codes into themes. Then, I reread or viewed the data looking for outliers that did not fit the themes. Finally, I compiled a list of themes with data excerpts to support them. I repeated this process for each of the four pieces of data for each participant.
- 3) Second Review of Data – This step marked the beginning of typological analysis. Because the first research questions asked about the three needs of self-determination theory, I used the three needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness as typologies for this review of the data. First, I read the data (using the same meaning units as in

the first review) and marking codes. Second, using the lens of self-determination theory, I grouped those codes into lists under the three need typologies. Next, I refined those lists into themes for each typology. Then, I reviewed the data for outliers. Finally, I categorized the themes into the final need themes for each participant with data excerpts to support them.

- 4) Third Review of Data – This step was the same as the previous one, except I used individual, family, and community protective factors as the typologies, and I viewed the data through a protective factor lens to answer my second research question.
- 5) Review of All Participant Data – Once each piece of data had been analyzed for a participant, I synthesized the data themes into themes across data for the same participant. Through this, I used general themes from the first review, need themes from the second review, and protective factor themes from the third review. I did this for all five participants, including the supportive data excerpts.
- 6) Summary – To finish the individual case analysis, I wrote a description of the participant and a summary of the themes developed in step 5. These were then sent to each participant for member checking and are described in Chapter 4.

Across case analysis.

Once I analyzed the data for each participant, the data were synthesized into themes across the five participants. First, I integrated the general themes from the first review into across case general themes. Next, I did the same for the need themes from the second review and the protective factor themes from the third review. I also synthesized the summary themes from each participant. Once I had across case themes, with data excerpts to support them, I reviewed the

data again for outliers. Finally, the general, need, protective factor, and summary themes were combined into overall themes across cases. The findings are described in Chapter 4.

Strengths and Limitations

The case study research design has many strengths. First, it provides a way to study a complex phenomenon like resilience. “The case study offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon. Anchored in real-life situations, the case study results in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41). Second, it is particularly suited to answer the how questions of this study (Yin, 1994). Third, it honors multiple realities and emphasizes a holistic treatment of a phenomenon, away from cause and effect explanation and toward personal interpretation (Stake, 1995). Finally, it provides insights that structure future research, advancing the knowledge base (Merriam).

While the case study design was selected because of its strengths in answering the research questions, it also had limitations. According to Merriam (1998), the rich, thick descriptions and analysis require extensive amounts of time; the product may be too long, detailed and involved for busy practitioners to read and use; and the study is limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher. “Although researchers can turn to guidelines and regulations for help in dealing with some of the ethical concerns likely to emerge in qualitative research, the burden of producing a study that has been conducted and disseminated in an ethical manner lies with the individual investigator” (Merriam, p. 219). The ethical considerations of case study research were echoed by Stake (2005) when he wrote, “Case study research shares an intense interest in personal views and circumstances. Those whose lives and expressions are

portrayed risk exposure and embarrassment” (p. 459). To maintain ethical research, I tried to be conscious of ethical issues that arose from the research process and my from my personal philosophies and experiences. I also strove to honor the participants’ experiences by using their words and expressions as often as possible to convey their truth in their experiences. Potential ethical issues have been outlined in that section below.

According to Merriam (1998), some other limitations of case study included issues of reliability, validity, and generalizability. “Regardless of the type of research, validity and reliability are concerns that can be approached through careful attention to a study’s conceptualization and the way in which the data were collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented” (Merriam, pp. 199-200). Although generalizability has often been assumed to be an inherent limitation of case study, using predetermined questions and specific procedures for coding in multicase analysis enhanced the generalizability of the findings (Merriam).

This study also contained limitations inherent to my choices for data collection. Case studies are limited by having enough information to present an in-depth picture (Creswell, 2007). To combat this weakness, I gathered four pieces of data from the participants: two pieces of artwork, interview data, and Demographic Survey #2. Demographic Survey #1 and the Healthy Kids Resilient Assessment were used only for determining eligibility. Each type of data had inherent limitations, but by gathering multiple types of data, it strengthened the cumulative data. First, I collected artwork from the participants. Yin (1994) called these data physical artifacts, and they included the weaknesses of selectivity and availability. In this study, the art was available because it was created as part of the interview, but the participants selected what

they drew and how they explained it. Second, interviews were another source of data. By nature, interviews were subject to bias from poorly worded questions, response bias, inaccuracies from poor recall, and the interviewee saying what he or she thought the interviewer wanted to hear (Yin, 2003). To reduce these limitations, I consulted with peers and faculty about interview questions, created a safe environment for the interview, and triangulated the data. That being said, in every interview the interviewer and interviewee influence each other. Finally, I collected data through Demographic Survey #2, a more detailed survey to give data about the participants' situational specifics and add to the thick, rich description. The demographic data were included in what Yin called documentation, and the limitations included retrievability, biased selectivity, reporting bias, and blocked access, which for this study would all come from the participant. By building trust and rapport with the participants, I strove to reduce these limitations. The steps outlined above were implemented to gather multiple types of data to triangulate and to reduce the interviewer influence as much as is reasonably possible.

The study was also limited by my choices in data analysis. By beginning with a priori themes, my findings were influenced. By looking at the data through the lenses of the protective factor themes and self-determination need themes, the categories of data were limited. To counter this limitation, I began by analyzing the data for general themes without using any a priori themes, and since I did this first, I prevented being influenced by any previous data analysis using the a priori themes.

Quality of Research Design

Yin (1994) cited four criteria for judging the quality of research designs and tactics for addressing them when doing case studies: construct validity, external validity, and reliability.

Merriam (1998) listed internal validity, external validity, reliability, and ethics as four criteria for judging the quality of a research design. Stake (2005, 1995) wrote about the importance of triangulation and member checking for validity. (See Table 3.)

Table 5: Validity, Reliability, and Ethics

	Construct Validity	Internal Validity	External Validity	Reliability	Ethics
Yin (1994)	multiple sources of evidence chain of evidence		replication logic in multiple-case studies	use case study protocol develop case study data base	
Merriam (1998)		triangulation member checks clarify researcher bias	rich, thick description typicality or modal category multiple cases	explanation of investigator's position triangulation audit trail	conscious of ethical issues examine own philosophical orientation
Stake (1995)		triangulation member check			

Construct Validity. First, a quality research design must have construct validity, or establishing the correct operational measures (Yin, 1994). The case study tactics to address construct validity are uses of multiple sources of evidence and establishing a chain of evidence. This study used four types of data (interview, demographic, and two pieces of artwork) as evidence. My chain of evidence was explained in the Data Collection and Analysis Procedures sections above.

Internal Validity. Second, internal validity is concerned with how congruent the findings are with reality (Merriam, 1998). This is accomplished through triangulation, member checks, and clarifying researcher bias (Merriam, 1998). Stake (1995) did not distinguish between internal

and external validity, but recommended triangulation and member checking for validity. This study built internal validity by triangulating data, and member-checking the data findings of the within case analysis I also clarified researcher bias through a pre-data, bracket interview that I analyzed and by detailing Potential Ethical Issues and Role of the Researcher in sections below. A Researcher Reflection of my experience during the research process is included in Chapter 5.

External Validity. According to Yin (1994), case studies are not statistically generalizable, but they may be analytically generalizable to a broader theory. This is accomplished through the replication of findings. I achieved this in the *Reaching Resilience* study by examining similar findings across multiple case studies found in Chapter 4 and by applying the findings to broader research literature in Chapter 5. Merriam (1998) added that rich, thick description, typicality, and multiple cases improve external validity. I provided those three things through the findings in Chapter 4, which described the multiple cases, their common themes, and outlier data.

Reliability. For Merriam (1998), explaining the investigator's position, triangulation, and creating an audit trail improved the reliability of a qualitative study. Yin (1994) described the audit trail as following case study protocol, and advocated creating a case study database with four components: notes, documents, tabular materials, and narratives. In this study, I have addressed reliability by explaining my position in the Role of the Researcher section below, triangulating multiple forms of data, following clear procedures outlined in this chapter, and maintaining notes, narratives, surveys and artwork in an electronic database.

Ethics. Merriam (1998) devoted a special section to ethics in her writing about improving the quality of qualitative research. She wrote that researchers must be conscious of ethical issues

and examine their own philosophical orientation. I agree, so I have included a Potential Ethical Issues section and a section on the Role of the Researcher below.

Three experts on case study research (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994) have written about ways to evaluate the quality of research. They included construct validity, internal validity, external validity, reliability, and ethics as categorical ways to ensure quality research. By addressing these areas as discussed above, I have improved the validity, reliability, and ethics of this study.

Potential Ethical Issues

Every research study, especially ones involving human participants, has possible ethical dilemmas. It was my aim to identify as many of those in advance of the commencement of the study to address each as possible. The following is a discussion of those issues, and the safeguards to address them.

First, I am a researcher with biases. I am from a divorced family, and it was inevitable that my own experience influenced the way I interpreted the data. Although unavoidable, I wanted to ensure that I was aware of it when it happened throughout the process by describing the role of the researcher before beginning the study, keeping a research log during the study, and summarizing my researcher experience after the study.

Second, because I was a doctoral student at the same university where the participants attended, the possibility of a dual relationship existed. Since it was a large university, and I had little contact with undergraduates, this was not a problem since I only saw the participants during recruitment and at the interview.

Third, I recruited participants from a university course in which they received a grade, although I had no part in the class or the grades students received. To make sure that they did not feel coerced to participate, I verbally told them and added a statement to the consent forms that their grade was not influenced either by participating or by choosing not to participate. They were informed that participation was strictly voluntary. Instructors were not in the room during recruitment to further establish that grades were not influenced by participation.

A fourth potential ethical issue was raising issues about family divorce without resolving them. People respond differently to stressful situations, and a variety of emotional reactions were entwined with the topic of divorce. I informally assessed participant distress levels during the interview, but strong reactions may have been stirred, yet withheld from me, during the interview. While I am a trained counselor, in this situation, I was in a researcher role. Therefore, I relayed information to each participant about the availability of counseling services on campus and encouraged them to seek assistance as needed.

Several confidentiality concerns were also possible. To protect the participants from feeling excluded, not good enough, or targeted, I did not reveal the inclusion criteria (traditional freshman aged students in a First Year Studies or English course determined to be resilient whose parents had divorced in the last 12 years) to the participants. They knew they were participating in a study about resilience in children of divorce, but they did not know who was excluded or why. Students were also at risk of their identity being revealed through quotations and interview data that were intended to be published. Each participant was told of this risk, but I also cleared all data of names and identifying information that could reveal their identity. I could not, however, control what participants might say to others after the interviews.

This study, like many others, held the potential for researcher bias, dual relationships, coercion, psychological difficulties, and confidentiality breaches. I tried to address and prevent or reduce the risks of these problems by developing strategies in advance related to participant selection, informed consent, data collection, and confidentiality in the data. My desire was to protect the participants, myself, and the integrity of this research.

Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the rationale, philosophy, strengths and limitations of a case study research design. I addressed quality issues, ethical issues, and my role as the researcher in this specific study. I clarified the procedures that I used in data collection and data analysis. In the next chapter, I explain what the data revealed about the experience of resilience in children of divorce.

Chapter 4: Findings

Chapter Overview

The focus of this chapter is to present the findings from the individual and across case data analysis. It will a) detail the themes of the demographic survey, artwork #1, artwork #2, and interview data for each participant; b) provide a summary description of each participant; c) detail the general, self-determination needs, and protective factor themes across all five participants; and d) describe outliers in the data.

As described in Chapter 3, participants were invited for interviews after it was determined that they met the inclusion criteria. Each interview began with the participant drawing a picture of divorce using blank copy paper and their choice of pencils, pens, markers, or crayons. Then the researcher conducted the formal interview. At the end of the formal interview, the researcher asked the participant to draw a picture of resilience. Participants completed the second demographic survey after drawing a picture of resilience. The following is a summary of each participant's data.

Individual Case Analysis

This section describes each of the five participants. Two females and three males were invited to participate, and four pieces of data were collected and analyzed for each participant: demographic surveys, divorce artwork, resilience artwork, and the interview transcription. Significant outliers are addressed in the across case analysis section as they related to the data findings, and a discussion of outliers is included at the end of this chapter.

Participant #1: Angela

Angela was a nineteen-year-old Caucasian female at the time of the interview. She was an only child. Like the other participants, Angela was a university freshman.

Demographic Survey.

The data analysis of the demographic survey combined data from the demographic surveys. (See Appendices B and D.) As described in Chapter 3, after the data collection, the researcher decided to include a question from Demographic Survey #1 in the demographic survey data analysis. The demographic information provided was used for a description of the participants, and the answers to the following questions were divided into meaning units, and then coded for data analysis:

From Demographic Survey #1:

- What are three words that describe your parents' divorce for you?

From Demographic Survey #2:

- Describe yourself.
- Describe your parents' divorce.
- Describe the difference between you and other children of divorce.
- Is there anything else that I should know?

Angela described herself as, "being very close to my friends and family. I live a very busy life and I am involved in many different things. I have a great outlook to the world and look forward to pursuing my career." Her parents' divorce occurred about a year before, and she described it as, "something that had been long time coming and was much needed. I was very

happy when it was over.” She selected the words good, compromising, and needed to describe the divorce. On Demographic Survey #1, she rated herself as a 5 after the divorce on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being awful and 10 being awesome.

Using Angela’s words and phrases from her answers to the demographic survey questions as general codes, the following were identified: good, compromising, needed, close relationships, busy, good outlook, future minded, long time coming, and happy when over. Next, these codes were categorized into themes by the researcher. This was done three times: first, to develop general themes; second, to categorize the codes as self-determination themes; and finally, to categorize the codes under protective factor themes.

When Angela described her parents’ divorce, she used the words good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, and happy when over, so these codes were included under the general theme of divorce. She described herself as having close relationships, busy, a good outlook, and future minded, so these were categorized under the theme self-description. During the second pass of the data, the researcher used the same codes, but they were divided into the three self-determination need themes. Busy and future-minded were categorized as autonomy needs, good outlook was included as a competence need, and good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, happy when over, and close relationships were part of the relatedness theme. In the third phase of data analysis, the codes were categorized into protective factor themes. The individual protective factor theme included the codes of future-minded, and good outlook; the family protective theme included the codes of good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, and happy when over; and the community protective factor theme contained the codes of busy, and close relationships. The themes are outlined below.

General Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Divorce – good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, happy when over

Self-Description – close relationships, busy, good outlook, future minded

Self Determination Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Autonomy – busy, future-minded

Competence – good outlook

Relatedness – good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, happy when over,
close relationships

Protective Factor Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Individual –future-minded, good outlook

Family – good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, happy when over

Community – busy, close relationships

Artwork #1.

Angela drew a picture of three people. She and her mom were on one side of a line, and her father was on the other side of the line to mark the separation caused by the divorce. See Figure 9.

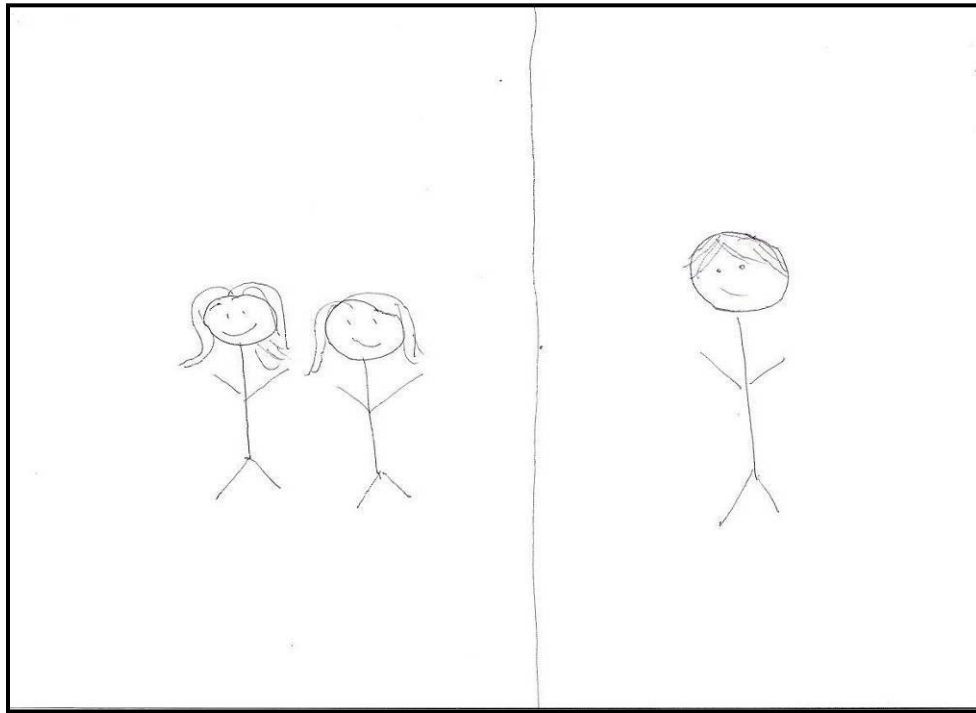


Figure 9: Angela's "Divorce" Artwork

The artwork was coded by using prominent features of from what Angela drew, as well as using her verbal description of the drawing to keep the codes in her words as much as possible. Therefore, the codes for her first piece of artwork were: Angela, Mom, Dad, line, separation, and smiles. She identified the figures in her verbal description as herself, her Mom, and her dad, and the line, separation, and smiles were included as codes because they were prominent parts of her artwork. Because her artwork depicted separation, the codes of Angela, Mom, Dad, line, and separation were included in that theme. The other general theme was smiles, which included only that code. No competence or community typology theme codes were identified. Using those codes, the following themes were developed:

General Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Separation – Angela, Mom, Dad, line, separation

Smiles

Self Determination Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Autonomy – smiles

Competence – none

Relatedness – Angela, Mom, Dad, line, separation

Protective Factor Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Individual – Smiles

Family – Angela, Mom, Dad, line, separation

Community – none

Artwork #2.

Angela drew four figures smiling: herself, her Mom, a boyfriend, and a friend who helped her to be resilient. She did not draw, but verbally added that the group also included family, saying, “Not only just these people, but my entire, my mom’s immediate family are closely involved. They know everything. And I mean, they just live down the road from us, so I see them every day.” See Figure 10.

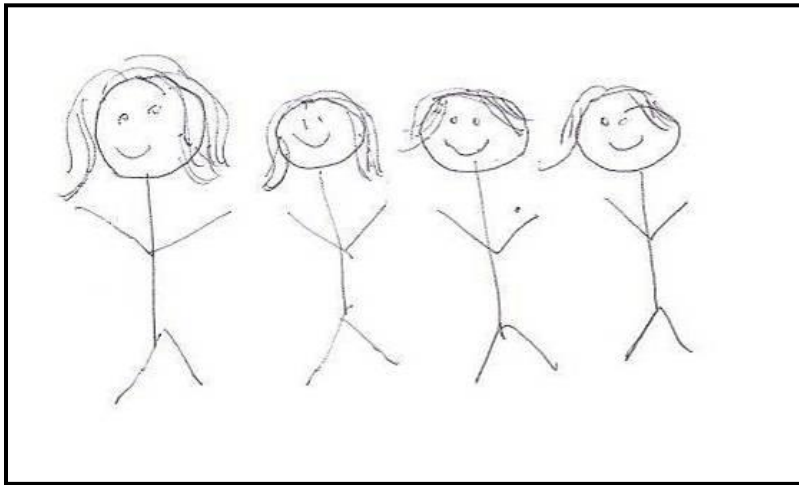


Figure 10: Angela's "Resilience" Artwork

The codes were selected combining her drawing and Angela's verbal description of the artwork. The codes for her second piece of artwork were assigned from the figures she drew (Angela, Mom, friend, boyfriend), what she included in her verbal description (family), and what the researcher saw in her artwork (smiles). The codes of Angela and smiles were categorized as the general theme of self because they reflected how she viewed herself, and the codes of Mom, friend, boyfriend, and family were part of the support that helped her to be resilient.

General Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Self – Angela, smiles

Support – Mom, friend, boyfriend, family

Self Determination Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Autonomy – Angela

Competence – Smiles

Relatedness – Mom, friend, boyfriend, family

Protective Factor Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Individual – Angela, smiles

Family – Mom, family

Community – friend, boyfriend

Interview.

Angela met me for the first time individually for the interview. She said she had plans to finish her undergraduate degree, pursue a Master's degree and eventually go to medical school. She was an only child with frequent contact with both parents.

General Themes from Angela's Interview:

Resilience. Resilience was a theme for all the participants by nature of the questions of the interview. Each one was asked to draw a picture of resilience, and each one knew before the interview that the study was about resilience. Although the entire interview was about resilience, the only meaning units coded as resilience were times when the word was specifically mentioned. Angela said, "I would say that I was very resilient" (line 30). Her description of resilience included other people and how they helped her through the difficult time. "I'm just gonna say that resilience is, you just have a lot more people involved. And you lean on a lot more people than you normally do. And you start to realize that everyone is there for you" (lines 639-641).

Divorce and Separation. Like resilience, divorce was a code for each participant by nature of the study. All participants knew that the population of the study was children of divorce, and the interview began with a drawing of divorce. This often led naturally to a

discussion of their parents' divorce specifically instead of divorce generally speaking, although that was not directly a part of the interview protocol questions.

Angela said, "I... wasn't bothered by it" (line 101). "There wasn't really anything that bothered me about it, 'cause I mean, it was very compromising. It wasn't that they were fighting about anything" (lines 65-66) and "they still talk" (line 74). Her parents' divorce a year earlier seemed to be amicable. "It was something that needed to happen, and I was happy that it did" (line 31). Twice she said that she knew that "it was the best thing" (lines 42 and 63). "I knew that my dad was in the wrong, and I was not gonna believe anything that he had to, kinda thing" (line 233). "My dad had an affair" (line 243).

However, she described the divorce as more of a process than one specific event. "It was coming for a long time by the time it actually happened" (line 33), and "I knew it was coming" (lines 379-380). Long before the divorce, "that was the point where everything was just chaos, and they were fighting all the time. And then years later, I mean, it was, it wasn't as bad. I mean, it was just still this underlying, but it wasn't as bad as that particular time... They had been, I'd say, emotionally divorced for a long time, but they hadn't physically" (lines 275-279). She said, "I think that was probably harder than the actual divorce" (line 267). "Actually, my parents separated for a period of about 3 months, and he lived with [another woman], and then my dad came back, and said he was sorry and it was never gonna happen again. But he never stopped talking to her" (lines 250-252). Fighting between Angela's parents was a sub-theme. "They would try to involve me, and that was just not good" (line 228) and, "I think they were trying to sway me to their sides, kinda thing" (line 232). "Actually, it was my dad was more trying to pull me in, and my mom was trying to show him that that's not the right thing to do" (lines 452-453).

“When I would get upset, I would usually lock myself in my room, or I would leave” (line 217). Eventually, her parents separated. “Me and my mom, we moved out in March, and we moved actually back where we had originally lived. Where we all lived. And that’s where my entire, my mom’s side of the family, like, we all live in the same area, cause it’s a small town. And my dad stayed in his house” (lines 37-40). During the years of her father’s affairs, “My mom knew about it, and she didn’t realize that I knew” (line 245). “I knew it was going on” (line 256), but “I really didn’t tell too many people about it until after it [the divorce] happened” (line 124).

Family Members. Again, family was a theme that naturally developed from a discussion about family divorce, especially the sub-themes of mom and dad. For Angela, mom, dad and family were subthemes. She said, “I think my mom always tried to be helpful to me” (line 178), and it was helpful knowing, “she cared, and that if I wanted to, I could go there and talk to her about it” (lines 409-410). Even though she was away at school, “I still have to talk to her several times a day” (line 97). “I still talk to my mom. I have to call her when I get up, and if I don’t, she’s like, what’s wrong? Or where have you been, kinda thing, and I just talk to her in all my free time” (606-608). During the divorce process, her mom would discuss it with her, but Angela did not confide in her mom much. “It eventually started out as she would talk to me, and then she would feel bad, and she was like, I shouldn’t do that. And I was like, it’s okay. And I could always sense if something was wrong, and then I would ask her, and she would talk to me about it” (lines 193-195). She felt that she needed to be the strong one. “Actually my mom was more upset by it than I was. I just kinda helped her” (line 41), and “I think mostly I was the person helping my mom through it” (line 122). “She always asked me if I was okay, but I never actually would tell her I wasn’t, because I was trying to be the strong one for her” (lines 179-180). Her

relationship with her father was different. “I see him, and I talk to him. I don’t really like to, but I do. But I do it because he’s my dad” (lines 109-110). “I talk to my dad probably every couple days” (line 609), but “My dad calls a lot, and then I don’t want to talk to him. I usually don’t answer the phone unless I need something” (lines 511-512). In addition to her mom and dad, “my entire, my mom’s immediate family are closely involved. They know everything. And I mean, they just live down the road from us, so I see them every day” (lines 651-653). They were important, “not as much for me but probably for my mom” (line 658) because, “They were there when my mom needed to move out. If anything happened in the house, they were there to fix it, kinda thing. And they would just come out and do whatever we needed them to do” (lines 663-665). Whenever Angela talked about family, she referred to her maternal extended family.

Friends and Boyfriend. Angela’s friends were important to her, but more so later in the divorce process. “Until I actually came here [to the university]. Because at the time, everything was just so busy, and I, the whole thing with my parents, I didn’t have time to spend with my friends. I actually reconnected with the friends that came here with me. I mean, we’ve been best friends before, but during later years it just kind of dissolved, ‘cause I had so much going on. But, I mean, we’ve actually drawn a lot closer together coming back here” (lines 502-506). She said, “I think we’re just really open with each other, ‘cause they know” (line 510). “I’ve elaborated with them, just told them the whole situation” (lines 513-514). Her boyfriends helped her through the process as well – two, at different times. “I told things to my boyfriend at the time” (line 204). “Just my boyfriend. He was the only person I actually talked to about things.” (lines 423-424). “We had been together for, like, two years, and he was always at my house at the time, so he was used to it” (lines 208-209). “And at one point he actually went to my parents,

and he was like, you don't need to involve her anymore in this. And I left with him" (lines 439-440). "He would listen, and he could just understand, like, be able to tell when I was not okay. 'Cause most people, I don't let them know at all, and he'd just be able to tell, just by how I was acting, that I wasn't. And just being there" (lines 482-485).

Activities. Staying busy kept Angela from dwelling on her parents' divorce. "I was so busy with work and graduation and all the senior activities. And see, I was in band, and I had all of this stuff going on. And then I was, I was in winter percussion. We had championships and practices and everything. It was really busy" (lines 162-164). "Not only was I in marching band, I was in the concert band, pep band, and then I was in the winter percussion" (lines 322-323) in addition to "applying for all the deadlines. Applying for college, applying for all the scholarships, and just different, just different things about that. Making deadlines" (lines 358-360). She was not only involved, but in leadership positions. "I would say that in band, I was definitely a leader. I was vice president junior, and then I was band captain senior year. I have been section leader all 4 years, and usually I was just in a leadership role, and everybody came to me" (lines 319-321). She worked as well. "I forgot to tell you I was in, I worked, too. And I was actually a manager, so I worked, it was almost like a full time job, plus everything else" (lines 340-341). "I would get out of school at 3. I had to be to work at 3:30. I'd get off at 10, and then if I had band practice after school it would last until about 5. I'd go in at 5:30, and get off at 10. And then on the weekends, I would close, and sometimes I would have to open and have to be there at 3:30 or 4:30 and get off at 2. And then I'd just go to sleep" (lines 527-530).

Coping. Angela talked about two things that were not activities that helped her to cope with her parents' divorce. One was a sense of perspective, which she described in this advice to

someone whose parents were divorcing. “I would tell them to look at it from both sides. Look at it from your perspective, and then look at it from your parents’, and maybe it’s a better thing than you realize. ‘Cause, I mean, you may not realize the things that you’re going through right now, but then once you’re, let’s say, on the other side of it, that it’s actually better off” (lines 618-621). She also said that leaving home was helpful to her. “I knew that I was not going to be dealing with it for so much longer kinda thing... I mean they actually got separated in March” (lines 373-375), and she left to attend the university in the fall.

Self Determination Themes from Angela’s Interview:

Autonomy. The two sub-themes in the autonomy category were perspective and maturity, referring to getting older and moving away. From her perspective, “I always knew that it was the best thing” (line 63), and, “It was something that needed to happen” (line 31) because “It was coming for a long time” (line 33). As a result, “I don’t think it affects me as much (line 605). That helped her to say, “Look at it from both sides. Look at it from your perspective, and then look at it from your parents’, and maybe it’s a better thing than you realize” (lines 618-619). Since she was leaving home to attend the university, “I knew that I was not going to be dealing with it for so much longer.”

Competence. The sub-themes for this category included resilience, being strong for others, and staying busy. “I would say that I was very resilient” (line 30). Angela felt competent by helping her mother and being strong for her. “I think it was harder for my mom than it was for me, cause she’s always been very protective and very involved in my life, and she wasn’t anymore” (line 95). “I just kinda helped her” (line 41). “She would always try to get me to tell her things, and I wouldn’t” (line 200) Angela stayed busy with band, leadership roles, applying

to colleges, and work. “I was so busy with work and graduation and all the senior activities... It was really busy” (lines 162-164). “I was just, like, I have to do everything” (line 322). “When I was in high school, I was involved in lots of other clubs” (lines 581-582). At work, “I was promoted to a shift leader, and my manager at the time, she looked to me for everything, and she took my opinion and liked it. And I talked to the owner, and he really listened and put in the changes... I was there for nearly 2 years when I quit” (lines 564-567).

Relatedness. Divorce, relationship with parents, and family and friends were subthemes for the relatedness need of self-determination. This was by far the largest category for this section of data analysis. The separation, “I think that was probably harder than the actual divorce” (line 267). “My dad had an affair, and for probably about 2 years, and my mom... Actually my mom knew about it, and she didn’t realize that I knew” (lines 243-245). “She finally decided she wasn’t going to take anymore, and my whole family came and helped us move out” (lines 380-381). “My mom was more upset by it than I was” (line 41). “I think mostly I was the person helping my mom through it” (line 122). As for her dad, “I see him, and I talk to him. I don’t really like to, but I do but I do it because he’s my dad” (lines 109-110). “Mom’s immediate family are closely involved. They know everything. And I mean, they just live down the road from us” (lines 652-653). The final sub-theme was friends. “I really didn’t tell too many people about it until after it happened” (line 124). But after the divorce, and especially after she left for school, she confided in her friends more. “They just kinda know what’s happened, and I’ve elaborated with them, just told them the whole situation” (lines 513-514). This included her boyfriends, “The first guy I was with, we were together about 2 and a half years, and that was when the whole thing, like the affair was going on, and he would come over, and then I would go

to him” (lines 436-438) “And then my past one, we were together about 2 years, and I usually, I just, I told him everything” (lines 461-463).

Protective Factor Themes from Angela’s Interview:

Individual. The sub-themes for the individual protective factor category were perspective, understanding, and personal reaction. Angela’s perspective was that the divorce was, “something that needed to happen” (line 31) and that “it was the best thing” (line 63), and according to Angela, contributed to her resilience as did her understanding about why it had to happen. Her personal reaction was at times upset, at times being strong for her mom, and at times not “bothered by it” (line 101).

Family. Angela’s family members comprised this theme. This category had the same sub-themes (divorce and separation, Mom, Dad, and family) as discussed above under General Themes.

Community. The community sub-themes were friends, boyfriends, activities, and leaving home. Her friends, who knew “what’s happened, and I’ve elaborated with them, just told them the whole situation” (line 514) and her boyfriend, who “I told things to my boyfriend at the time” (204) gave her select people to confide in when needed. Band, leadership roles, applying to colleges, and work kept her “just so busy” (line 503) and knowing that she would be leaving home in a few months also helped her.

Summary.

At nineteen, Angela was a hopeful freshman, looking forward to her future. She talked about her parents’ divorce as a lengthy process from turbulent fighting over her father’s affairs to a resigned separation that was more difficult for her mom to a post-divorce time when Angela

had moved out to attend the university. She found the divorce to be a relief and necessary, but it separated her from her father, both physically and emotionally. Before the separation and divorce were public, Angela hid it from most other people, including her friends. The exception to this was her boyfriend at the time, who was a confidant and, at least on one occasion, stood up for her when her parents drew her into their argument. Later, especially after leaving home, she confided in her friends more. The most noteworthy thing Angela did to cope with the divorce was to stay incredibly busy, not only participating in activities and work, but becoming a leader as well. Being strong for her mother and the one that others turned to was important to Angela. She seemed to find strength in presenting a strong front to others. Of all the participants, her parents' divorce was the most recent, about a year before the interview. See Table 5 for a summary of Angela's data themes.

Table 6: Angela's Individual Case Analysis Summary

ANGELA	Demographic Survey	Artwork #1: Divorce	Artwork #2: Resilience	Interview
First Review: General Themes	<i>Divorce</i> – good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, happy when over <i>Self-Description</i> – close relationships, busy, good outlook, future minded	<i>Separation</i> – Angela, Mom, Dad, line, separation <i>Smiles</i>	<i>Self</i> – Angela, smiles <i>Support</i> – Mom, friend, boyfriend, family	<i>Resilience</i> <i>Separation</i> <i>Dad</i> <i>Friends</i> <i>Activities</i> <i>Divorce</i> <i>Mom</i> <i>Family Members</i> <i>Boyfriend</i> <i>Coping</i>
Second Review: Self-Determination Themes	<i>Autonomy</i> – busy, future-minded <i>Competence</i> – good outlook <i>Relatedness</i> – good, compromising, needed, long-time coming, happy when over, close relationships	<i>Autonomy</i> – smiles <i>Relatedness</i> – Angela, Mom, Dad, line, separation	<i>Autonomy</i> – Angela <i>Competence</i> – smiles <i>Relatedness</i> – Mom, friend, boyfriend, family	<i>Autonomy</i> – Perspective; Maturity <i>Competence</i> – Resilient, strong for others, staying busy <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, relationship with parents, family & friends
Third Review: Protective Factor Themes	<i>Individual</i> – good, good outlook, looking forward to career, happy when over <i>Family</i> – compromising, close relationships, long time coming, much needed <i>Community</i> – close to friends, busy	<i>Individual</i> – Smiles <i>Family</i> – Angela, Mom, Dad, line, separation	<i>Individual</i> – Angela, smiles <i>Family</i> – Mom, family <i>Community</i> – friend, boyfriend	<i>Individual</i> – perspective, understanding, personal reaction <i>Family</i> – marriage, separation, divorce, family, Mom, Dad <i>Community</i> – friends, boyfriend, organizations & activities, leaving home

Participant #2: Sarah

Sarah was an eighteen-year-old Caucasian female at the time of the interview. She had two older brothers. At the time of the interview, her father lived in another country and her two older brothers and mother lived in different cities. They were, as Sarah called them, a clergy family.

Demographic Survey.

Sarah described herself as, “Independent, people-loving, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible.” Sesquipedalian means loving big words. Her parents’ divorce occurred two years prior to the interview, and she described it as, “an action that made the situation that was occurring match the inside to the outside.” She said one thing that made her different from other children of divorce was that, “I am older than most and don’t have to deal with visitation due to geographical challenges.” She selected the words tumultuous, painful, and frustrating to describe the divorce and rated herself as a 3, on a scale of 1 to 10, after the divorce.

Using Sarah’s words and phrases, the following codes were identified from the Demographic Surveys: independent, people-loving, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible, match inside to outside, older, don’t deal with visitation, tumultuous, painful, and frustrating. Because the codes described either her parents’ divorce, or herself, the codes were categorized into the two general themes of divorce and self-description.

General Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Divorce – match inside to outside, don’t deal with visitation, tumultuous, painful, frustrating

Self-Description – independent, people-loving, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible, older

Self Determination Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Autonomy – independent

Competence – sesquipedalian, responsible, tumultuous, painful, frustrating

Relatedness – people-loving, dominant, motherish, match inside to outside, older, don't deal with visitation, close relationships

Protective Factor Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Individual – independent, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible, older, tumultuous, painful, frustrating

Family – match inside to outside, don't deal with visitation

Community – people-loving

Artwork #1.

Sarah drew a picture of a house with a door, a heart in the middle, and a chimney on the right side. She then added a jagged line across the house to demonstrate the brokenness. See Figure 11.



Figure 11: Sarah's "Divorce" Artwork

The codes were selected from both her drawing and her verbal description and included: house, heart, and crack. In describing her drawing, she said, "House. Heart. Crack. Basically, it's just the whole, like, you're a family and all of a sudden you're not" (lines 73-74). The codes in this case were also the general themes: house, heart, and crack. There were no autonomy, competence, individual, or community typology themes.

General Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

House

Heart

Crack

Self Determination Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Autonomy – none

Competence – none

Relatedness – house, heart, crack

Protective Factor Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Individual – none

Family –house, heart, crack

Community – none

Artwork #2.

Sarah drew an egg with cracks in it. She said, “Basically, it comes from the quote. Lots of people who love you are cracked eggs, but still love you anyhow.” She described her egg as, “You’re gonna get bumps, and you’re gonna get bruised, and it’s not always gonna be fun, but it’s not about being on guard.” She felt like a cracked egg, but still loved. See Figure 12.

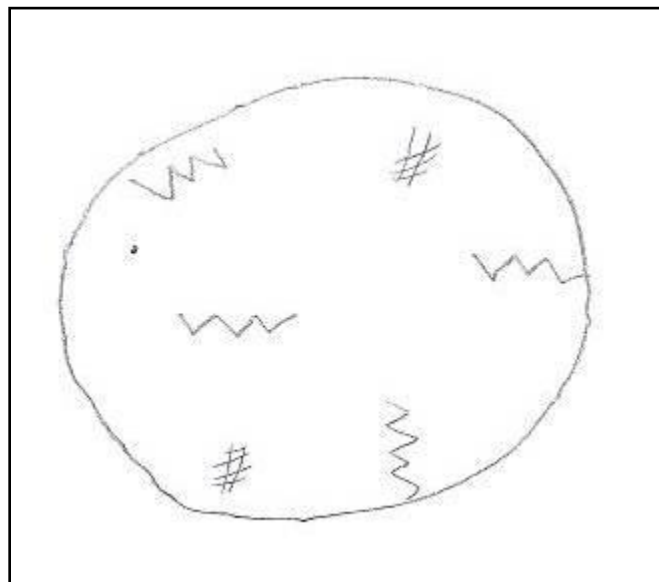


Figure 12: Sarah's "Resilience" Artwork

The codes were selected combining drawing and Sarah's verbal description of her artwork. The codes selected for her second piece of artwork were egg, cracked, and loved anyway. I chose to interpret egg and cracked as descriptions that Sarah applied to herself and loved anyway related to how others treated her, based on her quote of being bumped and bruised but not on guard and the fact that she only drew one egg. However, one could also argue that the cracked egg symbolized her family members. There were no autonomy or family themes with this interpretation.

General Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Self – egg, cracked

Others – loved anyway

Self Determination Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Autonomy – none

Competence –egg, cracked

Relatedness – loved anyway

Protective Factor Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Individual – egg, cracked

Family – none

Community – loved anyway

Interview.

Sarah was talkative, intelligent, and direct. She was the daughter of a clergyman. She easily answered the questions, sometimes pausing to consider carefully whether she agreed with my rephrasing. She stated strong opinions, but she was friendly, easy to converse with, and

intellectual. For example, she began the interview with, “You’re going to have to change what I call my dad then... I don’t call him dad. I call him Abba... Hebrew for father” (lines 4, 8, 12). For ease in across case analysis and to protect her anonymity, I coded references to her abba as dad.

General Themes from Sarah’s Interview:

Resilience. “For me, resilience is something I had to decide that I wanted. It really, it wasn’t something that somebody else could do for me” (lines 763-763). “I mean, it definitely, it took a while” (line 745).

Divorce. “My parents, well, they were married for 20-something years before they divorced, and like, I think, it was between 27 and 28 [years]” (lines 216-217). “They perfected the sham of a marriage, like, and I mean perfect. Nobody knew what was going on” (lines 218-219). “My mom and dad would go days without talking to each other. Not like, you know, I’m mad at you, not talking to each other... [just] never happened to run into each other” (lines 536-537,541). “This was the summer of 2006, and I was gone the entire summer. When I left, he was there. When I came back, he was gone” (lines 267-268). “I thought we were all moving as a family” (lines 252-253). “The divorce wasn’t done for, like, since the separation, and then the divorce was much later, and then there was the religious divorce even later” (lines 466-468). “The formal divorce wasn’t until November of 2008” (line 262). “And then a couple months ago, they got religiously divorced” (line 266). “It was more the neglect of the marriage than, like, an abusive marriage or anything” (lines 277-278). “My parents, they tried really hard. Like as divorces go, it was a pretty easy divorce” (lines 276-277).

Family Members. “There’s 5 people in my family” (line 77). “Now that everybody was absolutely everywhere, because at the moment we have three in Tennessee, one in Missouri, and one in Canada” (lines 778-779). “My oldest sibling went to college when I was a freshmen, because we’re four years apart in school. My other brother and I are two years apart in school” (lines 81-82). “I had 4 parents. I mean, well, two parents and two brothers who felt like parents” (lines 349-350). “We were a really a close knit family” (lines 434-435). “I was the clergy’s kid” (line 344). “Cause my dad’s clergy, he can’t tell the congregants what’s going on” (line 220). “We lived in a glass box, and they watched, they watched how my brothers and I behaved. They watched how we didn’t behave. They watched our table manners. They watched how we interacted with each other in the community. Like as much as I love my community, it’s a small community, and they all felt like they had a say in, like, we raised the kids collectively” (lines 336-340). “My dad and I never had a good relationship” (line 508). “Other people would be like, oh, your dad helped me so much” (line 546). “I would be like, this is so sad. He can do that for you, but he can’t even come home at night for me” (line 548-549). “For a long time I was pretty pissed off at my mom” (line 189). “For a while, though, my mom was so busy trying to figure out who she was, that she forgot she still had a kid at home” (lines 624-625). “I was pretty mad at my mom for a long time, but in the end, it was just, I mean, it was just how it was” (lines 746-747).

Personal Characteristics. “I just had to realize that, I mean, I didn’t really have the delusions a lot of kids have about their parents are gonna come back together” (lines 768-769). “I’ll be the first to tell you I’m not great with change. Like, well, I’m okay with change, but I hate the waiting to change” (lines 294-295). “I think of me as kind of decisive person” (lines

563-564). “I tend to be a logical thinker. When it comes down to it, I will make the logical choice almost every time” (lines 618-619), so, “I had to decide for myself that I was gonna stop whining about it, and I was gonna move on and just live my own life” (lines 748-749).

Other People. “I would deal with my friends’ problems, but I didn’t have to deal with my own. This was before I was talking to them, like, about what was going on with me. But if we only talk about what’s wrong with them, then they never had to know what’s going on with me” (lines 569-572). “One of my friends and I, we had only really known each other, I didn’t know what I was doing, and I counseled him through depression in 9th grade. And after that, we were kinda more venting friends. But there were definitely nights when I called him and was, like, you know I can’t handle it. Help” (lines 377-380). “In my friends, so it was kinda like, whenever I finally started talking about it, they were like, oh. I’m like, [sarcastically] guys that’s really helpful” (lines 397-398). “I was more like the mom figure in my group” (line 393). “The other person that I sort of talked to about it sometimes was my gifted teacher” (line 686).

Activities. Sara found music, journaling, and books to be helpful to her. “Look at the lyrics with some of the songs I was listening to” (line 455). “Writing down in my diary. Like, because I couldn’t talk to my mom, and there was nobody else I could talk to... I started, like, writing all the time. Like especially after we’d have a fight” (lines 360-363). “I’ve always been a reader. Always” (line 586). “When I couldn’t deal with it I would start reading” (line 601), “because, like, when I was reading, I wouldn’t be thinking about what was going on. And so it usually worked. I would read like 3 or 4 books at a time... I would just chill up in my room. Just read for hours” (lines 605-608). “If I just, just distract my emotions long enough, by, you know, shoving them into a book or whatever, then the logical part of me could usually reason out”

(lines 620-621). In addition to the private activities, Sara also participated in many group organizations and activities. “I did debate club... soccer. I did band. I did a lot of stuff in my community. I was a Girl Scout. I worked at Sunday school. Work. For part of my junior year I worked [at name of business], and then my entire junior summer, summer between my junior and senior year I worked there” (lines 713-717). “Mock trial... It was just a great way to get out my aggression, because I’m actually a very dominant person... If I have something that is an acceptable arena to be combative in, then it makes me not so antsy through the rest of the times” (lines 698-700). “Around that time, though, all of us started getting into what’s called Coffee House... It was open mike night, and it was once a month on Friday nights. And I would go, and I would help out in the kitchen, and, you know, perform and stuff. And it got to the point where I was pretty much running the kitchen” (lines 661-665). “Right now my brother’s trying to get me to drop my extracurriculars because they think I’m doing too much” (lines 757-758).

Perspective. Sarah’s family guarded the secret of marital trouble until her parents separated. “Nobody could know about the divorce because it looks bad” (line 318). “They didn’t know anything was going wrong at home, ‘cause I didn’t want to tell them” (line 195). Yet, Sarah developed a perspective that helped her cope. “If you look at, kind of, some of the things that have happened in my past, you could be like, ‘Oh, my gosh!’ But then if you look at other people’s pasts, like in comparison to mine, you might be like, ‘Oh, she’s not so bad” (lines 431-433). “I don’t really even think about it, like, you know, I had a bad kid’s childhood. Like, I didn’t. I really didn’t” (lines 442-443). “After so long, you have to stop being injured by whatever happened in your past” (lines 423-424). “I eventually just had to grow up and get over

it. Like, you know, what happened, there's nothing I could do about it. So, I mean, let's get over it" (lines 418-419).

Self Determination Themes from Sarah's Interview:

Autonomy. Resilience, perspective and personal characteristics were autonomy sub-themes. Sarah said that, for her, resilience took time (line 745) and was something that she had to do for herself (lines 762-763). Perspective allowed Sarah to change how she viewed the situation, "realizing that, like, yeah it sucks, and even if it was a nice divorce, it still sucks" (lines 814-815), but "I had to decide who I wanted to be as a person. I had to kind of figure out how things were gonna work with the family" (lines 776-777). Her personal characteristics, such as being logical and a leader, helped her with that. "My parents got divorced when I was older, so in a lot of ways it's easier" (lines 808-809). "You have start saying, you know what? I'm going to be my own person now, and I'm going to stop living in the past. Do stuff for me. Like you know, I have to decide who I wanna be" (lines 425-427).

Competence. Sarah showed competence through the three sub-themes of taking care of others, personal activities, and organizations and activities. "I talked to my friends about it and that helped a lot" (line 201). "I would deal with my friends problems" (line 569). She found music, journaling, and reading to be areas where she felt competent to help cope with her emotions. "I'm really into music, and so I found some songs that helped" (line 202). Helping out at a Coffee House night, "I was pretty much running the kitchen" (line 665) and staying busy with mock trials, debate club, Girl Scouts, Sunday school, and a job gave her outlets to excel. In school she took gifted classes. "I mean, in my family it's not really the question 'Are you going to college?' It's when" (lines 102-103).

Relatedness. Marriage, separation, divorce, family, and others comprised the sub-themes of relatedness. “We stuck together through realizing that my brother has bipolar... We stuck through him going through mental hospitals. Stuck together through suicide attempts” (lines 436-438). “The year that my parents got divorced, my brother and my dad both left that next year” (line 84). “Nobody could know about the divorce because it looks bad. People, as they found out, when my mom was still there and my dad wasn’t, were like, oh, I thought you were gonna move” (lines 318-320). “And so all of a sudden it was like, whoa, there’s a lot more space in this house” (lines 89-90). During the Coffee House, “The adults would come to help out every time, and one of them was named [female name] and the other one was named [female name], and I would talk to both of them about it... They both were really, really helpful” (lines 666-669).

Protective Factor Themes from Sarah’s Interview:

Individual. Resilience, perspective, and Sarah’s personal characteristics and activities were individual traits that helped her to be resilient. “You’re gonna get bumps, and you’re gonna get bruised, and it’s not always gonna be fun. But it’s not about being on guard. It’s about... moving along” (862-864). “The logical part of me could usually reason out that things were actually for the better because, like in the end, they really happen for the better” (lines 621-623). Listening to music, journaling and reading were also individual characteristics that Sarah identified as helpful to her. “But anyhow, the CD I... had was, like, it basically was just like support groups” (lines 456-457). “I would read like three or four books at a time. Most people that takes a lot more time than it takes me, apparently” (lines 606-607).

Family. Marriage, separation, divorce, and family were sub-themes for this category. They have been described above under general themes.

Community. Friends, others (other adults, Coffee House adults, and her teacher), taking care of friends, and the organizations that Sarah participated in (i.e. debate club, soccer, work, Sunday school, and other “extracurriculars” were community protective factors. These have each been described above.

Summary.

To understand Sarah’s story, one must recognize that she was the youngest child and only daughter of a clergy father. Her parents were married for 27 or 28 years. Their divorce had been a long time coming, but their failing marriage had been carefully hidden from the congregation and community. As a member of the clergy, her father was often absent, leading to the neglect of the marriage that Sarah believes ended it. Many evenings Sarah did not see him as he ministered to other families. A brother diagnosed with bipolar commanded attention from her father, and she felt a loss because other people spent more time with her father than she did. As a result, their relationship suffered, even before the divorce. After the divorce, he accepted a position in Canada, so she rarely sees him now. When her parents’ separated, Sarah experienced a series of losses as her father and then brothers moved out, leaving her alone with her mother, who caught much of Sarah’s anger. Sarah learned from living in a “glass box” to hide her parents’ problems from others. She would help her friends with their problems as way to deflect her own. She became involved in many activities, and also took on leadership roles. When she was not busy away from home, she would escape into books, journaling, or listening to music. She worked hard to maintain control. As time passed, however, Sarah began to confide in friends and trusted adults, which helped her personally to “match the inside to the outside.” See Table 6 for a summary of Sarah’s data themes.

Table 7: Sarah's Individual Case Analysis Summary

SARAH	Demographic Survey	Artwork #1: Divorce	Artwork #2: Resilience	Interview
First Review: General Themes	<i>Divorce</i> – match inside to outside, don't deal with visitation, tumultus, painful, frustrating <i>Self-Description</i> – independent, people-loving, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible, older	<i>House</i> <i>Heart</i> <i>Cracked</i>	<i>Self</i> – egg, cracked <i>Others</i> – love me anyway	<i>Resilience</i> <i>Marriage</i> <i>Divorce</i> <i>Family Members</i> <i>Personal Characteristics</i> <i>Other People</i> <i>Activities</i> <i>Perspective</i>
Second Review: Self-Determination Themes	<i>Autonomy</i> – independent <i>Competence</i> – sesquipedalian, responsible, tumultus, painful, frustrating <i>Relatedness</i> – people-loving, dominant, motherish, match inside to outside, older, don't deal with visitation, match inside to outside	<i>Relatedness</i> – house, heart, cracked	<i>Competence</i> – egg, cracked <i>Relatedness</i> – loved anyway	<i>Autonomy</i> – Resilience, Perspective; Personal Characteristics <i>Competence</i> – Taking care of others; personal activities; organizations/ activities <i>Relatedness</i> – marriage, separation, divorce, family, others
Third Review: Protective Factor Themes	<i>Individual</i> – independent, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible, older, tumultus, painful, frustrating <i>Family</i> – match inside to outside, don't deal with visitation <i>Community</i> – people-loving	<i>Family</i> – house, heart, cracked	<i>Individual</i> – egg, cracked <i>Family</i> – loved anyway <i>Community</i> – loved anyway	<i>Individual</i> – resilience perspective, personal characteristics, activities <i>Family</i> – marriage, separation, divorce, family <i>Community</i> – friends, others, taking care of others, organizations/ activities

Participant #3: Suah

Suah was an eighteen-year-old male at the time of the interview who had immigrated from Africa as a youth. He was the oldest of three children, but he lived with an aunt and uncle (who did not have children) in a different state from his parents after coming to the United States. The pseudonym Suah meant “new beginning,” and I selected it to reflect his culture and his story.

Demographic Survey.

Suah described himself as “extrovert and determined.” His parents’ divorce occurred when he was eleven to twelve, and he described it as, “divorce over who should take control in the household. Social changes due to men dominance in my African culture.” He thought that an important difference between his parents’ divorce and other divorces was that, “I tried to do my best to forget about my parent problems and find things that interest me.” He used the words sad, depressed, and very stressful to describe the divorce and rated himself as a 4 after the divorce. In answer to the question about anything else that I should know, he added, “Well, I am a better person because I did not let my parent divorce destroy my life.”

The codes identified from his Demographic Surveys were sad, depressed, stressful, extrovert, determined, control, social changes, forget, interests, and better person. The general themes that developed were his description of himself, what he believed caused the divorce, and his response to the divorce, so these became the general themes of self-description, divorce causes, and response. The codes were categorized into the following themes.

General Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Self-Description – sad, depressed, stressful, extrovert, determined

Divorce Causes – control, social changes

Response – forget, interests, better person

Self Determination Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Autonomy – extrovert, determined

Competence – forget, interests, better person

Relatedness – sad, depressed, stressful, control, social changes

Protective Factor Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Individual – extrovert, determined, forget, better person

Family – sad, depressed, stressful, control, social changes

Community – interests

Artwork #1.

When asked to draw a picture of divorce, Suah grabbed a highlighter and immediately began drawing. However, his approach was more of a verbal description, punctuated by drawings and words on the paper. I wondered if perhaps this stemmed from his early years in a storytelling culture, but he did not say in the interview. He drew his mother, father, and younger sister on the left side of the page saying, “This is my father. I’ll make him a big figure, ‘cause he’s controlling.” He added the words control and jealous beside his father. “Jealous because my mom have a better job coming to the United States, and he’s, he doesn’t, have a good job ... for African men, they always wanna be in charge...” He told me that his mom had a sister in the United States who hired her to do African braids, which enabled her to save \$3,000 the first month, while his father found a job making \$8 an hour, which was a source of contention. He drew cell phones next to his parents to show how they kept in touch with him. On the right side

of the page, he drew his uncle, with a line around him to show that he lived in another state, and then he added himself to the drawing near his uncle. See Figure 13.

The codes were selected from his drawing and description and included father, mother, sister, uncle, Suah, control, jealous, money, and phones. As he described the divorce, he divided his artwork into his two families, that of his parents and siblings, and that of his uncle and aunt, with whom he lived. Therefore, his two families became the general themes, the relatedness theme, and the family protective factor theme. There were no competence or community themes.

General Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Parent Family – father, mother, sister, control, jealous, money, phones

Uncle Family – uncle, Suah



Figure 13: Suh's "Divorce" Artwork

Self Determination Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Autonomy – Suah

Competence – none

Relatedness – father, mother, sister, uncle, control, jealous, money, phones

Protective Factor Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Individual – Suah

Family – father, mother, sister, uncle, control, jealous, money, phones

Community – none

Artwork #2.

For resilience, Suah drew several of the things he had talked about during the interview: reading, playing soccer, basketball, and video games. He also drew a group of friends. In the upper right corner, he drew his mother and father arguing, but he drew a line around it saying, “anything whatsoever that makes you off, way out of this zone. Try to stay out of this zone.” He drew an arrow pointing to things that helped him stay out of that zone. He said, “I was just lucky not to be with my parent at that time. But some kids who would be there, the best thing I think, find things. Friends that are really good. Be around good friends, you know, when you need them, talk to them. Read a lot. Find things like sport that you love to do, or maybe sit down and play video game if that’s what you like.” See Figure 14.

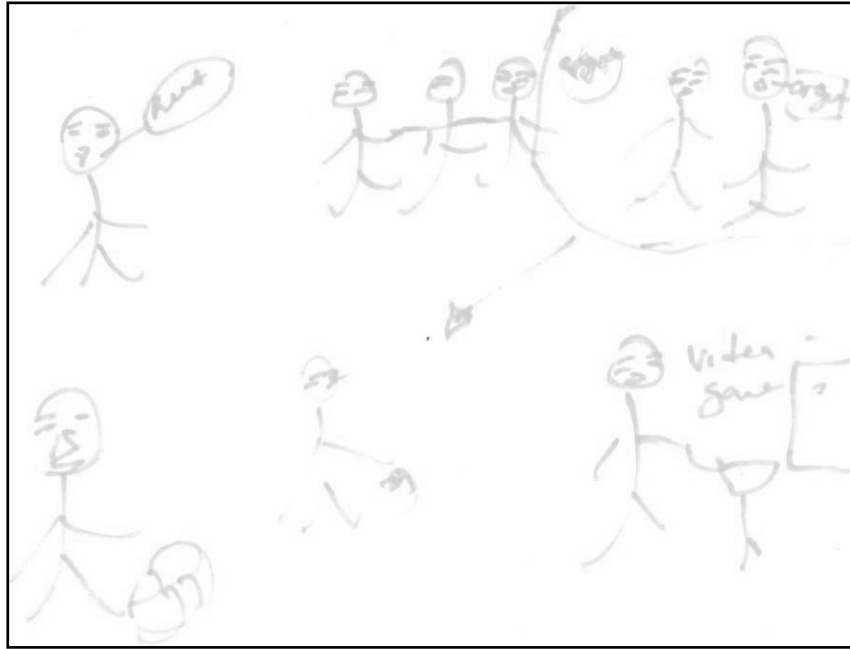


Figure 14: Suah's "Resilience" Artwork

The codes for his second piece of artwork were read, soccer, basketball, videogames, friends, arguing parents, out of zone. As he explained what he drew, he described what was helpful to do and what was helpful to avoid. The general themes that developed were based on that.

General Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Helpful – read, soccer, basketball, videogames, friends,

Avoid – arguing parents, out of zone

Self Determination Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Autonomy – videogames

Competence – read

Relatedness –soccer, basketball, friends, arguing parents, out of zone

Protective Factor Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Individual – read, videogames

Family –friends, arguing parents, out of zone

Community – soccer, basketball

Interview.

I chose the pseudonym of Suah because it was an African name that meant new beginning. He experienced a new beginning when his family immigrated to the United States, where he enrolled in middle school, struggled with learning the language, and suffered ridicule from other adolescents. Instead of living with his parents, he lived with an uncle in another state. Although he talked about the painfulness of that time, he also felt that it helped him to be a better person. By the time of the interview, he had a great grasp of the language, was personable, and confident. He was easy to understand, hopeful about the future, and proud of his education.

General Themes from Suah’s Interview:

Divorce. “I was really, like, depressed about the divorce, and I didn’t want my parents to divorce. I wanted them to stay together, you know. But, hey, that’s what happened” (lines 419-420). “For African men, they always, they always wanna be in charge” (lines 144-145). “My mom was making more money” (line 185). “I think that’s, that’s the main source of the divorce. That’s what caused the divorce. He’s trying to control her on her job, and because of her job, he’s kinda jealous” (lines 224-226). “I was living here in [city] with my uncle when we just came

[to the United States] ‘cause my family needs to settle down. And having two children, me and my sister, to a new foreign country was really difficult” (lines 151-153). “I decide that I want to stay with my uncle. My mom said, ‘you know, if you want, you can, I can bring you here, you know,’ and I told her that I want to stay with my uncle and, ‘cause my uncle was taking good care of me” (lines 416-418).

Anxiety. Suah had multiple difficulties. In addition to his parents’ divorce, he had moved to a new country, faced cultural differences, enrolled in a new middle school, struggled with the language, and was teased by other children. “I think the intensity of the divorce during middle school, just coming here and those kids teasing me at school also, like, all that mental... problem that I was having with those two things, that I have to deal with, I think created that anxiety in me” (485-493). As a result, in middle school, “I was more often loner. Work, I can work. I can do school work well by myself, but if I have to do group activity, always have that anxiety, always have problem with that” (lines 408-410).

Resilience. Suah talked about friends, sports, reading, and playing video games as things that helped him to be resilient. “All those things I think that helps” (line 1137). A discussion of the themes in his resilient artwork were described above.

Living Elsewhere. One thing that made Suah’s story different from the other participants was not living with his parents during the time of the divorce. “I was in [city name] then, you see, with my uncle, my father’s big, older brother” (lines 232-233). “My uncle don’t have, he have a wife, but they don’t have a child here in the United States, so I used to live with them” (lines 366-367). “I didn’t have to, like, see my dad saying bad things to my mother. Or I didn’t have to see my mother saying bad things to my father. I didn’t have to see that clash going on,

like that continuous noise and cussing each other. I don't have to see that, you know. It was out of my sight, so, like, it helps me a lot" (lines 535-538). "It was better that I wasn't there... I remember my uncle and his wife, they would sit down and, and just talk about my parents, like what they are doing, like what are these people doing, you know? Why they can't get along, you know" (lines 560-563). Suah felt that they honestly represented both sides of his parents' situation because, although his uncle was his father's brother, "My aunt, that's my uncle's wife, you know, she, she's a good friend of my mother" (lines 628-629). "I mean, that was a peaceful comfortable home for me" (line 599).

Culture. For Suah, his culture was an important part of both his adversity, and his resilience. "Especially in our culture, ... I'm a Muslim so I was brought up in a Muslim family where, I mean, in terms of religion, wise people know that Islamic treatment towards women is kinda different. And my family, they practice Islam a lot.... It was really hard for, for my father. I guess on his side, also, to see my mother as a woman in marriage to be this successful, starting to get all these opportunities here, and leaving him behind. And you know... my dad is the only one that used to work, so it was it was quite challenging" (lines 268-276). "[My uncle] he thinks that my father still have the old ways, you know. He was, I remember, he always say, hey, [father's name] this is America. This is not Africa. Okay, people who live like this, in America you have to work with your wife" (lines 572-574). "My language was a barrier. That was one. And I went to, like, it, a one shack roof school in Africa 'til 5th grade. It wasn't even good. Our teacher would just explain in Creole" (lines 870-872). "I was ashamed of my culture when just came, when I live in, like in middle school" (lines 1015-1016). "...to assimilate to the American culture was really tough for me. I didn't have friends because mostly, well, some kids, they have

a stereotypical belief about Africans, and I used, they used to make fun of me at the bus” (lines 386-388). But when Suah went to high school, he made friends who were interested in learning about his culture. “They would ask me questions about that, or they would ask me, they would ask me to talk about my culture. And they would always say, ‘Wow, that’s cool, man. I wish we could do that, you know, here in America’ Or, you know, like, I will tell about my childhood... and they would show interest in that... They care about, you know, other cultures and, you know, and I wasn’t ashamed to tell them that I was a Muslim... so we, we used to talk about, like, the religious differences and all that. And very, like, intelligent conversation. And you know, it was really good... They accepted me for who I am, you know, so I was happy” (lines 1033-1043).

Family Members. “I look at my uncle as a father figure” (line 924). “My uncle was a great help to me. Also, like, he tried, he talked to my mom over and over not to, like, tell me about what was going on my father” (lines 440-441). “[My aunt] she has stayed here [in the United States] longer than my uncle, but, about 20 years, but she had to adapt when she came, too. But we all came from the same Islamic societies” (lines 611-613). “My mother will always give a phone call” (line 157). “I remember, like, my mom would call me all the time, and, in the evening usually, and tell me about what was going on, and for the whole day the only thing I would be think, thinking about” (lines 402-404). “After, like, they have all this problem, he [my dad] decided that he just going to abandon us, and start a new life, find a new wife, and start a new family. So, I mean, there was nothing. He get in a problem even with my uncle because of that, and he just lose communication with us. He went to [another state]. He lives there now. He have a wife and three year old son, so he move along” (lines 442-446). “It has been a while. I

even graduated, he didn't call me, from high school, but I did receive him, his message on my phone yesterday saying that he's proud of me" (lines 459-461). "His wife actually called my mother. They are friends now, but they, just, they are not, I'll not say, like buddy buddies, but she will call, check on [sister's name] my sister. My mom will call, call her. My mom got a, got a cell phone. She will call her, and check on my little brother" (lines 926-929).

Reading. "I used to read a lot" (line 389). Reading served a dual purpose for Suah. It provided him with a way to keep his mind from dwelling on his parents' divorce and other cultural assimilation challenges, but it also provided him a way to overcome both. "That helps me a lot, reading books. I used to read a lot at that time, and it also helped me as, as a African, 'cause my language, my language. There was a lot of language barrier. My accent was heavy, and, you know, I had problem with even, like explaining things, which I still have a problem with... it did help me, like, understand English much better, and it helps me a lot in middle school, and it makes me focus more (lines 660-664). "Reading books helped me a lot, you know like, I used to read, like, books like *Gandhi*, you know, at that time, and I used to, like well, the issues. I tried to forget about it" (lines 437-439).

Sports. "I used to play soccer as well. So, I focus on reading, playing soccer, trying not to get those kind of stressful feelings" (line 391). "Once I get on the soccer field, I have to play soccer. My mind is out of everything else that is going on, like, I have to play soccer, and I, all I care about is winning. Like, once I'm in the field, it's nothing, like what my parent are doing, my parents are divorced, I don't care about that. I don't care if I have a school homework. I'm just playing soccer. It's just a way to relieve myself, and, and have fun with my friends" (lines 756-760). "I even tried out for football. I mean that aggressiveness, you know, it helps me into like

sport that I played, like playing football. It helps me a lot. Like, I was taking out the aggressiveness. I started as a linebacker in, in my middle school team, so that helps a lot” (lines 427-430). “It was an acceptable way to be aggressive. I think it was a way for me to also release my anger” (line 744-745).

School. Although his middle school years were difficult as Suah navigated a new culture and ridiculing peers, “in high school it was a little better” (line 494). “I didn’t went to the same high school with them [those who had made fun of him]. I went to a way different high school out of where I used to live. I used to take bus every morning, go all the way downtown to my school, my high school. I didn’t went to any high school around there, because all those kids that went to that school, they, they are now being, like, the thugs you see around or the guys that... do all the kind of bad things. But that, that also helped me, I think, to be somebody serious. To be more serious because they didn’t accept me in their circle at that time” (lines 688-694). “I like to be praised. I like to give, be given credit for something, so, like, I work hard at school” (lines 805-806). “I wasn’t part of, like, any of the honors program at my high school, but I took all honors, and I took AP classes because of these guys. I wanna be in the same class with them” (lines 854-855). “I actually worked so hard to get into those honors classes. I started with two, and I have, like, two friends there that say, ‘Oh well, we take biology honors, and we take all these honors class.’ And I say I want to get into those honors classes. I worked so hard by the first semester they got me into, they gave me another two honors classes. So by spring I was taking four honors classes, and when I get to 10th grade, I sign up for all honors. And I, my friend [friend’s name] was like, ‘I’m gonna take AP Euro [European History]. ‘Oh, that’s cool I said’” (lines 874-879). “It was great” (line 899).

Occupied Mind. “I tried my best not to think about it, like, not to think about what was going on all the time. And I also tried to focus on things that I loved to do” (lines 425-426). Sports and reading were two of his favorite activities for occupying his mind. “It pull my imagine, my attention from all those things, and just make me focus on what I was doing” (lines 680-681). “I try to find things that that makes me forget about what is going on, you know. I try to, like, I try to isolate myself from those problems” (lines 772-773).

Perspective. Suah’s unique perspective on his parents’ divorce and his other challenges helped him cope. For example, his uncle helped him to understand, instead of blame, his father. “His brother, who is taking good care of me, makes me just look at him as, you know, I mean, someone that is probably victim of social, social changes” (lines 942-943). Looking back at his middle school years gives him perspective about where he is now. “I didn’t have, like, a very happy life, like my middle, my middle school, because of the divorce and what was going on at school as well.... If I was having a lot of fun at school, and this wasn’t going on, I don’t think, I probably would have made the bad, bad friends in school, probably, because I live in a very poor neighborhood, and, and there was a lot of bad kids. And I know all those kids now. They are not in college, but I’m here” (lines 682-687). “That helped me, something to become different. Yeah, it makes me a serious person. It makes me serious, more about life in general, that I need to be successful, a successful person. And the divorce for my parents, you know, that also, like, it was bothering me a lot, so that also make me hide in my mind and become a stronger person instead of just getting down to everything and, and be that breakdown person” (lines 711-715).

Friends. Suah credited his choice of friends in high school as a pivotal factor in his resilience. “I had good friends in high school” (line 473). “Where I live, I live in a very poor

neighborhood back in [city], and most kids there, they're not, probably we didn't have the same goals and, and success in mind. And just being an African, probably makes it a little bit different also. They [my high school friends] think I don't know anything, but when I get to know these guys, they were really smart, cool dudes, and we meet, we became friends, and they, I found out they are like always interested in what I have to say. Or what is my perspective about being, like, from a different country? What is my perspective about everything? And you know, that helps me a lot. That helps me tremendously. I think I would say those guys throughout the four years that I'm in high school, it makes me much better, happier person" (lines 476-484). "I got good friends. I have, like, really cool buddies that wanna succeed" (lines 820-821).

Success. Suah valued success, especially success in school. Part of that stemmed from family expectation, but part of it was his own internal drive. "I'm someone that wanna be successful, like since that time I'm in Africa" (line 797). "I have cousins that live in New York, okay, and all those kids are doing well at school. And it's kinda like a competition... throughout high school. Later by my 12th grade year, I don't see, I see it doing myself what I wanna do... So, like I work hard at school in order not to, like, disappoint my mother, especially my mother. I always want her to be happy with me in my school life, like 'Oh yeah, my first son, he's doing so well.'... I have cousins that live in UK, in the United Kingdom. They going to school good, and they doing very well as well, so, like, it's kinda like, if you are the one that is not doing well, that's not good" (lines 801-811). "I studied hard. I can be, I can do whatever I want" (line 891).

Self Determination Themes from Suah's Interview:

Autonomy. Living elsewhere, culture, occupied mind, perspective, anxiety, and ridicule were sub-themes of autonomy. Living in a different home in a different state sheltered Suah from

some of the marital conflict. “I wasn’t in there. I wasn’t inside the house” (line 550). “I was in [city name] then, you see, with my uncle, my father’s big, older brother” (line 232-233). “I used to live with them, so I think the isolation, you know, from what was going on in the house” (lines 367-368). Being born in a different culture intensified his experience, but, with his friends’ help, he became comfortable with who he was, developing autonomy through his identity. “Cultural clash, I think, you know, make... it more intense” (288-292), but “They would ask me to talk about my culture... They accepted me for who I am” (lines 1033, 1043). Keeping his mind occupied and reframing his perspective of the situation also helped him with resilience. “I tried my best not to think about it” (line 425). “I try to find things that that makes me forget about what is going on, you know. I try to like, I try to isolate myself from those problems” (lines 772-773). “When we’re all together, I remember the memories that I had in Africa. Back then he was a good father to me” (lines 465-466). “[my uncle] used a religious way to explain it. Maybe God just don’t mean for them to be together anymore. So things happen, you know? I mean, people marry, and they divorce, he said, but they are both your parent. I know, like, they both love you, you know. I know that for sure” (lines 966-968). Anxiety and ridicule were less pleasant parts of his autonomy, but those experiences shaped who he became. “I think it did give me a nervous problem, like anxiety problem” (line 408). “There were kids that were really mean to me. They used to like call me names like [unintelligible] or, like, something funny, just to make fun, fun of me at school. And, and all that blended together” (lines 405-407). “It’s African American kids, so it wasn’t like, like a different race, but it was, you know, African American kids” (line 1018-1019) “They always have this stereotypical villain, like you being African, and where you from and, and all that, so that’s also, like, contributed to a lot of my problems” (lines 498-500).

Despite the anxiety and ridicule, Suah believes that he is now in a better place. “All these guys, we still live in the same area. I see them around. It would be, they would be like, ‘What’s up, [Suah]?’ ... We don’t have the same personality. We don’t have the same type of friends around us. We don’t do, there’s nothing common between me and them, you know. It’s, I see them as people that [are] wasting their time every day, and like I have, I’m way out of that level” (lines 703-706). “That helped me... to become different” (line 711).

Competence. Resilience, reading, school, and success were areas where Suah developed competence. “You’re always part of the reality, so but, like if, you are isolated from it” (line 1125). “I used to go to library and read a lot” (line 389). “That helps me a lot, reading books. I used to read a lot at that time, and it also helped me as, as a African, ‘cause my language, my language, there was a lot of language barrier. My accent was heavy” (lines 660-662). His poorer English skills kept him out of the Honors program. “I didn’t get enough points to get into the honors program at my school. My language was a barrier” (lines 868-870), yet even though, “I wasn’t part of, like, any of the honors program at my high school, but I took all honors, and I took AP classes” (lines 854-855). “I came back to, I guess, to my own self” (lines 431-432).

Relatedness. Divorce, family, sports, and friends were relatedness sub-themes. “[My dad had a job] while he was young that he work at, but, like computer work. My mother used to make at the braiding shop, which is a braiding shop, which, basically, is mostly women work. There my dad don’t have any experience to work in a braiding shop. My mom was making more money” (lines 182-185). “That was a serious issue” (line 296). “I have family members that spoke a lot about what happened. They would always, like interfere, like, ‘Oh, [mother’s name] is leaving her husband.’ And it, it makes my mom look bad” (lines 357-359). “I didn’t have to

deal with the, the sense that I'm only staying with my mother, and I'm not staying with my father, you know. I didn't have to deal with the sense that I'm, I'm just staying with my father... With my uncle, you know, I mean he's a good guy. He's friends with my mother. My father is his brother. He's not gonna throw him away. That's his brother" (lines 914-918). Sports and friends allowed Suah to develop his identity both as an African and as an American. "I will tell about my childhood, like in [African country]. I used to go to the beach and play soccer there, and all those kind of things, and they would show interest in that, like, you know they always want me to talk about things like that" (lines 1035-1037). "Soccer, I played with my African friends. They, well, some of them lived far away, a little bit from where I lived. We used to play a lot. Soccer. Like once I get off from school, I'll just go to the soccer field, like, during the fall, play soccer" (lines 732-734).

Protective Factor Themes from Suah's Interview:

Individual. Resilience, success, reading, culture, occupied mind, perspective and anxiety were sub-themes for Suah's identified individual protective factors. These were described above.

Family. The sub-themes for family protective factors were living elsewhere, divorce, and family. The family category included his father, mother, a brief mention of his younger sister and brother, and his uncle and aunt, with whom he lived. These also were described above.

Community. The community sub-themes were school, friends, ridicule, and sports. Although ridicule is not necessarily a protective factor, Suah credited that with his difficulty making friends in middle school, which in turn influenced his choice of friends in high school. Those friends were a protective factor, helping him to become comfortable with and valued for

his African culture as well as encouraging him to take advanced classes. Therefore, I chose to include the ridicule theme in this category instead of as an outlier.

Summary.

Suah's immigration and parental divorce were two major life events that were entwined with each other. Suah's family came to the United States from Africa, but Suah went to live with his father's brother and his wife in a different state. This distanced him from his parents' conflict, but their divorce intensified his cultural challenges. As a boy from a Muslim family a couple of years after the infamous events of September 11th, he was teased and shamed for his faith, accent, and heritage. Meanwhile, his parents struggled to assimilate into American culture with his working mother earning more than his father after coming from a male-dominated culture where only his father worked. This was a difficult and challenging time for Suah, marring his middle school years. However, attending a different high school marked a turning point for Suah. There, he made friends with students who excelled at school and expressed fascination, instead of condemnation, with his culture. He felt free to be himself, and he pushed himself academically so he could be in the same classes with his new friends. Suah, like other participants, kept busy to keep his mind off his troubles. He played soccer, which also allowed him to socialize with his African friends, and he read, which improved his language abilities. He also played video games to escape, and briefly played football to get out his aggression. His relationship with his mother is physically distant, but they keep in touch by phone frequently. His relationship with father is distant physically and emotionally, and Suah was hurt that his father did not even call for his graduation. His aunt and uncle filled the parental roles for Suah, but they also helped him to understand his father as a victim of cultural and social change. Suah, too, has experienced

cultural and social change, but he believes that he is now a better and more serious person as a result. See Table 7 for a summary of Suah's data themes.

Table 8: Suah's Individual Case Analysis Summary

SUAH	Demographic Survey	Artwork #1: Divorce	Artwork #2: Resilience	Interview
First Review: General Themes	<i>Self-Description</i> – sad, depressed, stressful, extrovert, determined <i>Divorce Causes</i> – control, social changes <i>Response</i> – forget, interests, better person	<i>Parent Family</i> – father, mother, sister, control, jealous, money, phones <i>Uncle Family</i> – uncle, Suah	<i>Helpful</i> – read, soccer, basketball, videogames, friends, <i>Avoid</i> – arguing parents, out of zone	<i>Divorce</i> <i>Anxiety</i> <i>Resilience</i> <i>Living Elsewhere</i> <i>Culture</i> <i>Family Members</i> <i>Reading</i> <i>Sports</i> <i>School</i> <i>Ridicule</i> <i>Occupied Mind</i> <i>Perspective</i> <i>Friends</i> <i>Success</i>
Second Review: Self-Determination Themes	<i>Autonomy</i> – extrovert, determined <i>Competence</i> – forget, interests, better person <i>Relatedness</i> – sad, depressed, stressful, control, social changes	<i>Autonomy</i> -- Suah <i>Relatedness</i> – father, mother, sister, uncle, control, jealous, money, phones	<i>Autonomy</i> – videogames <i>Competence</i> – read <i>Relatedness</i> – soccer, basketball, friends, arguing parents, out of zone	<i>Autonomy</i> – Living elsewhere, culture, occupied mind, perspective, anxiety, ridicule <i>Competence</i> – resilience, reading, school, success <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, family, sports, friends
Third Review: Protective Factor Themes	<i>Individual</i> – extrovert, determined, forget, better person <i>Family</i> – sad, depressed, stressful, control, social changes <i>Community</i> – interests	<i>Individual</i> – Suah <i>Family</i> – father, mother, sister, uncle, control, jealous, money, phones	<i>Individual</i> – read, videogames <i>Family</i> – friends, arguing parents, out of zone <i>Community</i> – soccer, basketball	<i>Individual</i> – resilience, success, reading, culture, occupied mind, perspective, anxiety <i>Family</i> – living elsewhere, divorce, family <i>Community</i> – school, friends, ridicule, sports

Participant #4: Craig

Craig was a nineteen-year-old Caucasian male at the time of the interview. He was the oldest of four children, one brother and two step-siblings from his mother's second marriage.

Demographic Survey.

He described himself as, "6'2", 205, curly light brown hair. athletic. funny. intelligent. complacent. talented. quick-learner. organized. long-tempered. pessimist." His parents' divorce occurred when he was seven, and he described it as, "peaceful yet disturbing, a wise decision. calm process." He thought that an important difference between his parents' divorce and other divorces was that, "my single parents cooperated very well and contributed to my upbringing equally after the divorce. I also had more of a sense about what was going on, which made me more effective in dealing with the divorce." He used the words startling, confusing, and guilty to describe the divorce and rated himself as a 3 after the divorce.

Using Craig's words and phrases, the following codes were identified from the Demographic Surveys: startling, confusing, guilty, athletic, funny, intelligent, complacent, talented, quick-learner, organized, long-tempered, pessimist, peaceful yet disturbing, wise decision, calm process, cooperation, and understood. These codes were divided into three general themes: divorce, after the divorce, and his self-description. The codes were then also categorized into self determination themes, and protective factor themes. No community protective factors were identified.

General Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Divorce – startling, confusing, guilty, peaceful yet disturbing

After Divorce – wise decision, calm process, cooperation, understood

Self-Description – athletic, funny, intelligent, complacent, talented, quick-learner, organized, long-tempered, pessimist

Self Determination Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Autonomy –complacent, long-tempered

Competence – peaceful yet disturbing, wise decision, understood, athletic, funny, intelligent, talented, quick-learner, organized

Relatedness – calm process, cooperation

Protective Factor Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Individual – startling, confusing, guilty, athletic, funny, intelligent, complacent, talented, quick-learner, organized, long-tempered, pessimist, understood

Family – peaceful yet disturbing, wise decision, calm process, cooperation,

Community – none

Artwork #1.

Craig drew a picture of a ripped heart with the words, “Arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy, [stress] ...things in general that I’ve seen.” He did not describe the drawing specifically related to his own family, but described divorce generally. See Figure 15.

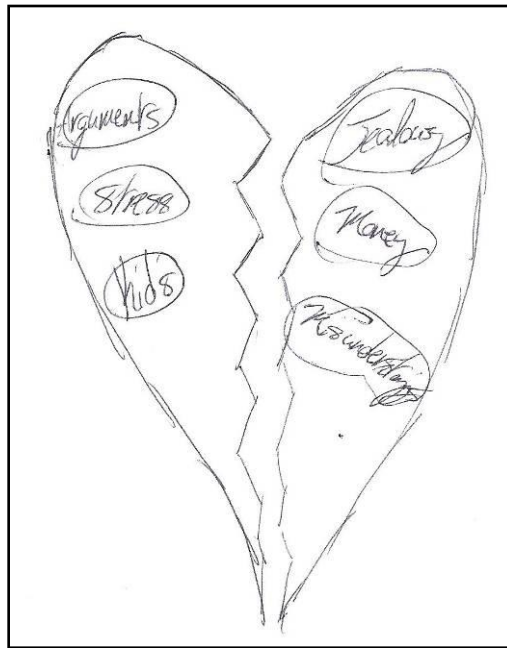


Figure 15: Craig's "Divorce" Artwork

The codes were selected from his drawing and description and included: ripped heart, arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy, and stress. All but the ripped heart were things that Craig described as contributing to divorce so they were included under that general theme. No themes were identified for autonomy, competence, individual, or community.

General Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Ripped heart

Contribute to divorce – arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy, stress

Self Determination Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Autonomy – none

Competence – none

Relatedness – ripped heart, arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy, stress

Protective Factor Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Individual – none

Family – ripped heart, arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy, stress

Community – none

Artwork #2.

Craig drew a flowering plant with a root system underground. He added a sun to the top right corner and a rock underground. He described it as, “This is gonna be the flower, like, finally comin’ up, and it’s comin’ up through all the dark, hard to get through places, like all the rock, all that kind of stuff. It’s comin’ up, and then the sunshine when it gets out of the ground.”

See Figure 16.

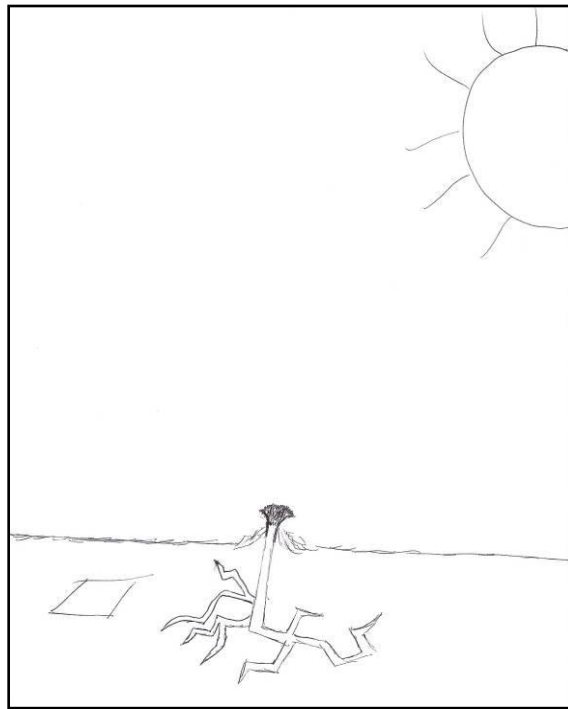


Figure 16: Craig's "Resilience" Artwork

The codes were selected by combining the drawing and Craig's verbal description of the artwork. The codes for his second piece of artwork were flower, roots, hard places, and sun. As I analyzed his artwork, there seemed to be two parts, the plant and things apart from the plant, so that became the two general themes. I interpreted the plant as symbolizing Craig, the roots as his family connection, and the hard places and sun as things outside the family.

General Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Plant – flower, roots

Outside the plant – hard places, sun

Self Determination Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Autonomy – plant

Competence – hard places, sun

Relatedness – roots

Protective Factor Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Individual – plant

Family – roots

Community – hard places, sun

Interview.

Craig was intelligent, articulate, and conversational. He wore a ball cap, and was heading to an exam after the interview, but he felt prepared for it, which seemed to capture his approach to many things. He was thoughtful in his responses. Craig was enthusiastic about his major and optimistic about his future career options. When he described his family, it was with warmth and caring.

General Themes from Craig's Interview:

Divorce. “My mom and dad got married when my dad was twenty. My mom was nineteen, like, my mom had me when she was nineteen years old” (lines 581-582). “I just remember them arguing, they just started arguing a little more and more, like more frequently and then I can remember the day like it was yesterday. Me and my brother were sitting on the couch in the living room, and it was night and we were just watching TV, and we heard them in there arguing. And then that’s when my dad came in there and told us that they were getting a divorce” (lines 160-164). “I just was really confused” (line 195). “Well, at first, ‘cause I was that young, I didn’t really know what a divorce was. I knew people could get split up, but I’d never heard the term divorce” (lines 176-177). “I didn’t understand why, because I mean was, I argued

with people, too, but it was, just like then I was little, so I didn't see, like, that was a reason to get a divorce at all. And I'm sure there was stuff going on at the time that I didn't know" (lines 179-181). "At first it was kinda weird. I guess, for number one it was weird, is because my mom moved on the same street, just right down the street a little bit, and it was just weird because we would have two different sets of clothes, one at one house, one at the other house. We would have different TVs. We would have different things we would do at each house, and it was just hard gettin' used to" (lines 215-219). "But after a while, things got, we got down to a normal routine of things, so I guess it wasn't really that big of a deal. After that, it took, I'd say, probably about a half a year, and then it was pretty normal" (lines 225-227).

Amicable Divorce. One theme that was unique to Craig was his parents' amicable divorce, marked by high levels of cooperation. "My parents did get a divorce but it wasn't one of those divorces that was really, like, that you hear about all the time, like fought out and blah, blah, blah even after they got divorced. They would still, like, cooperate very well" (lines 102-105). "They still talk about us every day. Like if we're having problems, they'll talk about it with each other, what they should do to help us out, whatever, and it's, like, as far as, like, school and stuff they split everything. Nothing, like as far as money goes, they split everything with us. It's not like one having to pay it alone" (lines 232-235). "They talked about it very well, and still talk, and have, like, a good relationship. They just weren't married and didn't live together. So they still cooperated, like to see us equally, and made sure we were happy. And so that really showed me a lot" (lines 107-109). "My dad got remarried, and my mom got remarried, and they're happy for each other. And they still talk probably every day, like communicate, and they both have a good relationship. Like my dad has a good relationship with my stepdad, like, they

like each other, and then vice versa with my mom and stepmom. So, that's probably helped me out, too. Seein' that they could actually try it again, and they made the right decision, and they could be happy with somebody else" (lines 347-351). "And so another thing that helped me bounce back was, again, seeing how well my mom and dad got along after their divorce. Like they saw that they couldn't make it work living together and being married, but they knew they could still be friends, and they did that for the betterment of me and my brother's, like, future" (lines 307-310).

Resilience. "I think I bounce back very well" (line 91). "Seeing that I could be there for my mom, seeing I could be there for my family when I was still not that old, and just seeing that I could do that made me have more, I guess, confidence. And I guess that all, like, together made me more resilient" (lines 261-264). Craig told me about the time when his great-grandmother, a close family member, died about a year after the divorce. "I guess, that's really a time that I would pinpoint where I was resilient. And it, it did hurt me, but I think it also made me stronger, too" (lines 256-257). "Other good that's come out of it, I think it's made me have a better sense of reality and not have a false sense of, like, security in this in the world, and, like, be ready. That it's made me ready for bad stuff that's gonna happen, like stuff that comes my way, and I'm prepared for it" (lines 555-558).

Family Members. His family was comprised of the sub-themes Mom, Dad, Brother, Grandma, and Great-Grandma. "Something just clicked in me, and I was there for my mom" (line 253). "I would do certain things that I could do that my mom couldn't do around the house. That my dad would normally do, but he wasn't there, so I would have to do it" (lines 302-303). "Simple examples would be like her not, her workin' late in the office, and me keepin' my

brother at home. Me, maybe she would even give me money, and I could order pizza, order dinner for me and my brother before she got home, so when she got home it'd already be there. We would've already eaten. Stuff like mowin' the grass for her when she was doin' other stuff. Just stuff that, like, normally an older male would do at his house, but I was doin' it at a younger age" (lines 381-386). "Of course, my dad was single again" (line 580). "So after they divorced, he was still, like, a young man, like he wasn't old at all. So he would go out, you know, do whatever, do what single guys do that are young. He would go out to bars, whatever, not anything bad, but just go out on the town, you know" (lines 594-596). "My grandma, she's my mom's mom" (line 321). "My grandma would be there when that stuff happened. She would always keep us, and she would never, just in case my dad was intoxicated when he came back, she would never let us see him or anything, 'cause that's just not stuff, like, a kid should see, especially from their dad that's now their only dad, like, their single dad now" (lines 600-603). "When [it] started [to] affect our relationship with him, that's when she would say something. But as, as long as he was smart about it, she was always supportive. And whatever he wanted to do, like after him and my mom got divorced" (lines 622-624). "She was just as close with my dad almost as she was with my mom. Like they were, like the whole family is like that" (lines 628-629). "My mom's grandma and they're, we were extremely close to her and my grandma. We would go over to her house at least two or three times a week. And she died, and that really tore my mom up, and me, too" (lines 250-252). His brother was "three years younger. He's... in high school, and I think it helped me that he didn't know what was goin' on, because he didn't really show, like, cause he didn't know, like, that it affected him that much. And he just went about his day as normal, and so that really helped me to not think about it as much" (lines 97-

101). “He is probably the most laid back person you’ll ever meet in your life” (line 404). “People kinda just knew, like, that he was my brother, and not to mess with him or anything... like that. But I’d still definitely watch out for him as far as, like, what he’s doin’ on the weekends, stuff like that. Like makin’ sure he’s not, definitely not doin’ anything he shouldn’t be doin’, like he’s headin’ down the right path instead of gettin’ into stuff he shouldn’t be” (lines 502-506).

Perspective. Craig’s perspective on the divorce was the final theme. “That really just made me realize that it’s not the end of the world, and it’s not, like, good can come of it. Instead of it bein’ all bad and gloomy and depressing, like, I can see how well they worked it out. And it can be a good, a really big, positive influence on me” (lines 315-317).

Self Determination Themes from Craig’s Interview:

Autonomy. The autonomy sub-themes were reaction to the divorce and resilience. “I think I wasn’t as hurt or as bad because they weren’t as, like, uptight and yelling and screaming about getting a divorce” (lines 196-197). “After a while things got, we got down to a normal routine” (line 225). “Resilience is something you draw, like you can’t really come up with, like, one specific exact meaning for this. And one, this is something that you draw from within yourself, and you, like, interpret your own way instead of, like, having exact definitions and reasons for something. This is [how] you interpret yourself, and you use it to help yourself. Other people don’t really have to understand it” (lines 703-707). “You can always bounce back from it, and always make it to a good thing, and I guess that’s kinda what the definition of resilience is” (lines 524-525).

Competence. Craig’s perspective was a sub-theme for competence. “I was really sad, but then I thought about, like, we just have to move on” (line 254). “Next time something happens,

that I can be there, and I can be there and I can be strong” (lines 268-269). “When I was, of course, that age I never thought, I thought my parents were happy. Like I never knew they were gonna get a divorce at all, so that kinda shook me at first. And then when I saw how they worked through it, of course that made me, like, that made me feel a lot better about it. So now when stuff happens in life, I’m just more, I’m more prepared and I’m more able to deal with it” (lines 559-563).

Relatedness. The sub-themes of divorce, amicable divorce, and family were in the relatedness category for Craig’s interview. “It was just hard gettin’ used to [the divorce]. It was like when I was with my mom at her house, and I was playing outside, and my brother wasn’t there, and I wanted somebody to throw, like a baseball with me or something. And then nobody was there, ‘cause usually that’d be my dad already coming home. And where I’d be at my mom’s, I mean, I’d be at my dad’s, and I would get hurt or something, and I would immediately look for my mom, and she wouldn’t be there. So I guess that was kinda weird and hard to get used to” (lines 219-224). “They were really good at organizing stuff, like when it’s Christmas time, we had a night with my dad and a night with my mom, and they rotate every year. Like one year I’ll be with my mom on Christmas Eve, and then I’ll go to my dad’s on Christmas Day. And then the next year, it will be flip flopped. And it’s like that with every holiday. So they got that organized pretty well” (lines 228-323). In addition to his mother, father, and brother, Craig said his grandmother contributed to his resilience. “She’s a big part of my life. Still, even today she calls me, probably every day. I’m in college. And she just, she was always there. She would come over and cook meals, ‘cause then, of course, my mom was a single mom, so she was working late hours. My grandma would come over and cook meals and babysit us and take care

of us and take us out to do things, and she was just really a big, a big part of my life. I could go to her whenever I needed to talk about somethin', like about even my mom or my dad. I could go to her and just talk about it, and she would give me good advice. She's very wise, and she's been through a lot, and she, she's really one of the main reasons that helped me through it, too. My grandma" (lines 325-332).

Protective Factor Themes from Craig's Interview:

Individual. Three sub-themes developed in the individual protective factor category: reaction to divorce, resilience, and perspective. Craig's initial reaction, as outlined above, was confusion and shock, but he later viewed the divorce as good for his parents and something that made him stronger. "That's probably helped me out, too, seein' that they could actually try it again, and they made the right decision, and they could be happy with somebody else, and seeing how well they work together, like all the families, like work together" (lines 350-353). "I've seen that they, they made the right decision, because now they're both remarried, and they're both really happy now" (lines 344-345). His perspective helped as well. "For one, I get double Christmas presents every year" (line 539). "Knowing that it was the right decision, and me thinkin' that it really helped me to have, no not really regrets, but, like, no regrets for my parents. And not really doubt what they did. And so it helped me move on" (lines 643-646).

Family. The family sub-themes were divorce, amicable divorce, and family. "Everything I've seen up to that point of people splittin' up and not bein' married anymore was really, not violent in the sense of like physically, but it was really violent as far as arguing. And it was really dirty, as in, like, the divorce process and stuff like that, and so I guess I figured my dad told me that that was what was comin', so I was gettin' myself prepared for that" (lines 513-

517), but “I saw them working together” (line 314). “Of course, at first it hurt, but then, like, I saw just how, they were just cooperating” (lines 109-110). It also helped “seeing that I could be there for my mom, seeing I could be there for my family when I was still not that old” (261-262). “My brother being young and innocent and not really knowing what was goin’ on, and that really helped me. And I was just, I could just kinda get away when I was with him, and we could go off and do our own thing, and he wouldn’t really know what was goin’ on. So it was just like we were playing like normal” (lines 281-284).

Community. Craig’s interview did not reveal any community themes.

Summary.

Craig’s parents divorced when he was seven, making him the youngest participant when his parents divorced. Although the divorce was shocking, confusing, and disruptive for him at the time, he now believes that it was the best thing for his parents. The divorce was more of a process than an event for Craig. It began with arguing, then his parents told him and his brother that they were divorcing, then they adjusted to multiple houses on the same street, then his parents began dating and eventually marrying other people. Craig relied on his family to help him through. His great-grandmother and grandmother helped with babysitting, cooking, and other responsibilities. His grandmother also provided an ear when Craig needed to talk. Because she maintained a relationship with her former son-in-law and supported his reemergence into the dating scene, Craig did not feel divided loyalties when he confided in her. Since he was the oldest, Craig adapted and took on the “man of the house” role when he was with his mother. Taking care of his mom and brother helped him to feel strong and confident. Because his parents were cooperative and supportive of each other after they separated, Craig seemed to receive most

of his resilience support from a close family, not the community, which also shaped his positive perspective after the divorce. Unlike the other participants, his relationship with his dad did not become more distant after the divorce. See Table 8 for a summary of Craig's data themes.

Table 9: Craig's Individual Case Analysis Summary

CRAIG	Demographic Survey	Artwork #1: Divorce	Artwork #2: Resilience	Interview
First Review: General Themes	<i>Divorce</i> – startling, confusing, guilty, peaceful yet disturbing <i>After Divorce</i> – wise decision, calm process, cooperation, understood <i>Self-Description</i> – athletic, funny, intelligent, complacent, talented, quick-learner, organized, long-tempered, pessimist	<i>Ripped heart</i> <i>Contribute to divorce</i> – arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy, stress	<i>Plant</i> – flower, roots <i>Outside the plant</i> – hard places, sun	<i>Divorce</i> <i>Amicable Divorce</i> – cooperation <i>Resilience</i> <i>Family Members</i> – Mom, Dad, Brother, Grandma, Great-Grandma <i>Perspective</i>
Second Review: Self-Determination Themes	<i>Autonomy</i> – complacent, long-tempered <i>Competence</i> – peaceful yet disturbing, wise decision, understood, athletic, funny, intelligent, talented, quick-learner, organized <i>Relatedness</i> – calm process, cooperation	<i>Relatedness</i> – ripped heart, arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy	<i>Autonomy</i> – plant, <i>Competence</i> – hard places, sun <i>Relatedness</i> – roots	<i>Autonomy</i> – reaction to divorce, resilience <i>Competence</i> – perspective <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, amicable divorce, family
Third Review: Protective Factor Themes	<i>Individual</i> – startling, confusing, guilty, athletic, funny, intelligent, complacent, talented, quick-learner, organized, long-tempered, pessimist, understood <i>Family</i> – peaceful yet disturbing, wise decision, calm process, cooperation	<i>Family</i> – ripped heart, arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy	<i>Individual</i> – plant <i>Family</i> – roots <i>Community</i> – hard places, sun	<i>Individual</i> – reaction to divorce, resilience, perspective <i>Family</i> – divorce, amicable divorce, family, Mom, Dad

Participant #5: Rob

Rob was an eighteen-year-old male at the time of the interview. He listed two black cultural groups as his race. He was the youngest of three children with two older brothers, one of whom had a different father.

Demographic Survey.

He described himself as, “I am an introvert, but I open up very well to people that I get to know.” His parents’ divorce occurred when he was ten, which he described as, “My parent’s divorce was very difficult for my mom at first, but after a while, she finally got over the situation and started a better life without my father.” He thought that an important difference between his parents’ divorce and other divorces was that, “My experience with my parents’ divorce had a positive impact on my life because my mom was happier, and I had the ability to do things that I wanted to after their divorce than before their divorce. I think other children have a negative effect of their parents’ divorce because they are discouraged about the situation.” He used the words difficult, stressful, and content to describe the divorce and rated himself as a 10 after the divorce, the highest post-divorce rating of all of the participants.

The codes identified from his Demographic Surveys were difficult, stressful, content, introvert, Mom, without father, better life, and positive impact. These codes were categorized into the general themes of divorce, family, and personal. Those related to the divorce were also categorized as relatedness themes and family protective factor themes.

General Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Divorce – difficult, stressful, content, introvert, better life, positive impact

Family Members – Mom, without father

Personal – Introvert

Self Determination Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Autonomy – introvert

Competence – positive impact

Relatedness – difficult, stressful, content, Mom, without father, better life

Protective Factor Themes from the Demographic Surveys:

Individual – introvert

Family – difficult, stressful, content, Mom, without father, better life, positive impact

Community – none

Artwork #1.

Rob drew a picture of a family divided by a “big wall, a separation.” The father was on one side, and the mother and her children were on the other side. See Figure 17.

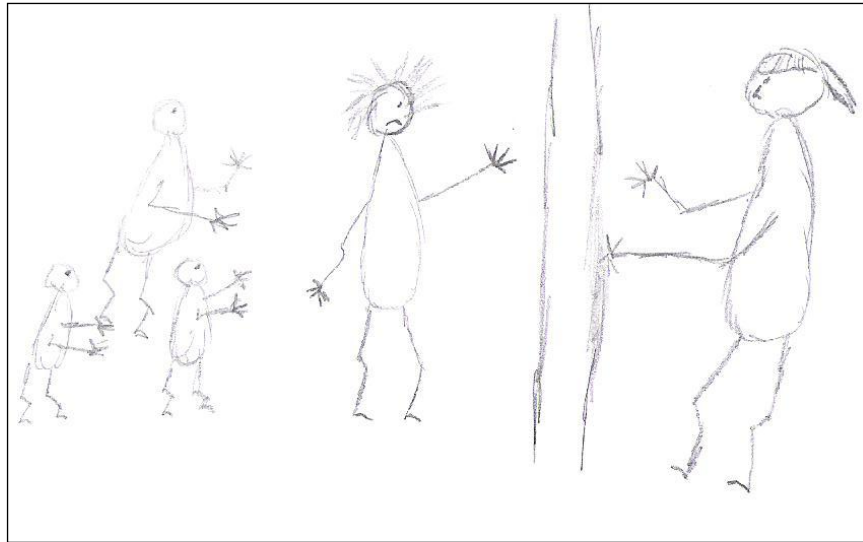


Figure 17: Rob's "Divorce" Artwork

The codes were selected from his drawing and description and included father, mother, children, wall, and separation. The general themes developed were separation (separation and wall) and family members (father, mother, and children). All the codes were categorized as relatedness and family protective factors because they related to the divorce, so no themes were developed for the typologies of autonomy, competence, individual, or community.

General Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Separation – separation, wall

Family Members – father, mother, children

Self Determination Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Autonomy – none

Competence – none

Relatedness – father, mother, children, wall, separation

Protective Factor Themes from the Divorce Artwork:

Individual – none

Family – father, mother, children, wall, separation

Community – none

Artwork #2.

Rob drew an airplane in what he called “five phases” as a metaphor for resilience. In phase one, “it’s flying,” and in phase two the “airplane [is] crashing.” In phase three, he drew a grounded plane being worked on. Phase four has “the plane taking back off,” and phase five “is fly higher than before.” He described it in relation to his own family as, “Before the divorce, like, the plane was ...in the air but as the divorce, you know, took action or occurred, it was pretty much falling downhill. ...Time went on and we had to take time to repair ourselves and get ourselves together. And then after a while with my mom having, like, free time and my dad not coming around as much, the plane pretty much was, like, on the runway about to take back off. And then now, like higher than before,” See Figure 18.

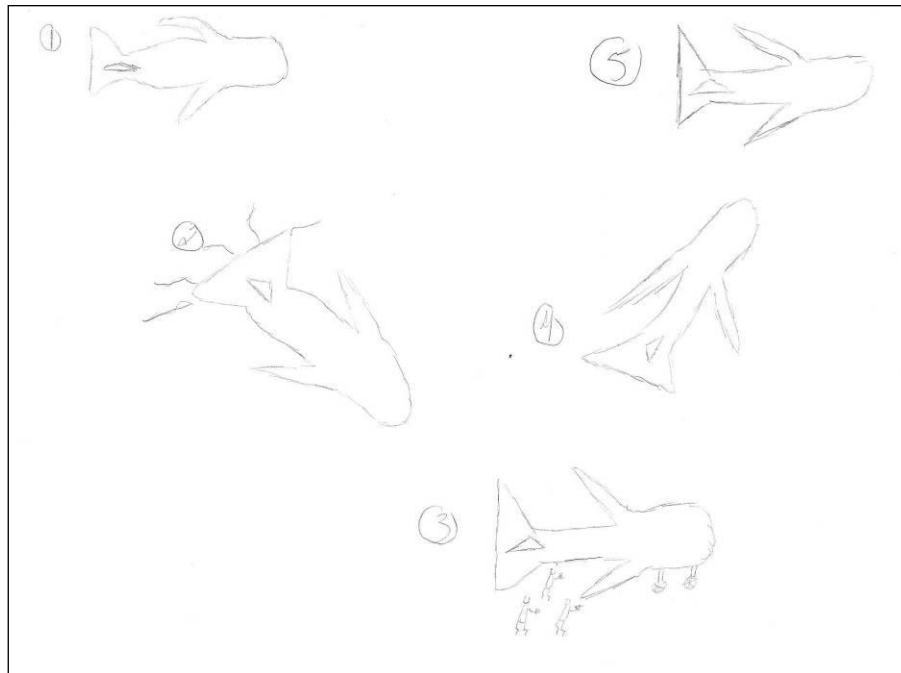


Figure 18: Rob's "Resilience" Artwork

The codes for his second piece of artwork were airplane, phases, flying, crashing, worked on, taking back off, and flying higher. I used his description of phases of resilience as the general theme for the codes. I chose to categorize the code of airplane as representing Rob, but I was not sure whether Rob intended the airplane to represent himself individually or to represent his remaining family collectively. Although I chose to code it individually, I placed a question mark (?) by the code to indicate my uncertainty about Rob's intent. No community themes were identified.

General Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Phases of resilience – airplane, phases, flying, crashing, worked on, taking back off, flying higher

Self Determination Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Autonomy – airplane (?)

Competence – phases, flying, flying higher

Relatedness –crashing, worked on, taking back off

Protective Factor Themes from the Resilience Artwork:

Individual – airplane (?)

Family –flying, crashing, worked on, taking back off, flying higher

Community – none

Interview.

Rob came to the interview, prompt and ready to participate. He smiled a lot, and described a very busy and demanding schedule. He had lengthy pauses before the drawings to think through what he wanted to put on paper, and perhaps because he was nervous about his drawing ability. However, during the interview, he spoke with confidence and placed a great value on his family (mother and brothers). He was part of a leadership program for freshman.

General Themes from Rob's Interview:

Divorce. When Rob described the divorce, he talked about a lot of drama. He said, “Things just fell apart between them, and so my mom, she requested that they got a divorce. And, like, pretty much during the same time that they, like, got the divorce, it was, like it was just terrible, because, like, both of their names was on the house, and, like, my dad leavin’ had to go somewhere else. It was just like a lot of drama, just within the household basically. My dad like tryin’ to come back, and just pretty much a lot of drama” (lines 159-164). “After a while it settled down” (line 165). He said, “Since the divorce, we’ve been actually progressing instead of,

you know, everything just falling apart between us” (lines 175-176). “The reason I said my mom and everything’s been goin’ so well since the divorce is because when they got the divorce, you know, I said my mom had more free time, and so she had a chance to go back to school and get a nice job to pay for the house. And we started getting valuable things that we wanted. I know me personally, I started getting everything that I wanted, just started getting clothes that I wanted, gadgets that I wanted, and that’s why I would say, like, it’s been goin’ very, very, very well since the divorce” (lines 451-460).

Moving Event. Rob talked about two main events: the divorce and moving from a duplex in a lower socioeconomic part of town to a house his parents purchased. These events were intertwined, and Rob seemed to associate his parents’ marital trouble and the move, perhaps simply because of timing. “They bought a house, ‘cause we was livin’ in a duplex at first, and so we had finally moved and bought a house in a different neighborhood” (lines 154-156). “It was mandatory that they get the house, but they really didn’t have any money or anything” (lines 449-450). “Pretty much before the divorce when my parents were still together, you know, I told you that we lived in, like, a duplex, and we was, we were, like, really, really, really, well, we were, like, in, you know, lowest of the low class, and there was a lot of things that we couldn’t afford. And so once we moved and got the house, it was like they could barely afford the house, but we needed the house, because the duplex, it was like 5 of us in the duplex, and it was limited space” (lines 440-445).

Family Members. Rob’s family members included his dad, mom, and two older brothers, so they comprised the sub-themes, but when he talked about his family, he meant his mother and brothers. “I know once my parents divorced, I still had my brothers and my mom” (lines 270-

271). “My mom, she always played, like, the mother and father role in the house” (line 166). Rob had a tremendous amount of respect for his mother. “My mom she’s a very hard worker. I mean, she’ll work two or three jobs if she had to just to make sure that she’s supporting her kids and herself and we have a house and food and clothes and, like, she always been like that. Even when I talked to my grandparents, they say that she’s always been like that” (lines 318-321). In addition to working, she also went back to school, which was a big influence for Rob. “Like with her takin’ her classes, it helped better her and me at the same time, because, like, even though she was takin’ classes, she was still, she was a learner and teacher at the same time, because what she was learnin’, she was comin’ back and teachin’ me and my brothers, or my brothers and I” (lines 307-310). He also respected his brothers’ work ethic. His oldest brother, “stepped up to the plate, and basically took care of my older brother and I, and he went out and got a job and everything on his own. Like, my mom never requested for him to work. He just went out and took initiative, like, just to support my brother and I and my mom and help out around the house” (lines 171-174). “When I was younger, I didn’t look at, look at him as bein’, like, my oldest brother. I looked at him bein’ more like a father figure in the home, because he did so much. Like, he had so many jobs and he was only 16. So there wasn’t much that he could do, like a big job that he could really get, but he did, like, a lot of small jobs, like, just to add up, you know, the money, just to pitch in to my mom. And so I looked at him as, you know, playin’ the father role in my home. And he, he made sure that we were taken care of. We had plenty of clothes. He made sure, he made sure we had food in the house” (lines 403-409). His middle brother, “To this day he does the same thing that my oldest brother does. Like, he makes sure everything is taken care of. He does that. He plays the exact same role” (lines 426-427). Rob’s relationship with his

father is another matter. “I still try to communicate with my dad, but it is like, that I know more of what happened, and it, I just really can’t have that connection with him because I know what he has done” (lines 253-255). “Ever since the divorce happened... [I] really didn’t talk to my dad that much” (lines 222-223) and “My brothers they don’t talk to my dad at all.” (lines 232-233).

Perspective. Rob had a perspective that was influenced by the divorce. “I guess it opened my eyes more, ‘cause I, like, I hear my brothers talkin’ and I hear the terminology and things that they using, their perspective about the divorce and how they felt, and I guess it kinda opened my eyes more, and it made me grow up faster “ (lines 465-468). “I matured a lot and ... as you get older, you know, these, you notice things that you didn’t notice when you was younger. Like you become more wise about why things happen” (250-252), he said, “But it actually, it came out to be a positive outcome” (line 178).

Inner Drive. Rob was motivated to achieve by his mother, but he internalized that drive. “It started when I was younger, but as I got older, she didn’t have to tell me all those things, because it was, like, already inside of me. I knew what I had to do” (lines 339-341). He said, “Well, first you get good grades. Then success... [is] just a powerful feeling” (lines 346-347).

Occupied Mind. One of the things that Rob thought helped him to be resilient was keeping his mind off the divorce. “I guess it takes your mind off of the situation, you know, having a social life, and so that’s pretty much it” (line 274). He also said, “Work. It took my mind off it” (line 522).

Friends. Rob had two groups of influential friends. The first group was school friends. “I had close friends in my schools” (line 273). “I think it was a lot easier when you have friends that you can talk to about the situation, and, like, they can relate to what you’re goin’ through”

(lines 283-284). “The people I hung around, they were, like, in the same situation that I was in with divorce” (line 486). About one of his close school friends, Rob said, “We were the same because our fathers were gone, and, like, we have, we had positive role model brothers who just, we were watchin’ all the time. And so it was, we were, like, in the same boat” (lines 491-493). The second group of influential friends was his brothers’ friends. “I know when I was younger I never really hung around people my own age. I hung around my brothers’ friends and played sports with them. And so... I was, like, ahead of my time” (lines 462-464). “Just me and my brothers hangin’ with my brothers friends, like an older generation keepin’ me wiser” (lines 276-277). They helped him because, “They were role models, and so I guess just following in their footsteps and just being around them” (lines 469-470). They were “very positive role models” (line 475).

School. Excelling at school helped Rob as well, but his motivation was often to please his mother. “Plenty of times I worked hard for my mom just by completing courses in school” (lines 357-358). “She know her children, like, she can recognize the potential in them, like what we do. She know we can do better, and we, like, if we just barely attempted anything or just gave the bare minimum or. So basically, with my grades and work, like, sometimes I come in the house on my report card, and I have probably like a high C, like a C+, and she would literally be mad at me, because I had a C, or even a low B. And especially, like, if it’s a class that she know that I can just ace. And she would really get on me. She’d be, like, I need to pick my grades up and, like, do this and do that. And then, like, I fear her. So when I came back in my report card the next time, I had an A” (lines 331-338).

Work. Like his brothers before him, Rob also worked to contribute to the family. “How it feels to, you know, work and bring back to the family and provide for yourself and family. I think that was a big factor. Knowin’ how it feels to have someone to do it for you and so, and also knowin’ how it feels to you now. Put smiles on important people’s faces, like people who really matter to you in your life” (lines 523-525). “Work was a big factor that I could, you know, maintain the job and work hard at maintaining the job. Then, my havin’ great attendance and a great attitude” (lines 528-529).

Sports. Rob was passionate about basketball, and played often with his brothers and their friends. “I went with them. You know, they’re basketball fanatics as well, so I went with them. Played ball all day with them and their friends, and we played basketball all day” (lines 543-544). He also played on a league team. “We played in different tournaments, and I played for this team called [name of the team], and we won like almost every tournament” (lines 567-568). “I got involved in basketball camps” (line 507) and “playing basketball all day” (line 499).

Ministries. “I got involved with this ministry called [name of the ministry], and eventually it changed to [name], and it changed again to [name] now. And we went to all these different Christian camps... it’s like for middle school students” (lines 573-576), and “then within the same ministry, it’s like a bigger thing, like all over the country. It’s called Young Life” (lines 580-581). He traveled to “Christian camps. Like, you have a lot of fun, but at the same time you learn about, you know, the *Bible* and all of that” (lines 590-591). “But I learned about God myself, and tried to give my life to Christ and all, and basically just became my own person” (lines 603-604).

Self Determination Themes from Rob's Interview:

Autonomy. The sub-themes that developed from Rob's interview for autonomy included perspective and occupied mind. His perspective on the divorce was, "I think that it, my dad, just pretty much, like, held my mom from doing a lot of things that she wanted to achieve, and so when she had, like, the freedom to herself and with just us, in like, and focus more on us as her children, and, like, help us with school more" (lines 183-186). "I know it probably seems like a bad reason, but it actually it came out to be a positive outcome" (lines 177-178). Keeping an occupied mind helped him as well. "It takes your mind off of the situation" (line 274).

Competence. The sub-themes for competence were resilience, school, inner drive, work, and developing his own faith. He talked about resilience specifically when describing his family related to his second drawing and flying "higher than before" (line 658). Rob demonstrated competence with school. "I remember tryin' to do some of her [his mom's college] homework" (line 305). School tied in with his inner drive to succeed. "First you get good grades. Then success really, and success is just, it's just a powerful feeling" (lines 346-347). Working was another area of competence. "I was noticin', like, that my mom was strugglin', and so I got involved in this program at... [a local] Community College. And it was a summer employment program. And so I had signed up for that, and I started workin' at this Doggie Daycare, and it was fun" (lines 377-380). "If you worked well enough, then they'll consider hiring you, hiring you permanently, and so basically, within those six weeks, I worked very hard just so I can have a permanent position at the job. And pretty much, I accomplished my goal" (lines 385-387). His faith development also was an area of competence. "My mom, she was always, well, she would always, like, go to church, and me bein' younger, you know, I just went to church just to go with

her because she wanted me to go. But I learned about God myself and tried to give my life to Christ” (lines 600-603).

Relatedness. The sub-themes for relatedness were divorce, moving event, family, friends, sports, and ministries. In each of these areas, relationships with others were important. For example, when talking about what it was like after the divorce, he talked about his remaining family in plural instead of about himself individually. “Basically, since the divorce we’ve been actually progressing instead of, you know, everything just falling apart between us” (lines 175-176). The same was true when talking about moving to a house. “They could barely afford the house, but we needed the house” (line 444). Relationships with his mother and two older brothers were important. “I know once my parents divorced, I still had my brothers and my mom, like my brothers, even though we was young and we fought a lot, like daily as we grew older, we had formed these closer friendships” (lines 270-272). His friends were another relational connection. “Close friends, they pretty much know exactly what you’re goin’ through” (lines 288-289). His brothers’ friends and sports were also relational. “I went with them [my brothers]. Played ball all day with them and their friends” (lines 543-544). With city ministries, youth camps and Young Life, Rob socialized and said, “It’s really fun” (line 595).

Protective Factor Themes from Rob’s Interview:

Individual. Resilience, perspective, occupied mind, inner drive, and for Mom were sub-themes for individual protective factors. His description of resilience was flying “higher than before” (line 658). His perspective on the divorce was, “As you get older... you become more wise about why things happen” (lines 251-252), “and that’s why I would say, like, it’s been goin’ very, very, very well since the divorce” (line 456). “It takes your mind off of the situation” (line

274) helped him to cope with the divorce. His inner-drive was an individual quality. “It started when I was younger, but as I got older, she [my mom] didn’t have to tell me all those things, because it was, like, already inside of me. I knew what I had to do” (lines 339-341). His mom also motivated him to work hard. “I went to work for my mom just to, basically like, give something back to her, because I feel that she deserved more... I’ve always been a hard worker in school, just because I love to see my mom happy” (lines 217-221).

Family. The divorce, moving event, and family were sub-themes of the family protective factor. These were discussed in the family general theme section above.

Community. Factors outside the family were also helpful to Rob. He identified school, work, friends, sports, and ministries as things that helped him to be resilient, so they were sub-themes of community protective factors. These also have been described above.

Summary.

Rob has combined the two events of his parents’ divorce and purchasing a house together in his mind. Both were plagued with financial issues and occurred about the same time. However, unlike the literature on children of divorce indicates, Rob believed that things were better financially after the divorce. His mom was able to work and go back to school. Work was a strong family value, and Rob esteemed how his mom worked to provide for them and how his brothers took jobs to help as well. He was proud of his opportunity to work and help support the family. Rob’s admiration and respect for his mom and brothers fueled his inner drive to succeed. He wanted to please his mother and help take care of his family. He knew firsthand what it felt like to receive support from his brothers as they stepped up to contribute to the family, but he also knew the accomplishment of stepping up himself by getting a job to help his family. He

viewed his oldest brother as a father figure, and looked up to his brothers' friends. They served as mentors for him and, he believes, kept him out of trouble. His friends at school, especially those who also had divorced parents, helped him. Rob, like other participants, tried to stay busy as a strategy for keeping his mind off the divorce. He played a lot of basketball, worked hard at school, and socialized to stay busy. He was also involved in ministries, youth camps, and Young Life. He tried to maintain a relationship with his father, but what Rob believes his father did to contribute to the divorce left the relationship distant. His brother did not maintain contact with him at all, but Rob wanted to maintain some sort of relationship, despite the past. See Table 9 for a summary of the data themes.

Table 10: Rob's Individual Case Analysis Summary

ROB	Demographic Survey	Artwork #1: Divorce	Artwork #2: Resilience	Interview
First Review: General Themes	<i>Divorce</i> – difficult, stressful, content, introvert, better life, positive impact <i>Family Members</i>– Mom, without father <i>Personal</i> – Introvert	<i>Separation</i> – separation, wall <i>Family Members</i>– father, mother, children	<i>Phases of resilience</i> – airplane, phases, flying, crashing, worked on, taking back off, flying higher	<i>Divorce</i> <i>Moving Event</i> <i>Family Members</i> <i>Perspective</i> <i>Occupied Mind</i> <i>Friends</i> <i>School</i> <i>Inner Drive</i> <i>Work</i> <i>Sports</i> <i>Ministries</i>
Second Review: Self-Determination Themes	<i>Autonomy</i> – introvert <i>Competence</i> – positive impact <i>Relatedness</i> – difficult, stressful, content, Mom, without father, better life	<i>Relatedness</i> – father, mother, children, wall, separation	<i>Autonomy</i> – airplane (?) <i>Competence</i> – phases, flying, flying higher <i>Relatedness</i> – crashing, worked on, taking back off	<i>Autonomy</i> – perspective; occupied mind <i>Competence</i> – resilience, school, inner drive, work, ministries (own faith) <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, moving event, family, Mom, Dad, brothers, friends, sports, ministries
Third Review: Protective Factor Themes	<i>Individual</i> – introvert <i>Family</i> – difficult, stressful, content, Mom, without father, better life, positive impact	<i>Family</i> – father, mother, children, wall, separation	<i>Individual</i> – airplane (?) <i>Family</i> – flying, crashing, worked on, taking back off, flying higher	<i>Individual</i> – resilience, perspective, occupied mind, inner drive, for Mom <i>Family</i> – divorce, moving event, family, Mom, Dad, brothers <i>Community</i> – school, work, friends, sports, ministries

Across Case Analysis

This section begins the across case analysis by looking at the demographic and artwork data across participants. The findings of all five participants' demographic data are outlined, then the divorce artwork, and finally the resilience artwork. This helps to illuminate similarities across participants for the same data. Then, I present those data in addition to the interview data exploring general themes, self-determination need themes, and protective factor theme needs. The findings address the research questions that have guided this study.

Demographic and Artwork Data Themes

Four sets of data were collected and analyzed for this study. The participants were asked to complete two demographic surveys, one to determine inclusion criteria and one at the time of the interview. They were also asked to draw two pieces of artwork, one image of divorce and one of resilience. The final data were the interview transcripts.

Demographic Survey

Because the demographic surveys asked items such as "Describe your parents' divorce," "Describe the difference between you and other children of divorce," and "Describe yourself," all the participants' data included descriptions of the divorce and themselves. All but Angela talked about the stress and pain of the divorce. Rob described it as difficult and stressful, while Craig said it was startling, confusing, guilty, and peaceful yet disturbing. Suah used the words sad, depressed, and stressful, while Sarah chose tumultuous, painful, and frustrating. However, every participant was able to identify at least one positive aspect of the divorce. Angela wrote that the divorce was good, needed, and a long-time coming, and Sarah said that the divorce

matched the inside to the outside. Craig called it a wise decision that he understood, Rob wrote about a better life and the positive impact, and Suah said it made him a better person.

When analyzing the words and phrases that the participants used to describe themselves, the participants showed great variety. For example, Rob described himself as an introvert, while Suah described himself as an extrovert. Sarah said she was sesquipedalian, motherish and older, while Craig said he was athletic, long-tempered, and funny. However, most of them wrote about intelligence or academic skills. Craig wrote that he was intelligent, a quick-learner, talented, and organized. Suah was determined and Sarah was independent, dominant, and responsible. Angela was future-minded. They also expressed a value of others. Rob wrote about his mom after his father left, and Craig wrote about his family's cooperation. Suah wrote about his interests (some revealed in other data were sports and friends), while Angela wrote about close relationships, and Sarah wrote about being people-loving.

Summary of Demographic Survey.

Divorce is clearly, as Richardson (2002) described in the resilience model, a disruption. The change was difficult, stressful, confusing, guilt provoking, disturbing, sad, depressing, and frustrating for the participants. Yet, resilient children of divorce seemed to be able at the same time to see another perspective. They could identify how it might be good, needed, more authentic, wise, and positive, and how it had a positive impact and made them better people.

While the five participants in this study were different from each other in temperament (for example, Rob described himself as an introvert and Suah as an extrovert) and other self descriptions, generally they valued intelligence, academic skills, and other people. Perhaps this description of self was linked to their developmental stage and the context of college life. They

were new to university life, saw it as an achievement to be in college, and were developmentally at the stage where relationships were important.

Artwork #1

When viewing the divorce artwork side by side (see Figure 19), some themes became obvious. Rob and Angela drew strikingly similar pictures of a barrier between the father and the mother with her children. In Rob's picture, the father was actively reaching toward the barrier, and in Angela's picture, the father was slightly leaning and looking that direction. Suah's picture, though less obvious, also had a barrier separating his uncle (whom he lived with) and himself from his divorcing parents and sister. Craig and Sarah drew similar pictures of a ripped, or broken heart. Both had a jagged line of separation, but Sarah placed the heart inside a house.

These drawn barriers might have represented the physical distance between family members after divorce, but they might also have represented the emotional distance that resulted. Separation was more than a phase of divorce. It seemed to epitomize what divorce was. All five participants drew separation in some fashion, three with separated family members and two with separated hearts. Conflict and money might be part of the separation, as shown in Craig and Suah's drawings, but divorce was a ripping apart and a barrier between more than just the mother and father.

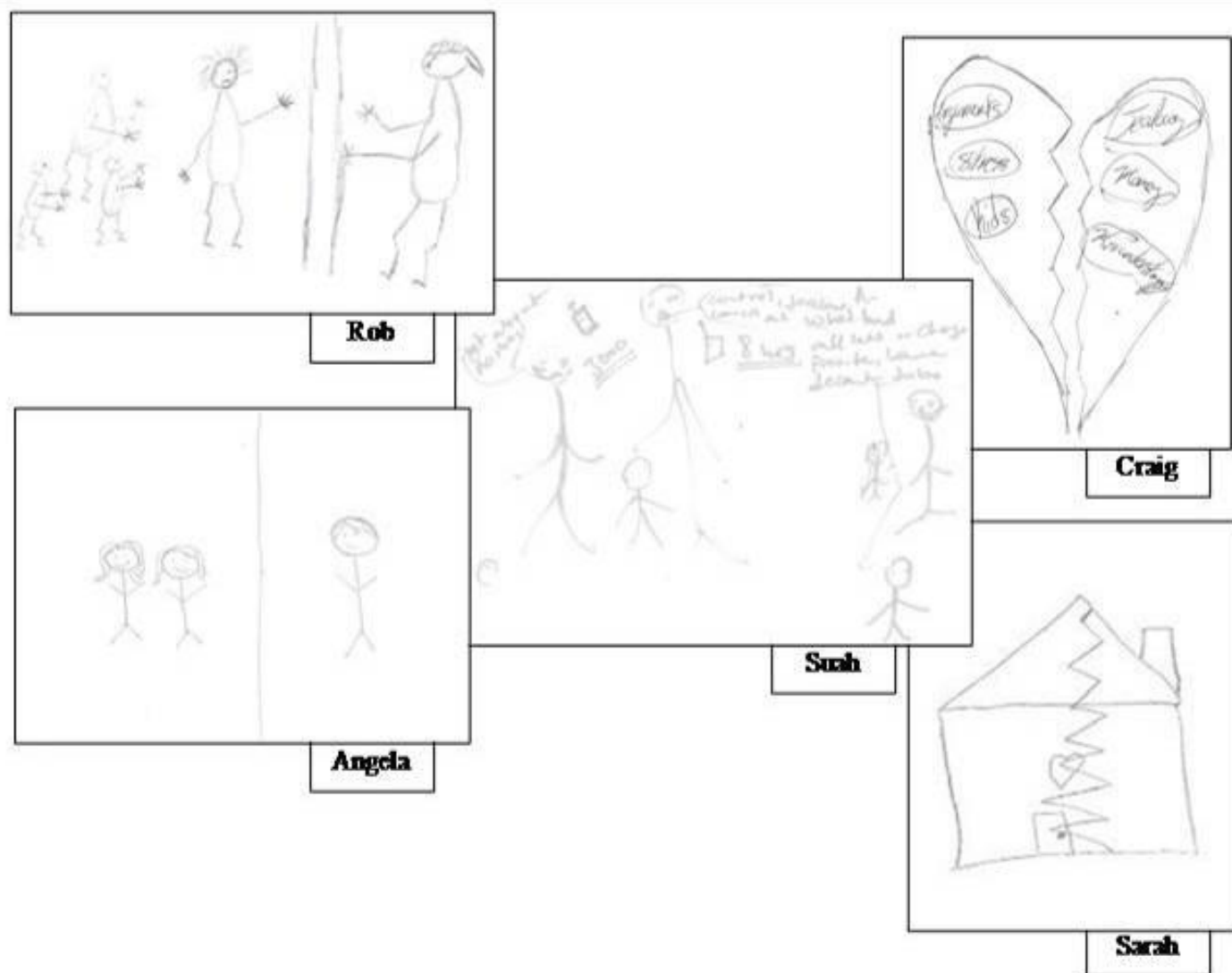


Figure 19: Across Case "Divorce" Artwork

Artwork #2

It was enlightening to view the resilience artwork side by side as well (see Figure 20). Although the similarities were less obvious initially, they were still evident. Angela and Suah used their drawing to reiterate what they had talked about during the interview, specifically the importance of family, friends, and activities. Sarah, Craig, and Rob used metaphors to demonstrate resilience. Sarah drew a cracked egg, Craig drew a plant growing out of the earth, and Rob drew an airplane in five phases.

All three metaphors illustrated that resilience, like divorce, was a process and not a single event. It required time, nurturing and outside factors. The egg, the seed, and the airplane had to go through hard soil and rocks, tough shells, or be grounded temporarily. They emerged different, but they could be better than before, or as Rob said, “fly higher than before.” Family may be a cracked egg, but family, friends and activities incubated the experience of resilience.

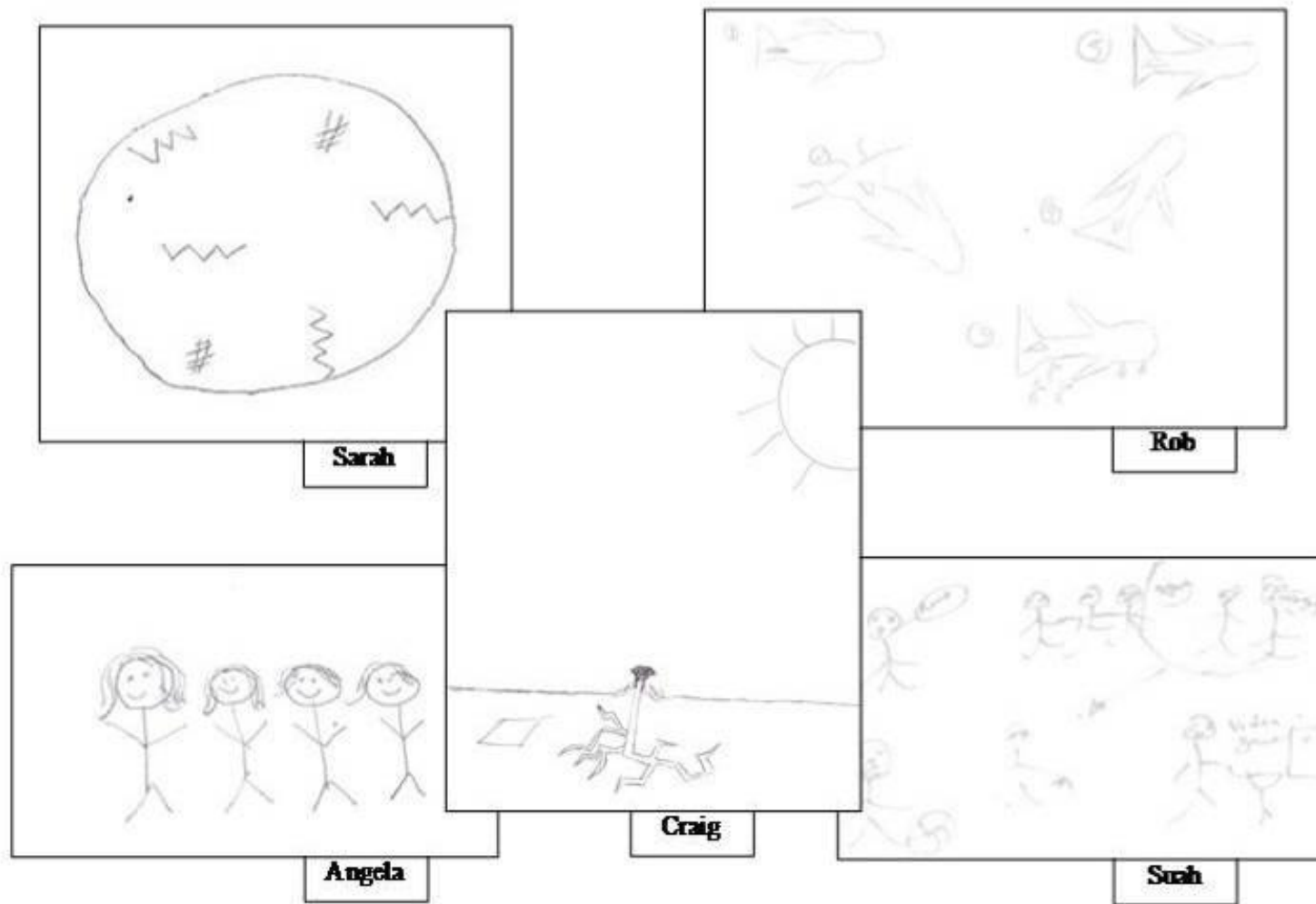


Figure 20: Across Case "Resilience Artwork"

General Themes

The general themes presented combined themes from the demographic surveys, the two artwork data, and the analysis of the individual interviews. What emerged from the data analysis were overall general themes across participants. Eight General Themes developed from the data. See Table10.

Table 11: Across Case Analysis – General Themes

GENERAL THEMES	Angela	Sarah	Suah	Craig	Rob
Demographic Survey	<i>Divorce</i> – good, needed, long-time coming, <i>Self-Description</i> – close relationships, busy, future minded	<i>Divorce</i> – match inside to outside, don't deal with visitation, tumultuous, painful, frustrating <i>Self-Description</i> – independent, people-loving, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible, older	<i>Divorce Causes</i> – control, social changes <i>Response</i> – forget, interests, better person <i>Self-Description</i> – sad, depressed, stressful, extrovert, determined	<i>Divorce</i> – startling, confusing, guilty, peaceful yet disturbing <i>After Divorce</i> – wise decision, calm process, cooperation, understood <i>Self-Description</i> – athletic, funny, intelligent, complacent, talented, quick-learner, organized, long-tempered, pessimist	<i>Divorce</i> – difficult, stressful, content, better life, positive impact <i>Family</i> – Mom, without father <i>Personal</i> – Introvert
Artwork #1 “Divorce”	<i>Separation</i> – family, separation <i>Smiles</i>	<i>Heart</i> <i>Broken</i> <i>House</i>	<i>Parent Family</i> – father, mother, sister, control, jealous, money, phones <i>Uncle Family</i> – uncle, Suah	<i>Ripped heart</i> <i>Contribute to divorce</i> – arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy, stress	<i>Separation</i> – separation, wall <i>Family</i> – father, mother, children
Artwork # 2 “Resilience	<i>Self</i> – Angela, smiles <i>Friends</i> – friends, boyfriends	<i>Self</i> – cracked egg <i>Others</i> – love me anyway	<i>Helpful</i> – read, soccer, basketball, videogames, friends, <i>Avoid</i> – arguing parents, out of zone	<i>Plant</i> – flower, roots <i>Outside the plant</i> – hard places, sun	<i>Phases of resilience</i> – airplane, phases, flying, crashing, worked on, taking back off, flying higher

Table 10: Continued

GENERAL THEMES	Angela	Sarah	Suah	Craig	Rob
Interview	<i>Resilience</i>	<i>Resilience</i>	<i>Resilience</i>	<i>Resilience</i>	
	<i>Divorce and Separation</i>	<i>Divorce</i>	<i>Divorce</i>	<i>Divorce</i>	<i>Divorce</i>
			<i>Living Elsewhere</i>	<i>Amicable Divorce – cooperation</i>	<i>Moving Event</i>
	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>
	<i>Friends and Boyfriend</i>	<i>Other People</i>	<i>Friends</i>		<i>Friends</i>
	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>School</i>		<i>School</i>
	<i>Work</i>		<i>Sports</i>		<i>Sports</i>
	<i>Coping</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Ministries</i>
		<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Work</i>
			<i>Occupied Mind</i>		<i>Perspective</i>
			<i>Success</i>		<i>Occupied Mind</i>
		<i>Personal Characteristics</i>	<i>Culture / Ridicule</i>		<i>Inner Drive</i>

Divorce. Since this study included children of divorce as the population of study, divorce was a theme. All the participants described their parents' divorces as painful and difficult at the time. For example, in the demographic data parental divorce was described as difficult and stressful (Rob); startling, confusing, guilty, and peaceful yet disturbing (Craig); sad, depressed, and stressful (Suah); and tumultuous, painful, and frustrating (Sarah). In the interview, Angela said, "That was the point where everything was just chaos, and they were fighting all the time. And then years later, I mean, it was, it wasn't as bad" (lines 275-277). Craig said, "I was just kinda shocked, like, I really didn't know, like, I didn't understand why" (lines 178-179). In their artwork, the participants expressed the painfulness of separation (Rob, Angela, and Suah) and broken hearts (Sarah and Craig).

Yet the participants also talked about divorce as something that made the situation and themselves better for it. In the demographic data, the divorce was described as good, needed, and a long-time coming (Angela), matched the inside to the outside (Sarah), was a wise decision that he understood (Craig), made a better life and a positive impact (Rob), and made him a better person (Suah). In his interview, Rob said, "I know it probably seems like a bad reason, but it actually it came out to be a positive outcome" (lines 177-178). Suah said, "The divorce for my parents, you know that also, like, it was bothering me a lot, so that also make me hide in my mind and become a stronger person" (lines 713-714). In the resilience artwork, the resilience came after the divorce. So the divorce was drawn as hard, rocky soil (Craig) or as a plane going down (Rob), but divorce was part of that process for them.

Resilience. Resilience was another theme that naturally developed by nature of the study. For most of the participants, their direct references to resilience were expressed with the

resilience artwork. Yet the entire interview was about their experience with resilience, so many of the other themes were linked with this one, but not coded as resilience. For example, when participants explained how talking to a friend helped them to be resilient, it was coded as friends, but not as resilience. The participants believed they were resilient, and none denied or even qualified their own resilience. Angela said, “I would say that I was very resilient” (line 30). Sarah said, “For me, resilience is something I had to decide that I wanted.” (line 763). Craig said, “I think I bounce back very well” (line 91). Suah and Angela included themselves in their resilience drawing.

Family. When talking about divorce, the participants naturally talked about their families where the divorce occurred. Siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and even a great-grandmother were included in this theme, in addition to the mother and father. About her resilience artwork, Angela included, “my entire, my mom’s immediate family are closely involved. They know everything. And I mean, they just live down the road from us, so I see them every day” (lines 651-653). Suah said, “I look at my uncle as a father figure” (line 924). Rob’s oldest brother, “stepped up to the plate, and basically took care of my older brother and I, and he went out and got a job and everything on his own. Like, my mom never requested for him to work. He just went out and took initiative” (lines 171-173). Craig’s maternal grandmother, “She was just as close with my dad almost as she was with my mom. Like they were, like the whole family is like that” (lines 628-629). Extended family members helped with babysitting, support and listening ears.

Angela, Craig, and Rob talked about how by helping their mothers, it helped them to be resilient. Angela lent emotional support to her mother. “I could always sense if something was

wrong, and then I would ask her [my mom], and she would talk to me about it” (lines 193-195).

Craig helped around the house. He said, ““I would do certain things that I could do that my mom couldn’t do around the house. That my dad would normally do, but he wasn’t there, so I would have to do it” (lines 302-303). Rob, like his brothers before him, helped the family financially when he could. “How it feels to, you know, work and bring back to the family and provide for yourself and family. I think that was a big factor. Knowin’ how it feels to have someone to do it for you and so, and also knowin’ how it feels to you now. Put smiles on important people’s faces, like people who really matter to you in your life” (lines 523-525).

All of the participants except Craig reported a more distant relationship with their fathers following the divorce. For Craig, his parents “talked about it very well, and still talk, and have, like, a good relationship. They just weren’t married and didn’t live together. So they still cooperated, like to see us equally, and made sure we were happy. And so that really showed me a lot” (lines 107-109). The other participants had a different experience. Rob and Angela’s divorce artwork showed the father separated from the rest of the family. Their pictures of resilience showed their new, fatherless families. Sarah, Suah, Rob, and Angela put most of the blame on their fathers for the divorce. Sarah’s father was out late most evenings caring for congregants, so his marriage and his relationship with his daughter suffered. She said, “I would be like, this is so sad. He can do that for you, but he can’t even come home at night for me” (line 548-549). Suah said, “That’s what caused the divorce. He’s trying to control her on her job, and because of her job, he’s kinda jealous” (lines 224-226). For Rob, “I just really can’t have that connection with him because I know what he has done” (lines 254-255). Angela knew that “my dad had an affair” (line 243). “I knew that my dad was in the wrong, and I was not gonna believe anything that he

had to [say]” (line 233). They all maintained some contact with their fathers, but sometimes it was because, like Angela, “I see him, and I talk to him. I don’t really like to, but I do. But I do it because he’s my dad” (lines 109-110).

Friends. Craig drew most of his support from his family, so although he mentioned in passing that he played football, he did not talk about his friends contributing to his resilience. Rob, Suah, Sarah, and Angela drew a lot of support from their friends. Rob’s brother’s friends were, “role models, and so I guess just following in their footsteps and just being around them” (lines 469-470). His other friends helped, too, because “I think it was a lot easier when you have friends that you can talk to about the situation, and, like, they can relate to what you’re going through” (lines 283-284). Suah credited his friends with his much better high school experience. “They are like always interested in what I have to say. Or what is my perspective about being, like, from a different country? What is my perspective about everything? And you know, that helps me a lot. That helps me tremendously. I think I would say those guys throughout the four years that I’m in high school, it makes me much better, happier person” (lines 481-484). Sarah said, “there were definitely nights when I called him [my friend] and was, like, you know I can’t handle it. Help” (lines 377-380). With her friends, Angela could be “really open with each other, ‘cause they know” (line 510). For the women, they were more guarded about what was happening in the family before their parents’ divorce was public, so they leaned on their friends more later in the process. Sarah said, “this was before I was talking to them, like, about what was going on with me. But if we only talk about what’s wrong with them, then they never had to know what’s going on with me” (lines 569-572).

Self. The participants were also members of the family. In the demographic surveys, they described themselves in many ways. Sarah said she was sesquipedalian, motherish and older, while Craig said he was athletic, long-tempered, and funny. Rob was as a self-identified introvert, while Suah was the extrovert. Intelligence and academic skills were part of their revealed identity. Craig wrote that he was intelligent, a quick-learner, talented, and organized; Suah was determined; Sarah was independent, dominant, and responsible; and Angela was future-minded. The metaphors that Rob, Craig, and Sarah selected to represent resilience reflected higher order thinking. Suah and Rob benefitted from doing well in school even when their motivation was for others. Suah “wasn’t part of, like, any of the honors program at my high school, but I took all honors, and I took AP classes because of these guys. I wanna be in the same class with them” (lines 854-855). For Rob, “Plenty of times I worked hard for my mom just by completing courses in school” (lines 357-358).

Perspective. These participants were able to reframe the situation to help them see a better perspective and the benefits from the divorce. In the demographic surveys, Suah believed his parents’ divorce made him a better person. Rob thought the divorce gave him a better life and had a positive impact. Angela wrote that the divorce was good, needed, and a long-time coming. Sarah said that the divorce matched the inside to the outside. Craig saw it as a wise decision that he understood. Sarah’s divorce artwork expressed that although divorce might leave people cracked, they still love you. Rob’s resilience artwork showed how one could fly even higher than before. He said, “The reason I said my mom and everything’s been goin’ so well since the divorce is because when they got the divorce, you know, I said my mom had more free time, and so she had a chance to go back to school and get a nice job to pay for the house... that’s why I

would say, like, it's been goin' very, very, very well since the divorce" (lines 451-460). Angela said, "It was something that needed to happen, and I was happy that it did" (line 31).

Success/Drive. Being successful and having an inner drive to work hard and achieve was another themes across participants. Rob said, "success... [is] just a powerful feeling" (line 347). Suah said, "I'm someone that wanna be successful, like since that time I'm in Africa" (line 797). Sarah was in a gifted program, and Suah took advanced classes. All the participants had graduated from high school and were attending the university. They also found success through sports, activities, work, and leadership roles. Rob "played in different tournaments, and I played for this team called [name of the team], and we won like almost every tournament" (lines 567-568). Angela "was promoted to a shift leader, and my manager at the time, she looked to me for everything, and she took my opinion and liked it. And I talked to the owner, and he really listened and put in the changes" (lines 564-565). Sarah volunteered at the Coffee House and "it got to the point where I was pretty much running the kitchen" (lines 661-665).

Busyness/ Occupied Mind. While all the participants were involved in activities, one purpose was to stay busy to keep their minds occupied. For some, personal activities kept them from dwelling on the divorce. For example, Sarah would read. "When I was reading, I wouldn't be thinking about what was going on. And so it usually worked" (line 605). Rob, Suah, and Craig played sports. Suah said, "Once I get on the soccer field, I have to play soccer. My mind is out of everything else that is going on... like what my parent are doing, my parents are divorced, I don't care about that. I don't care if I have a school homework. I'm just playing soccer. It's just a way to relieve myself, and, and have fun with my friends" (lines 756-760). Angela kept busy with work, college applications, and "I would say that in band, I was definitely a leader. I was

vice president junior, and then I was band captain senior year. I have been section leader all 4 years, and usually I was just in a leadership role, and everybody came to me” (lines 319-321).

Researcher Interpretation and Summary.

Divorce, resilience, family, friends, self, perspective, success/drive and busy/occupied mind were the eight general themes across cases. Although the five participants had experienced their parents’ divorce as painful and difficult, they also saw the benefits and opportunities that it provided them. They recognized their own resilience and captured what it meant to them in artwork. Mostly, they respected their mothers, but felt a need to help them emotionally, financially, and with chores around the house. Most of them blamed their fathers for much of the divorce, and had more distant relationships with them as a result. They were social, and their strong relationships with friends helped them, pushed them academically, and kept them out of trouble. They had diverse descriptions of themselves, but valued their academic and intellectual abilities. Although they recognized the difficulty of the divorce, they reframed their perspective to see things more optimistically. They developed self-esteem and competence through success and a drive to do well. And they stayed (in some cases very) busy as a strategy to occupy their minds.

Self Determination Themes

The first research question addressed self-determination needs: How did participants describe their experience of resilience following parental divorce related to the three basic needs of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2003)? The three sub questions were: a) How did the participants’ experience reflect the need for autonomy? b) How did the participants’ experience reflect the need for competence? and c) How did the participants’ experience reflect the need for

relatedness? The discussion that follows will answer those questions through the findings of this study.

Autonomy.

According to Deci and Ryan (2008), autonomy meant to act with volition and a sense of choice. It was the need for independence and the ability to alter the environment when necessary (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). If people chose what they did and were in creative control, they felt like origins, but if their environment regulated them without them being personally responsible, they felt like pawns (Sheldon, Williams, & Joiner, 2003). See Table 11 for a list of the autonomy themes across participants and data.

In the demographic survey, the participants demonstrated having their need for autonomy met when they described themselves as busy and involved (Angela); independent (Sarah); extrovert and determined (Suah); complacent and long-tempered (Craig); and introvert (Rob).

Only Angela and Suah had autonomy codes in the divorce artwork. Angela chose to draw a smiling family and show smiles to others to mask her parents' marital trouble. She also drew herself as one of the people in the drawing. Suah also identified himself as a person in the divorce artwork. In the resilience artwork, again, Angela and Suah had autonomy codes. Angela identified herself in the artwork, and Suah showed himself playing videogames, a choice to regulate his environment. Craig and Rob also had autonomy codes, assuming that the metaphors they drew reflected themselves. Craig's plant and Rob's airplane demonstrated their creative control over their environment.

Table 12: Across Case Analysis – Self Determination Themes

SELF DETERMINATION THEMES	Angela	Sarah	Suah	Craig	Rob
Demographic Survey	<i>Autonomy</i> – busy & involved <i>Competence</i> – great outlook, looking forward to career <i>Relatedness</i> – amicable and needed divorce, happy when over, close relationships	<i>Autonomy</i> – independent <i>Competence</i> – sesquipedalian, responsible, tumultuous, painful, frustrating <i>Relatedness</i> – people-loving, dominant, motherish, older, don't deal with visitation, match inside to outside	<i>Autonomy</i> – extrovert, determined <i>Competence</i> – forget, interests, better person <i>Relatedness</i> – sad, depressed, stressful, control, social changes	<i>Autonomy</i> – complacent, long-tempered <i>Competence</i> – peaceful yet disturbing, wise decision, understood, athletic, funny, intelligent, talented, quick-learner, organized <i>Relatedness</i> – calm process, cooperation	<i>Autonomy</i> – introvert <i>Competence</i> – positive impact <i>Relatedness</i> – difficult, stressful, content, Mom, without father, better life
Artwork #1 “Divorce”	<i>Autonomy</i> – smiles <i>Relatedness</i> – family members, separation	<i>Relatedness</i> – house, heart, broken	<i>Autonomy</i> -- Suah <i>Relatedness</i> – father, mother, sister, uncle, control, jealous, money, phones	<i>Relatedness</i> – ripped heart, arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy	<i>Relatedness</i> – father, mother, children, wall, separation
Artwork # 2 “Resilience”	<i>Autonomy</i> – Angela <i>Competence</i> – smiles <i>Relatedness</i> – friends, boyfriends	<i>Competence</i> – cracked egg <i>Relatedness</i> – loved anyway	<i>Autonomy</i> – videogames <i>Competence</i> – read <i>Relatedness</i> – soccer, basketball, friends, arguing parents, out of zone	<i>Autonomy</i> – plant, <i>Competence</i> – hard places, sun <i>Relatedness</i> – roots	<i>Autonomy</i> – airplane (?) <i>Competence</i> – phases, flying, flying higher <i>Relatedness</i> – crashing, worked on, taking back off

Table 11: Continued

SELF DETERMINATION THEMES	Angela	Sarah	Suah	Craig	Rob
Interview	<i>Autonomy</i> – perspective; maturity <i>Competence</i> – resilient, strong for others, staying busy <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, relationship with parents, family & friends	<i>Autonomy</i> – Resilience, Perspective; Personal Characteristics <i>Competence</i> – Taking care of others; personal activities; organizations/ activities <i>Relatedness</i> – marriage, separation, divorce, family, others	<i>Autonomy</i> – Living elsewhere, culture, occupied mind, perspective, anxiety, ridicule <i>Competence</i> – resilience, reading, school, success <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, family, sports, friends	<i>Autonomy</i> – reaction to divorce, resilience <i>Competence</i> – perspective <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, amicable divorce, family	<i>Autonomy</i> – perspective; occupied mind <i>Competence</i> – resilience, school, inner drive, work, ministries (own faith) <i>Relatedness</i> – divorce, moving event, family, Mom, Dad, brothers, friends, sports, ministries

The themes of resilience, perspective, personal characteristics, maturity, living elsewhere, culture, occupied mind, reaction to divorce, anxiety and ridicule were included in autonomy. Anxiety and ridicule and some codes included in the theme of reaction to the divorce were originally categorized as outliers (other outliers are discussed in a later section below) because of their negative connotations, but resilience, by definition, requires adversity, and the participants' views on these suggested that I recategorize them under autonomy. For example, Suah faced ridicule for his culture, language deficits, and religion. Yet, he credits that difficulty with his choice of friends later who encouraged him to take advanced classes and do well in school. "If I was having a lot of fun at school and this wasn't going on, I don't think, I probably would have made the bad, bad friends in school" (lines 682-685). So the ridicule became another adversity that he controlled by making different friends, thus exercising his autonomy and resulting in a resilient outcome. Sarah said, "For awhile, I was on antidepressants" (line 248). This, too, could have been an outlier, but through her experience with depression, she helped a friend. "I didn't know what I was doing, and I counseled him through depression in 9th grade" (line 378). She used her experience to alter her environment.

Researcher Interpretation and Summary. Autonomy, though not represented in the data in as great a quantity as other self-determination needs, was evident in the participants' data. When they listed personal characteristics in the demographic survey such as independent (Sarah), determined (Suah) or long-tempered (Craig), those characteristics were easily identified as autonomous. However, characteristics such as anxiety or ridicule (Suah) were categorized as autonomous, not because of the characteristic, but because of what the participant did in response that reflected autonomy.

It was surprising how little the quantity of autonomy themed codes were represented in a study on resilience. I expected the participants to reveal many personal qualities that helped them and indicated meeting the autonomy need, yet generally, autonomy had the fewest codes of the three self-determination needs. Perhaps part of the answer to this can be deduced from the absence of autonomy in the divorce artwork for three of the participants (Sarah, Craig, and Rob). This may hint at their perception of a lack of choice in parental divorce. Angela was the oldest participant when her parents divorced, and she knew she would be leaving for college soon, thus giving her more autonomy in the situation. Likewise, Suah, though younger, made the autonomous decision to continue living with his uncle, giving him control over his situation. Maybe children of divorce display autonomy later in the process of resilience as they develop perspective, maturity, and learn ways to keep their minds occupied, yet struggle with meeting the need of autonomy during the heat of the divorce process.

Competence.

The second self-determination need was competence. This was the ability to function effectively in the environment (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). It included survival, but also success and growth, and it was related to self-efficacy. Refer to Table 11.

The participants displayed competence through the demographic surveys in how they described themselves after the divorce, their personal assets, and how they also could view the divorce as a positive event. Angela described herself as having a great outlook and looking forward to her career. Sarah was sesquipedalian and responsible. Suah was a better person who tried to forget the painfulness through his interests. Craig was athletic, funny, intelligent, talented, a quick-learner, and organized. Finally, Rob saw the positive impact. I coded Sarah's

tumulus, painful, and frustrating and Craig's peaceful yet disturbing, and understood as self-perceptions which showed the ability to function effectively in the environment, even if the environment was difficult.

None of the divorce artwork included competence themes. In the resilience artwork, competence codes included smiles (Angela), cracked egg (Sarah), read (Suah), hard places and sun (Craig), and phases, flying, and flying higher (Rob).

The interviews included the competent subthemes of resilience, taking care of others, activities and organizations, and staying busy. Angela displayed the competence need when she confidently said, "I would say that I was very resilient" (line 30). When participants helped others, they also helped themselves. By taking care of others, they could be strong enough for others to lean on, not just getting by, but doing better. Angela helped her mother and Sarah helped her friend emotionally. Craig and Rob helped their mothers with chores and finances. Craig also looked out for his younger brother. He said, "I could order pizza, order dinner for me and my brother before she got home, so when she got home it'd already be there. We would've already eaten. Stuff like mowin' the grass for her when she was doin' other stuff. Just stuff that, like, normally an older male would do at his house, but I was doin' it at a younger age" (lines 383-386). By participating and leading in activities where the participants had skills and could excel, they improved their self-efficacy. Sarah said, "I did soccer. I did band. I did a lot of stuff in my community. I was a Girl Scout. I worked at Sunday school" (lines 714-717). Rob's basketball team won tournaments, Angela was promoted at work, and Suah studied hard to take advanced classes. While the improvements to their self-efficacy built competence, being involved also helped the participants keep their minds off the divorce. Suah said, "I think I tried

my best not to think about it, like, not to think about what was going on all the time, and I also tried to focus on things that I loved to do” (lines 425-426).

Researcher Interpretation and Summary. Resilience requires competence, which implies survival, but also success and growth. However, it was noteworthy that not a single participant showed the competence need being met in the divorce artwork. Maybe the brokenness of the marital relationship preempted identifying competence at the time, but like autonomy, later in the resilience process, it developed or became more evident. All of the participants were involved in activities that fed the competence need. The males leaned towards sports: football, basketball and soccer. Playing for school teams, summer leagues, or pickup games helped them to cope cognitively with the divorce by focusing on the game and reducing free time to dwell on their problems. Yet, they also improved their self-efficacy through winning and doing well. The females chose a wide variety of activities, juggling many responsibilities at once. Angela maintained a grueling schedule with year-long band practices, school, senior activities, and almost full-time management responsibilities at work. She said, “I was just like, I have to do everything, so I mean not only was I in marching band, I was in the concert band, pep band, and then I was in the winter percussion” (lines 322-323). Sarah, too, stayed very busy at school, church, with friends, and in the community. Maybe as young women, they felt the need to do it all, and do it all well. The participants also helped their friends and family. While it built competence to be able to help others, it also may have helped them by shifting power. Instead of needing help, they gave it. Especially for those who talked about stepping up to help their mothers, this could be an important boost to their self-efficacy as they internalized the notion of being a strong child caring for the parent.

Relatedness.

Relatedness, the third need, was feeling connected to others and feeling worthy of love and respect (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). The principal function of identity formation was fostering the experience of relatedness, according to self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2003). Divorce was an issue tied closely with relatedness, so it was logical, yet significant, that this category contained, by far, the largest quantity of codes comprising the themes. In the demographic surveys, descriptions about the divorce and the participants' perceptions of the divorce fell in this category. The amicable and needed divorce (Angela), calm process and cooperation (Craig), social changes (Suah), better life and without father (Rob), and match the inside to the outside (Sarah), codes were examples of that.

The only one of the three self-determination needs represented in every piece of artwork was relatedness. Angela, Rob, and Suah drew pictures of their families for the divorce artwork, but included other people and activities in their resilience artwork. The broken hearts drawn by Sarah and Craig showed that relatedness is not only external contact with others, but a deeply internal need as well. Suah, who did not live with his parents, drew his aunt and uncle as parental substitutes.

The one word or short phrase interview codes of relatedness belied the complexity of the category. For example, the divorce theme included much more than a legal event and separation of housing arrangements. For Angela, many years and multiple separations occurred before the final divorce. After moving out for three months because her father's affair, Angela and her mom moved back home, "but then it just started happening again, and then after that broke off, it just kinda, with other people" (lines 254-255). Rob said, "my dad, like, tryin' to come back in" (line

164). Physical distance when parents moved out could change when they moved back in, affecting relationships. The phases of the divorce made it more complicated. Sarah said, “The separation, and then the divorce was much later, and then there was the religious divorce even later” (lines 467-468). She expressed some of the complexities of relatedness. “When they told us they were gonna divorce, about 10 minutes later they were like, ‘Oh and by the way, we were gonna get divorced 2 years earlier, but your brother asked us to stay together’” (lines 190-192).

Another complexity surfaced through the theme of *family*, which was a misnomer and was later changed to *family members*. This included the codes of mom, dad, siblings and extended family members, but in reality, after the divorce, “family” meant something different and broader. Craig’s family included his brother, parents with shared custody, and extended family that supported both of his parents. When Rob talked about family, he meant his mother and two older brothers, but not his father. Angela only used the word family when talking about her mother’s side of the family. For Suah, family meant two families, the uncle and aunt he lived with, and his divorced parents and siblings. Only Sarah used the word family to refer to what had been her nuclear family.

Within the family, relatedness looked different with different family members. For example, relationships with mothers for Rob, Craig, Sarah, and Angela generally became closer, but participants tended to adapt into more of a caretaking role with them. Rob said, “I was noticin’, like, that my mom was strugglin’, and so I got involved in this program at... [a local] Community College. And it was a summer employment program. And so I had signed up for that, and I started workin’ at this Doggie Daycare” (lines 377-380). None of the participants expressed a need to help their fathers. Angela, Sarah, Rob, and Suah talked about how

maintaining a relationship with their fathers was important, but more out of obligation than a desire to meet the relatedness need. Angela said, “My dad calls a lot, and then I don’t want to talk to him. I usually don’t answer the phone unless I need something” (lines 511-512). Rob said, “I guess, like, my daddy still sees me as, like, this little kid, and he still tries to make that connection with me and stuff. Like, I talk to him sometimes” (lines 248-249). Suah said, “After, like, they have all this problem, he decided that he just going to abandon us and start a new life. Find a new wife, and start a new family, so I mean, there was nothing” (lines 442-443).

Relationships with siblings were complex, too. Angela was an only child, and Suah did not live with his younger siblings. Craig was the oldest child, and “I’d still definitely watch out for him [my brother]” (line 503). “When we’re at my mom’s and stuff would happen, and I would be like the oldest guy, like male, there. So I was kind of, like, as I got older, I kind of evolved into the man of my mom’s house” (lines 95-97). Rob and Sarah were the youngest, both with two older brothers. Rob said about his oldest brother, “When I was younger, I didn’t look at look at him as bein’, like, my oldest brother. I look at him bein’ more like a father figure in the home because he, he did so much” (lines 403-405). For Sarah, her brothers being older meant that they could leave the house, which she showed me on a timeline. “Brother 1 went to college. [In] 2006, brother 2 went to college. My dad separated from my mom, not actually divorced yet, just separated ... 2007, he then moved to [another country]” (lines 130-131).

The family relatedness was complex, but supportive friends, and socializing through sports, activities, work, and ministries were relationships where, according to the researcher, it was easier for the participants to have some control. Angela and Sarah hid their parents’ marital problems until later in the divorce process, when they chose to confide in their friends more.

Angela, whose parents divorced a year before the interview, said, “Actually, not until recently. Until I actually came here, because at the time, everything was just so busy, and I, the whole thing with my parents, I didn’t have time to spend with my friends.” (lines 502-504). Having a friend in a similar situation helped Rob. “We were the same because our fathers were gone, and, like, we have, we had positive role model brothers who just, we were watchin’ all the time. And so it was, we were, like, in the same boat” (lines 491-493).

Researcher Interpretation and Summary. The expansion of Angela, Rob, and Suah’s resilience artwork to include other people and activities may indicate the expanding role of relatedness in the resilience process. While they may have started with their family members, they later deepened their friendships and increased their social activities, fulfilling the relatedness need. Perhaps because divorce is a relatedness disruption, an important part of the resilience solution is to increase ways to meet this need. Family relationships became more complex during and after the divorce. Craig, Rob, and Angela developed more of a caretaking role with their mothers, and all but Craig reported more distant and obligatory relationships with their fathers. Craig, as an oldest child, became “the man of my mom’s house” who looked out for his younger brother, while Rob was the youngest who felt taken care of by his brothers. He and Sarah, another youngest child, experienced being left behind when their siblings left home. As Sarah said about her resilience artwork, “Lots of people who love you are cracked eggs, but still love you anyhow.”

Summary.

This study found support for the three self-determination needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness from the participants’ experiences, but not to the same extent.

Autonomy was, generally, the least represented, perhaps because the family disruption left them (especially Sarah, Rob, and Craig) without an immediate sense of choice over the decisions that affected them. These children of divorce displayed autonomy later in the process of resilience as they developed perspective, maturity, and learned ways to keep their minds occupied.

All the participants were involved in activities and organizations that met and fed their needs for competence and helped them to cope cognitively with the divorce by focusing on those things and reducing free time to dwell on their problems. None of the participants showed the competence need in the divorce artwork, maybe because the brokenness of the marital relationship preempted identifying competence at that time. Like autonomy, competence may develop or become more evident later in the resilience process. Gender may have influenced the kind and quantity of activities for the participants. The females chose a wide variety of activities, juggling many responsibilities at once, while the males placed particular emphasis on sports. Helping others met the competence need, but it also may have helped the participants by shifting power, especially for those who stepped up to help their mothers.

Relatedness was, by far, the theme with the largest quantity of data. Angela, Rob, and Suah included other people and activities in their resilience artwork, which may indicate the expanding need of relatedness in the resilience process. Because divorce is a relatedness disruption, an important part of the resilience solution may be to increase meeting this need. Family relationships became more complex during and after the divorce. Craig, Rob, and Angela developed more of a caretaking role with their mothers, and all but Craig reported more distant and obligatory relationships with their fathers. Sibling relationships changed as older brothers became father figures and youngest siblings were left home.

Protective Factor Themes

The second research question was: How did participants describe protective factors that contributed to their resilience related to the classification of protective factors? The sub questions were: a) How did participants describe their experience of individual protective factors as these related to their experience of resilience? b) How did participants describe their experience of family protective factors as these related to their experience of resilience? and c) How did participants describe their experience of community protective factors as these related to their experience of resilience? This section will summarize the findings for the answers to these questions. See Table 12.

Table 13: Across Case Analysis – Protective Factor Themes

PROTECTIVE FACTOR THEMES	Angela	Sarah	Suah	Craig	Rob
Demographic Survey	<i>Individual</i> – good, good outlook, looking forward to career, happy when over <i>Family</i> – compromising, close relationships, long time coming, much needed <i>Community</i> – close to friends, busy	<i>Individual</i> – independent, dominant, motherish, sesquipedalian, responsible, older, tumultuous, painful, frustrating <i>Family</i> – match inside to outside, don't deal with visitation <i>Community</i> – people-loving	<i>Individual</i> – extrovert, determined, forget, better person <i>Family</i> – sad, depressed, stressful, control, social changes <i>Community</i> – interests	<i>Individual</i> – startling, confusing, guilty, athletic, funny, intelligent, complacent, talented, quick-learner, organized, long-tempered, pessimist, understood <i>Family</i> – peaceful yet disturbing, wise decision, calm process, cooperation	<i>Individual</i> – introvert <i>Family</i> – difficult, stressful, content, Mom, without father, better life, positive impact
Artwork #1 “Divorce”	<i>Individual</i> – Smiles <i>Family</i> –family, separation	<i>Family</i> –house, heart, broken	<i>Individual</i> – Suah <i>Family</i> – father, mother, sister, uncle, control, jealous, money, phones	<i>Family</i> – ripped heart, arguments, money, kids, misunderstandings, jealousy	<i>Family</i> – father, mother, children, wall, separation
Artwork # 2 “Resilience	<i>Individual</i> – Angela, smiles <i>Community</i> – friends, boyfriends	<i>Individual</i> – cracked egg <i>Family</i> – loved anyway <i>Community</i> – loved anyway	<i>Individual</i> – read, videogames <i>Family</i> – friends, arguing parents, out of zone <i>Community</i> – soccer, basketball	<i>Individual</i> – plant <i>Family</i> – roots <i>Community</i> – hard places, sun	<i>Individual</i> – airplane (?) <i>Family</i> –flying, crashing, worked on, taking back off, flying higher

Table 12: Continued

PROTECTIVE FACTOR THEMES	Angela	Sarah	Suah	Craig	Rob
Interview	<i>Individual</i> – perspective, understanding, personal reaction <i>Family</i> – marriage, separation, divorce, family, Mom, Dad <i>Community</i> – friends, boyfriend, activities, work, leaving home	<i>Individual</i> – resilience perspective, personal characteristics, activities <i>Family</i> – marriage, separation, divorce, family <i>Community</i> – friends, others, taking care of others, organizations/ activities	<i>Individual</i> – resilience, success, reading, culture, occupied mind, perspective, anxiety <i>Family</i> – living elsewhere, divorce, family <i>Community</i> – school, friends, ridicule, sports	<i>Individual</i> – reaction to divorce, resilience, perspective <i>Family</i> – divorce, amicable divorce, family, Mom, Dad	<i>Individual</i> – resilience, perspective, occupied mind, inner drive, for Mom <i>Family</i> – divorce, moving event, family, Mom, Dad, brothers <i>Community</i> – school, work, friends, sports, ministries

Individual Protective Factors.

With the demographic surveys, the participants had the opportunity to describe themselves currently and after the divorce. They used descriptive phrases such as looking forward to career and good outlook (Angela); independent, responsible, and older (Sarah); extrovert and determined (Suah); athletic, funny, and intelligent (Craig); and introvert (Rob) to describe themselves now. Some described themselves after the divorce with phrases like happy when over (Angela) and better person (Suah), but other personal reactions were not as positive and hopeful, such as tumultuous, painful, and frustrating (Sarah) and startling, confusing, and guilty (Craig). These less positive responses were coded as individual protective factor codes, though, because they demonstrated an accurate ability to identify their emotions, while still keeping them in perspective. These were also descriptions of their response to the situation, and not a personal characteristic.

Only two of the participants had individual codes for the divorce artwork, and they were the two who drew themselves in their artwork, Suah and Angela. They all had individual codes for the resilient artwork.

The common sub-themes for individual protective factors that developed from across the interviews were perspective, resilience, personal characteristics, and personal activities. All five participants talked about their perspectives on the divorce, a reframed perspective to accentuate the benefits. Angela said, “You may not realize the things that you’re going through right now, but then once you’re, let’s say, on the other side of it, that it’s actually better off” (620-621). Suah said, “That helped me... to become different” (line 711). Craig said, “I can see how well they worked it out, and it can be a good, a really big, positive influence on me” (line 317). They

identified themselves as resilient and included themselves in their artwork. Their personal characteristics helped them. Sarah said, “I had to decide for myself that I was gonna stop whining about it” (line 748). Rob’s inner drive helped him. “It was like already inside of me I knew what I had to do” (line 341). Reading, journaling and videogames were personal activities that helped Sarah and Suah. Sarah said, “When I couldn’t deal with it, I would start reading” (line 601).

Summary. The participants revealed the individual protective factors of perspective, resilience, personal characteristics, and personal activities during the interview. They also included themselves in their pictures of divorce. These participants seemed to have developed cognitive strategies that served two purposes. First, they found personal activities that helped them cope such as reading, journaling, and videogames. Second, without glossing over the painful aspects of their parents’ divorce, they were able to reframe their perspective to see benefit and betterment.

Family Protective Factors.

A study of children of divorce required a look at families. The participants offered candid looks at their families as they rebuilt themselves after an affair, a major cultural and social change, financial challenges, community scrutiny of a clergy family, and arguments. For Craig, the divorce was a calm process, and Angela said it was compromising, but Suah and Rob called it stressful. Sarah felt the relieving honesty of matching the inside to the outside. The families experienced separation, barriers, and broken hearts, shown in the divorce artwork. Yet, they could fly again, grow, and be loved anyway, which the participants drew in their resilience artwork.

Although the family rift was reason for the adversity, family also provided protective factors that helped the participants to build resilience. Angela, Craig, and Rob credited their mothers with helping them bounce back after the divorce. Angela said, "... knowing that she cared, and that if I wanted to, I could go there and talk to her about it" (lines 409-410). Craig said, "I would do certain things that I could do that my mom couldn't do around the house that my dad would normally do, but he wasn't there" (lines 302-303). Rob said, "It gave me the drive to, like, work harder for my mom" (line 212). None of the participants identified their fathers as a protective factor.

Extended family provided other protective factors. Suah lived with his uncle and aunt. His uncle told him, "I'm here for you all the time" (line 975). Craig found support from his grandmother. "She's a big part of my life still. Even today she calls me probably every day" (line 325). Angela had her mom's family. "They were there when my mom needed to move out. If anything happened in the house, they were there to fix it, kinda thing, and they would just come out and do whatever we needed them to do" (lines 663-665). Craig and Rob said that their brothers helped them to be resilient. Craig and his brother pulled pranks on each other and joked around. "He's always a good sport about it. He does stuff back to me, and we, we have the same interests. Like, we like to play computer games. We like to talk about the same stuff. We like the same movies, sports, stuff like that. So we always have something to talk about" (line 485-488). About his brothers, Rob said, "We was young, and we fought a lot, like daily. As we grew older, we had formed these closer friendship over that" (lines 271-272).

Researcher Interpretation and Summary. Family provided protective factors for the participants, but it looked different for each one. Sarah was loved and cared for by her parents,

but she still felt angry and abandoned from the divorce. Now that her father was dating someone else, she said, “If you could be home every night for the past 4 months to talk to her, why were you never there for us? Like, he’s apologized about it... I’m glad he started doing it, but at the same time I’m just like...” (lines 521-524). Their mothers and brothers helped Craig and Rob, and Angela drew support from her mother’s extended family. Suah credited his uncle with helping him to bounce back.

The significant exception was the father as protective factor. Craig, who experienced an extremely amicable divorce, did not even talk about his father as a protective factor. When he described his parents after the divorce, his mother “obviously, never had been a single mom before, so she was struggling with it at first” (lines 391-392). But about his father, he said, “So after they divorced, he was still, like, a young man. Like, he wasn’t old at all, so he would go out, you know, do whatever. Do what single guys do” (lines 594-595). This may suggest that the participants’ believed that their mothers needed them, and being needed built resilience. A similar idea may apply in the way Craig and Rob describe how brothers needed them or they needed their brothers. Their fathers did not seem to need them, and in addition, for Sarah, Angela, Rob, and Suah were mostly to blame for the divorce.

Community Protective Factors.

Community protective factors also helped most participants to build resilience. In the demographic surveys, Angela’s community codes were close to friends and busy, Sarah’s was people-loving, and Suah’s was interests. In the resilience artwork, codes were: friends and boyfriends (Angela), loved anyway (Sarah), soccer and basketball (Suah), and hard places and sun (Craig).

Friends and activities were the dominant themes that developed from the interviews. Rob said, “I think it was a lot easier when you have friends that you can talk to about the situation” (lines 283-284). Suah said, “Find things, friends, that are really good around. Be around good friends, you know. When you need them, talk” (lines 1131-1132). Sarah said, “We were kinda more venting friends” (line 379). Angela talked about her friends, but also her boyfriends. During her parents’ marital problems, “He [my boyfriend] was the only person I actually talked to about things” (line 424). Activities gave the participants ways to socialize. Angela and Sarah were involved in band, and Suah and Rob played sports. Some activities, such as mock trial and debate for Sarah, were school activities, but some, such as the ministries that Rob participated in, were community activities. For Rob, Sarah, and Angela, work was another type of activity. For Suah activities provided a way for him to connect with his culture through playing soccer with his African friends, make new friends, and keep his mind off problems. He said, “I try to find things that that makes me forget about what is going on, you know. I try to, like, I try to isolate myself from those problems” (772-773).

However, this theme had some notable places where community protective factors were not represented in the data. Craig revealed community protective factors only in his resilience artwork, and it is noteworthy to mention that that coding was interpreted by the researcher. It is possible that the hard places and sun were metaphors for family and not broader references as coded. Rob, also, did not have codes for community in three of the data collected, the demographic survey and both artwork. None of the participants had community codes for their divorce artwork, although four of the five included community factors in their resilience artwork.

Researcher Interpretation and Summary. Friends and activities provided outlets for venting emotions and connecting with others. They also built self-esteem and confidence. High schools provided activity options in which they participated, but all of the participants who discussed community protective factors also talked about involvement in the larger community outside of school. This suggested that multiple kinds of relationships were important: intimate friends, teammate friends, work relationships, spiritual associations, etc.

Craig did not have any community protective factor codes in his interview, demographic survey or divorce artwork. He also described the most amicable relationship between his parents following the divorce and continuing until the present. He did briefly mention that he had been on the football team, but only as an aside when talking about taking care of his brother. Therefore, he was involved in at least that activity, but he did not include it or any other community involvement as contributing to his resilience. Perhaps this was because the most resilience-building thing for him was his family support, and any community protective factors that helped paled in comparison, though they may have been present.

Summary.

Perspective, resilience, personal characteristics, and personal activities were themes for individual protective factors. The cognitive strategies, such as reading, that the participants developed helped them bounce back. These strategies also allowed them to acknowledge the painful aspects of their parents' divorce while at the same time reframing their perspective to see benefit and betterment.

Family also provided protective factors for the participants. Participants highlighted moms, brothers, uncles, and other extended family members as helpful. Glaringly missing was

the father as a protective factor. Perhaps both needing support from family and being needed for support built resilience.

Finally, friends and activities were community protective factors that provided outlets for venting emotions, connecting with others, and possibly building self-esteem and confidence. High schools and involvement in the larger community outside of school were both important sources for community protective factors, indicating that multiple kinds of relationships may be important. However, Craig's absence of community protective factors suggests that family protective factors may be more important.

Summary of Across Case Themes

Divorce was a difficult, stressful, confusing, guilt provoking, disturbing, sad, depressing, and frustrating disruption for the children, but resilient children of divorce seemed to be able to simultaneously see how it might be good, needed, more authentic, wise, and positive, and how it could have a positive impact and make them better people. Separation seemed to epitomize divorce as expressed through the participants' divorce artwork. Three drew separated family members, and two drew separated hearts. While conflict and money might be variables in the separation, as shown in Craig and Suah's drawings, the barriers and ripping apart were between more than just the mother and father. All three metaphors drawn in the resilience artwork illustrated that resilience, like divorce, was a process and not a single event.

Divorce, resilience, family, friends, self, perspective, success/drive and busy/occupied mind were the eight general themes across cases. Typically, they respected their mothers, but felt a need to help them emotionally, financially, and with chores around the house. Most participants blamed their fathers for the divorce, and had more distant relationships with them as

a result. Their strong relationships with friends helped them, pushed them academically, and kept them out of trouble. They developed self-esteem and competence through success and a drive to do well. Staying busy was a strategy to occupy their minds.

This study found support for the three self-determination needs from the participants' experiences. Autonomy was, generally, the least represented, perhaps because the family disruption left them (especially Sarah, Rob, and Craig) without an immediate sense of choice over the decisions that affected them. However, they displayed autonomy later in the process of resilience as they developed perspective, maturity, and learned ways to keep their minds occupied. The participants also had their competence need met. All the participants were involved in activities and organizations. These helped them to cope cognitively with the divorce by involvement as well as by reducing free time to dwell on their problems. None of the participants showed the competence need in the divorce artwork. This may be because the brokenness of the marital relationship preempted identifying competence at that time. Competence, like autonomy, may develop and become more evident later in the resilience process. The participants hinted at gender preferences for meeting competence needs. The females juggled many responsibilities at once, while the males placed particular emphasis on sports. Helping others may have served the purpose of meeting the competence need by shifting power, especially for those who stepped up to help their mothers. Relatedness held the largest quantity of data. Angela, Rob, and Suah hinted at the expanding need of relatedness in the resilience process, through their resilience artwork, which included other people and activities. Family relationships became more complex during and after the divorce. Craig, Rob, and Angela developed caretaking roles with their mothers, all but Craig reported more distant and obligatory

relationships with their fathers, and sibling relationships adapted as older brothers assumed father figure roles.

This study also found support for protective factors. The individual protective factor sub-themes of perspective, resilience, personal characteristics, and personal activities contributed to cognitive strategies, which allowed the participants to acknowledge the pain of the divorce while at the same time reframing their perspective to see benefit and betterment. Participants indicated that moms, brothers, uncles, and other extended family members were family protective factors. The father was absent as a protective factor. Perhaps both needing support from family and being needed for support by family contributed to resilience, but the participants did not report feeling that from their fathers. Friends and activities were community protective factors. These provided a trusted place for venting emotions and connecting with others. High schools and the community at large were both important places for the participants to get involved, suggesting that multiple kinds of relationships may be important. However, Craig's absence of community protective factors may indicate that family protective factors were more important.

These five participants were resilient not despite their parents' divorce, but very possibly because of it. They found ways to cope with and adapt to their situation that worked for them. The three self-determination needs offered a lens to examine their experience with resilience, and it revealed that relatedness was a critical need for children of divorce. They participated in things where they were competent, and autonomy gave them control over their circumstances, but the largest quantity of data was in the relatedness theme. Protective factors provided another lens to view the participants' experiences. This correlated with the findings on relatedness, as family

and community relationships provided important protective factors. Individual protective factors indicated an important cognitive component linking perspective to resilience.

Outliers.

Hatch (2002) described outliers as nonexamples of patterns in the data. He described the dilemma of designating outliers as, “On the one hand, your judgment will be based on how well the data that are coded fit into the categories that you have tried. Another side of the issue is deciding if the data not coded contain insights that are different or contradictory to what you have proposed” (p. 157). The data analysis for this study had both dilemmas.

First, I had to determine how well the data fit (or did not fit) into the typology categories. Several codes were originally categorized as outliers, but later recategorized into the appropriate themes. For example, Suah’s ridicule theme was originally considered an outlier, but was later included as part of the community protective factor typology because he describe it as contributing to his choice of high-quality friends in high school. These types of outliers were discussed in applicable sections above.

Second, I had to decide if the data coded as outlier contained different or contradictory insights. Many items were categorized as outliers if they provided no information. For example, responses such as yeah, right, okay, etc. were coded as outliers. A few phrases were categorized as outliers if they did not make sense in the context of the transcription. An example of that would be what was transcribed as, “None of my parents have left me. I’m having chicken tonight.” None of the final data analysis coded as outlier contained different or contradictory insights, but one theme warrants discussion.

The pattern of outliers that was important to mention was the participants' concern about their drawing ability. Because this did not directly apply to the topic of study, these codes were left as outliers. However, all five participants were concerned about their artistic aptitude. After I asked Sarah to draw a picture of divorce, I said, "There's no right or wrong, and I'm not judging your artistic abilities." She replied, "I would fail miserably. I have friends who are artists. I always go, well how come I'm not them?" (lines 42-43). Angela said, "Well, yeah... 'cause I have none [artistic abilities]." Craig when drawing his resilience artwork said, "[I] just have to think about all the details. Like, this is gonna be really terrible." (lines 681-682). Suah said, "I'm not a good drawer" (line 1076). Rob said, "I'm not really sure what a picture of divorce would look like" (line 97), "I'm not the best drawer either" (line 101), and "Will stick people work?" (line 109). I would argue that what the participants viewed as crude attempts at art were in reality stunning and vivid emotional expressions that provided rich data for this study.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a summary of the demographic data, divorce artwork, resilience artwork, and interview data for five participants. Each participant's experience was discussed individually. Then, the data were examined across cases. Eight general themes developed: divorce, resilience, family, friends, self, perspective, success/drive and busy/occupied mind. The study supported the three self-determination needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, with the majority of the data falling in the relatedness category. It also found support for individual, family, and community protective factors, especially in the context of relationships. The implications of these finding are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Chapter Overview

This chapter provides three things. First, a discussion of the findings examines the experience of resilience related to self-determination needs, protective factors and Richardson's resilience model. Second, using the findings of this study, I present the implications for counseling. Finally, I suggest areas for future research.

Discussion of Findings

Before discussing the findings in relation to the research questions of this study, the population must be considered. Participants were selected because they had experienced parental divorce in the last 12 years; their scores on the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment indicated resilience; they were aged 18-19; they had enrolled in a First Year Studies class in the spring semester of 2009 or ENG 101 in the summer semester of 2009 at the University of Tennessee; and they were willing to participate in the study. Therefore, these participants were from a very specific and narrow segment of the general population.

At ages 18-19, the participants were still adolescents. "Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood. Its age boundaries are not exact, but in our society adolescence begins at around age 13 and ends at about age 22" (Weiten, Lloyd, Dunn & Hammer, 2009, p. 337). Within the last year, they had experienced a societal rite of passage by graduating from high school. They were in their first year of transition between living at home and living at school and on their own. Traditional-aged college students tend to enter universities

with a similar set of developmental issues, such as establishing identity, seeking autonomy, and achieving competence (Noldon & Sedlacek, 1998). These students were selected because they were resilient and had succeeded in gaining acceptance to study at a large university.

Building upon Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (Eggen & Kauchak, 2010), the participants would have been straddling the stages of identity versus confusion (12-18 years) and intimacy versus isolation (young adulthood). The identity psychosocial crisis included the significant relationships of peer groups, outgroups, and models of leadership, while the intimacy crisis included partners in friendship and sex and competition and cooperation (Weiten, et. al., 2009). These participants were in a period of discovery, finding who they were, who they would become and who would accompany them on the journey. Berzonsky and Kuk (2000) found that progress in identity formation foreshadowed how successfully freshmen students would negotiate the university transition.

After placing the participants within the context of their specific development and required accomplishments in order to be selected for the study, I now turn to the findings of the study. The next sections relates the findings to self-determination needs, protective factors, and Richardson's resilience model.

Self- Determination Needs

Self-determination is the process of deciding how to act on the environment (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007), and the theory is based on the assumptions that people are by nature active, self motivated, and eager to succeed because success is itself satisfying and rewarding (Deci & Ryan, 2008). As Rob said, "Success is just, it's just a powerful feeling" (lines 346-347). The difference in outcomes, according to the theory, is a result of the interaction between a person's inherent

active nature and the social environment that either supports or thwarts that nature (Deci & Ryan).

This theory of motivation assumes three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2003). When social contexts promote these needs, optimal motivation and positive outcomes occur (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The more self-determined individuals are, the more intrinsically motivated, intrinsically regulated, and internally perceiving of causality they are (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The next three sections will summarize the findings of this study in relation to these needs (Ryan & Deci).

Autonomy.

Autonomy means to act with volition and a sense of choice (Deci & Ryan, 2008), to need independence, and to have the ability to alter the environment when necessary (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). An example of autonomy was Suah's choice to remain living with his uncle. "I decide that I want to stay with my uncle. My mom said, 'You know if you want, you can, I can bring you here, you know.' And I told her that I want to stay with my uncle, and, 'cause my uncle was taking good care of me" (lines 416-418). Angela's busyness filled her need for autonomy by giving her choice, independence, and control over her environment. "Right now not so much, but when I was in high school, I was involved in lots of other clubs. And then now, I'm just, it's actually, I have a lot more time 'cause I'm not as involved, even though I have about 18 hours" (lines 581-583). This supports the contention of self-determination theory that a difference of outcomes in children of divorce is a result of the interaction between a person's inherent active nature and the social environment that either supports or thwarts that nature. The autonomy themes of resilience, perspective, personal characteristics, maturity, living elsewhere, culture, occupied mind, reaction to divorce, anxiety and ridicule were found in this study.

Friendly and Grolnick (2009, p. 70) in a review of the literature of child adjustment to parental divorce wrote:

In situations of familial dissolution, children's sense of autonomy is threatened almost by definition—because, for the most part, children are not the primary players in parental motives for divorce, children are rarely given any voice when it comes to parents' decision to break up a family. The feeling of having no choice about any of the changes occurring in the child's family is a reflection of a lack of autonomy felt by the child during this time of familial distress.

Yet, even when the participants had little choice over their parents' marital situation, as indicated by three of the participants not having autonomy codes in the divorce artwork, they still chose their perception of it. Sarah said, "I'm gonna stop letting whatever happened to me, whatever I feel has happened to me, be what's gonna determine how I act now" (lines 448-449). Note that this perception developed with time and hindsight. Resilient children of divorce may struggle with autonomy needs during the crisis part of the divorce process, especially if they feel little control, but develop autonomy later in the process of resilience as they develop perspective, maturity, and strategies to keep their minds occupied.

The participants' abilities to reframe the problem (parental divorce) and positively redefine the situation were congruent with the family stress literature. In this body of literature, perceptions of events moderate outcomes (McKenry & Price, 2005). "Thus subjective definitions can vary, from viewing circumstances as a challenge and an opportunity for growth to the negative view that things are hopeless, too difficult, or unmanageable" (McKenry & Price, pp. 12-13). Greeff and Van Der Merwe (2004) found that meaning attached to a crisis, family members' attitudes toward the crisis, and the ability to reformulate the crisis situation were distinguishable resilience factors. Another study found that positive redefining of stressful situations and social support were protective for both parents and children (Greeff,

Vansteenwegen, & DeMot, 2006). Figley & Barnes (2005) explained how a mastery frame of reference maintained the perception that family members had the resources or access to resources that were needed to exercise control over the event. By redefining events, the participants of this study were able to 1) clarify issues to make them more manageable, b) decrease the intensity of the emotional burdens associate with stressors, and c) encourage the family unit to promote individual family members' social and emotional development (McKenry & Price).

Competence.

The second need, competence, is the ability to function effectively in the environment (Eggen & Kauchak). This included survival, but also success and growth, and it was related to self-efficacy. Participants displayed competence by identifying themselves as resilient. "I would say that I was very resilient" (Angela, line 30). Craig described his competence in helping around the house when he said, "I could order pizza, order dinner for me and my brother before she got home, so when she got home it'd already be there. We would've already eaten. Stuff like mowin' the grass for her when she was doin' other stuff." (lines 383-385). Other areas of competence included participating in and leading activities. Sarah was involved in the community, Rob's basketball team won tournaments, Angela was promoted at work, and Suah studied hard to take advanced classes.

An aspect of competence identified by the researcher related to power. The participants found it helpful to help others, but part of competence in caring for others, as asserted by the researcher, was a shift in power. For example, Sarah said, "I was more like the mom figure in my group" (line 343), and "I would deal with my friends problems, but I didn't have to deal with my own. This was before I was talking to them, like, about what was going on with me. But if we

only talk about what's wrong with them, then they never had to know what's going on with me" (lines 569-572). Being the strong friend who helped others with their problems gave Sarah power in the relationship. This was notable in mother relationships. Craig said, "I would be, like, the oldest guy, like male, there, so I was kind of like, as I got older, I kind of evolved into the man of my mom's house" (lines 296-297). Rob said, "...the money that I was makin', I was... pitchin' in to help my mom out" (line 393). And Angela, said, "I think mostly I was the person helping my mom through it" (line 122). However, this finding conflicted with a survey of the literature, which found that children were more likely to experience controlling parenting behaviors following divorce (Friendly & Grolnick, 2009) and no research on power in relationships after parental divorce was found to support the finding.

Altruism might be an alternative explanation. One study on adolescent altruism (Magen & Aharoni, 1991, p. 138) found that:

Contributing to others or to a cause increases openness and sensitivity to moments of joy and excitement and enables the individual to experience life and the world more fully. Helping behavior may be considered a source of positive experiences, in that it provides the helper with increased good feelings, pride, satisfaction, and self-worth, while it focuses less attention on the self and the price of assisting others, thereby increasing the willingness to transcend oneself. On the other hand, the ability to experience the events in the world as intensely significant and fulfilling may also contribute to one's awareness of the environment, thus reinforcing the tendency to transcend personal needs.

Another significant finding was on the influence of gender in choosing activities and strategies to stay busy. Sarah and Angela chose a variety of activities simultaneously including work, band, school, and community involvement. Suah was very involved with school and Rob was involved in ministries, but all three males played sports. For Rob and Suah, sports were very important to their experience of resilience. In the gender role literature, Simpkins, Eccles, and Becnel (2008) found that girls reported a higher breadth of involvement in organized activities

than boys, which they wrote paralleled gender differences favoring girls found in other studies. In a review of the literature on family processes and gender of children, Raley & Bianchi (2006) found that girls tended to do more overall housework than boys did, and all children tended to do more gender related chores. The authors suggested that this underscored that gender-role socialization in the home is suggestive of early socialization into gender specialized household tasks and caregiving that characterize adulthood. The gender-role socialization that Raley and Bianchi documented may account for gender differences in the activity choices and quantity of busyness with participants in this study.

Relatedness.

The third need, relatedness, is the concept of feeling connected to others and feeling worthy of love and respect (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). For the participants of this study, relatedness included relationships with parents, siblings, extended family, and friends. According to self-determination theory, the principal function of identity formation is fostering the experience of relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2003). This study strongly supported Deci and Ryan, since the theme of relatedness had a far larger quantity of codes than the other two self-determination needs.

A significant finding about relatedness from this study was the changing roles between family members during and after a divorce. Most participants developed closer relationships with their mothers, more distant and obligatory relationships with their fathers, and oldest brothers (the participants in this study did not have older sisters) became father figures or men of the house. Extended family members were also important for both emotional support and basic needs, such as tangible help with babysitting, feeding, and other care giving functions.

This is described in the literature on children of divorce. Abbey & Dallos (2004) found that siblings experienced increased closeness from the experience of going through the divorce of their parents together, resulting from the emotional unavailability of their parents. Lussier, et al. (2002) identified closer relationships with grandparents, especially maternal grandparents, to be associated with better adjustment in children. Greeff and Van Der Merwe (2004) found that intra-family support, extended family support, and support of friends were the most cited factors that helped divorced families. Furthermore, in the landmark study described in Chapter 2, Wallerstein listed seven psychological tasks that effected the outcomes of the children of divorced parents: 1) parental resolution of conflict and anger, 2) resumption and improvement of parenting within the home, 3) lack of feeling rejected from the noncustodial or visiting parent, 4) the child's personality assets and deficits, 5) a supportive human network, 6) child's absence of continuing anger and depression, and 7) the sex and age of the child (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Success in many of those tasks required navigating changing roles within the family. The researchers also found that supports for children needed to be available, but children also needed to be able to grasp them (Wallerstein & Kelly). Thus, there was a reciprocal aspect to changing roles between family members.

These findings might also be explained using attachment theory. According to Nichols (2008, p. 108), "Now, in addition to theories about the broad, systemic influences on family members' behavior, attachment theory has emerged as a leading tool for describing the deeper roots of close relationships." He defined attachment as seeking closeness in the face of stress. Although attachment traits tend to be stable through childhood (Nichols), the changes in family relationships following the divorce disruption, may reflect changes in attachment as evidenced through different levels of closeness post-divorce. Further research is needed.

Protective Factors

Amato (2000) used the metaphor of shock absorbers to describe how protective factors weakened the links between divorce events and negative outcomes. This section describes the individual, family and community protective factors that the participants of this study listed as helpful to their resilience. According to Richardson (2002), the first wave of resilience research identified characteristics that marked people who thrived despite high-risk situations or setbacks and generated lists of qualities, assets, and factors considered to protect the individual. The second wave examined the resiliency process and addressed identifying, fortifying, and enriching resilient qualities or protective factors. The third wave explored innate resilience and focused on theories of resilience, motivational forces within individuals and groups, and creating experiences that fostered the growth and use of those forces. This study fit into the third wave, by examining innate resilience in the participants and focusing on the protective factors they identified as fostering resilience.

Individual.

Individual protective factors included character traits, personal strategies, and individual abilities that helped the participants to be resilient. In this study, they identified the individual protective factors of perspective, resilience, personal characteristics, and personal activities. They developed cognitive strategies through personal activities such as reading, journaling, and videogames, and they reframed their perspective to see benefit.

In chapter 2, the review of the literature identified the following individual protective factors: temperament (Lengua et al., 2000; Ruschena et al., 2005), social responsibility and peer influence (McIntyre et al., 2003), social networks and personal resources (Neher & Short, 1998), emotionality and self-regulation (Hipke et al., 2002), intelligence and regulation (Katz &

Gottman, 1997), and academic performance (Mulholland, et al., 1991). This study supported the factors of social responsibility, peer influence, and social networks, but they are discussed below under community factors. The findings also supported personal resources, intelligence, and academic performance. The participants in this study did not, however, provide data to support temperament or self-regulation, which was also tied to temperament.

An individual protective factor that merits mention was the use of cognitive strategies to occupy their minds and reframe their situations. First, personal activities such as reading, journaling, and videogames helped the participants escape immediate and intense emotion. Sarah said, “When I was reading, I wouldn’t be thinking about what was going on” (lines 605-606). This kept their minds busy and not thinking about the divorce. Second, participants simultaneously acknowledged the painful aspects of their parents’ divorce, but they were able also to reframe their perspective to see how it benefited and improved them. This was supported in the cognitive coping literature. For example, a study with Japanese university freshmen found that coping by cognitive reinterpretation and problem solving was indicative of better health and suggested that encouraging freshmen to use the two strategies in stress coping at early time points in their campus experience could promote better future adaptation (Sasaki & Yamasaki, 2007). Another longitudinal adolescent/early adult study found that the cognitive coping strategy of positive reappraisal was used most often during transition and role strain events, and avoidance during interpersonal stressors (Harnish, Aseltine, & Gore, 2000). They reported that avoidance coping was ineffective in resolving the stressor early on in the course of the stressor, and active behavioral coping, positive reappraisal, and use of social support were most effective later in the course of the stressful experience. Their results lent support to this study’s findings that coping effectiveness, and therefore coping strategies, varied as the divorce event progressed.

For children of divorce, escapism strategies when emotions were raw early in the process may not have been about resolution, but more about coping with the crisis, so they were helpful initially. However, reframing was better long-term strategy in those who were resilient.

Family.

Family protective factors included both immediate and extended family members. In this study, participants identified mothers, brothers (only Suah had a sister, who was younger and lived in another state), aunts, uncles, and grandmothers. In the review of the literature in Chapter 2, the following family protective factors were described: the parent-child relationship (Wolchik et al., 2000; Lazar & Guttman, 2004; Ruschena et al., 2005; and Katz & Gottman, 1997), family coherence (Greeff & Van Der Merwe, 2004), family hardiness (Greeff, Vansteenwegen, & DeMot, 2006), siblings (Abbey & Dallos, 2004), and grandparents (Lussier, Deater-Deckard, Dunn & Davies, 2002; Ahrons, 2006). The participant data findings supported those studies.

A notable exception was that the participants omitted fathers as protective factors. Four of the participants mostly blamed the fathers for the divorce, which could contribute to not seeing them as protective factors. The literature on divorced fathers helped explain the finding. For example, the social idea that divorce is responsible for the breakdown of family values may contribute to divorced fathers having a strong sense of the traditional family form, but not believing that they can continue to be part of a family that was not consistent with that social construction (Bailey, 2007). Bokker (2006) also found support for divorced fathers' role confusion in a review of the literature on factors that influence the relationships between fathers and their children. However, even Craig, who had good relationships with both parents and enjoyed their good relationship with each other, did not identify his father as a protective factor.

An alternative explanation, offered by the researcher, was that their fathers did not depend on them as their mothers did, and the element of needing to be needed was protective. Huta and Zuroff (2008) found that needing to be needed, or being important to other people, was positively correlated with generative behavior and well-being. Suah said, “He lives there [in a different state] now. He have a wife and three year old son, so he move along... he don’t wanna deal with us anymore” (lines 445-447). Craig described how his mother had a difficult adjustment to becoming a single mom, but his dad would, “do what single guys do that are young” (line 595). Sarah’s father, who was rarely home in the evenings for her, said, “Right now, he’s dating somebody else, and that’s been a whole new deduction of screwed up, because like he’ll say stuff, and then he’ll be, like you know, I’ve been home every night for 5 weeks, or a month, to talk to her” (lines 518-520). Bokker (2006, p. 163) wrote, “Divorced fathers may struggle with knowing how to develop, maintain, and nurture the relationships between them and their children.”

Community.

The community also offered protective factors. The participants identified friends and activities as community protective factors. Chapter 2 detailed the community protective factors of intimate friendships (Kirk, 2002), peers, schools, and neighbors (Rodgers & Rose, 2002), and positive life events (Doyle, et. al, 2003). This data in this study supported friends, peers, and schools, but no data was collected on neighbors and positive life events.

A finding of this study was the multitude of relationships spanning from intimate friendships to teammate relationships to relationships with trusted adults to work relationships to acquaintances. This tied into the adolescent community involvement literature. For example, Magen and Aharoni (1991) found an interrelationship between involvement in community

service activities, positive experiences, and transpersonal commitment among adolescents. In another study, greater community involvement was related to more engagement with nonfamily adults; higher levels of the positive developmental processes of support, empowerment, and boundary setting; lower levels of risk behaviors; and higher levels of thriving (Scales, Benson, & Mannes, 2006). Being involved in activities for these participants meant more than showing up. They were actively involved and became leaders. Rob said, “I’d travel playin’ basketball. I played for different [league] teams and different basketball tournaments” (lines 552-553). Angela was a band captain and shift leader at work. She said, “Usually, I was just in a leadership role, and everybody came to me” (line 321). Sarah not only attended the Coffee House, but eventually ran the kitchen. Assessing a broad range of high school and young adult involvement in community and political activities, one study found positive adjustment and developmental outcomes for involved students (Pancer, Pratt, Hunsberger, & Alisat, 2007). Youth in their study identified as Activists, Helpers, and Responders reported significantly and substantially higher levels of optimism, self-esteem, and social support than those identified as Uninvolved.

Another finding was the importance of selecting good friends. The findings of this study also suggested gender differences in the types of friendships that the participants sought. The female participants found relationships that provided emotional support, and the males found relationships that provided social engagement. For example, Rob talked about the role of his brothers’ friends in guiding him. He said, “Just me and my brothers hangin’ with my brothers’ friends, like a older generation keepin’ me wiser” (lines 276-277). Suah’s friends promoted his identity development. “They care about, you know, other cultures and, you know, and I wasn’t ashamed to tell them that I was a Muslim, you know. I know, like, the perception of being a Muslim after, especially, September 11th was, was a really difficult thing... We used to talk

about, like, the religious differences and all that, and very, like, intelligent conversation and, you know, it was really good... They accepted me for who I am” (lines 1037-1043). The adolescent friendship literature suggested that a way in which activity participation related to outcomes was through the relationships adolescents formed and maintained during activities, specifically friends with positive characteristics (Simpkins, Eccles & Becnel, 2008). The results of another study found that adolescents in interdependent friendships seemed to balance both individuality and commitment across adolescence, and increasingly developed acceptance for each other’s individuality (Selfhout, Branje, & Meeus, 2009).

Richardson’s Resilience Model

Richardson (2002) described resilience through a linear model. (See Figure 1.) The model began with the stage of biopsychospiritual (body, mind, and spirit) homeostasis followed by a disruption. Reintegration followed in one of four ways: dysfunctional, with loss, back to homeostasis, or resilient. This model provided a framework for understanding the participants’ experiences and the findings of this study. It framed the following seven conclusions.

First, the participants began at biopsychospiritual homeostasis before the divorce, depicted by the disruption. The progression from homeostasis to disruption was a process, which for some was lengthy. Craig said, “I knew people could get split up, but I’d never heard the term divorce, but when I knew what it was, I was just kinda shocked” (lines 177-178). Angela said, “It was coming for a long time by the time it actually happened” (line 33). Sarah said, “The separation, and then the divorce was much later, and then there was the religious divorce even later” (lines 467-468). This echoed Wallerstein and Kelly (1980), who described divorce as a series of legal, social, psychological, economic, and sexual changes strung together complexly

and extending over time. The divorce disruption was a process that had multiple phases (Amato, 2000; Sun & Li, 2002; and Hipke, et al., 2002).

Second, participants moved through the reintegration process and emerged resilient. Sarah said, “I mean it [resilience] definitely it took a while” (line 745). Richardson (2002) defined resilient reintegration as experiencing insight or growth through disruptions. For example, participants exemplified this through their reframed perspective of the divorce’s impact on them. Angela said, “It was something that needed to happen, and I was happy that it did” (line 31). Rob said, “Since the divorce we’ve been actually progressing instead of, you know, everything just falling apart between us” (lines 175-176). Suah said, “It makes me a serious, more about life in general, that I need to be successful, a successful person, and the divorce for my parents... make me hide in my mind and become a stronger person” (lines 711-714). Like divorce, the participants revealed that resilience was a process.

Third, both self-determination needs and protective factors contributed to resilience. When this study commenced, no journal articles explored children of divorce through the lens of self-determination theory, but a recent article provided a review of the literature on parental factors using that theory as a framework for understanding child adjustment to parental divorce (Friendly & Grolnick, 2009). The authors concluded that no existing studies had combined all three self-determination needs to examine the overall impact of parental factors on children’s psychological needs after the divorce, but that the results of the studies reviewed revealed results consistent with expectations of the theory. That is, when social contexts facilitated meeting the three needs, optimal psychological, developmental and behavioral outcomes occurred, but when the needs were not met, poorer outcomes occurred (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The *Reaching Resilience* study also supported the protective nature of the three self-determination needs. (This

is described more in the conclusions below.) Originally in this study, self-determination needs were depicted as part of the reintegration process, separate from protective factors (see Figure 2), but the findings indicated that self-determination needs and protective factors were closely related with overlapping categorization of themes under the typologies. (See Table 13.) As the table demonstrates, generally, the autonomy needs and individual protective factors were the same, competence needs and community factors were the same, and relatedness needs and family protective factors were the same. The exception to this was that the community protective factor of friends was included in the relatedness theme. Therefore, this study has linked the empirical support of protective factor research to the tenet of self-determination theory that states that by facilitating the three self-determination needs, optimal positive psychological, developmental and behavioral outcomes occur (Deci & Ryan). In other words, meeting the self-determination needs was protective for children of divorce.

Table 14: Comparison of Self-Determination Needs and Protective Factors

Self-Determination Needs	Protective Factors
<i>Autonomy</i> resilience perspective reaction to divorce personal characteristics anxiety ridicule maturity living elsewhere culture occupied mind	<i>Individual</i> identification as resilient perspective personal characteristics personal activities
<i>Competence</i> resilience taking care of others activities & organizations staying busy	<i>Community</i> activities – school, band, work, and sports
<i>Relatedness</i> family mom dad brothers grandma great-grandma uncle aunt friends	<i>Family</i> family mom brothers extended family <i>Community</i> friends

Fourth, the model showed a positive influence of protective factors, but within protective factors, individual protective factors and autonomy needs contained overlapping themes. The participants identified the individual protective factors of perspective, personal characteristics, personal activities, and identification as resilient, and they described the autonomy needs of resilience, perspective, reaction to divorce, personal characteristics, anxiety, ridicule, maturity, living elsewhere, culture, and occupied mind. So when Angela said, “I would say that I was very resilient” (line 30), she revealed an individual protective factor and autonomy with the same sentence. In the literature on protective factors in children of divorce, coping skills and social skills were identified as individual protective factors negatively correlated with substance use and antisocial behavior in adolescent children of divorce (Neher & Short, 1998). The ability to self-regulate, or calm themselves down physiologically from emotional arousal, was another protective factor (Katz & Gottman, 1997) found in the literature. The findings of this study assert that coping skills, social skills, and self-regulation are also related to autonomy because, by definition, autonomy meant to act with volition and choice (Deci & Ryan, 2008) and represented the ability to alter the environment when necessary (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007). Therefore, when participants acted with autonomy, they simultaneously exerted individual protective factors.

Fifth, family protective factors were correlated with relatedness needs. The participants described the family protective factors of mom, brothers, and extended family and the related needs of family, mom, dad, brothers, grandma, great-grandma, uncle, aunt, and friends. (The community protective factor of friends was also correlated with relatedness.) It was logical that family themes and relatedness themes would be similar. Friendly and Grolnick (2009) wrote that, “SDT [self-determination theory] acknowledges a universal need for relatedness with our fellow human beings, the thwarting of which would result in an overall lack of well-being, and the

meeting of which can help individuals to thrive.” Thus, family protective factors (and the community protective factor of friends) met the relatedness need, and meeting the relatedness need was accomplished through family (and community) protective factors.

Sixth, community protective factors were correlated with the competence need. Participants listed the community protective factors of friends and activities (such as school, band, work, and sports), and the competence needs of resilience, taking care of others, activities and organizations, and staying busy. Likewise, Rodgers and Rose (2002) identified the community protective effects of peer support, school attachment, and neighbor support in adolescents, but the findings of this study suggest that when participants were actively involved with friends and activities, it often met their competence need as well.

Finally, Richardson’s image of protective factors as buffers did not divide protective factors into categories. This may be more accurate in explaining the broad phenomenon of resilience than the categories of protective factors and self-determination needs because they were more interrelated than the delineations suggested. For example, in this study, when Rob talked about playing basketball with his friends, some meaning units were coded under competence (e.g. winning tournaments) and some under relatedness (e.g. friends), depending on whether he described ability or relationship. The same activity could represent both needs. However, a study on youth programs and autonomy development found that the programs offered an “opportunity pathway” that could also contribute to autonomy (Larson, Pearce, Sullivan & Jarrett, 2006, p. 43). According to the authors, the youths first exercised autonomy in their decision to join; second, participating in the programs built self-reliance and personal autonomy; and finally, being involved in the programs influenced their autonomy in family relationships. This study suggests the interrelatedness of the three self-determination needs

because the same event (program involvement) could meet the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness simultaneously, yet differently. It is also important to reiterate that the greatest quantity of data fell in the relatedness need typology, combining the family protective factor with the friends sub-theme of the community protective factor. Yet meeting that relatedness need might contribute to both the other needs, and all three protective factors. The simplicity of the typologies belied the complexity of the experience.

To summarize, Richardson's model provided a framework for the findings of this study. The model represented homeostasis, the divorce disruption, and resilient reintegration for the participants. The protective factors that he indicated through arrows contributing to resilient outcomes were shown to be very similar to the needs of self-determination theory, indicating the protective quality of meeting the needs. Finally, although this study categorized the needs and protective factors, they were complexly interrelated.

This study has contributed to the body of research in three ways. First, this study provided support for Richardson's Resilience Model and the contribution of protective factors in resilient reintegration. Second, it extended the application of that model to include self-determination needs, which were closely correlated with the categories of protective factors. Third, it applied the model of resilience specifically to the population of children of divorce.

Researcher Reflection

Although this study focused on the experience of resilience in five university freshman after their parents' divorce, I gathered and analyzed the data, and I, too, am a child of a divorce that happened when I was a freshman in college. It would be impossible to separate my experiences with divorce and resilience from this project. To be authentic, my reflections on this process must be shared.



Figure 21: Researcher “Divorce” and “Resilience” Artwork

My experience was the reason this topic interested me. As a child of two divorces, I was frustrated and frightened from popular books and articles that I read detailing my many risk factors. For years, I told others that I was allergic to marriage because, in my young adult reasoning, the best way to avoid divorce (of which I was strongly adverse) was to avoid marriage (which I thought I could happily live without). I did eventually marry, and I believe that I have a stable and healthy marriage that will last, but it has been a journey. In graduate school, I first stumbled upon the idea of protective factors and Emmy Werner’s work when writing a paper, and I came to my doctoral studies knowing that this would be my dissertation work. My counseling approach is strongly humanistic, and that influenced my approach to research as well. My past gave me a passion and a desire for knowledge that another researcher with a different experience might lack. I also know that my past influenced the way I filtered the data.

Before contacting the participants, I completed the Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment, drew a picture of divorce, was interviewed by a fellow researcher following the interview protocol, and drew a picture of resilience. (See Figure 21.) (Note: Like the participants, I feel the

need to say that I am not an artist as you look at my stick figures, but since I shared their drawings, I needed to share my own.) By the time I was interviewed, I had designed the study and read much of the research, so those things influenced my answers, although I tried to respond as if I were a participant. While my interview revealed many of the same themes (i.e. resilience, divorce, mom, dad, sister, family, friends, faith, school, etc.), my interview revealed more self-reflection, which has developed with maturity. My reactions to the participants were more diverse.

My first interview was with Angela. My parents' marriage was crumbling when I was the same age she was, so I empathized with her. I had also chosen busyness as my primary coping mechanism, so that by my senior year of college, I was a leader in every activity that I participated – editor of the yearbook, trip planner of a traveling drama group, officer in the advertising club, among others. I still have a pattern of swinging between being very busy to doing little productively, but I had not recognized that about myself until I heard Angela's story.

Next, I interviewed Sarah. I saw some of myself in Sarah as well. I perceived that she identified as being an intellectual and enjoyed having friends that provided stimulating and challenging conversations, and it reminded me of my undergraduate years when I learned to enjoy thinking. She was also blunt at times, another trait that I have consciously worked to temper with time. I used thinking as a defense (it was much easier to think than to feel at that time), and was even given the appropriate West Texas nickname of Prickly Pear because of it. I suspected that Sarah used intellectualism as a defense, too, and that it would be part of her journey as it was mine.

Third, I interviewed Craig. That interview felt the most comfortable for me, and I enjoyed hearing about how amicable his parents' divorce had been. I kept thinking about what a

gift his parents had given him and how I wished that other divorcing parents could learn from his. When I talk about “the divorce,” I refer to my mom and dad’s ten-year legal battle, but my mom and father divorced when I was two. I do not remember it, but they still maintain an amicable relationship today, and both sets of grandparents stay in touch. I am very grateful for this, and I credit my father’s parents with being my model for a healthy marriage. Craig’s interview reminded me of the good and healthy relationships that are possible after divorce.

Fourth, I interviewed Suah. He was, on the surface, the most different from me in gender, race, culture, and religion, but his story intrigued me. As he shared his experience, I thought that his parents’ divorce was seemingly overshadowed by other challenges, yet it struck me how much it affected him. One would think that not living with his parents would make it easier, yet I understood (because I was away at college for my parents’ divorce) that not being present allowed us to, not just cope with the crisis, but begin to deal with the underlying issues. I hurt with him as he talked about his difficult middle school experience, but I witnessed a young man who had become comfortable with who he was and where he was. I left the interview with immense respect for him.

Finally, I interviewed Rob. I found it easy to like him from the moment he entered the room. He smiled easily, was polite, and I sensed that he really wanted to share his story. Rob did not share details about what happened with his parents marriage (which I thought respected his family), but he did blame his father. This gave me pause to think about how other participants, friends of mine, and I assessed blame after parental divorce. I wondered how it could be helpful for some to explain the divorce as mostly one parent’s fault, yet maintain a relationship with that parent, while for others, that blame could breed bitterness and lead to estrangement.

As I moved into the data analysis portion of the research, I felt a fresh sense of awe that these participants, who did not know me, would talk so candidly about their experiences. I believed that I had a tremendous responsibility to preserve their experiences in their own words as much as possible, and fortunately, they provided me with rich data to do that. When I first laid out the divorce artwork side by side, I felt the impact of their collective experience. That was the point when I realized that my own divorce artwork also showed the theme of ripping down the middle. Our experiences with divorce were different, but emotionally, I think we all felt a similar brokenness.

I had several “a-ha” moments, which have been described in the findings, but I will highlight a few here. First, I identify myself as more humanist and person-centered, so I was surprised at the cognitive coping findings that the participants seemed to use naturally. Second, I expected a somewhat even distribution of data between the three needs, but the importance of relatedness was striking. In my experience with resilience, my friends and support systems have been vitally important, and relationships were at the heart of my healing, so maybe it should not have been surprising. Finally, I have finished this study with a fresh appreciation for adversity. I have learned through the participants that without it, there is no resilience.

Implications for Counseling

With about 1.5 million children and adolescents in the United States experiencing parental divorce each year, and 40% of children predicted to live with a divorced parent before they reach the age of 16 (Haine, Sandler, Wolchik, Tein & Dawson-McClure, 2003), most child, adolescent, and young adult counselors will work with clients who have experienced this disruption. The following are implications for counseling based on the findings of this study.

- 1) *Divorce is a process, but so is resilience.*

Wallerstein and Kelly (p. 4), in their longitudinal study of children of divorce, came to the understanding that divorce was not as a single event, but rather a “chain of events – a series of legal, social, psychological, economic, and sexual changes, strung complexly together and extending over time.” Resilience, too, is a process.

The participants of this study described the reintegration process in at least two phases. First, they had strong, emotional immediate responses. Craig said, “I was just kinda shocked. Like, I really didn’t know, like I didn’t understand why because... I argued with people, too... I was little, so I didn’t see, like, that was a reason to get a divorce at all. And I’m sure there was stuff going on at the time that I didn’t know about, so I guess that kinda confused me even more” (lines 178-182). Then, participants described more thought-out long-term responses. Sarah said, “It definitely it took a while... I had to decide for myself that I was gonna stop whining about it, and I was gonna move on, and just live my own life” (lines 745-749). Because the divorce process can span across years, resilience must adapt along that process as well.

In the stress and coping literature, one study examined how coping behaviors were tied to the resolution of stressful events, arguing that defining stressors as acute or chronic could provide an “artificial dichotomy” that did not consider the individual’s contribution to the duration of the event (Harnish, Aseltine, & Gore, 2000, p. 122). Without discounting the chronic nature of some stressors, such as parental divorce, the researchers examined duration of the stress as a dependent variable instead. What they found was that coping style did not explain duration, and they suggested that coping effectiveness varied as the stressor event continued. The findings of this study suggest that coping with the stress of parental divorce requires adapting to different stages in the process of resilience.

For counselors, this means two things. First, both divorce and resilience must be viewed as a process with different phases. Counselors may need take a psychoeducational approach to help clients understand the normalcy of the process. Second, coping strategies need to be adapted throughout the process. Therefore, clients may need assistance in developing appropriate strategies during times of acute stress and different strategies for coping with enduring stress.

2) *Adversity is part of resilience.*

Richardson's Resilience Model (2002) visualized the resilience process beginning with a state of biopsychospiritual homeostasis, then experiencing a disruption before reintegrating into a state that is higher functioning than before. Without the disruption, however, there could not be resilient reintegration. It is how people made sense of what happened. The human development literature offered insight into resilient development. According to Eggen and Kauchak (2010, p. 34), Piaget

described this need for understanding as the drive for equilibrium, a cognitive state in which we're able to explain new experiences by using existing understanding (our experiences make sense to us). If we can explain new experiences, we remain at equilibrium; if we can't, our equilibrium is disrupted, and we are motivated to reestablish it. When our understanding advances as a result of regaining equilibrium, development occurs.

Erickson described eight stages of psychosocial development as each requiring a crisis to be navigated for development (Weiten, et al., 2009). In a similar fashion, adversity could be seen as necessary for resilient development. For some of the participants, more adversity than parental divorce shaped their development. For example, Suah overcame cultural challenges, ridicule, and anxiety; Sarah had a brother diagnosed with bipolar, lived in a clergy family's glass box, and took medication for a few months for depression; and Rob's family struggled out of poverty.

When adversity is seen as part of resilient development, then the participants' resilience developed not in spite of these challenges, but because of them.

This distinction is important for strength-based counseling. Not only is resilience a process, but it is a developmental process. Instead of viewing the adversity solely as a risk factor (which research supports; see Chapter 1), it can be viewed as a component of resilience development (which this study supports). Therefore, counselors can include helping the client to see the benefit of the adversity as one of the treatment goals.

3) Divorce is a relatedness disruption that requires a relatedness solution.

Divorce is a separation that divides more than a couple. It often results in changes in residence, school, and friends (Kelly & Emery, 2003). Family and community relationships change. For example, in this study, most participants drew closer to their mothers and more distant from their fathers. After the divorce, they re-created fatherless families. Extended family members helped with emotional and other expressions of support, such as fixing houses, babysitting, or preparing food. Angela and Sarah described how they did not tell their friends about their parents before the divorce was public, but confided in friends later in the process. The relatedness disruption of divorce had ripple effects in many relationships.

Divorce disrupted many relationships for the participants, but relationships also seemed to be key to building resilience, both friendships and family relationships. For example, Rob said, "I think it was a lot easier when you have friends that you can talk to about the situation, and, like, they can relate to what you're goin' through" (lines 283-284). Suah said, "I would say those guys, throughout the four years that I'm in high school, it makes me much better, happier person" (lines 483-484). Craig said, "Like I said before, my brother being young and innocent and not really knowing what was goin' on, and that really helped me. And, I was just, I could

just kinda get away when I was with him, and we could go off and do our own thing” (lines 281-283).

Counselors, then, need to assess the client’s sources for meeting the relatedness need and work with them to create strategies for developing supportive relationships. These are needed both within and outside the family. This is especially important when working with children of divorce who have experienced a relatedness disruption. For example, Friendly and Grolnick (2009) found in a survey of parental factors on the outcomes of children of divorce that higher levels of parent involvement led to better parent-child relationships. One approach a counselor might take to improve relatedness, then, would be to work with a client to promote parental involvement.

4) *Cognitive coping helps with both acute and chronic stress.*

Cognitive coping strategies were an important individual protective factor for the participants. They described two types, short-term and long-term. Whenever they felt overwhelmed or strong emotion, they would practice escapism techniques – reading, keeping busy, and occupying their minds with sports or other activities. This cognitive diversion helped them cope with the acute pain. The participants also employed a long-term cognitive strategy of reframing. Without minimizing the painful aspects, they began to see how their parents’ divorce was actually beneficial to them.

In the coping literature, Sasaki and Yamasaki (2007) found that an increase in cognitive reinterpretation directly predicted a reduction in social dysfunction, and an increased use of situational cognitive reinterpretation. This meant that the freshman university students of their study who used cognitive reinterpretation (or what I called reframing with the participants of this study) showed less social dysfunction and more ability to reinterpret other situations. The

findings in *Reaching Resilience* were congruent with other studies. However, the literature has mixed conclusions about use of escapism, or avoidant strategies. For example, Sasaki and Yamasaki (p. 53) wrote, “Catanzaro et al. (2000) showed that dispositional avoidant coping does not directly predict depression or state anxiety. On the other hand, Carver et al. (1989) showed that dispositional coping strategies do predict trait anxiety.” Perhaps the reason that the participants were resilient although they used cognitive strategies that could be related to higher anxiety levels was that escapism was not the strategy that they used exclusively.

The implication for counselors is that clients need a variety of coping strategies to use in the resilience process. Reframing seems to be a particularly helpful strategy for those who are resilient. Other strategies, such as escapism, may be appropriate at times, too.

5) *Involvement in activities, not just attendance, makes a difference.*

Activities were important to the participants because they contributed to the competence need. As examples, Rob was good at basketball, Angela competed with band, and Sarah participated in and ran the kitchen at the Coffee House. These activities built resilience because the participants were involved; they did not simply attend.

This echoed the risk and resilience research. One researcher examining adolescent youth and a sense of community found an interdependent blend of contributing factors to youth experiencing power and influence in community settings (Evans, 2007). His results indicated that power came from developing capacity, experiencing voice and resonance, and having opportunities to play meaningful roles, but that needed to be in the context of caring adult support and challenge. Sarah described that community power in the Coffee House kitchen, Angela experienced it through bosses that implemented her ideas, and Rob found it through the program that placed him at work at the doggie daycare so he could help his family. Part of

involvement included social relationships. Both peer acceptance and friendship quality have been associated with adjustment, and adolescents who had higher-quality friendships and were accepted by their peers tended to be rated lower in internalizing, externalizing, and social problems (Waldrip, Malcolm, & Jensen-Campbell, 2008).

The one exception found in the literature, but not supported in the data of this study was the importance of adult connections in schools. Stuht (2008) reported that California schools that were consistently successful in supporting at-risk students were characterized by strong interpersonal relationships. However, in this study, only Sarah briefly mentioned a teacher. The other participants did not mention adults in the schools as helping them to be resilient. One reason for this could be that the participants were no longer in high school and in direct contact with those adults, while they still maintained contact with the high school friends that they identified as helpful in their resilience.

Counselors need to recognize the importance of community involvement for their clients. Based on the findings of this study, clients could find it helpful to not just attend, but also actively participate in activities, especially those that encourage the development of high-quality friendships. For adolescents this could be at school, in the community at large or both.

6) *Gender influences activity choices.*

The findings from the participants of this study suggested that females may be highly involved and try to “do it all,” while males may use sports as their activity of choice. For example, Sarah said, “I did soccer. I did band. I did a lot of stuff in my community. I was a Girl Scout. I worked at Sunday school” (lines 714-717). Angela emphasized her busyness when she said, “I was so busy with work and graduation and all the senior activities. And see, I was in band, and I had all of this stuff going on. And then I was, I was in winter percussion. We had

championships and practices and everything. It was really busy” (lines 162-164). The males talked about sports as their primary activity. Suah said, “Once I get on the soccer field, I have to play soccer. My mind is out of everything else that is going on, like, I have to play soccer, and I, all I care about is winning” (lines 756-757). Rob said, “I went with them [my brothers]. You know, they’re basketball fanatics as well, so I went with them. Played ball all day with them and their friends, and we played basketball all day” (lines 543-544).

Other research (Simpkins, Eccles, & Becnel, 2008) also found that girls reported a higher breadth of involvement in organized activities than boys. The findings of this study suggest that those choices may be beneficial, but more research is needed because activity overload, a concern with such high involvement, was not the purpose of this study.

Counselors can assist their clients in finding a good balance of activities, maintaining awareness that gender may influence the type and scope of the activities. Females may feel more competent when they are busy, while males may find competence through more physical activities. Counselors should also be aware that this may reflect social norms, so those clients who do not have these preferences could have more difficulty feeling that the competency need has been met as socially expected.

7) *Helping in relationships increases competence.*

By taking care of their mothers, siblings, and friends, children of divorce met their need for competence. Craig helped his mother by helping with chores, and watched out for his younger brother. Angela helped her mother emotionally. Rob took a job to help his family financially. Sarah helped her friend through depression. Nomaguchi (2008, p. 1215) reported that single mothers may share household managerial responsibilities with their children to manage overload, “which may make the adolescents feel as if their peerlike mothers are unable to

provide them with emotional security.” On the other hand, “teenagers may enjoy the autonomy provided by their mothers and perceive the relationships with their mothers as very close... Empirical evidence is inconsistent.” The participants of this study considered it helpful, and spoke highly of their mothers and siblings.

In the literature on belonging, one study found associations between university freshmen’s sense of class belonging and their academic self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and task value (Freeman, Anderson, & Jensen, (2007). Helping others may improve a sense of belonging. It also may help children of divorce to develop their own identity. In the identity development literature, researchers found that students’ levels of personal identity development played a role in the transition to university (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000, p. 92). “In general, the more self exploration the students had engaged in (high achievement and moratorium scores), the better prepared they were to operate in a mature, autonomous, and self-directed manner without continually needing to look to others for reassurance and emotional support.” Perhaps by filling new roles in the family after divorce (i.e. man of the house, confidant, or caretaker for a sibling), the participants of this study progressed in their identity development.

The implication for counselors is that helping others is beneficial to clients. The act of altruism has been linked with an increased meeting of the competence need (Magen & Aharoni, 1991). Therefore, relationships with parents, siblings, friends, and others could be assessed for opportunities to help others that is beneficial to both the client and the one they help.

8) *Art is a useful counseling tool.*

This study required the participants to draw a picture of divorce and a picture of resilience, but all five participants were concerned about their artistic aptitude. For example, Craig said, “This is gonna be really terrible.” (lines 682), and Suah said, “I’m not a good drawer”

(line 1076). Rob said, “Will stick people work?” (line 109). Yet, what they conveyed in their pictures (See Figures 19 and 20) was more powerful and concise than could be expressed through words alone, especially in a first meeting.

For counselors, this provides another tool for helping clients. Expressive art therapy is a means for accessing hidden resources and gaining a better understanding of the unconscious (Snyder, 1997). It does not require interpretation by the counselor (in fact, only a trained art therapist should attempt interpretations), and it builds rapport by allowing the client to look at the paper, while still communicating with the counselor. Clients can express a depth of emotion that they may be uncomfortable sharing in a first session. Cox (2005) found that a central part of the context for drawing was the verbal commentary that accompanied the act of drawing, so counselors need to direct clients to talk them through their work as they draw. Much information can be expressed through client commentary of a single drawing that would typically be difficult to verbalize with a stranger. Using art is a time-efficient counseling tool that does not require client confidence in their artistic ability.

Areas for Future Research

This project raised questions that point to the need for more study in three areas. First, resilience is a field of study that requires more research. More study is needed in other populations. Some populations that were only hinted at in this study include resilience in immigrants, clergy families, children in poverty, adolescents, and young adults, but many other populations need to be included in inquiry. Second, Wallerstein, Lewis, and Blakeslee (2000) in their 25-year landmark study have documented the changing effects of divorce on children as they grow older. More research is needed to examine protective factors and self-determination needs as they change during the lifespan in children of divorce, since this study only examined

university freshmen. Finally, empirical studies scrutinizing the correlation between protective factors and self-determination needs are necessary. In addition, more qualitative research on resilience in children of divorce is necessary. Resilience, protective factors, self-determination needs, and children of divorce are all areas that still need rigorous research.

Summary

This dissertation began with the first recorded divorce in America. In December 1639, James Luxford's wife requested a divorce because of his bigamy. The magistrate granted the divorce, seized Luxford's property, transferred it to his wife and children, fined him £100, ordered him to the stocks for an hour, and banished him back to England (Riley, 1991). Although judges no longer order people to the stocks or sent back to England, the participants in this study exposed that divorce is still cloaked in issues such as extramarital affairs, financial issues, multiple cultures, shame, and fathers distanced from mothers and children.

A bulk of literature has focused on the harmful effects of divorce on children including higher levels of aggression, depression, anxiety, school dropout, drug and alcohol use, early sexual behavior, adolescent pregnancy and poor academic performance (Wolchik, Wilcox, Tein, & Sandler, 2000). Beginning with Werner's landmark study of the children of Kauai, researchers began to explore the idea of resilience, looking at "problems and promises" (Werner & Smith, 1977). Then, Wallerstein and the California Children of Divorce Project initiated an interest in children of divorce and offered qualitative, longitudinal data documenting the cumulative, long-term effects of parental divorce on children (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980; Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989; Wallerstein, Lewis & Blakeslee, 2000). Both Werner and Wallerstein's longitudinal studies laid the foundation for research into protective factors in children of divorce, including individual, family, and community factors.

This study expanded the research into resilience in children of divorce by analyzing participants' descriptions of their own resilience to see what they revealed about protective factors and self-determination needs using Richardson's resilience model. Using self-reported demographic data, artwork, and interview transcriptions, five resilient participants opened their lives to inspection.

Through their gripping and emotionally powerful stories, they have taught us many lessons about resilience. First, self-determination needs are strikingly similar to protective factors. Second, perception of the divorce was an important component of *autonomy*, even when the children had no control over the decision to divorce. Third, helping others helped the participants to meet *competence* needs, and gender influenced activity choices and quantity. Fourth, changing roles and relationships with the family and community affected *relatedness* needs. Fifth, the cognitive strategies of avoidance and reframing served as *individual* protective factors. Sixth, children may have had a need to be needed, which was absent in their relationships with their fathers, preventing fathers from being a *family* protective factor. Finally, *community* involvement helped the participants develop multiple kinds of relationships, good friends, and become highly involved.

Nearly 1.5 million children experience parental divorce every year in the United States (Haine, et al., 2003). Understanding what contributes to resilience can help counselors working with children of divorce. The findings from this study provide the following implications for counselors:

- Divorce is a process, but so is resilience.
- Adversity is part of resilience.
- Divorce is a relatedness disruption that requires a relatedness solution.

- Cognitive coping helps with both acute and chronic stress.
- Involvement in activities, not just attendance, makes a difference.
- Gender influences activity choices.
- Helping in relationships increases competence.
- Art is a useful counseling tool.

Angela, Sarah, Suah, Craig, and Rob shared five very different stories of divorce, but stories that showed common factors of resilience. Through their candid conversation, drawings and written words, they have allowed others to see their hurts and their healing. They have shown us that resilience is possible, but only possible after adversity.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Healthy Kids Resilience Inventory

Appendix B – Demographic Survey #1

Appendix C – Potential Interview Protocol

Appendix D – Demographic Survey #2

Appendix E – Information Sheet

Appendix F – Informed Consent Statement

Appendix G – Permission to Recruit Participants

Appendix H – Internal Review Board Permission

Appendix A

Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment

Healthy Kids Resilience Assessment

Version 3.0

For each of the statements below, please mark your answer sheet to show whether you feel that it is not at all true, a little true, pretty much true, or very much true.

I have a friend about my own age...

	Not at All True	A Little True	Pretty Much True	Very Much True
1. Who really cares about me.	A	B	C	D
2. Who talks with me about my problems.	A	B	C	D
3. Who teases me too much.	A	B	C	D
4. Who helps me when I'm having a hard time.	A	B	C	D

In my home, there is a parent or some other adult...

	Not at All True	A Little True	Pretty Much True	Very Much True
5. Who expects me to follow the rules.	A	B	C	D
6. Who is interested in my school work.	A	B	C	D
7. Who believes that I will be a success.	A	B	C	D
8. Who is too busy to pay much attention to me.	A	B	C	D
9. Who talks with me about my problems.	A	B	C	D
10. Who always wants me to do my best.	A	B	C	D
11. Who listens to me when I have something to say.	A	B	C	D

For each of the statements below, please mark your answer sheet to show whether you feel that it is not at all true, a little true, pretty much true, or very much true.

	Not at All True	A Little True	Pretty Much True	Very Much True
12. I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt.	A	B	C	D
13. I do fun things or go fun places with my parents or other adults.	A	B	C	D
14. I try to understand what other people go through.	A	B	C	D
15. When I need help, I find someone to talk with.	A	B	C	D
16. I know where to go for help with a problem.	A	B	C	D
17. I try to work out problems by talking about them.	A	B	C	D
18. My friends get into a lot of trouble.	A	B	C	D
19. I do interesting activities at school.	A	B	C	D
20. My friends try to do what is right.	A	B	C	D
21. I do things at home that make a difference.	A	B	C	D
22. My friends do well in school.	A	B	C	D
23. I help make decisions with my family.	A	B	C	D
24. At school, I help decide things like class activities or rules.	A	B	C	D
25. I do things at my school that make a difference.	A	B	C	D

For each of the statements below, please mark your answer sheet to show whether you feel that it is not at all true, a little true, pretty much true, or very much true.

Outside of my home and school, there is an adult...

	Not at All True	A Little True	Pretty Much True	Very Much True
26. Who really cares about me.	A	B	C	D
27. Who tells me when I do a good job.	A	B	C	D
28. Who notices when I am upset about something.	A	B	C	D
29. Who believes that I will be a success.	A	B	C	D
30. Who always wants me to do my best.	A	B	C	D
31. Who I trust.	A	B	C	D

At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult...

	Not at All True	A Little True	Pretty Much True	Very Much True
32. Who really cares about me.	A	B	C	D
33. Who tells me when I do a good job.	A	B	C	D
34. Who notices when I'm not there.	A	B	C	D
35. Who is mean to me.	A	B	C	D
36. Who always wants me to do my best.	A	B	C	D
37. Who listens to me when I have something to say.	A	B	C	D
38. Who believes that I will be a success.	A	B	C	D

For each of the statements below, please mark your answer sheet to show whether you feel that it is not at all true, a little true, pretty much true, or very much true.

	Not at All True	A Little True	Pretty Much True	Very Much True
39. I can work out my problems.	A	B	C	D
40. I can do most things if I try.	A	B	C	D
41. I can work with someone who has different opinions than mine.	A	B	C	D
42. There are many things that I do well.	A	B	C	D
43. I enjoy working together with other students my age.	A	B	C	D
44. I stand up for myself without putting others down.	A	B	C	D
45. I try to understand how other people feel.	A	B	C	D
46. I feel like I am all alone in the world.	A	B	C	D
47. There is a purpose to my life.	A	B	C	D
48. I understand my moods and feelings.	A	B	C	D
49. I understand why I do what I do.	A	B	C	D
50. I am part of clubs, sports teams, church groups or other extra activities away from school.	A	B	C	D
51. Outside of my home and school, I take lessons in music, art, sports or a hobby.	A	B	C	D
52. Outside of my home and school, I help other people.	A	B	C	D
53. I am confused about what I want out of life.	A	B	C	D
54. I have goals and plans for the future.	A	B	C	D
55. I plan to graduate from high school.	A	B	C	D
56. I plan to go to college or some other school after high school.	A	B	C	D

Appendix B

Demographic Survey #1

Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible. Your answers will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will see your answers. Please print legibly.

Code: (Please leave blank.) _____

Name: _____

Age: _____ Phone Number: _____ Cell Number: _____

Email address: _____

Are your parents divorced or have they ever been divorced? _____

If you marked yes to the previous question, please continue.

How old were you when your parents divorced? _____

Were they your biological parents? _____

If no, please explain: _____

Have either of your parents remarried? _____

If so, please explain briefly: _____

Have your parents experienced multiple divorces? _____

What are three words that describe your parents' divorce for you? _____

How would you rate yourself after the divorce? Circle one number.

Awful												Awesome
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		

Appendix C

Potential Interview Protocol

To begin the interview, the principal investigator will review the research process and specifically explain confidentiality and its limitations. Confidentiality will be explained to all participants, along with the times it may be breached: 1) If he/she is a clear danger to self or others, 2) If the researcher suspects child abuse or neglect, as required by state law, 3) If the release of information is court-ordered, and/or 4) For supervision of the researcher's skills, data may be discussed among a small groups of faculty and other researchers, without disclosing the participant's identity.

Participants will be asked for informed consent and reminded that they may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. They will also be encouraged to utilize the University Counseling Center should the participant wish to talk more in the future. Questions will be encouraged.

The interview will be audio taped and transcribed for data analysis, using a code and not students' names to identify participants' artwork and interviews and stripping it of any identifying information. Each participant will be asked to draw a picture of divorce at the beginning of the interview, and a picture of resilience at the end.

Topic Domain: Experience of Resilience

Lead off question: Some people have a hard time after their parents divorce, and some people bounce back. They are more resilient. How would you describe your experience of resilience?

[*Covert Categories:* didn't know I was, I don't know, had to be, self-determination needs]

Probable follow-up questions

- a. You talked about _____. Tell me more about how that describes your experience?
- b. You talked about _____. Can you give me a specific example?
- c. You talked about _____. What was that like for you?

Topic Domain: Protective Factors

Lead off question: After their parents divorce some people have a hard time and some people bounce back. How did you bounce back? What things helped you bounce back? What made you different from those who do not bounce back?

[*Covert Categories:* personal characteristics, family characteristics, community characteristics]

Probable follow-up questions

What things helped you when it was hard to go through your parents' divorce?

You mentioned _____. Tell me about a time that helped you?

You mentioned _____. How was that helpful?

You mentioned _____. Describe the last time you experienced that.

Note: Qualitative inquiry methods will guide the research study. Interview protocol contains potential questions, but will be guided by developing data.

Appendix D

Demographic Survey #2

1) Age: _____

2) Ethnicity: _____

3) Gender: _____

4) Gender and Ages of Siblings: _____

5) Describe yourself: _____

6) Describe your parents' divorce: _____

7) Describe the difference between you and other children of divorce: _____

8) Is there anything else that I should know? _____

Appendix E

Information Sheet

Reaching Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of Resilience in Adult Children of Divorce

You are invited to participate in a research study to learn about the experience of resilience in adult children of divorce. Although a portion of this study is directly concerned with adult children of divorce, a short demographic survey and a resilience assessment will be administered to all students.

Denis' Thomas is a doctoral candidate at the University of Tennessee. With your permission, she will administer a short demographic survey. This survey will ask your name, age, contact information, if your parents have divorced and/or remarried, and if applicable, an explanation and your age when your parents divorced. It also asks for three words describing your parents' divorce and a self-rating of yourself after the divorce. You will also be asked to complete a resilience assessment, which will not identify you by name. Five of the students who take the assessment will be interviewed once for about an hour and asked to draw two pictures. The interview will be audio recorded, and a pseudonym will be assigned for confidentiality. These recordings will be transcribed. They will kept for no more than three years before being destroyed, and will be kept in a secure location until that time.

It is intended that the data and results of this study will be published and presented at professional meetings or conferences, including direct quotes from the interview. However, your identity will be kept confidential, and a pseudonym will be assigned. The researcher will strive to protect the identity of all participants. Sometimes discussing personal issues, such as parental divorce, can facilitate unforeseeable risks, such as strong emotional reactions. You are strongly urged to seek the services of the Counseling Center if needed. You may make an appointment by contacting them:

Counseling Center		
900 Volunteer Blvd	Phone: 865-974-2196	Email: counselingcenter@utk.edu
Knoxville, TN 37996	Fax: 865-974-7039	

Several safeguards will protect your identity and confidentiality. First, the researcher will explain confidentiality that participation is voluntary. Second, all data with your name or any information that could identify you will be kept in a locked cabinet at the University of Tennessee for three years and then destroyed. Care will be taken to strip all other data of any identifying information which could link you with the data, and it will also be kept in a secure location. Finally, the researcher plans to publish the thematic results of this study, including direct quotes from the data. However, the researcher will strive to protect the identity of all participants. To participate in this study, you must give signed consent to participate. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

It is hoped that this interview will extend the application of resilient factors to your daily life. The researcher will gain a greater understanding of resilience following parental divorce, which will, hopefully, be helpful to others. This study is the dissertation study of Denis' Thomas.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Denis' Thomas, at the University of Tennessee Counselor Education department, (865) 974-8864. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466.

Appendix F

Informed Consent Statement

Reaching Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of Resilience in Adult Children of Divorce

INTRODUCTION

You have been invited to participate in a research study to learn about the experience of resilience. Although a portion of this study is directly concerned with adult children of divorce, a short demographic survey and a resilience assessment will be administered to all students in this class willing to participate. You may elect to stop participation at any time in the study without penalty or any influence in grades.

INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY

Denis' Thomas, is a doctoral candidate at the University of Tennessee. With your permission, she will administer you a short demographic survey. This survey will ask your name, age, contact information, if your parents have divorced and/or remarried, and if applicable, an explanation and your age when your parents divorced. It also asks for three words describing your parents' divorce and a self-rating of yourself after the divorce. She will also administer a 56-item resilience assessment, which will not identify you by name, but it will use an identification number. Five of the students who complete the assessment will be asked to be interviewed once for about an hour and to draw two pictures. The interview will be audio recorded, and a pseudonym will be assigned to each student for confidentiality. These tapes will be transcribed and kept in a secure location for no more than three years before being destroyed. Your decision regarding your participation in this study will not affect your grade.

RISKS

Sometimes discussing personal issues, such as parental divorce, can facilitate unforeseeable risks, such as strong emotional reactions. You are strongly urged to seek the services of the Counseling Center if needed. You may make an appointment by contacting them:

Counseling Center

900 Volunteer Blvd Phone: 865-974-2196 Email: counselingcenter@utk.edu
Knoxville, TN 37996 Fax: 865-974-7039

Several safeguards will protect your identity and confidentiality. First, the researcher will explain confidentiality and that participation is voluntary. Second, all data with your name or any information that could identify you will be kept in a locked cabinet at the University of Tennessee for three years and then destroyed. Care will be taken to strip all other data of any identifying information which could link you with the data, and it will also be kept in a secure location. Finally, the researcher plans to publish the thematic results of this study, including direct quotes from the data. However, the researcher will strive to protect the identity of all participants. To participate in this study, you must give signed consent to participate. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

BENEFITS

It is hoped that this interview will heighten your awareness and extend your application of resilient factors. The researcher will gain a greater understanding of resilience following parental divorce, which will, hopefully, be applicable to others. This research will add to the body of knowledge by filling a gap in the literature. Very little research like this has been conducted on this population or using self-determination theory. Since so many adults in our country are affected by parental divorce, this research

is important. By learning from you the factors that attribute to your resilience, interventions for others could be made more effective.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be kept confidential. The researcher will be the only one transcribing the data, which will be kept in a locked cabinet when not in use. No references will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study. Confidentiality will be explained, along with the times it may be breached: 1) If you are a clear danger to self or others, 2) If the researcher suspects child abuse or neglect, as required by state law, 3) If the release of information is court-ordered, and/or 4) For supervision of the researcher's skills data may be discussed among a small groups of faculty and other researchers, preserving your identity.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about the research project or the procedures, or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher:

Denis' Thomas

UT Counselor Education Department

(865) 974-8864

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without penalty. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

*** Please initial the first page at the bottom, indicating that you have read that page.**

Appendix G

Permission to Recruit Participants

Reaching Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of Resilience in Adult Children of Divorce

As an instructor of a First Year Studies course offered at the University of Tennessee, I do hereby grant permission for Denis' Thomas to visit my class in the spring 2009 semester one time to recruit participants for her study "Reaching Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of Resilience in Adult Children of Divorce." I understand that she will administer a voluntary demographic survey and an assessment, and participants will sign an informed consent form before participating. I also understand that I will not be in the classroom when she does this and that students' grades will not be influenced positively or negatively by their choice to participate or not.

Signature

Date

Appendix H

Internal Review Board Permission: Pilot Study

Adolescent Resilience: A Phenomenological Study of the Experience of Developing Resilience in Adolescent Children of Divorce



THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE

**Institutional Review Board
Office of Research**

1534 White Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
Phone: 865.974.3466
Fax: 865.974.7400

DATE: October 30, 2007

IRB #: 7413 B

TITLE: Adolescent Resilience: A Phenomenological Study of the Experience of Developing
Resilience in Adolescent Children of Divorce

Thomas, Denis'
Educational Psychology & Counseling
449 Claxton Complex
Campus - 3452

Paulus, Trena
Educational Psychology & Counseling
515 Bailey Education
Campus - 3452

The points of clarification you submitted to this office for the above-captioned project have been reviewed and satisfactorily addressed the issues raised by the IRB, thus your research project has been granted approval.

Approval is for a period ending one year from the date of this letter. Please make timely submission of renewal or prompt notification of project termination (see item #3 below).

Responsibilities of the investigator during the conduct of this project include the following:

1. To obtain prior approval from the Committee before instituting any changes in the project.
2. To retain signed consent forms from subjects for at least three years following completion of the project.
3. To submit a Form D to report changes in the project or to report termination at 12-month or less intervals.

The Committee wishes you every success in your research endeavor. This office will send you a renewal notice on the anniversary of your approval date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda Lawson".

Brenda Lawson
Compliances

Internal Review Board Permission: Dissertation Study

Reaching Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of Resilience in Adult Children of Divorce



Institutional Review Board
Office of Research
1534 White Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
Phone: 865.974.3466
865.974.7400

January 16, 2009

IRB#: 7806 B

TITLE: Reaching Resilience: A Multiple Case Study of the Experience of Resilience in Adult Children of Divorce

Thomas, Denis
Educational Psychology & Counseling
449 Claxton Complex
Campus - 3452

Woodside, Marianne
Educational Psychology & Counseling
447 Claxton Complex
Campus - 3452

Your project listed above was reviewed and has been granted IRB approval under Expedited review.

This approval is for a period ending one year from the date of this letter. Please make timely submission of renewal or prompt notification of project termination (see item #3 below).

Responsibilities of the investigator during the conduct of this project include the following:

1. To obtain prior approval from the Committee before instituting any changes in the project.
2. If signed consent forms are being obtained from subjects, they must be stored for at least three years following completion of the project
3. To submit a Form D to report changes in the project or to report termination at 12-month or less intervals.

The Committee wishes you every success in your research endeavor. This office will send you a renewal notice (Form R) on the anniversary of your approval date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda Lawson".

Brenda Lawson
Compliances

Vita

Denis' A. Thomas graduated from Abilene Christian University in 1992 with a B.A. in journalism. She continued her education by earning a M.Ed. in school counseling from Middle Tennessee State University in 1997 and a Ph.D. in counselor education in 2009. She has been a grief counselor for the University of Tennessee Community Program, a PK-12th grade school counselor at Knoxville Christian School, and a PK-8th grade school counselor for the Cannon County School District. She taught educational psychology classes at the University of Tennessee and creative writing classes for a home school cooperative. She has also worked as a freelance writer, radio announcer, and head of the design department at a printing company. She has been a member of Toastmasters International, the Cumberland Writer's Guild, and Bible Study Fellowship. She is now an assistant professor in the School of Professional Counseling at Lindsey Wilson College.